

Writing your Personal Statement

The dreaded personal statement – enough to induce blind panic in even the most accomplished student. Of course, it is not the only thing of interest to Admissions' Tutors; your predicted grades, GCSE results and the school or college reference is also vitally important. However, Admissions' Tutors want to know what motivates you- what is important to *you*; your personal statement allows you to provide this information. The personal statement should be a positive description of your interests, abilities and achievements, which reflects your personality. It should indicate that you are motivated, have an enquiring mind, are realistic about your subject choice and can manage your time effectively. Above all, it should be interesting. Admissions Tutors read hundreds of them; you want yours to be remembered - distinct from the others.

Motivation

Admissions Tutors want to teach motivated, enthusiastic students, so start by explaining why you have picked your chosen subject. For example, it is not enough to say "I want to be a nurse, OT, physiotherapist, radiographer, radiotherapist or orthoptist", or worse, "I like hospital programmes and would therefore like to work in this area". The Admissions Tutor will want reassurance that you really know what their subject is about, and are not going to drop out if it is not what you expect. If you have career plans mention them, but do not worry if you have not, we are happy for you to like studying for its own sake too.

Relevant experience

Recent work experience or an observational visit is highly recommended for the health science degrees here. Whichever health science degree you are interested in you must find out what is expected of you, in terms of work or observational experience and ensure you undertake this and then talk about it in your personal statement. This will enable you to reflect on the experience and provide your insight into the profession and what you most enjoyed / learnt from it. It will also show how it has shaped your desire to become this health care professional and how it has confirmed that you have the rights qualities to succeed in your chosen career. Highlight areas of the role and use this to illustrate how it has inspired you.

Academic interests

You should definitely include a small section on your current studies, indicating that you enjoy studying and are interested in your subjects. Apply your subjects to the degree you are applying for. So, if you are studying psychology talk about why you think this will be useful to your degree.

A responsible attitude

Your personal statement should indicate that you will be able to handle the transition from the structure of school/college to the freedom of university life. It is not enough to simply state "I am a mature and responsible individual" you need to prove it. So, include positions of responsibility in or out of school, whether you are captain of a sports team, a prefect, or treasurer of a society. Part-time, voluntary and community work look good too, especially if you have been given extra responsibility.

Admissions Tutors want applicants who will make a positive contribution to university life, so tell them about your interests and achievements. Most are realistic about your lack of time, and do not expect to see a long list of extreme sports and unlikely cultural pursuits. On the other hand, avoid listing shopping, TV and computer games either.