Preparing to write your personal statement

Vision   **I**mpact   **H**abits   **G**rowth   **S**ervice

What's the purpose?

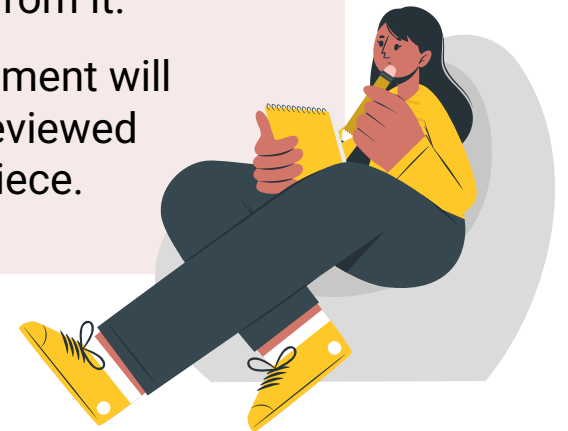| It's your chance to:	Question prompts are there to help you but remember to:	Don't panic about the sections:
• **show** your curiosity, knowledge and passion. • **evidence** relevant skills and your potential. • **communicate** your genuine interest and a desire to learn more.	• **link** your academic, extra-curricular and other experiences to your chosen area(s) of study. • use relevant **examples** throughout your personal statement.	• the important thing is to **explain** why you're including the example. • reflect on what you've **learned** from it. • the statement will still be reviewed as one piece.

Remember there's no right or wrong!

Format and structure

Three sections with question prompts

4,000 - total character count split across sections

Minimum character count 350 characters per section

Don't waste characters listing grades and subjects

Don't repeat information across sections

We recommend an **80/20** split: 80% academic experience, super-curricular and work experience, and 20% related hobbies or other extra-curricular.

What are the questions?
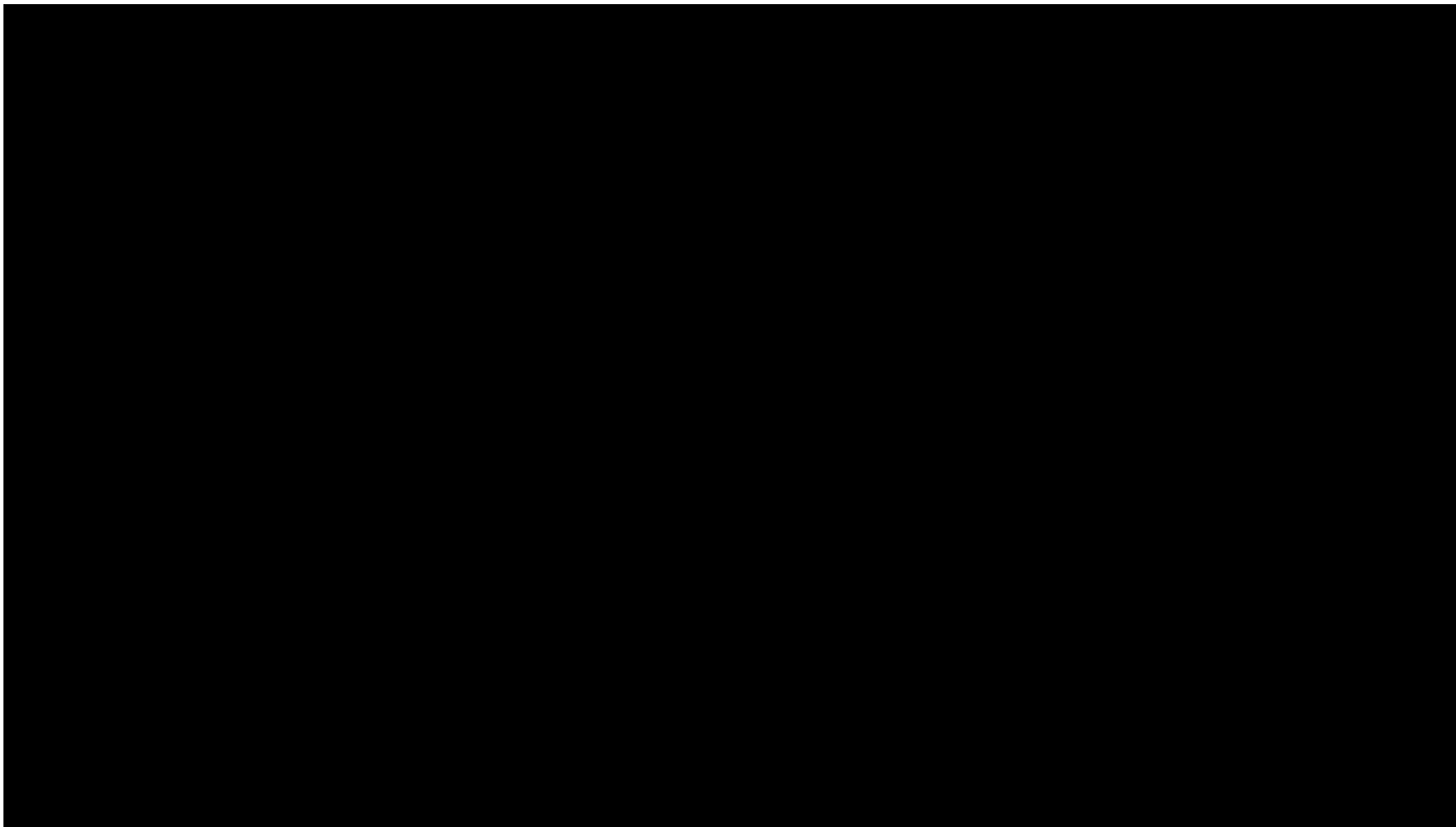
Why do you want to study this course or subject?

How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject?

What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e-TM0KX_xv8

Q1: why do you want to study this course or subject?

You'll want to show **evidence** of passion, curiosity and interest, this might include:

Motivations for studying this course(s):

- Have you been inspired by a key role model or moment in your life?
- Is it a subject you love and want to pursue further?
- What is your drive?
- How has your path led you to this course or subject area?

Knowledge of this subject area and interests:

- Is there a particular subject area you've researched?
- Something you can't wait to learn more about?
- What about a book or subject expert doing great things that's sparked your interest?

Future plans; demonstrate why this course/subject is a good fit:

- Do you already have a particular profession in mind?
- How might you use your studies to launch your career?
- What's important to you and your future, and how might the knowledge gained from this course(s) help you achieve this?

Remember these are just some examples, you don't need to include it all.
The key is to research the course(s) to find out what might be most relevant.

Q2: How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject?

Focus on what's most **recent** and **relevant** to your subject or course(s), examples could include:

How your studies or training relate to chosen course(s) or subject area:

- This could be your current or previous studies.
- This could be from any form of formal education – think school, college, training, or short online courses.

What relevant or transferable skills have you got that make you a great candidate:

- Are there a couple of subjects that helped you develop a core set of relevant skills required for your chosen course(s).
- Maybe a particular module or project helped you understand where your interests and strengths lie.

Any relevant educational achievements

- Universities and colleges will see your grades on your application - don't waste space talking about these.
- Focus on your other accomplishments like a competition, holding a position of responsibility or representing the school/college.

Remember these are just some examples, you don't need to include it all.
The key is to research the course(s) to find out what might be most relevant.

Q3: What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?

Examples should be **reflective** and **demonstrate** further **suitability** for your subject or course(s), this could include:

Work experience, employment, or volunteering	Personal life experiences or responsibilities	Hobbies and any extracurricular or outreach activities:	Achievements outside of school or college
• In-person or virtual work experience. • Paid for work or volunteering. • The key thing is reflection on the experiences and the skills gained relevant to your chosen course(s).	• Is there a situation you've personally overcome that has influenced your decision? • Are there personal experiences that have helped you develop essential qualities for the course?	• Think sports, reading, community work, summer schools. • Any activities outside of core studies that help further showcase why you'd make a great student.	• This could be a position of responsibility for local clubs or groups, competitions, or qualifications you've attained outside of the classroom.

Remember these are just some examples, you don't need to include it all.
The key is to research the course(s) to find out what might be most relevant.

Universities & colleges will consider

- Have you chosen the course for the right reasons?

- Do you have a depth of interest in the subject?

- Do you appear motivated and committed?

- Can you study independently?

- Are you genuinely engaged and knowledgeable about the area you're applying to?

Examples

On Showbie there are some slides which include excerpts from real personal statements written by students at HGS. They were not written to directly answer the questions that you have been set, but they should provide some good inspiration / food for thought for you when considering how to respond to each section.

It is important to remember that there is no 'correct' way to write the personal statement, and the word 'personal' in the title is deliberate, as it should reflect your own motivation and perspective. As such, a model personal statement does not exist.

Research is the foundation

Research and preparation is key when you're starting to think about your personal statement.

Before you start writing anything, take some time to:

- mind map what you might want to include

- build up a bank of examples you can refer to

- list evidence of your skills and experiences

- rank your evidence and examples that are MOST relevant to the course(s) you're thinking of applying to

Don't worry about making your notes perfect; this is about checking you fully understand the course and have specifics to refer to in your personal statement.
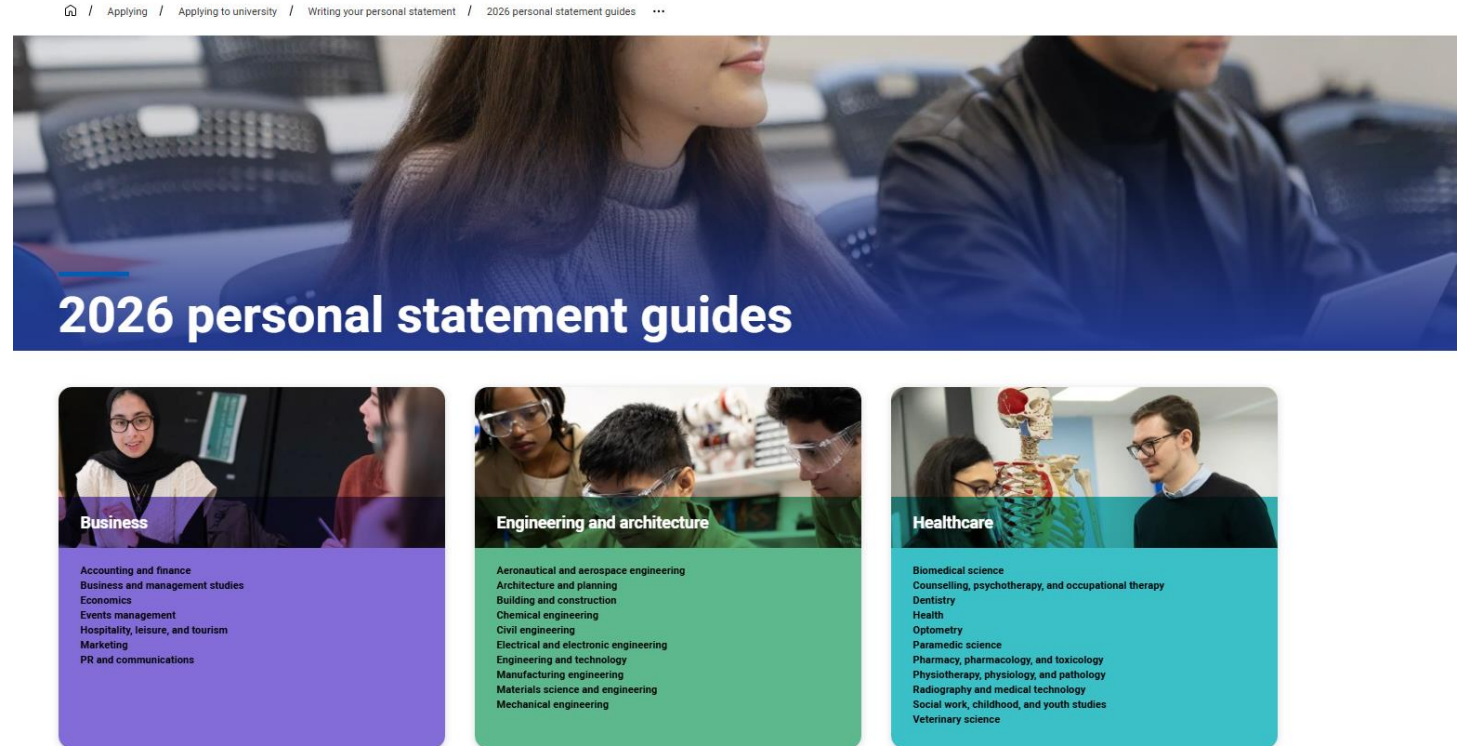
Whether you know what you're applying to or still considering your options, the more research you do the easier it will be to write.

Where can I start?

- Start by looking at the course description; this'll help you with what to include and give you a good idea of what they are looking for.

- Attend an open day and ask faculty staff what they like to see in the personal statement.

- Explore the personal statement guides for the main subjects offered at University. These guides explain what admission tutors would be looking for from a personal statement for that subject.

https://www.ucas.com/applying/applying-university/writing-your-personal-statement/2026-personal-statement-guides

Applying / Applying to university / Writing your personal statement / 2026 personal statement guides ···

2026 personal statement guides

Business
Accounting and finance
Business and management studies
Economics
Events management
Hospitality, leisure, and tourism
Marketing
PR and communications

Engineering and architecture
Aeronautical and aerospace engineering
Architecture and planning
Building and construction
Chemical engineering
Civil engineering
Electrical and electronic engineering
Engineering and technology
Manufacturing engineering
Materials science and engineering
Mechanical engineering

Healthcare
Biomedical science
Counselling, psychotherapy, and occupational therapy
Dentistry
Health
Optometry
Paramedic science
Pharmacy, pharmacology, and toxicology
Physiotherapy, physiology, and pathology
Radiography and medical technology
Social work, childhood, and youth studies
Veterinary science

Remember requirements may differ for each university or college, as well as depending heavily on the course. So, this research on your chosen area of study is vital before you start writing your personal statement.

Using Unifrog

You can also compare universities by entry requirements, hours of contact time, university rank and distance using this 'UK Universities' tab on Unifrog.

Quizzes

Skills profile
✖ Quiz not taken

Quiz profile
✖ 0 of 4 quizzes complete

Exploring

Careers library
✖ Careers favourited

Subjects library
✖ Subjects favourited

Know-how library
✖ Guides favourited

Courses
✖ No courses added

MOOCs
You have 2 shortlists

Recording

Activities
✖ Recorded at least 10

Skills
✖ Completed all 12

Interactions
✖ Missing 5 Interaction types

Academics
✖ 1 Classes, 1 Predict missing

Materials

UK personal statement
✖ Subject added

Subject References
✖ Overall Ref not finished / 1 Sub Ref, 1 not finished

CV / Resumé
✖ Write CVs tailored for each roles

Searching

UK universities
0 shortlists

European universities
0 shortlists

Oxbridge
0 shortlists

Apprenticeships
0 shortlists

Irish universities
0 shortlists

Connecting

Unifrog events
Interact directly with experts

Talent pool
✖ Not joined

Do

- Be clear and concise – the more concentrated the points and facts, the more powerful

- Include **relevant** information from your academic achievements, work experience and super-curricular tasks

- Include developed evidence of your learning and growth (wherever possible) to support claims and statements – "I read X and it encouraged me to explore the theme further, so I watched Y…"

- Link forward by explaining what you hope to achieve from completing this degree

Don't

- List what you've done/watched/read

- List things you do in your spare time – only **relevant** examples should be used

- Over-exaggerate or lie! You may be called to interview and questioned on what you have written

- Be tempted to buy, copy or AI a personal statement – plagiarism software is now very sophisticated and if you're caught out you won't get a place

- Use gimmicks, quotes or make jokes

Research the course(s) you are interested in using UCAS and Unifrog. You need to know what admission tutors are expecting first, before you can write your personal statement. Then, identify your relevant experiences / achievements that you could include.

15 min

What does my research about courses I am interested in tell me I need to include?	What are my own specific examples that are relevant and match with what they are looking for?	What do I still need to do/add to…

Using Unifrog

1) Log on to Unifrog
2) Select the 'UK personal statement' tab under 'materials'. You can also search for this.

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Tomorrow, you are expected to complete your first draft of your personal statement and upload it to Unifrog by 4pm.

Section 1
Why do you want to study this course or subject?

Characters: **0** (Min 350. Our recommendation is about 1200)

Start ▸

Section 2
How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject?

Characters: **0** (Min 350. Our recommendation is about 1400)

Start ▸

Section 3
What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?

Characters: **0** (Min 350. Our recommendation is about 1400)

Start ▸