



Writing Your UCAS Application Personal Statement



**CITY OF LONDON
SCHOOL**

Writing your Personal Statement

- ❑ The Personal Statement section of your UCAS application is your opportunity to 'sell' yourself to the Admissions Tutor for your chosen course (who is going to decide whether you get a place or not)
- ❑ Most Admissions Tutors like Personal Statements to be written in a particular way so that it is easy for them to find the information they need
- ❑ In general the first section (at least one third of the statement) should be about why you want to study your chosen subject(s). This should include any supporting information.
- ❑ The middle section should include other information relevant to your course choice (see notes) including career plans if you are applying for a subject where this is relevant.
- ❑ The final section is where you can mention any in or out of college activities or interests. These might not be related to your course choice but they can show what kind of person you are and that you can balance academic study work with other things.

Getting Started

The best way to begin your personal statement is to 'brain-storm' a list of all the information you might want to include. You can do it as a series of 'bullet' points - keep them short at this stage.

There are three boxes on the next pages that you can write these in and the boxes correspond to the three main sections of the Personal Statement already suggested. Try to sort your ideas in to the right boxes as you think of them.



Studying a new subject

If your university subject is **new** to you and **not** something you have done as an AS level write a few points to explain **how you have got interested in the subject**

Your AS and A2 subjects

If you want to continue studying one (or more) of your **AS/A2 levels subjects** at university use **what you have been doing in the course** to support your choice. Include

- any **reading** you have done outside course work and the exam syllabus to show extra interest in the subject
- involvement in any **special individual or group projects** (mention your own contribution to these) as part of your Sixth Form course

Career plans

If you have a definite future **career plan** and the course you have chosen is an essential part of qualifying for your chosen career you need to show **where your interest in this comes from**

Section 1 - Why I want to do my chosen subject

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Look at the prospectus

Don't mention individual universities in your statement but do

- check **prospectus** details for your chosen university courses including the core topics and **option choices**
- identify any particular aspects of the course that are of special interest to you (at least it shows that you have read the prospectus!)

Other interests

You can also include in this section any especially relevant things that you would otherwise have put in Section 2 or 3 such as **work experience** or **work shadowing** or **out-of-school interests and activities** (if any of these help to explain your subject choice)

Other AS levels

Use your other AS levels (ones not related to your course choice) to show other knowledge or skills you have gained which might be relevant to your choice. For example

- related topics in subjects like **history, politics or philosophy** could be relevant to courses such as **law, or international relations** and so on
- common **scientific skills** in **chemistry, biology or physics** can be relevant in **health care professions, biochemistry, pharmacology, genetics, psychology** and lots of other applied science courses

Section 2 - Supporting evidence

In this box you should list anything that you have done that helps to show that you have checked out your chosen subject further. This can include –

- **Future career plans** (if any) where your chosen course could be relevant to these
- **Work experience** or **work shadowing** (if not already included in Section 1)
- **Summer schools** or **taster courses**
- **Student shadowing**
- **Special subject-based Open Days**
- **GAP year plans** if you are intending taking a year out and are applying for deferred entry

Section 3 - Other activities and you as a person

Activity/Interest	Skills/abilities/experience I have gained
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Include here any **in or out-of-school activities, interests, additional skills** (for example ICT or language skills), **experience** (such as travelling abroad), **part time jobs** or **voluntary work** where these don't relate specifically to your course subject and you haven't already mentioned them. Also include any **positions of responsibility** you have had at school or where you have initiated activities such as in clubs and societies.

Don't just write a long list of activities – they should be things that you do regularly, maybe to a high standard (like sport or performing arts activities). For each activity you list mention what additional skills you have gained from it or what it tells the admissions tutor about you as a person. Maybe mention some of the personal qualities which can make you a good student (like reliability, being well organised, good at working with others, meeting deadlines and so on).

Now you have got all your information together you are ready to write up your Personal Statement.

- Check that you have put all relevant notes into the right section (1, 2 or 3)
- Number the bullet points in each section in the order you want to include them so it is logical and easy to read
- Use Microsoft WORD word-processor to type it up and save it so you can easily make alterations to it after you have discussed it with your tutor or careers staff
- You need to choose Times New Roman 12pt font and then you will be able to copy and paste it in to the Personal Statement section in UCAS 'Apply'
- Use the WORD spell check to make sure you haven't made any spelling mistakes before you put it on to 'Apply' (which doesn't have a spell check facility).

Help - I can't decide on my course choice

- Do you have a definite career idea in mind? If 'yes' then do you know if you need to do a particular degree subject in order to qualify to do it?
(careers like medicine, pharmacy, civil engineering or psychology need a definite degree but others like law, business and finance or the Civil Service are open to people with a degree in any subject so check it out)
- Think about whether you want to continue with one or more of your AS/A2 levels subjects or do something completely different
- Use Course Finder on www.ukcoursefinder.com where you can do a questionnaire about your interests. It will give you a profile of your study interests along with details of the courses available and where you can do them related to these interests
- To see what subjects you can do at university with your AS/A2 Levels use the **Higher Ideas** program on the school network under careers applications:
 - enter your name if you want to
 - click on Advanced Levels to enter your subjects

If you still can't decide or you need to talk through your ideas ask to see one of the Careers Consultants in the Careers Centre.