

Personal Statements for Higher Education and Employment Applications



Why is a personal statement so important?

- Many universities do not interview applicants so the only chance that you have to create a good impression is by your personal statement. How you come across may strongly affect whether you receive an offer or rejection.
- Admissions tutors for competitive courses at universities will interview applicants (e.g. health care, art and design, social work, teaching) but will only spend their time on students whose personal statements have stimulated enough curiosity.
- Additionally, lots of employers request that candidates complete application forms which require people to complete an additional information section. This is not dissimilar to a personal statement and relies upon potential employees having the ability to demonstrate that they meet the criteria of the position.

Admissions tutors will want to hear about your reasons for your decision, your plans, your current studies, relevant work experience and any other achievements. Employers will want to read about how your skills and experiences match the desirable and essential criteria for the post. The following will give you some suggestions on how to structure your information.

Preparing your Personal Statement for Higher Education Applications and/or the additional information section on a job application for a career in sport

Paragraphs/headings:

It is important that the personal statement or additional information section is well structured. A suggested structure is included below. There are some examples of starter sentences to help. Finally, when you are satisfied with your statement, produce it as a continuous piece of text.

1. Reasons for going to university and for choosing the course / position (linked to your subject interests, career plans, experience, etc). Useful resources: www.ucas.com, University course web sites, degree course guides, The Times Good University Guide.
 - Higher Education is the right step for me because.....
 - My interest in (state the subject) was sparked off by.....
 - (State the subject) fascinates me because.....
 - I am really interested in this post as the organisation.....
 - I have a passion and dedication for.....
2. Mention how the degree and Higher Education will help you with your career plans and future ambitions. If it is a job that you are applying for then mention how you can support the organisation with their development. Useful resources: www.skillsactive.com
www.careers-in-sport.co.uk/
<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/>
 - Higher Education will prepare me for a career in _____ and I have come to this decision because.....
 - My ambition is to pursue a career in The degree will help me because ...
 - As an aspiring sports professional I think this organisation will support my long-term development by.....
 - I feel I can support the organisation because.....

3. Current Studies: Relate your current studies to the degree course / job opportunity for which you are applying. Outline how your current studies are helping you to prepare for HE study, the course/s you are choosing and/or employment. Look at your degree choice course profile/or the position and the skills and experience it requires and try to ensure your statement includes reference to how you are gaining these in your current studies.

My strengths lie in _____ where I have learned how to _____ (skills)

In my current studies, I have learnt (list some of the areas and skills developed)

My main areas of interest are _____ because.....

4. Extracurricular activities (e.g. sport, voluntary work, part-time work, placement experience). These will show additional qualities, skills and knowledge you have gained beyond the academic areas you have mentioned in the previous paragraph.

By working part time as a _____, I have developed the ability to.....

(Name of activity) has developed my character and qualities by.....

5. Hobbies and interests. Linked to the above paragraph, these will provide opportunity to mention achievements beyond work and education and demonstrate your all round abilities and potential. Try to link these to the course and the job opportunity.

During my spare time I enjoy and take part in (hobbies and interests) and this has developed my skills in (e.g. leadership, communication, interpersonal, negotiating, working under pressure, etc)

6. Power ending / conclusion

List academic / personal qualities / skills that summarise why the University should offer you a place or why the employer should offer you the position.

I feel that I will be successful in Higher Education because.....

Higher Education is the appropriate choice for me because.....

(Try to focus on the benefits for the employer / university).



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