



Some of the colleges that you intend to apply to may require you to submit a personal statement along with your application. Here are some hints that will help you on your way to writing a successful and clear personal statement.

The best place to start is to use a set of headings and write bullet points about how you relate to these headings. Here are some headings to think about.

### **What you study now and would like to study at college / university and why:**

- Specific aspects of the courses that interest you
- Examples of coursework you have completed
- Practical work you have enjoyed
- Work experience or voluntary work in this area
- Personal experiences which lead to the decision to take this subject

### **Experiences that show you are a reliable and responsible person:**

- Part-time job
- Business enterprise
- Community and charity work
- School council
- Helping out at school events and open days (prefects)
- Young Enterprise, World Challenge, Duke of Edinburgh award what you've gained from these experiences.
- Sports Teams

### **Your interests and skills**

- What you like to do in your free time
- Sport and leisure activities
- Subjects you study which are not examined
- Musical instrument which you play
- Languages which you speak
- Prizes you have won or positions achieved in your interests

Try to include as much detail as possible without waffling! The personal statement is your way of selling yourself to the college before they even meet you. It may make the difference between you being invited to interview or not. A good personal statement has the possibility of holding a college's interest, even if you feel that your grades are not the best.

Do get someone to read and check your statement and make sure that there are no spelling mistakes. If you can, word process it and send along with your application. If it has to be hand written, make sure it is written carefully onto the application form with no spelling mistakes or crossing out.

Your personal statement is your big chance to sell yourself to college admissions tutors. There is no single, right way of doing this, but here are a few tips.

## What should I write about?

- Your reasons for choosing the courses on your form.
- The background to your interest in these subject(s).
- Particular interests you have in your current studies.
- Any field trips and visits.
- Specific projects you have done.
- Any employment, work experience, or voluntary work you've done, especially if relevant to your course.
- Any Key Skills you have.
- Other achievements e.g. Duke Of Edinburgh Award.
- Your career aspirations.
- Any non-examined subjects you are studying.
- Your social, sporting or other interests.

## Ten tips for writing your personal statement

1. Make an effort – especially if you're applying for popular courses or for vocational courses.
2. Start by writing down anything you can possibly think of about yourself that might be useful. Ask family and friends for ideas and use your Record of Achievement or Progress File to remind you of things you've done.
3. Always try to link what you say to your chosen course. Don't go on about long-forgotten, irrelevant hobbies.
4. If you really don't do anything but watch telly, concentrate on your current studies and your reasons for applying for the course.
5. Structure your statement by using paragraphs and/or headings.
6. Don't repeat information appearing elsewhere on the form.
7. Be literate - try to write fluently using correct grammar and spelling. Read your statement back to yourself to be sure it makes sense.
8. Avoid sounding too stereotyped, as if a teacher has given you a template and you've just filled in the gaps.
9. Show your draft to someone else, such as your form teacher / PSHE teacher or a careers adviser.
10. Use large, clear handwriting (black ink), or word process using black.