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UNIVERSITY OF
CHICHESTER

CELEBRATING
180 YEARS
OF HIGHER
EDUCATION

PERSONAL STATEMENT GUIDE

How to get started

Contents

Structuring your personal statement	4
What makes me unique	6
Subject specific help for University of Chichester courses	8
Personal statement checklist	10
How we can help	10
Your notes	11



YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT GUIDE

This guide will help you understand what you should include in your personal statement. A well written personal statement should show excellent communication skills and demonstrate your commitment towards your chosen course.

What is a personal statement?

A personal statement forms part of your UCAS application to study in higher education. **It must be no longer than 47 lines and consist of no more than 4000 characters.**

You get the chance to express your passion towards your chosen course and demonstrate your skills, experiences and interests. It is your opportunity to sell yourself in an academic setting to your chosen higher education providers.

What do universities want to see in an applicant?

- Passion
- Enthusiasm
- Commitment
- Academic and transferable skills
- Learning outside of the classroom
- Relevant paid/unpaid work experience



Dos and Don'ts for your personal statement

Do

- ✓ Do 'mind map' your ideas before writing anything structured
- ✓ Do use guides and documents to help write and structure your personal statement
- ✓ Do write with enthusiasm and show what you're passionate about
- ✓ Do aim to write about five paragraphs and try to relate them to each other
- ✓ Do produce several drafts before submitting your final version
- ✓ Do ask friends and family for feedback on what you produce
- ✓ Do double check your spelling, punctuation and grammar
- ✓ Do make sure you answer the key questions

Don't

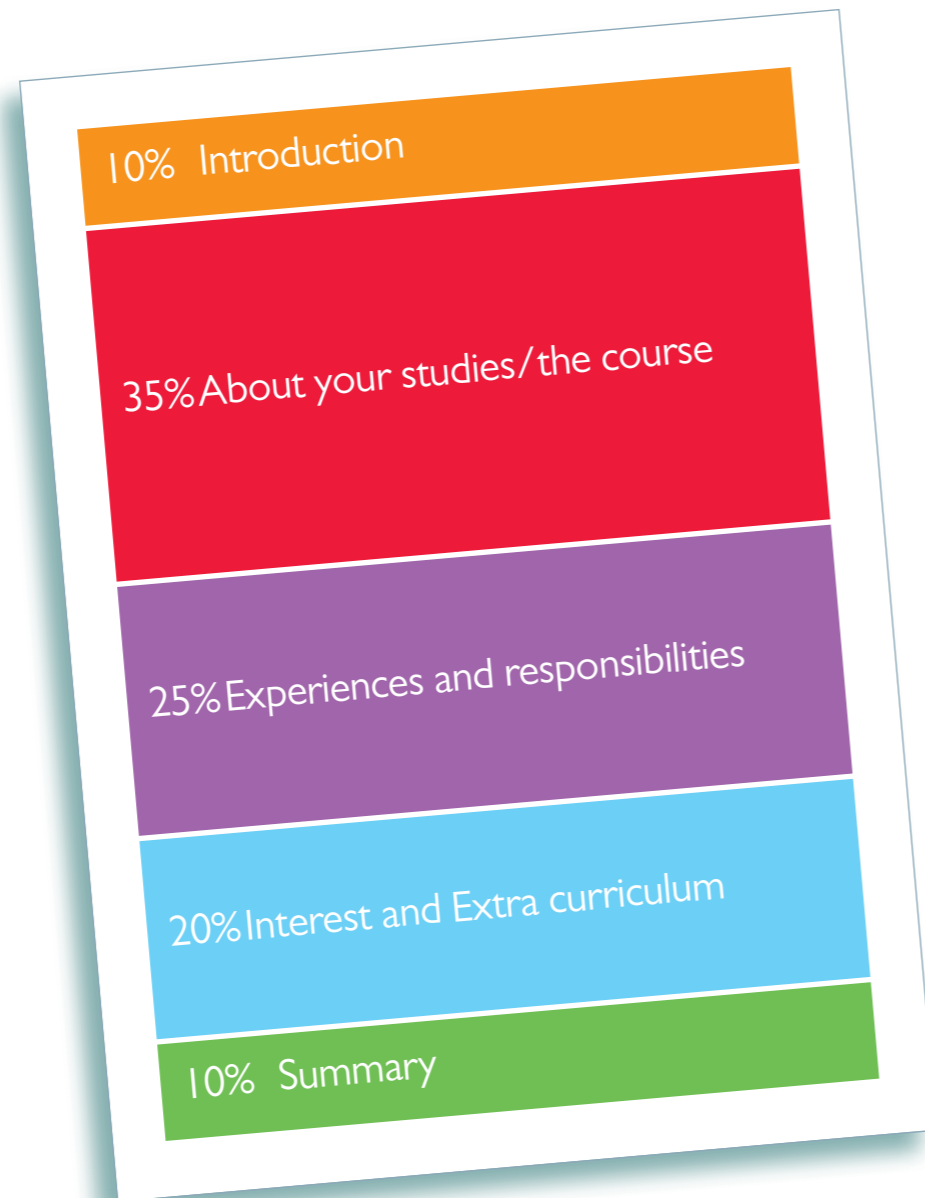
- ✗ Don't over complicate the content
- ✗ Don't lie or stretch the truth – you might get caught out at a later point in your application
- ✗ Don't write about irrelevant topics, it wastes characters
- ✗ Don't copy someone else's personal statement
- ✗ Don't repeat things already on your UCAS form
- ✗ Don't include lists and avoid cliches
- ✗ Don't use slang or abbreviations
- ✗ Don't forget to vary the length of your sentences and paragraphs.
- ✗ Don't use quotations

Structuring your personal statement

The most difficult part of writing a good personal statement is getting started.

We suggest the following structure to show your university the best of you in five paragraphs.

Try not to repeat yourself and separate each topic into a new paragraph to make it easier to flow and read. Aim to keep each paragraph relevant and loosely linked to each other. 30-40% of your application is non-academic information so try to have a balance of content, both academic and non-academic.



Paragraph 1. Introduction

Start with a short and punchy introduction on what motivated you to study in higher education. Why did you pick this specific subject/course? What inspired you to expand your subject knowledge in this specific field of study? You don't need to list exam results/grades as this will be written on your UCAS application but you can talk about the subjects you did previously. Do not name any universities within your personal statement as the same application is sent to every university.

Paragraph 2. About the course

This paragraph is about your current courses and how these subjects have encouraged you to want to continue learning at university. Make sure, you include your academic skills. Be specific and give examples where possible. What knowledge do you have on the subject, be sure to showcase research you've done on it in preparation for your further studies.

What subjects are you currently studying?

- How have they influenced your desire to study the course you're applying for?
- What relevant skills did you gain that can be transferable to your studies?
- Include information about any studies or research that were particularly interesting during your time at college/sixth form.

What course are you interested in applying for?

- What is the inspiration for doing this course?
- Is there anything or anyone that fuelled your interest in the industry you're applying for?

Mention any knowledge you have in that area ...

- Are there any studies or research that interest you in particular?

Paragraph 3. Experiences and responsibilities

In the third paragraph you should write about your work experiences and volunteer opportunities. It is important to mention what skills you have developed through these opportunities and how you can use these in higher education. Try to talk about a variety of opportunities even if they aren't directly relevant to the course you're applying for; the skills gained may still be important.

Include any experiences or placements that require skills similar to the course you are applying to.

- Work experience or shadowing in a relevant field and what have you learnt from this.
- Talk about specific procedures, responsibilities and skills. if they are in that industry.

Do you have any paid/unpaid work experience that enabled you to gain transferable skills?

- How could you use these transferable skills at university?

Paragraph 4. Interests and extra-curricular

This is your opportunity to mention any extra-curricular activities you do. Include how these activities will aid you through your studies, are there are any skills gained from that activity?

Interests and extra-curricular activity - Complete the following table with relevant information.

Step 1. List your activities such as work experience and recent extra-curricular activities.

Step 2. List those skills that you gained through each of your listed activities.

Step 3. Review each of the activity and skills that you developed, then think of ways that these skills can benefit you through your studies in Higher Education and on your chosen course.

Activity	Skill	How is it beneficial for your course?
E.g. school council	Communication skills	Ability to work with other people and to speak and debate in front of others

Paragraph 5. Summary

This last paragraph is to tell your chosen university, why you are the best candidate to study at their establishment and what you can bring to their university. It is an opportunity to sum up the type of person you are and distinguish yourself from other applicants.

Why you think you would make a good student

- What qualities and attributes would you bring to the university?

WHAT MAKES
ME UNIQUE?

Subject specific help for University of Chichester courses

Our departments at the University of Chichester are keen to give you as much support as possible through your journey with us in higher education. Use this subject specific information to customise your application.

Business

- Demonstrate you have the ability to persevere with a task by not giving up at the first hurdle.
- Explain what you have done that is above and beyond your studies that help to widen your life experience and have contributed to refining your subject interest and career path.
- Show evidence of commercial awareness along with consideration of ethical and sustainable business practices.

Charity Development

- Express any experience you have of fundraising.
- Have you done any volunteering and how has it provided you with transferrable skills?
- Do you have any voluntary sector interests?

Creative Digital Technologies

- Use honesty in your application to build a story about yourself that will distinguish you from other applicants.
- Provide examples of when you've been dedicated, hard-working or engaged and why that will make you a good student.
- Show how passionate you are by telling us why this subject matters so much to you.

Dance

- Expand on how you engage with dance beyond your school/college studies - give us an insight into workshops that you have attended or choreographers that you have or would like to work with.
- Tell us about professional works you have seen that inspired you.
- Convey your passion for the specific programme you are most interested in.

Early Childhood

- Express your desire and passion to work with children.
- Reference any examples of relevant paid or voluntary work placements where you worked with young children and other age ranges.
- Make your statement personal by sharing how activities and experiences in your spare time help you to self-develop.

Education (Primary Teaching)

- Demonstrate your passion for learning beyond the classroom and examples of being proactive, inquisitive and self-reflective.
- Reveal your awareness to the sensitivity of the developmental needs of children.
- Show commitment to teaching, evidence it through the actions you took to learn more about this role.

Education (KS2/3 Maths & Teaching)

- Demonstrate your intellectual curiosity and the potential to achieve academically, professionally and personally.
- Express sensitive awareness of the needs of young people and the different things that can influence their learning.
- Show evidence of your openness and ability to analyse own strengths and weaknesses.

Education (Mathematics)

- Illustrate with examples how problem solving helped you succeed in a task.
- Demonstrate how thinking rationally and logically can result in resolving a situation.
- Has there been a situation that required perseverance and determination?

Education

- Show your curiosity by demonstrating that you are interested in finding out new information.
- Reveal how persistent you are when realising a problem and completing long-term projects.
- Provide evidence of being a good team player, who will be able to support others in their learning journeys.

Engineering:

- Demonstrate that you possess analytical thinking skills and give any examples of when it was beneficial during problem solving.
- Reveal your interest to solve complex problems and support it with relevant examples of dealing with issues or problems in your previous academic or professional work.
- Strengthen your application with examples of successfully working together with a team on a chosen project.

English and Creative Writing

- How have you gone above and beyond your studies to further your knowledge?
- Are there any plays or books etc that you relate to that have inspired/influenced your decision to do this course?
- Try to balance the inclusion of extra-curricular activities with academic engagement and the relationship between the two.

Fine Art

- Tell us what you're passionate about.
- What art/artist(s) inspire you?
- What makes you unique in terms of the art industry?

History and Politics

- What have you done in the last six months to engage with your chosen degree route?
- What specific area of your subject is most interesting to you?
- Avoid referring to experiences before sixth form or college. It's about you now and in the future.

Law

- Provide evidence of situations where you have relied heavily on English skills to perform a task.e.g. EPQ?
- Any experiences where problem solving skills resulted in a situation being dealt with successfully and how these skills can help apply the law logically?
- Have there been any situations that relied heavily on your research skills?

Music

- Include information about performance experience and practical qualifications.
- Indicate whether you play any musical instruments.

Musical Theatre and Performance

- What inspired/motivated you to want to do this course?
- What creative or artistic practical experience do you have?
- Where in the industry do you think this course might take you in the future?

Product Design

- Demonstrate that you are an artistic-minded, independent thinker and that you have a natural inquisitive awareness; use examples from your extra-curricular activities, academic or work experiences.
- How has participating in external activities made you a better team player?
- Show you have a level of interest in making, designing and drawing; both digitally and manually and show how much of a hands-on person you are.

Psychology

- Show your awareness and passion for the subject while demonstrating your understanding of how the discipline works in terms of scientific methods.
- Share a phenomenon (a breadth of behaviours, thoughts or feelings) which you are familiar with, in reference to any experiences that have motivated you to apply for this course.
- Strengthen your application by including reference to professional motivations to study psychology at degree level.

Religion and Philosophy

- Which ideas/philosophers/theologians are you most passionate about? Is there something you have learned that has changed the way you think and see the world?
- What experiences and activities reflect who you are as a unique person?
- Are there any issues that you find challenging or interesting that might fuel you to change the world?

Social Work

- Prove that you have the ability to build upon your own interventions and draw upon a 'tool box' of techniques, skills, values, knowledge and experiences to use in various situations.
- Express your appreciation of the bigger picture while illustrating some of your attributes such as curiosity, humility, self-awareness, realism, resilience and open-mindedness.
- Reveal your analytical and critical thinking skills coupled with adaptable and effective communication skills which include aspects of assertiveness and observational skills.

Sport

- Why are you unique? What can you bring to the department/course?
- Do you have any sporting achievements or aspirations? Are you an elite athlete?
- Have you done any work in the community or with governing bodies that has resulted in achieving external qualifications and skills that can be used to succeed in higher education?

Theatre

- What's the most challenging thing you have been in?
- Mention any plays/performances or other art works you have seen that challenged you and your views.
- What is the value of arts in society?

