

"Write it, read it,  
refine it, and read  
it again"



# Writing a strong Personal Statement



CROTON  
SIXTHFORM  
COLLEGE

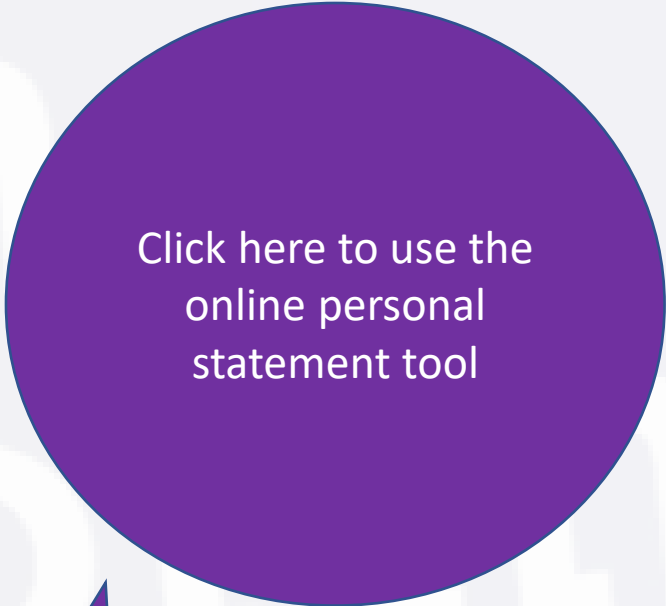
The personal statement is your opportunity to demonstrate your desire and passion to study the course you are applying for. You need to demonstrate your enthusiasm and commitment, and above all ensure that you stand out from the crowd.



You only have **47 lines or 4000 characters** to write your personal statement, so you need to structure it well.

### Key Points

- Keep sentences short and to the point
  - Mind Map ideas or bullet point
  - Draft paragraphs and condense them afterwards
- Do not make it specific to one University- it gets sent to all your choices
  - You don't need to talk too much about what you are studying as they can see that on the application, talk more about how studying this has helped you improve your skills and what you have achieved from that.
  - Don't lie- they have a tool to check this!
  - Be personal – its all about you!



Click here to use the  
online personal  
statement tool

This tool on the UCAS website allows you to break down the paragraphs required whilst also getting you thinking about how to structure a good personal statement. It also keeps you updated on meeting the required characters of the text



# Medicine/Veterinary/ Dentistry Personal Statements



Click here to read  
10 tips on making  
a strong  
statement for  
Medicine/Veterinary/  
Dentistry

Doctors need to demonstrate the capability of recognising these specific healthcare needs and addressing them appropriately. Many patients were in a poor state of health and usually in terminal phases of their illness. This environment exemplified how healthcare staffs are often faced with emotionally stressing situations.

My experience of shadowing a GP and the attached community staff exemplified how modern primary care in partnership with secondary care is central to an effective NHS.

Furthermore, I understand the research aspect of medicine providing an evidence base for modern medicine as well as the need for clinicians to undertake lifelong learning for the benefit of their patients.

Having attended a medical summer school, I had the opportunity to speak to medical professionals and students; Speaking to them made me aware of the challenges associated with a career as a doctor such as the proactive balance between work with long hour shifts with social and family life.

Growing up also saw my personal qualities mature and strengthen under the good influence of my close relatives. My adaptability and problem solving skills have been pushed to their limits when my family moved country twice in five years; it was a daunting challenge for any child. I was kept afloat by my affability and resilience in a war against language and cultural barriers.

Learning to appreciate diversity and cultural differences also taught me to be a compassionate young adult, which in turn, only amplified my aspiration to become a doctor. I am acutely aware that taking on medicine equates to a life-long learning experience, both intellectually and on a personal level, but this only inevitably makes it more irresistible than ever for an inquisitive mind like mine.

In order to deepen my understanding into what medicine entails, I attended Medlink. For the first time, I began to appreciate the less glamorous demands of being a doctor, but I was not fazed. I later arranged work experience in a local hospice.

In addition to improving my communication skills-the significance of which was very apparent in the hospice-the patients revealed to me the high level of trust they placed in the staff. It was valuable to my understanding but nevertheless distressing to learn that not even the ocean of knowledge that we currently have could cure those palliative patients in the hospice.

What initially drew me to medicine arose from a childhood intrigue into the intricacies of biological science and disease.

This interest flourished greatly during third-level education and postdoctoral research, growing a deeper appreciation for the many challenges of such an interdisciplinary career. I have endeavoured to explore numerous activities to truly test this desire, all of which have further reinforced my aspiration to study medicine.

A hungry intrigue about science and an intrinsic yearning to have a positive impact on health standards in my community have compelled me towards the challenges and pressures of studying medicine.

Having observed the commitment and dedication that my father devotes to his role as a gynaecologist, I am aware of and prepared for the demands and the intensity that a career in medicine will entail.

Given that over ninety nine percent of the body consists of just six elements, it is hard to imagine the human body as an intricately synchronised and immensely complex machine.

Yet, it has done well to puzzle even the brightest minds in history-but I am drawn to a challenge; I cannot think of anything else more fascinating to work with.



## Oxford/Cambridge and other prestigious statements

Click here to read 8 tips on making a strong statement for Oxbridge

I have always been fascinated by my mathematical studies and, having a flair for the subject, there was never any doubt that I would choose mathematics as a degree.

It is a pivotal subject on which so many others depend (such as physics and chemistry). I relish the challenge of problem solving that mathematics provides. For me, it is an endlessly intriguing subject, as the discipline appears limitless, allowing so much scope for further study and research.

Due to the vast nature of this subject I have been stimulated to go beyond the limitations of the A level syllabus and investigate ideas and unanswered questions for myself. Consequently, I have been led to the writings of Peter Clarke, Ralph Milliband, Eric J. Evans and Francois Bedarida which have not only aided my study of twentieth century British history but profoundly influenced my political outlook and decision to join the Labour party.

I have been equally fascinated by works of political science, for example Friedrich von Hayek's 'The Road to Serfdom' and, in contrast, Anthony Crosland's 'The Future of Socialism'. Hunting some of the Labour and Conservative initiatives in the 1960s and 1980s back to their conception was particularly rewarding; and it was interesting to consider how the gap is bridged between an idea and its translation into party policy. Reading both E. H. Carr's 'What is History' and Richard Evans' 'In Defence of History' has widened my conceptions of the methods of historians to the extent that Carr's social paradigms acted as a framework for my African-American civil rights coursework. I look forward to encountering the challenges of historical methodology and technique at university which will no doubt expand my views further and force me to reconsider certain beliefs.

The subject fascinates me because it brings together moral, philosophical and social issues into an analytical form to reach a conclusion, and of course there is no textbook conclusion in law. Not only is the content of the subject intriguing, but the process of how one can defend a position through cleverly advocating and arguing points.

I am interested in the fields of employment and European law. A recent case (Garside and Laylock Ltd v Booth) considered an employee's refusal to accept wage-cutting proposals when the company experienced trading difficulties.

I found this intriguing, not only in the legal debate over fairness, but how case law evolves to changing economic circumstances. Laws can also conflict one another, recently on the legalities of the Greek bail-out, this debate has been cropping up regularly in the news and this emphasises the importance of the role of the law in the European Union.

The more explicitly human aspect of the disciplines similarly enthuses me, and I have enjoyed reading biographies such as Strachey's 'Queen Victoria' and Paul Routledge's 'Mandy', finding them insightful, as well as enjoyable.

University lecture days, talks from local politicians, and visits to Westminster and the Welsh Assembly have all been valuable and stimulating experiences, allowing me to engage in my proposed area of study guided by my growing curiosity.

But as the brain is governed by electrochemical properties, another subject that homogenized rightly was Chemistry. Some approaches to psychology that focus on the organic causes of psychological phenomena use various aspects of chemistry in order to explain behaviours in humans.

Studying these subjects revolved around the implementation of vital relevant skills such as persistence, concentration, discipline, patience, analytical and critical skills and practical skills.

English literature as an A level subject has facilitated my ability to embody the complexities of the human mind and behaviour in imaginative ways.

My creative and spontaneous nature has been unleashed by studying this subject and the outcome has been a demonstrated ability to analyse and interpret text, accurately communicate information and also the ability to write detailed critical essays.

# Things to try to avoid saying in your statement



Click here to find out more about writing a good statement

Click here to download a personal statement writing framework

“ I enjoy the theatre and used to go a couple of times a year. (Drama) ”

“ I am a keen reader and am committed to the study of human behaviour through TV soaps! ”

“ I have led a full life over the last 18 years and it is a tradition I intend to continue. ”

“ I describe myself in the following two words: 'TO ODIN!' the ancient Viking war cry. (Law) ”

“ My favourite hobby is bee-keeping and I want to be an engineer. ”

“ My interest in Medicine stems from my enjoyment of Casualty and other related TV series. ”

“ I have always had a passion to study Medicine, failing that, Pharmacy. (A student putting Pharmacy as her fifth choice after four medical school choices – Pharmacy can be just as popular and high status as Medicine.) ”



# A 'strong' example

Name: [REDACTED]

Course applied: Bsc Mathematics

SHOWS  
GOOD  
UNDERSTANDING  
OF COURSE  
AT START

Looking back over a complex equation that has been reduced to a simple solution provides an addictive sense of achievement. So far with mathematics, I have found that frustration and success go hand in hand, and I thrive upon the challenge. At my primary school, mathematics was always my favourite subject, and increasingly as I move through education, I feel a sense of excitement when I start to study a topic which before had only been a mysterious concept. Mathematics provides a perpetual opportunity for expanding knowledge and learning, and in reading into the subject I have started to realise how my studies so far have been very much the tip of the iceberg.

HONEST  
ASSESSMENT

SUPPORTS  
CLAIMS WITH  
EXAMPLES

For me, areas of particular interest in the subject are the applications of pure mathematics in the real world - ideas that may at times seem to be extremely abstract in fact have remarkably common applications - an example being the use of complex numbers for technology such as mobile phones. After attending a 'Maths Inspiration' lecture in [REDACTED] my eyes were really opened to the sheer scale of mathematics that is involved in structural engineering, specifically the design of the Olympic Stadium in London. Even in music, mathematical theories can be applied to study of pitch and harmony. Over the last few years, I have attended various mathematics workshops and seminars, including the 'Making Maths at [REDACTED]' two-day course. Also, each year I have entered the UKMT Maths Challenge, in which I have found success - I reached the European 'Kangaroo' stage on two occasions. Books such as 'The Code Book' and 'Fermat's Last Theorem' by Simon Singh have made me realise the enthralling nature of the history

SUBJECT  
KNOWLEDGE

# A 'not-so-strong' example

Name: [REDACTED]

Course applied: Bsc Accounting for Management

TOO MUCH  
INFO,  
OCCASIONAL  
WAFFLE

I am currently a final year student studying Accountancy, English Literature (AS and A2 in the one year). From my childhood I have always been interested in, and practised, dealing with numbers. Whether it was counting objects from my buggy, or calculating profit from sales of my drawings, I have always had a passion to learn more about and engage in numeracy. Studying accountancy, has been really exciting for me, as I love seeing how each figure affects the overall 'landscape' of the accounts, and how one misplaced item can ruin the whole balance. I know that if I put my head down, work hard and focus, I can achieve a good result from this subject. I have considered other numeracy careers such as banking, however, I feel the role of Accountants suit my passion more adeptly, and for this reason I have decided to choose Accounting as my university course. My ambition is to one day become a Chartered Accountant, and I believe that studying Accounting in university will be another stepping stone towards reaching this goal.

LISTING  
A LEVELS  
NOT NEEDED

FOCUSES  
ATTENTION  
ON NEGATIVE

DATED  
EXAMPLE

Outside of the Educational surroundings, I have partaken in many activities and tasks which have helped me become more responsible. One example is from a few years ago; I was part of a select board, which included a former Home Secretary, which was put together in order to familiarise ourselves with certain changes that were occurring within the community. I was chosen to represent [REDACTED] alongside a few other individuals from [REDACTED]. In addition to this, I have been involved in a lot of sporting activities from my youth, predominantly football, where I have gained opportunities to work with a team. Because of this I have been able to play at [REDACTED], representing [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] respectively. Furthermore, one of my many passions is poetry and I write new pieces on

SPELLING/  
GRAMMAR

## What to do next:

- Begin research
- Get some notes down
- Make a first draft of your statement
- Speak with your personal tutor and hand in a draft for them to check over (dates for this vary according to curriculum area so please check this!)
- Keep drafting! The more you can edit and change it, the stronger your statement will be
- Utilise all the online tools and resources to make sure you create a brilliant statement!
- Visit the Advice, Careers and Employability teams page for a vast amount of resources and support

For further support:

[acecronton@riversidecollege.ac.uk](mailto:acecronton@riversidecollege.ac.uk) (Cronton Site)

[aceriverside@riversidecollege.ac.uk](mailto:aceriverside@riversidecollege.ac.uk) (Riverside Site)