

Guidelines for Your Personal Statement

Admissions tutors receive a huge pile of application forms. This is your chance to communicate details about yourself that will make the tutor want to interview you. Here, academic qualifications are not everything; extra-curricular study, travel, work experience, your personal interests, can all be relevant. Try to convey a little of what you are like as a person. Remember however, that you may be asked for specific details about what you put down. Vague expressions of enthusiasm for the environment, art or theatre, for example, will not carry much weight.

Activity 1: Make Notes

Jot down details about yourself under these topic headings (provided by UCAS):

Your reasons for choosing the course, and your background interest in the subject:

Particular interests in your current study:

Employment, work experience or voluntary work, especially if relevant to your choice of course:

Extra-curricular activities, visits, study days etc., relevant to your choice of course:

Career aspirations:

Any sponsorship you have secured, or applied for:

Personal interests and achievements; even if not directly relevant, these give a sense of you as a person and your possible contribution to university life:

Activity 2: Plan the Sequence of Your Statement

Select and organise your material to present yourself and what you want to do, clearly and coherently. Don't include material that is irrelevant to your university ambitions, like an interest in socialising or watching tennis. Check, briefly, with your tutor at this stage.

Activity 3: Draft Your Statement

Draft your statements in complete sentences and paragraphs, without using slang or contractions (e.g. isn't, won't, I'll...). The tone should be personal, but formal.

Type out your draft to get an idea of whether you have enough room for your ideas. Don't feel you must fill the whole space available, but most people will have plenty to say. Be specific. Get in those fascinating details!

Here your tutor can be a big help, as a friendly reader and editor.