Do:

Do show that you have a clear understanding of your course
Have a look at the subject content of the courses you are applying for to show that you understand what studying this involves before writing your statement

Do get straight to the point
Think about what is most relevant and start there. Don't waste valuable characters getting to the point!

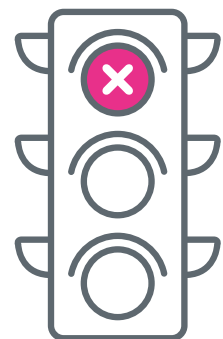**Do include studies, reading or experiences that are 'above and beyond'**
If you have done some relevant wider reading, completed a project such as an EPQ, or additional course such as a MOOC, or undertaken relevant work experience, focus on these in your statement. Give us detail about what you read, researched, discovered and found interesting.

Do relate everything in the statement to your chosen course
Your personal statement shouldn't just be a list of your experiences. Write reflectively, give us detail about your experiences, interests and opinions, and always relate back to your chosen course. Don't spent too long writing about unrelated experiences, such as hobbies and wider interests.

Do include any relevant career aspirations or future plans
This can be a helpful way to conclude your statement.

Don't:

Don't be negative
Keep your statement focused on the positives at all times. If any mitigating circumstances have affected your studies or exams, speak to your school or college and they can make sure that this information is included in your academic reference.

Don't exaggerate
Be genuine: it probably isn't true that you wanted to study Physics since you were 4 years old. However, a personal experience of something that sparked your interest may be a good starting point, such as a lecture, book or experiment.

Don't list the qualifications that you are taking
Pick out relevant or interesting aspects or topics from your qualifications, but don't list them out as these are already on your UCAS form.

Don't waste characters on jokes or quotes
These can be a bit clichéd. Instead, focus your characters on more valuable content.

Don't forget to check the character count
Check that your statement falls within the character count when you transfer your statement to the UCAS form.

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Online help and guidance:

Read our student blogs for further advice from some of our undergraduates
http://blogs.bath.ac.uk/students/category/personal-statements/

All the rules plus films and guides
www.ucas.com

Downloadable guides for students and teachers plus the HE skills map can help your planning
www.careerpilot.org.uk

MOOCs:

Enrol on a MOOC on any subject that interests you to add some extracurricular study to your application. They are all here at:
www.futurelearn.com

At the University of Bath we even have a MOOC to support your EPQ!
How to succeed in your EPQ:
The Nuts and Bolts of Completing your Project
go.bath.ac.uk/EPQ-success

Wise words from our students…

Stand out, talk about something you've done outside of school - a book you've read, or a course you attended. Convince the reader you want to go to university, and that you'd be an asset to their institution. Start it as soon as you can, it might take you hours to perfect, but it's worth it."

Psychology is such a broad course that I didn't struggle to find links to my other studies such as History and Religious Studies. They weren't always obvious links but I think that showed that I was really applying the theory of psychology to the real world."

Just write, more words is easier to work with than nothing. If you aren't good at selling yourself, get someone who knows you really well to tell you what you're best at. It's easier to sell someone else than yourself."

About Bath

The University of Bath is a world class university in a world heritage city - a nurturing environment for enterprising minds.

Our courses are designed to provide both rigorous intellectual challenge and real-world relevance, giving our students the opportunity to study with researchers who are leaders in their field.

Our vibrant campus - and location right on the edge of Bath - provide our community of over 17,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students with superb sporting, social and cultural opportunities.

Join our close-knit, high achieving community to gain the knowledge, skills and experience you'll need to thrive in a world of global networks.

TOP 10
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UNIVERSITY OF BATH

UNIVERSITY OF BATH

FOCUS ON…

Writing your personal statement

Writing your Personal Statement

5

Fundamentals

1 The personal statement is your opportunity to tell us why you want to study your chosen course and why your experiences make you a good candidate.

2 It is a maximum of 4000 characters or 47 lines. Please use paragraphs to make it user-friendly, and include a short introduction and conclusion.

3 Your personal statement should be subject-focused. At least 80% should be in some way related to what you want to study.

4 At the University of Bath, at least 2 members of admissions staff will read your personal statement. Ask your teacher, tutor, careers advisor and parents to read it and give you feedback

5 Your personal statement should capture the enthusiasm you felt when you chose your course. Start making notes to help with drafting your statement as early as possible!

proved experienced
discovered
focused prepared
designed
experimented
influenced
explored

researched
identified convinced
determined
won utilised
gathered

innovated
analysed
realised balanced
encouraged
secured invigorating
specialised
marketed
formulated

delivered
oversaw
critiqued
inspired

surpassed
created
pioneered
resolved
generated
specialised

gained
collaborated advanced
accomplished
strengthened
motivated
targeted emphasised

appealing
led built

undertook overcame
compelled strengthened
contributed provoked
fulfilled introduced questioned
implemented reshaped
organised absorbed
imagined compared
challenged

captured
participated
expressed fascinated
refreshing improved
performed
oversaw transformed
provided
thought-provoking appreciated perceived
decided

Make every paragraph count!

Start by using our planner. Once you have noted down all your skills, activities, achievements and academic interests, you will need to focus on what is most relevant to the application. Your first draft will probably be too long. You can then edit out anything vague or irrelevant. Remember to structure in paragraphs and for each ask yourself "so what?".

Interviews

If you are invited to an interview, you may be asked to expand on something you wrote in your statement. Always keep a copy of your statement and review the content before any interviews you are invited to.

Courses leading to a specific vocation may need a different approach

If you apply for courses such as Pharmacy or Social Work, you should balance out the academic content of your statement with content on relevant work experience that you have gained. You should demonstrate that you have an understanding of the profession and the skills and aptitudes required to succeed. Writing about relevant work experience can help to demonstrate this.

Skills, activities, knowledge

Skills, activities, knowledge	How did you gain this and how will you reflect on this?	How is it directly relevant to the course you are applying for?	How else might you use these skills at university?	Is this something that you hope to gain or develop during the course?
Managing your own project	EPQ planning			
Team work				
Creativity				
Supporting others				
Analysing data				
Problem solving				
Managing your time				
Planning ahead				
Speaking in public				
Engaging in extra independent study e.g. MOOC				
Leadership skills				
IT capabilities				
Knowledge and research				
Working to deadlines/under pressure				
Insight into why you love your subject				
Creative process				
Critical thinking				
Contextualising				
Taking the initiative				
Working with younger/older people/the public				
Sensitivity				
Working with animals				