

Information about the UCAS Personal Statement

For all students applying to university for 2026 entry and beyond, the UCAS Personal Statement has changed.

- The statement will be made up of 3 questions:
 1. Why do you want to study this course or subject?
 2. How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject?
 3. What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?
- There is a 4,000 overall character limit, with a minimum of 350 characters per question.
- The statement will be reviewed as a whole, not per question - so you should avoid repeating information across sections.

Below are some suggestions of what you could include within the three sections of your personal statement. This list should be used as a guide only and is not exhaustive - aim to include all of your strong examples of why you're a good fit for your chosen course.

Question one: Why do you want to study this course or subject?

- Your passion and interest for your chosen course
- Your knowledge and skills in your subject area
- How the course links to your future

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

- How your studies have prepared you for your chosen course/subject
- The skills and knowledge that you've developed
- Any independent learning or academic achievements that you've obtained
- Your super-curricular activities and learning

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

- Your work experience, employment or volunteering experiences
- Your personal life experiences, responsibilities and achievements
- Your hobbies and any extracurricular activities

What course and why?

A key focus of your personal statement should be about the course that you're applying to. It's important that you research the course descriptions for each university that you're applying to beforehand. Complete the activities below, explaining why you're applying for your chosen course(s), and which experiences have shaped your interest.

Activity one: Course exploration

What are the key modules or areas of study that excite you? And why?

What skills or qualities does the course require or develop?

How does this course relate to your long-term goals or values?

What makes this course or subject a good fit for you?

Activity two: Key achievements and learning moments

What sparked your interest for your chosen course?

What has been your proudest academic or extracurricular achievement?

What challenges have you overcome that relate to your learning or development?

Self-Reflection: My Skills & Experiences

Your personal statement should include specific and relevant examples to your course.

Activity three: Generating relevant examples

Complete the table below to outline the skills, qualities or knowledge you wish to draw on in your personal statement. Consider where you developed these and how they will support you in your chosen course. **Remember:** Admissions teams want insight into *what* you've learned, not just a long list of activities.

| Skill/Quality/Knowledge | Where I developed this | How this prepares me for the course |
|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
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Tip: Include a range of examples - school projects, work experience, hobbies, volunteering, etc.

Mapping your ideas to your Personal Statement

Activity four: Planning your personal statement

Use the below table to organise your ideas into the three UCAS personal statement sections. This will help you to write focused, well-structured responses to the three questions.

| UCAS Section | Key points | Notes |
|--|------------|-------|
| Question one: Why do you want to study this course or subject? | | |
| Question two: How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject? | | |
| Question three: What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful? | | |

Tip: If you're unsure which section to include an experience in, don't worry! Admissions Teams read your personal statement in full, so include it where you think it flows best with the rest of your answers.

Personal Statement Checklist

Now you've completed the first draft of your personal statement, take a look at the checklist below. What improvements could you make? This checklist is a guide only and is not exhaustive.

General

- ☐ I have avoided using clichés, quotes, jokes, and catchy phrases
- ☐ I have avoided relying on AI, so the statement still reflects my own voice
- ☐ My statement is free of university names, ensuring suitability for all of my choices
- ☐ My statement is free from repetition across the three questions
- ☐ I have used clear and confident language throughout my statement
- ☐ I have included specific examples rather than general statements

Question one: Why do you want to study this course or subject?

- ☐ I have clearly explained why I want to study this subject
- ☐ I have supported my reasons with evidence
- ☐ I have demonstrated that I understand the course and what it involves
- ☐ I have mentioned my future goals (if known) and explained how the course supports them

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

- ☐ I have highlighted the knowledge and skills that I've gained from my qualifications
- ☐ I have linked my experiences to my chosen course's content or skills.
- ☐ I have reflected on what I've *learned* from experiences, not just listed them.
- ☐ I have included examples of my super-curricular activities
- ☐ I have included an analysis of my broader reading or experiences

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

- ☐ I have linked my extra-curricular activities to my chosen course to show their relevance
- ☐ I have highlighted the specific skills (e.g., communication, problem-solving, creativity) that I gained through my experiences and explained their relevance