

UCAS Personal Statement

Personal statement journey- non early applicants

Complete first draft - completed by the 10th of September

Re-draft- completed by 1st of October

Final draft- 5th of November

Final checks in school.

Submit to school 26th of November

Submit to UCAS before 10th of December

What's the point of a personal statement?

Personal Statement Overview

Maximum of 4000 characters

Maximum of 47 lines

Meet the deadline!!!

Structuring your statement

- A 2 part introduction
- The main body
- Extra curricular experiences
- Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

About 6 lines

ACADEMIC

Plenty, perhaps 22 – 27 lines

EXTRA-CURRICULAR

Around 10 – 12 lines

CONCLUSION

No more than 4 lines

TOTAL; 47 lines; 4000 characters

What to avoid

- Long complicated sentences
- Lack of reflection
- Listing things
- Out of date content
- Being negative
- Generic/ stereotypical statements
- Gimmicks
- Controversy
- Repetition
- Over egging one example
- Inappropriate examples

What to include

- Personal attributes
- Sports and other hobbies
- Musical instruments
- Work experience
- Personal interests within the field of study
- Contextual information

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Examples

Writing Effective UCAS Personal statement booklets

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Then please look at:

Additional Examples 1,2 and 3

Universities applied to:

- Oxford: Offer
- University College London: Offer
- King's: Offer
- Exeter: Offer
- Durham: Offer

Good Points:

This is a very good personal statement and is well-written. The student is clearly interested by many aspects of geography, which is very important as geography is a multi-disciplinary subject. The student describes several areas of geography which capture their interest, demonstrating their interest and commitment to the reader. The student justifies their decision to take a gap year well, and the relevance their activities will have to the subject of geography and their interests in global aid.

Bad Points:

The student misspells the word 'millennium' in the second paragraph. The second paragraph is also very long. It is hard for the reader to stay focused when reading through long paragraphs, and it would have been better if the student had separated the second paragraph into two. The final paragraph is also very long and it is not clear where the conclusion begins. As a result, the end of the statement does not deliver the impact which the student has intended to produce. If the student separates the sentence, 'These activities demonstrate leadership skills, commitment and an enthusiastic approach to challenges, all of which will equip me well for the study of Geography at university' into a new final paragraph, this would have made the final statement much more effective.

Overall:

This is a very good statement. The student has a wealth of experiences and is clearly very motivated to study geography. Some paragraphs are very long and this reduces the impact that the statement has on the reader. With some restructuring, this could be an excellent statement.

Universities applied to:

- Cambridge: Offer
- Imperial College London: Offer
- University College London: Offer
- Bath: Offer
- Sheffield: Offer

Good Points:

This is a very well-written and compact statement. The student starts by explaining their interest in a particular branch of engineering and then goes on to explain their interest in science. This may be because the student has applied for several different courses with their UCAS application, however, the statement manages to remain specific to engineering yet general enough to encompass the physical sciences.

Bad Points:

The student exclusively describes their interests in civil engineering and does not mention any other branches of engineering. Whilst this may be relevant for applications to universities offering civil engineering as a single discipline, other universities such as Cambridge offer general engineering degrees with the option of specialising available in the third year of study. To make the statement more relevant to general engineering, the student should have mentioned other engineering disciplines. Some sentences are not well-written, e.g. 'My writing and communication skills were developed as much teamwork was involved and after research and interviews we published in the local newspaper our opposition to the destruction of this green source of life'. This could be written as, 'My writing, communication, and teamwork skills were developed through the production of a published newspaper article in opposition to....'

Overall:

This is a very good statement, although is quite focused towards civil engineering. The student could have made the application more relevant to general engineering by mentioning their enthusiasm to gain a broad experience in general engineering before specialising in civil engineering.

Universities applied to:

- > Oxford: Offer
- > Warwick: Offer
- > St. Andrews: Offer
- > Durham: Offer
- > Exeter: Offer

Good Points:

This statement is powered by a broad range of academic interests — all of which the candidate has explored to a deep and commendable level. They are able to articulate how these interests came about, why they are important, and how they intersect. In so doing, the candidate clearly demonstrates their ability to think independently, to undertake independent projects, and to foster a wide-ranging curiosity. Furthermore, they clearly illustrate how their academic interests have had a bearing on their actions outside of the classroom; activities which require a substantial amount of initiative and endeavour.

Bad Points:

While the consideration of a range of different areas of psychology is illustrative of a consistently curious individual, this statement would have benefited from greater cohesion as an overall piece. The candidate could have also found a less rhetorical way of opening their statement; their tone at this point is not a mode of speech that they return to elsewhere, and as such, it seems somewhat like a non-sequitur. Their prose thereafter is much more engaging, and it seems unfulfilling and irrelevant to include such mystifying text at the start.

Overall:

This candidate maturely presents their academic interests and particular areas of personal pursuit. As a result of this, they are able to demonstrate moments at which they have taken impressive amounts of initiative, and have really gone out of their way in order to experience their academic interests outside of the classroom. They are thereby able to fashion themselves as a curious, energetic, academic individual, who is able to think independently and develop their own work. There are potential areas for stylistic improvement within the statement but they do not hinder the overall impression given of a capable and committed candidate.