

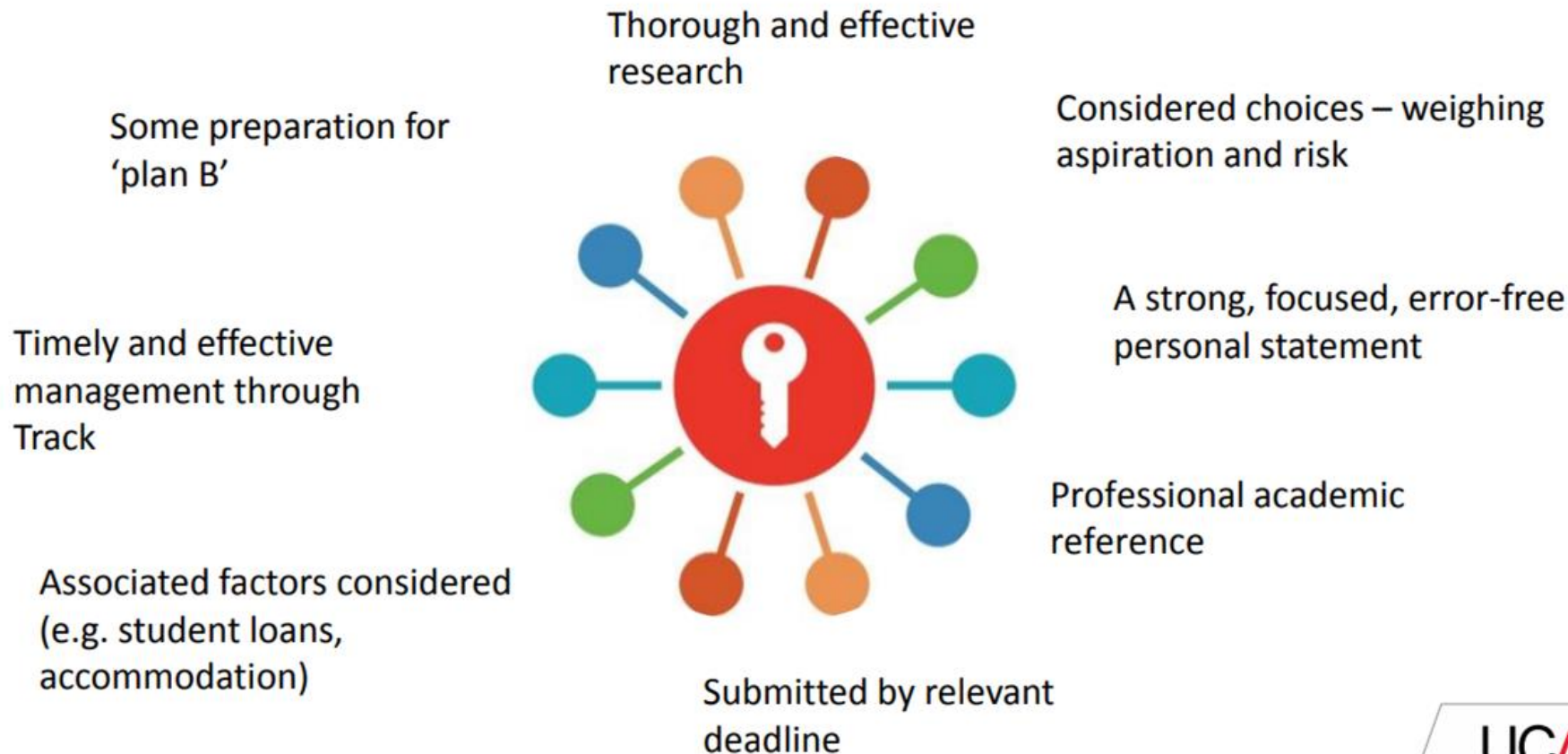


Vyners School

Striving for
Excellence

UCAS

Key factors for successful applications





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What is a Personal Statement?

The Personal Statement gives you an opportunity:

- 1) To tell the universities and colleges why they should choose you
- 2) To tell universities and colleges about your suitability for the course(s) that you hope to study.
- 3) To demonstrate your enthusiasm and commitment, and above all, ensure that you stand out from the crowd

UCAS

Preparing

your personal statement



1. Preparation

- You can only write one personal statement, so don't mention a uni or college by name.
- Check uni and college websites to see what skills and qualities they'd like you to have.
- Make a list of things you want to include.
- Start drafting early.



2. What to include

- Why you're interested in the subject.
- Your enthusiasm for the subject.
- How your previous studies relate to the course(s).
- Relevant aspects of jobs, placements, work experience or volunteering.
- Activities or hobbies that show your interest in the subject.
- Any training or achievements that show your skills.
- Demonstrate you're a great candidate and you have skills and qualities they're looking for.



3. How to write it

- Introduction – start with an opening sentence that encourages the reader to read on.
- Structure what you want to include in an order that's most relevant to what the unis and colleges are looking for.
- Conclusion – reinforce your commitment, enthusiasm and skills suited to uni/ college life.
- Check your grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- Leave time to get feedback and redraft.



4. Technical details

- Length – up to 4,000 characters or 47 lines of text (including spaces and blank lines).
- Make sure you don't copy – our software detects any similarities and this could jeopardise your application.



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What is a Personal Statement - Logistics

- A formal application
- You have 4,000 characters (including spaces) and 47 lines
- Write the statement in Word and then copy and paste into your application later.
- 80% Academic - 20% Extra-curricular

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Why do you need to write a Personal Statement?

- The Personal Statement helps to distinguish between applicants with similar academic profiles
- This is the only 'personal' information an admissions tutor will get from you (plus the reference from school) - You control the content!
- Most courses do not interview
- A chance for you to impress and differentiate yourself from others



Making Applications

UK Personal Statement

- ✗ Subject added
- ✗ Started
- ✗ Character count
- ✗ Marked as finished

[Go to tool >](#)

Teacher References

- ✗ Overall Reference

Post 18 Intentions

Sorry, your school doesn't yet have this tool

UK Top 5

- ✓ You've shortlisted UK university courses - now pick your top 5

[Start >](#)

CV / Resume

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Common App Essay

Sorry, your school doesn't yet have this tool





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Section 1

Why do you want to study this subject?

0 of 1200 characters

Start >



Section 2

What have you done in the past that makes you particularly suitable to study the subject?

0 of 2400 characters

Start >



Section 3

What else have you done that would contribute to the university community?

0 of 400 characters

Start >





Section 1: Why do you want to study this subject?

This part should make up 30% of the total statement

[< Back](#)

Examples of what you may want to write about:

1. Your knowledge of the subject area

Be specific - mention in detail what has interested you.

"I have been enthralled by the Japanese language since I was a young teenager; reading 'Japanese for Busy People' at school and trying to note down homework reminders in Kanji – anything to incorporate Japanese into my daily life. As I grew, so did my desire to study Japanese culture and society. Yukio Mishima's politically aware novel 'Confessions of a Mask' captivated me. I found very refreshing the contrast between the effeminate main character Kochan, and the uber-masculine male figures generally present in teenage Japanese media. I empathised with Kochan's oppression in an era of Japanese right-wing militarism. This is where my political interests began – through independent study I became absorbed in political history, with particular attraction to the way Japan avoided colonisation by becoming an industrial superpower."

2. Why this subject area interests you

3. What interests you the most about the subject area?

4. Where your studies could lead

Personal Statement Dos

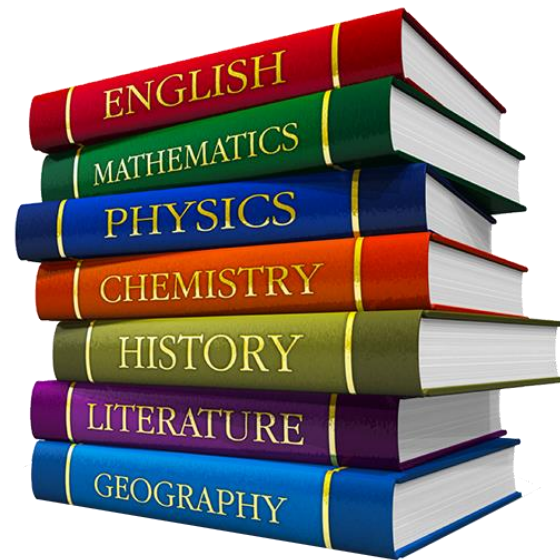
Personal Statement Don'ts





Two of the most important things to include are...

1. Why you are applying for the course you have chosen:
 - Why does the subject interest you?
 - Include evidence that you understand what is required to study the course
 - What got you interested in the subject?
 - What have you learnt about the subject?
 - Any activities which demonstrate your interest in the course(s)





Two of the most important things to include are...

2. Why you are suitable for the course:

- Which skills and experiences do you have that will help you succeed on the course?
- What have you done to develop your knowledge of the subject?
- What evidence is there that you have read, studied, gained experiences outside the confines of your A Level courses?





What are the Admissions Tutors thinking?

- Have they chosen the right subject for the right reasons?
- Can they survive at university level - are they mature enough?
- Do they have a range of interests and aptitudes?
- Does the Personal Statement confirm their depth of interest in the subject?
- What has the candidate studied independently?



Evidencing Subject Interest...

- Academic Clubs or Societies - **involvement**
- Attending museums, festivals, events, exhibitions, debates - **passion and interest**
- Reading current literature - **up to date**
- Listening/watching debates on current issues in the subject
- Work Experience choices
- Experiences they've sought themselves - **initiative & self-reliance**

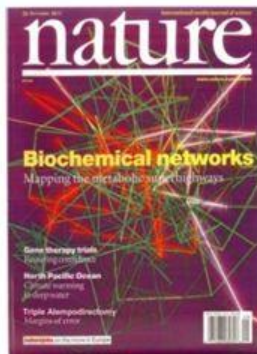
Super Curricular Exploration



92-95 FM



Inside the Ethics Committee



UCAS



The Economist



UNIVERSITY OF
OXFORD





ABC Rule

Activity: What have you done?

Benefit: What skills have you gained?

Course: How will this prepare you for the course?



What you shouldn't do	What you should do
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Waffle• Go mad with a thesaurus• Be trivial• Exaggerate or lie• Write lists• Put everything in• Plagiarise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strong opening paragraph• 80% academic, 20% extracurricular• Honest and genuine• Draft, re-draft and proof-read• Be analytical and reflective rather than merely descriptive



Checklist

1. How impressive is your opening sentence/paragraph?
2. Have you made a convincing case of why you have chosen the course?
3. Do you have evidence to show that they have researched what the course entails?
4. Do you have evidence of wider reading in the subject?
5. Do you have evidence of skills picked up in your A-Levels/BTEC?
6. Do you have evidence of skills gained from an out-of-school activity?
7. Have you suggested what you might do after university?
8. Have you avoided using too long sentences?
9. Are you guilty of using any bland generalities (eg. I love history)
10. Is the ending a positive affirmation of what you can bring or contribute to the university community?



Key Points to consider...

- Admissions tutors want to see a person – not just the application!
- Based on the statement, would they want to meet you?
- Avoid just giving a list of activities you have done or a list of personal qualities – is it all relevant? How does it link to your chosen course?
- You will go through many drafts - get your tutor/friend/parent to read through it - check that it makes sense and flows and that you are selling yourself



Points to Take Away...

- Slides and resources will be put on Google Classroom and handed out
- **START NOW!**
- Make the most of the Summer time to gain experiences and skills and visit Open Days
- Specific workshops to follow - Oxbridge, Medicine etc.
- Personal Statement clinics
- UCAS Parent Information Evening on Tuesday 10th July