

**University &**  
**Careers Week**

## The personal statement: what admissions tutors want

Evidence of: your academic potential, commitment and curiosity for your chosen course.

80% focus on your commitment to your related subjects, with evidence of going beyond the syllabus and independent learning incl. work/extra-curricular experience.

## Sources of Evidence

Taster days attended

Wider reading/study

EPQ investigation

Competitions entered (engineering; debating)

Work experience (caring professions especially)

Pro-active involvement in events (Rob's Festival)

Skills acquired (research; organising; presenting)

Awards won (subject, music, sport, arts .....

Responsibilities held (in and out of school)

# The Personal Statement Structure

Four or five (separate!) paragraphs covering:

1. Why you are interested in the course
2. What you have done/read/considered that is relevant to your chosen study
3. The necessary skills you have developed
4. A brief summary of your aspirations and your “offer”

# Other Considerations

- The 'hook'
- Make it personal
- Future plans



# The Personal Statement Rules

4000 characters (about 47 lines) of 12 font text.

Must be original – “Copycatch” software is used.

Only one version allowed, across your choices.

Read in conjunction with your academic results  
and school reference – don't repeat!

## Views of the Experts – Don't:

“Give little or no information on your reasons for studying a particular course”

“Use bland statements like ‘I am fascinated by science’ – instead, give examples where your interest was aroused”

“Use long-winded words to try to sound overly academic ”

## Views of the Experts – Don't:

“Use humour – avoid jokes at all cost”

“mention hobbies and leisure activities unless they are specifically relevant”

“make errors in spelling, punctuation and paragraphing or use abbreviations or colloquial language”



# Spot the Error Activity

With a partner find as many problems as you can with this personal statement .....

## Views of the Experts – Do:

“Plan, write drafts, ask someone to proofread”

“Give concrete examples of things you have done to back up your claims”

“Aim to devote the majority of your words to academic achievement, experience and motivations ... and include evidence of leadership and achieving personal goals.”

## Views of the Experts – Do:

“Make the first paragraph grab the attention of the reader, like the first two lines of a newspaper story” (examples)

“ Give clear information on the reasons why you want to do a particular course”

“Look at the course blogs to get a feel for what is happening .... and the key attributes needed”

What is an admission tutor looking  
for?

**PASSION**



# Showing passion

- Lectures-TED, Royal Society, Universities...



Biggest mistake

Your personal  
statement doesn't fit  
the courses being  
applied for

# Other helpful hints..

- Use of language – not a narrative
- Help your tutor to write theirs
- Must be seen, discussed and improved with your Tutor





# First Task

Using the suggested personal statement structure, note down all your relevant evidence to date to reveal if you can cover all necessary areas.

This will be the skeleton for your final draft.