

## **Personal Statement**

The personal statement is the most important part of your application. You need to ensure that you make it clear why you are passionate about what you are applying for, and display any relevant knowledge that could show an understanding of the profession. You need to be positive and not be scared to talk yourself up. There may be 1000s of applicants for your course with the same or better grades. What makes you stand out and why should you get a place over others? You will find it easier if you break it down and answer the following questions. Write a paragraph for each of these headings and follow this structure when writing your personal statement.

### **The Course**

Why are you applying for this course?

What is it about this subject area that interests you? Show that you have an understanding of what is involved e.g. that psychology is a scientific course, specific modules that interest you etc.

What makes you suitable for this course – any relevant skills and abilities?

*Be enthusiastic. Describe what excites you. Share a career goal. Show that you have researched or understand what is involved in the course.*

### **Experience**

Have you managed to get any work or voluntary experience in this sector?

Have you anything lined up for the future?

What did you learn from these experiences?

*Showing that you are keen for experience, pro-active to get experience and then describing some of the things you have learnt can set you apart from others that haven't done this – but don't say you have done this if you have not!*

### **School**

Have you held any position within the school?

Have you contributed to the wider life of the school?

What did you do for school service?

Have you won any achievements or awards?

Have you developed any key skills?

Did you take part in work experience?

*Prefect. Committee member, pupil council, head/depute/house captain – what did these include / skills developed. Saltire awards, First Aid, work in the community, help in classes or extra-curricular activities, subject prizes or awards for clubs, teams, competitions etc. team player, communication skills, initiative, leadership skills etc.*

### **You**

What are your hobbies?

What do you do to relax?

Have you got a part time job that may have taught you any relevant skills to your course or have developed you as a person?

Show an understanding that you are prepared to work hard at uni but that also you have a balance and can switch off. Maybe you'd like to become involved in some uni sports teams or social clubs. Even a waitressing job can develop teamworking, communication skills, initiative, time management skill (you can plan work & study etc).

### **Summarise**

Are you ready for the challenge?

What are you looking forward to?

Career ambitions and plan for the future?

State that you are prepared for the work and challenges ahead and that you are looking forward to getting involved in the wider life of the university.

You can incorporate knowledge, quotes, ideologies, people etc that inspire and influence you from your subject field. Architecture – favourite buildings, city, styles etc. Literature – types of work, authors/poets etc. Don't be scared to make it personal just make sure it makes sense and is all true!

### **Do's and Don'ts**

- ✓ **DO** – use your best English and don't let spelling and grammatical errors spoil your statement.
- ✓ **DO** – show that you know your strengths and can outline your ideas clearly. Use words you know will be understood by the person reading your statement.
- ✓ **DO**- be enthusiastic – if you show your interest in the course, it may help you to get a place
- ✓ **DO** – expect to produce several drafts of your personal statement before being happy with it.
- ✓ **DO** – ask people you trust for feedback.
  
- × **DON'T** – exaggerate- if you do you may get caught out at an interview when asked to elaborate on an interesting achievement.
- × **DON'T** – rely on a spellchecker as it will not pick up on everything – proof read as many times as possible.
- × **DON'T** – leave it to the last minute – your statement may seem rushed and important information could be left out.

### **Summary of Statement Structure & Paragraph Order**

1. Introduction - why do you want to do the course/job you want to do?
2. What have you been doing in school, subjects? Why did you choose those subjects and what skills & qualities have they helped you develop that are relevant to the course?
3. What else do you do in school, what skills and qualities do you use for this?
4. What are you involved with out with school/
5. What work experience do you have, what skills and qualities do you use for this?
6. How do you spend your free time?
7. Summarise - what can you bring to the course/university? What are your career ambitions and plans for the future after university? Why should they pick you?
- 8.

## **PERSONAL STATEMENT**

1. Introduction - why do you want to do the course/job you want to do?
2. What subjects have you been doing in school that are relevant to your application? Why did you choose these subjects? What skills, qualities & experience have they given you that will help at university/college?
3. What else do you do in school, what skills and qualities do you use for this?
4. What are you involved with out with school?
5. What work experience do you have, what skills and qualities do you use for this?
6. How do you spend your free time?
7. Summarise - what can you bring to the course/university? What are your career ambitions and plans for the future after university? Why should they pick you?