

Writing a personal statement

- A personal statement is important because you are introducing yourself in your own words. It is crucial then, that you include your own thoughts, feelings and opinions.
- The admissions staff are curious- they want to know more about *you* and why you chose to study at their college (rather than the other choices).
- You must always link back to why you are a suitable candidate for the subjects they are offering. *Why* should they select you rather than someone else? Why are you suited to their college and the courses? What do you offer them in terms of your academic ability, confidence and interests?

I would start by considering these points carefully:

1. Which subject would you like to study?
2. Why? What *specific aspects* of the subject appeals to you?
3. What does the course involve? What will you be expected to do?
4. What skills will this require you to be good at?
5. How have you demonstrated these skills?

You can then use these points in your personal statement

- referring to how you have the relevant skills for the courses and giving clear evidence of what you have done which proves this.

For example.

1. Which subject would you like to study?

English Literature

2. Why? What *specific aspects* of the subject appeals to you?

I like the sound of the texts we will be studying on the course.

I read a lot already and am good at the subject.

I like writing and can already write well-structured essays.

I want to study this subject later at university.

3. What does the course involve?

Extensive reading- focusing on a Shakespeare play and poetry.

Essay-writing,

Group presentations,

a coursework/essay assignment of 4,000 words.

Lots of reading and writing for homework.

4. What skills do they require you to be good at?

Enjoyment of reading.

Good time-management- being able to read long texts and write essays.

Public speaking- being able to debate and share interpretations, ability to work in a group

Concise note-taking and listening skills.

Personal organisation- a lot of work, essays, wider reading etc.

Responsible and hard-working- being able to complete the work at a high standard.

5. How have you demonstrated these skills?

Poetry/creative writing awards.

Evidence of consistently high marks in the subject & previous academic essays

Work experience at the library- talking with customers, recommending books, being able to prioritise and manage my time in the evenings.

-Reading widely in my spare time.

Engaging opening.
It offers a
personal insight
into the writer's

Specific examples
of their
responsibilities
and experience.

Introduces what
has been learnt
from the work
experience and
how it has
benefitted them

I am an avid reader and enjoy visiting second hand book shops in my free time.

I read widely across all subjects, including poetry, non-fiction and even comic books. This love of reading inspired me to gain work experience at my local library. Every weekend I stock shelves, interact with customers and offer recommendations when asked for help. Working part-time at weekends has taught me how to manage my time effectively. I often prioritise and plan my time efficiently, making sure that my homework tasks are handed in on time and at a high standard. I have learnt a lot about literature whilst working at the library and believe this part-time job has enabled me to develop excellent organisational skills and a good work ethic.

I have applied to study **English Literature** because I hope to attend university in the future to study English and Creative Writing. I have already entered many poetry competitions and was even awarded the 'Star Writer Achievement Award' by my school last term. I would be interested in joining any Creative Writing Clubs offered and am excited to meet other students with similar interests.

I understand that the **English Literature** course focuses on the text 'Othello' and this greatly appealed to me because I have always enjoyed studying Shakespeare plays at school. I loved learning about the imagery of love in 'Romeo and Juliet' and this interest in Shakespeare led to me visit the Globe theatre last summer. At the Globe, I learnt about Shakespeare's life and even got the opportunity to practice some of his famous speeches alongside the actors. My experiences at the Globe theatre developed my confidence and ability to speak in front of others. I believe this will support my study of **English Literature** at college because it is important to share different interpretations with the class and to work well as part of a team in group projects and presentations.

Overall, I am I am extremely interested in studying **English Literature** at this higher level. The texts offered are very interesting and I am excited by the prospect of being able to join or create a creative writing club. I believe my strong work ethic and previous experiences make me a suitable candidate for the course and hope that studying at this higher level will allow me to continue this passion further one day at university.

Clearly
introduces a
hobby
linked to
their own
interests.

Leads
nicely into
why they
chose to do
this work

Gives
evidence of
the skill
learnt and
relates to a
quality
which will
be useful
for studying
the course.

You could include some of these things in your personal statement:

About the college/sixth form:

- Why do you want to go there?
- Have you been to any open days or visits?
- What about the college/courses on offer appeals to you?
- What subjects do you want to study?

What are your hobbies?

- What made you take up this hobby?
- How often do you do it?
- What skills have you developed?
- Are these skills transferable? Will they be helpful for the subjects you hope to study? Or towards what you want to do in the future?

What are your qualities?

- Are you friendly, hardworking, quiet, polite, reliable?
- Give some specific examples.

What are your strengths/skills?

- Have you achieved any certificates or awards? What for? How did you gain them?
- What are some tasks or activities you enjoy doing? Why?
- What is your favourite subject at school?
- Do you do any wider reading or work around the subject outside of school?
- How are your strengths relevant to the subjects you want to study?

Employment:

- Have you done any work experience, volunteering or part time jobs?
- What skills did you learn from these experiences?
- How does your work experience and overall character show you are a valuable person to have at their establishment?

The future

- What are your goals for the future?
- How do you hope your experiences at college/sixth form will help you achieve them?

Some example sentences:

I have a great interest in

Studying has always appealed to me because

In my free time I enjoy

After school I dedicate a lot of time to

It is important to me because

In the future I hope to become a

I understand that in order to achieve this goal I must

I believe an important aspect of studying is to learn

Whilst working at I learnt how to

During my experience at I was encouraged to

In my free time I have focused on which has enabled me to

I have developed the ability to because

This demonstrates that I am because

Once you have completed your first draft, don't forget to
send it to your PSHE teacher for feedback
(but first check your spelling, punctuation and grammar!)