

The *dreaded* personal statement

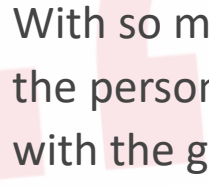
Matthew Welbourn

UCAS Professional Development Manager



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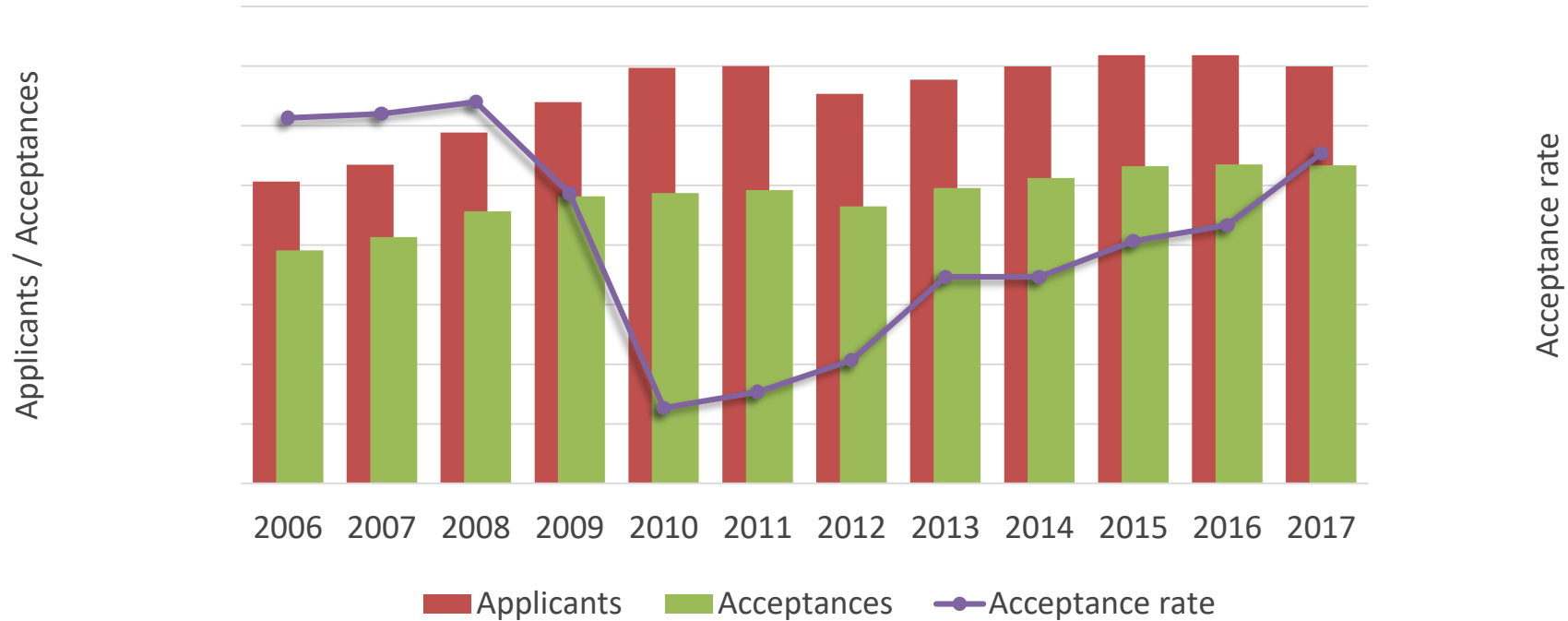
A vital differentiator in the selection process



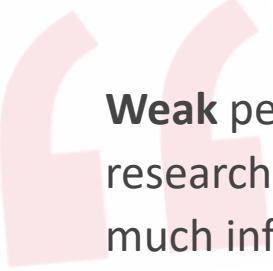
With so many highly qualified students applying to university, the personal statement is crucial in helping us select students with the greatest merit and aptitude for our courses, identifying those most likely to succeed in their future studies.

University of Manchester

The personal statement in context



From the admissions tutors...



Weak personal statements are those that have been poorly-researched, under prepared and rushed. They often try to include too much information in too little detail, demonstrating little reflective thinking on the part of the applicant.

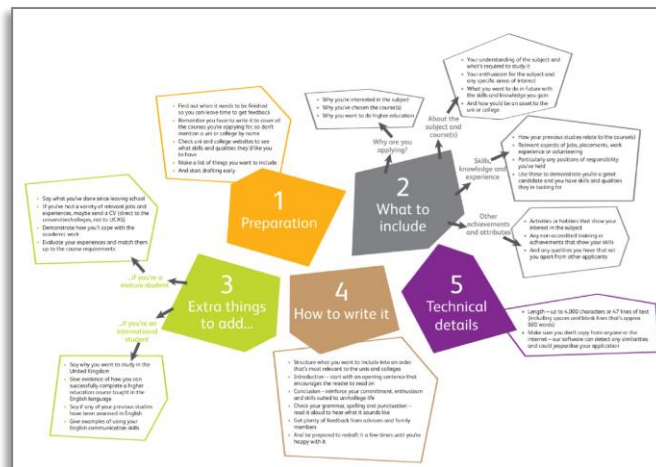
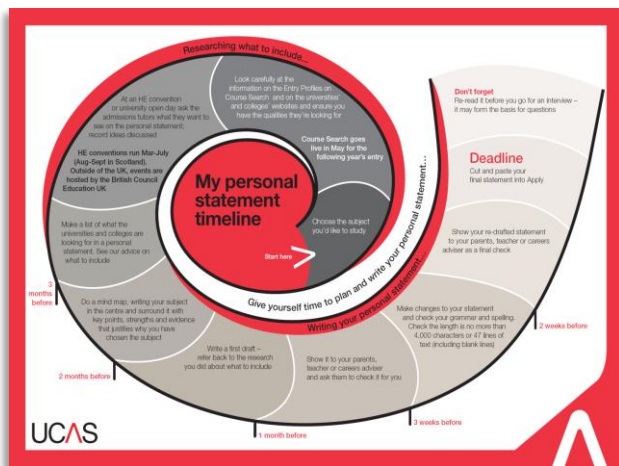
From the admissions tutors...

Strong personal statements are ones that have been well-researched, carefully prepared and worked upon to eliminate errors and maximise effect. They demonstrate reflective thinking, showing that the applicant has spent time working out what information is most relevant and important to include and use concrete supporting evidence to demonstrate assertions rather than simply state or tell.

SO WHAT?

EVIDENCE?

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Personal statement worksheet

international students

Tell universities why you want to study in the UK and why you think you can successfully complete a course that is taught in English. Say if some of your studies been taught or examined in English and if you have taken part in any activities where you have used English outside of your studies.

Future plans

If you know what you'd like to achieve after completing the course, explain how you want to use the knowledge and experience that you gain. How does the course relate to what you want to do in the future?

- ### Do's and don'ts when writing your personal statement

- Do use your best English and don't let spelling and grammatical errors spoil your statement.
- Do show that you know your strengths and can outline your ideas clearly. Use words you know will be understood by the person reading your statement.
- Do be enthusiastic - if you show your interest in the course, it may help you get a place.
- Do expect to produce several drafts of your personal statement before being totally happy with it.
- Do ask people you trust for their feedback.
- Don't exaggerate - if you do you may get caught out at interview when asked to elaborate on an interesting achievement.
- Don't rely on a spellchecker as it will not pick up everything - proof read as many times as possible.
- Don't leave it to the last minute - your statement will seem rushed and important information could be left out.

How to write a personal statement for Forensic Science



A good science student has a natural interest in their subject, a passion for learning, an inquisitive mind, an ambition to succeed, and is keen to develop and apply their analytical skills in a contextual environment, says Dr Paul Jones, award leader for the [Forensic Science courses](#) at USW.

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Five ways to a stand-out statement

- **Make it personal:** Research the forensic science course on the website, attend an Open Day and relate the course to your career aspirations. Also, be clear about why you want to study Forensic Science at USW and what you hope to achieve from your studies.
- **Work experience:** Show a desire to learn outside of the classroom. You may have experienced a working laboratory environment, had some kind of work experience in industry, or have a part-time job where you are developing and applying the transferable skills required by forensic scientists, such as working as part of a team, communication, planning and organisation, evaluating situations etc.
- **Commitment:** We are looking for students who have a career ambition to be a forensic scientist or analytical scientist. You'll need to demonstrate an awareness of the field of forensic science through being able to quote examples. Also, evidence how you keep up-to-date with what is happening in the forensic science sector. The best way to do this is to read scientific articles and news items.
- **Strengths:** Emphasise your strengths and qualities by providing relevant examples. Tell us what you can do, and sell yourself positively. Show us how you use initiative to solve problems and how you enjoy the practical aspect of your studies. Which experiment has been the most interesting to you, and why? What did you learn?
- **Skills:** Tell us about your hobbies and interests, and what skills you are acquiring from them. Are you a member of a sports team, for example? How do you think that is similar to a role in the workplace?

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or Forensic Science

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Information and advice

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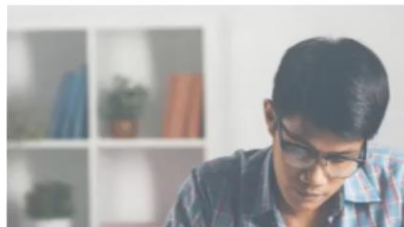
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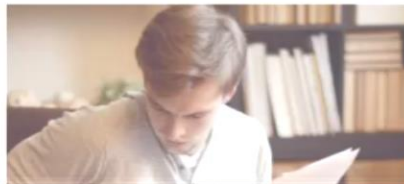
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Choosing what to study



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Reflecting on experience and skills

Working to deadlines

Flexibility

Responsibility

Problem solving

Initiative

Critical thinking

Time management

Confidence

Interpersonal skills

Essay writing

Communication skills

Team work

Understanding of the course

Reflective thinking

Determination

Organisational skills

Working independently

Enthusiasm

Research skills

Computer literacy

Motivation

The ABCD guide to hooking an offer



English

Medicine

Law

Structure

- Skills, qualities, experiences
- Reflective and insightful
 - What you have done
 - What you have learnt
 - Why this is relevant
- Avoid waffle and slang
- Check spelling and grammar
- Structured, clear, concise, precise

Draft and redraft

I have achieved my Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award and am currently working towards my Silver. I love planning and undertaking expeditions as they are physically demanding.

SO WHAT? **EVIDENCE?**

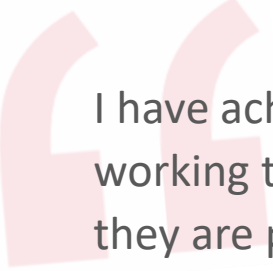
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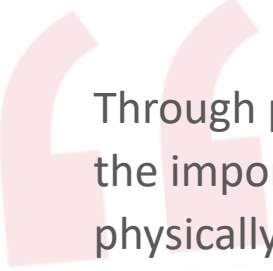
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Draft and redraft



Through participation in the Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award I have learnt the importance of planning, collaboration, and commitment, particularly in physically and emotionally demanding situations such as the expeditions. I believe these skills will help me develop the courage and competence to deal with the challenging circumstances a career in nursing could present.

Structure

- Skills, qualities, experiences
- Reflective and insightful
 - What you have done
 - What you have learnt
 - Why this is relevant
- Avoid waffle and slang
- Check spelling and grammar
- Structured, clear, concise, precise

Effective, efficient and economical

Get into the habit of being very critical with the number or choice of words that you use in each sentence. Once you have written something, go back and decide if each and every word you have written needs to be there. If you subsequently decide that something doesn't add value to your personal statement, then you should probably remove it, rephrase it or replace it.



Effective, efficient and economical

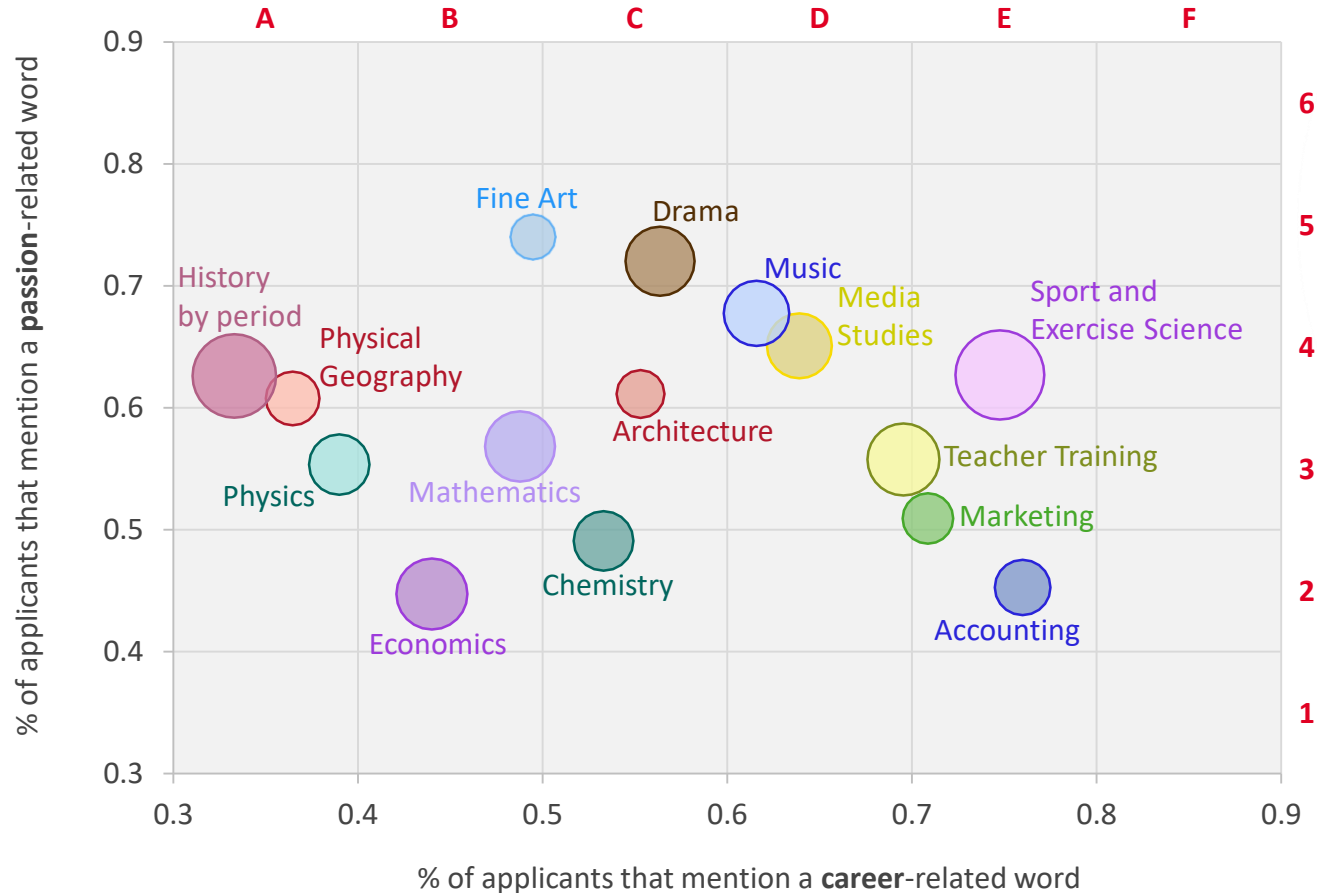
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Content

- Motivation, passion and commitment
 - Subject
 - Career
- Insight into current studies
 - Expanding on relevant units, modules, projects, EPQ
- Hobbies, pastimes, interests
- Work experience or voluntary work
- Reasons for deferred entry

Personal statement – passion v career



Personal statement extracts

I have a strong sense of duty, I am teachable, trustworthy and reliable. I have excellent leadership skills and I'm flexible. I am an articulate and highly motivated scholar with an enthusiasm for law. I am a confident communicator with good technical, written and oral presentation skills.

A good dentist is like a good cake decorator, both are always aware of the customer's needs, possessing a steady hand, and with a keen attention to detail. As a keen cake decorator I have the skills relevant in my chosen field of dentistry.

I am a responsible, caring, and sympathetic person with good communication skills, aspiring to a career in teaching.

**YOUR
FUTURE** 



Pitching it just right



When it's not what you meant...

It was a catch 12 situation...

I am a kind and worm hearted individual...

English is like a second language to I...

My painting challenges the pubic consciousness...

Thank you



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