



UNIVERSITY
OF
WINCHESTER

TOP TIPS FOR

Writing your personal statement

This worksheet is to help you think about what you should include in your personal statement.

Try to include as much information as you can. This will give you the best chance of writing an interesting and **successful** personal statement.

The most important aspect of a personal statement is conveying your enthusiasm for your chosen course.

This is your opportunity to tell us about you and to help you **stand out from the crowd**.

For the vast majority of courses, universities do not interview. With many students applying with similar grades, the personal statement, in conjunction with the academic reference, is one of the main tools universities use to make offers for their courses. **There is no such thing as a perfect personal statement;** show lots of interest in the subject, prove your existing knowledge and give us some personal insight.

THE BASICS

Three separate sections, with a different question for each section.

It is a maximum of 4,000 characters, with each section having a minimum character count of 350 characters. You can use the character limit across all answers in any way you choose.

Universities and colleges will review the three sections as one, so ensure you do not repeat the same information across all three sections.

Remember to make sure that this is all your own work. UCAS uses similarity detection software to scan your personal statement for potential copied material.

Don't waste characters listing qualifications; focus on giving in-depth examples and context in relation to your chosen course.

Remember! Keep a copy of your statement for future reference so that if you are called to interview, you can refresh your mind on what you wrote. They are likely to ask you about it or want you to expand on your reflections.

THE STRUCTURE

Question 1

Why do you want to study this course or subject?

This is your opportunity to showcase your passion, curiosity, interest, and knowledge for your chosen subject area. Additionally, you are demonstrating to universities and colleges why studying this course is a good fit for you and your future ambitions.

What to think about:

Your motivation for studying the course, your knowledge of the subject area and interest, your future plans, and why this course is a good fit

Question 2

How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject?

This is the opportunity to show evidence of the relevant or transferable skills you have gained from formal education and highlight your understanding of how this will help you succeed in the subject area.

What to think about:

How your studies or training relate to your chosen course(s) or subject area, relevant or transferable skills you have that make you a great candidate, and any relevant educational achievements.

Question 3

What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?

This is your chance to discuss any other activities you have undertaken outside of your formal education or personal experiences that further demonstrate your suitability for the course. This section is personal to you, and anything you include, you should reflect on why.

What to think about:

Work experience, employment or volunteering, personal life experiences or responsibilities, hobbies and extracurricular/outreach activities, achievements outside of school or college.

Recommended paragraph structure – ABC

In everything you write, do not just describe but also reflect on your experiences and skills and relate them to your chosen course or career.

To help you think about your skills, you may want to use the ABC technique.

A – Action

What you did while participating in an activity – it could be a sports team, voluntary or paid work, school prefect, etc.

B – Benefit

What skills do these roles give you – teamwork, responsibility, time management, etc?

C – Course or Career

Relate these skills and experiences to the course you want to study or the career it will lead to. We only want to see limited information about your ACTION but reflect on the BENEFITS you gain and how it links to your COURSE or CAREER.

An example of the ABC structure:

ACTION	<i>Alongside my studies, I work part-time in a coffee shop . . .</i>
BENEFIT	<i>. . . where I have been able to develop my communication skills. I have been able to expand this due to the different audiences I interact with, for example customers from a variety of backgrounds, as well as my colleagues. . . .</i>
COURSE OR CAREER	<i>. . . Developing ways of communicating including repetition and using non-verbal signals has enhanced my skills which will be useful as I progress through my course.</i>

Think about your non-study involvements and activities or, for applicants not in school or college, life experiences and previous employment. This could include sports or music activities, Duke of Edinburgh, Young Enterprise, work experience, working on a school or community project, school mentor or prefect, course placements, volunteering, or paid work. Think about what skills you have gained from these and how the experience or your skills might link with your chosen course. You should ideally only refer to current or recent activities (during the last two years).

Some examples of skills are shown in the table but you may have others you feel are relevant to your subject. Use them together in a sentence where more than one experience covers the same skill.

Activity or experience	Skills gained	✓
	Communication	
	Teamwork	
	Time management	
	Independent working	
	Problem-solving	
	Commitment	
	Leadership	
	Adaptability	
	Responsibility	
	Other	
	Communication	
	Teamwork	
	Time management	
	Independent working	
	Problem-solving	
	Commitment	
	Leadership	
	Adaptability	
	Responsibility	
	Other	

It is important that you include the skills and knowledge that your chosen universities are looking for. The following table may help you summarise what you need to include. List the skills and knowledge required for each university and highlight common themes. Include these in your statement to appeal equally to every university you are applying to.

[illegible]

ASK YOURSELF	ANSWER
Why do you want to study this course or subject?	
How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject?	
What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?	