

Top tips

THINGS TO DO

Be clear and concise

You only have limited space, so make sure every word is necessary.

Be positive

Make sure you give the best impression of yourself.

Include interests from outside of school

Even something a little more unique like an interest in extreme sports can benefit your statement.

Show us concrete evidence of your interest in the subject

Reading around your chosen subject is always a great place to start.

Prove that this is the right course for you.

Make sure your statement does you justice

Be confident in your own abilities.

THINGS TO AVOID

Don't mention specific universities

We don't know who else you're applying to. This is also true for course titles. Even if the subjects are very similar, the actual course titles may differ.

Try not to include generic or obvious opening lines

Admissions tutors will have seen these countless times in the past.

Don't overuse a thesaurus

Write in your natural style and try not to overcomplicate your statement with words you wouldn't normally use.

Be careful not to exaggerate and don't lie

You may be asked for an interview and be questioned about something in your statement.

Avoid including too much information

Not everything will be entirely relevant and you need to make sure you include the best bits.

Don't be negative

If you need to share any extenuating circumstances let your school or college know about your situation and they will include this in your reference. You could also complete an Extenuating Circumstances form – all universities should offer this option and it will support your application.

EXAMPLE

Over the last two years, I have captained my school football team to two successive league titles. My role as captain allowed me to strengthen my organisational skills and work as part of a successful team. These attributes will be invaluable throughout my degree as I will have to undertake many different tasks simultaneously and deliver group presentations.



Your personal statement is your chance to be positive about yourself and show universities how and why you are ideal for the course and their institution.

MOST IMPORTANTLY

THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO PRESENT YOUR SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE IS TO WRITE IN AN ABC STRUCTURE

ABC stands for Activity, Benefit, Course and this helps to keep your reader engaged.

Activity

Describe the activity using key terms, being as specific as possible.

Benefit

Tell us the benefit of this activity. What have you gained?

Course

Make it obvious how this is relevant to the course. However, avoid phrases like 'This is relevant to the course because' as this is unengaging for the reader.



You should spread this information between five paragraphs of similar length but bear in mind that this is just a guide.

30%

should include information about yourself and your skill set

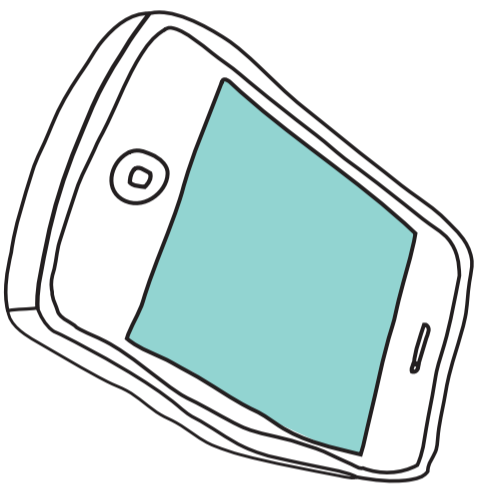
70%

should detail your interest in the course and why you've chosen it

A GOOD TIP IS TO WEIGHT YOUR STATEMENT IN THE FOLLOWING WAY:

TO GET AN IDEA OF WHAT THE UNIVERSITIES ARE LOOKING FOR

Check the course content online for the universities you are applying to.



LINK YOUR ACTIVITIES TO SOME KEY SKILLS

Teamwork, confidence, commitment

DRAMA PRODUCTION

Leadership, time management, organisational skills

SPORTS CAPTAIN

Passion and drive, communication, enthusiasm

VOLUNTARY CHARITY FUNDRAISER

Avoid slang and colloquial or chatty language.

Make sure your spelling, grammar and punctuation are perfect. If you need advice, your teachers or guidance counsellor may be able to help.

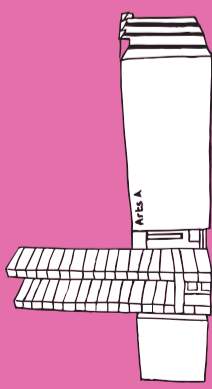
Vary the length of your sentences. This helps keep the reader engaged and is evidence that you can write to a high standard, a skill useful for every course.

IT'S A FORMAL PIECE OF WRITING SO YOU SHOULD AIM TO:

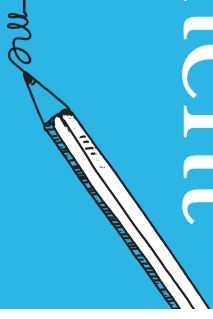
The personal statement is one of the best opportunities you have to demonstrate your abilities to a university.

As many courses no longer require an interview, it's vital that your personal statement does you justice. You need to include evidence of your skills and experience, and show the university why you are the ideal candidate for your chosen course.

Your personal statement needs to be either 4,000 characters or 47 lines – whichever is reached first. The character limit includes all letters, punctuation and spaces.



Your personal statement



us
UNIVERSITY
OF SUSSEX