

Get into uni

# Student pack

## your personal statement

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## Real customer quotes

“Just to let you know I have filled in your online satisfaction survey – I am really speechless at your great editing work”.

Min-Chih Yao  
August 17th 2006

## Real customer quotes

“The edited version is simply flawless. Thank you so much! I really appreciate your help”.

Valentine  
September 30th 2005  
Service: Gold editing

# Welcome



**Did you know that on average admissions officers have a mere two minutes to review each personal statement?**

After many years of editing we have established our own philosophy of what makes a good personal statement.

Your personal statement is your one chance to market yourself effectively. Poorly structured statements that do not give good reasons of why you want to study will get you about as far as your university grant.

Sounds obvious, but unclear and unstructured personal statements are

the number one complaint of university admissions officers in the UK.

A good command of English is essential for admission into university and just one incorrect sentence could result in failure.

At Get Into Uni, we understand admissions officers, we listen to them, we talk to them, and we keep our eyes and ears open - so we can tell you what they want.

Top universities are looking for more than high grades or even academic achievement. They want students who are knowledgeable and passionate about their desired field of study. To compete with thousands of other impressive candidates,

you must write a personal statement that is clear, concise and polished. What's more, it must offer a glimpse into your distinctive goals and the path that has led you to them.

This writing guide helps you objectively find the best way to present yourself. One important thing to remember is that your personal statement must be a “selling document” a kind of prospectus in which your virtues are set out, with supporting details.

# Where to start

Even professional writers sometimes struggle with writing. Staring at a blank white page (or computer screen) can be daunting for anyone.

Just keep in mind a few simple principles and the process becomes much easier. First, remember that you only need 600 words, which is roughly a page. Any more is unnecessary.

Next, plan your personal statement before you begin writing. Make notes on your childhood, your academic career and turning points in your life. Jot down anything and everything that could possibly be applicable. You can then use these notes to construct an outline, which will guide the writing process.

Later, details can be added or removed, and the writing can be polished. At this stage, you are merely collecting information. Below are some questions to aid you in gaining some ideas:

- Who has influenced you to study your subject?
- Has it been your family, friend, or teacher? How have you learnt about your subject?

- What experiences and qualifications do you hold?

- Your future intentions and goals?

Try to answer the questions quickly – about 30 minutes is generally a good time-frame – but don't worry if answers are not immediately obvious. If you have a CV, even an old one, it could jog your memory.

Once you've brainstormed ideas, make sure you carefully read the instructions on the application form. All of this research should be completed before starting your personal statement. It will simplify the tasks and improve your final admissions essay.

Only one thing is more important to a university admissions officer than an applicant's accomplishments; admissions officers want to know the individual behind those achievements. For this reason, an effective personal statement is essential to gain admittance to your school of choice.

For some degree programs, the personal statement is crucial. The best advice for a prospective student is: write for your reader and use a clear form of English by avoiding slag, repetitiveness, pomposity, academic complexity and obscurity.

A compelling personal statement can give you the edge you need to set yourself apart from the crowd. Therefore we have created individual subject writing guides to help you write your way into university.

To access individual writing guides visit [www.getintouni.com](http://www.getintouni.com)



Imagine how difficult it must be to choose between thousands of students with the same grades. Admissions officers want subjective criteria to make a decision, and in most cases the personal statement is the best source for this information.

# Get into uni

## The reader



One of the key complaints admissions officers have, is that the personal statement is often poorly structured, and that they do not convey the reasons why the applicant wishes to study.

Get Into Uni surveyed UK admissions officers to find out exactly what is their criteria. Below are the top admissions requirements:

- Write in clear English.
- Allow friends, family, and teachers to read through your personal statement and provide feedback.
- List paragraphs.
- Be positive and enthusiastic.
- Remember admissions officers will read thousands of personal statements and you want yours to be the one they remember.
- Write in short sentences.
- Be as clear as possible about why you have chosen your course of study.
- Set out the unique features and extracurricular activities that will allow you to be selected ahead of your peers.
- Take the opportunity to point out any occurrences or circumstances that may have affected your academic results.
- Construct the personal statement into 4 to 5 paragraphs.
- Keep sentences short and succinct.

Understanding what the admission officer would like to read up front is what will make you different.

Below are comments from real admission officers:

“The personal statement is very important: it gives the applicant the opportunity to explain why they have chosen the course of study and the university and why they think they would perform well on the course. It also gives the applicant the opportunity to set out their unique features, which they feel should lead them to be ranked ahead of their peers”. University of Hertfordshire Head of the university admissions service.

“At DMU, we are not looking only for students with a sound academic background - we seek students who are motivated and passionate about their subject area and have the potential to succeed in their studies. The graduate job market is competitive and we offer excellent preparation for both undergraduate and postgraduate students to enter or re-enter the world of work, but you have to be prepared to take advantage of the opportunities we offer if you are to succeed. The personal statement is a crucial part of the application and can make the difference as to whether you are offered a place or not. This is especially true for courses where applicants are not

invited to attend an interview. In these cases, the personal statement is the only chance to sell yourself and give a flavour of whom you are”. De Montford University.

“We are seeking aptitude, enthusiasm, and genuine passion for the subject. The personal statement is important as a way of gauging motivation and enthusiasm, and helps us to assess the character of the applicant – what interests you and how you express yourself. Admissions tutors want to read statements that are clearly written and show why you are interested in the subject. Above all to be honest – it is easy to tell if work has been cribbed or copied”. University of East London - Carol Elliott, Head of Admissions; Hamid Jahankhani, Admissions Tutor, School of Computing & Technology.

It is important that you are aware of your readership because the personal statement should be tailored to what the reader wants to hear.

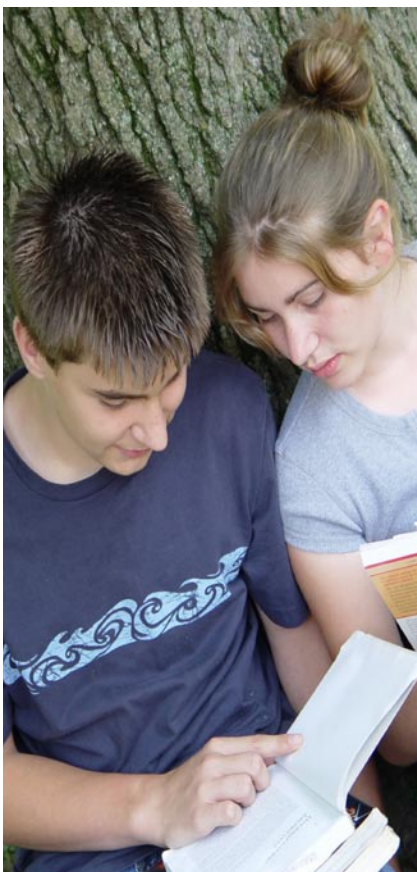


# Creative thinking

Creative thinking is where innovative thoughts begin as you mentally travel through your life and let the ideas flow. We feel that a vivid presentation of what motivates you to study is the first step to an excellent personal statement.

The single most important point to remember is that you cannot change who you are or what you have accomplished – but what you can do is showcase your successes, achievements, and skills in the personal statement.

Below is a short questionnaire to capture all these great things that make your application unique.



1. List the top 10 reasons why you wish to study at university.

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2. Who has influenced you the most to study your subject?

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3. What are your future intentions and goals?

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4. Who inspires you most and why?

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# Getting the structure right

Every personal statement should be to the point and not an autobiography. Focus on your results from the questionnaire, and be particular about each element that you wish to include.

If you are lacking practical experience, demonstrate your interest to study. Below is our recommended approach to answering postgraduate application questions.

## Introduction

Giving your personal statement a strong opening will engage the reader's attention from the outset. Common mistakes include the use of clichéd and overused sentences in the introduction. For example, you should avoid starting your sentence with the following:

“ I have always wanted to study”.  
“ My passion has always been for this subject”.

Below is an example of a powerful introduction:

“Whenever I have set a goal in life, my mind has always drifted to the example set by Lester Wunderman. Growing up poor amidst the Great Depression, he went on to become a marketing mastermind, responsible for innovative direct media

techniques such as the insert card and ‘Gold Box’. Wunderman was never content to accept setbacks. When faced with a struggle, I have always sought to emulate him by emerging from obstacles - not with a sense of defeat - but with a renewed sense of determination and greater problem-solving skills”.

Notice how the student has used Lester Wunderman as a business icon to introduce their character.

## The Body

People often forget about the body. It is important to remember that your personal statement must proceed in a logical succession from one thought to the next. The body of the personal statement should lead in a convincing way from the introduction to conclusion. The paragraphing can be used as a planning tool. The beginning of each paragraph should introduce the topic and the paragraph must end in a “hook” to the next paragraph. Whenever possible give the first sentence an interesting angle.

Each paragraph should follow this general structure. Make sure your sentence is supported by actions.

## The Conclusion

Conclude the personal statement with an attention-grabbing sentence. You may find it helpful to reflect on your

main accomplishments and experience. The main point of the conclusion is to underline your desire to study. Read the sample postgraduate conclusion below.

“In pursuing a post graduate degree in engineering, I seek to advance my research of electrical systems and perfect my personal engineering skills. I have established the strong academic foundation necessary for success, excelling in my engineering degree. Through my intensive work, hands-on work experience, and prolonged personal interest, I have demonstrated my considerable commitment to engineering”. Having reached the conclusion, admissions officers need to feel that they know more about you than when they started.

The fact that you have been swimming every day is impressive, but what is more interesting is the inspiration behind it: the fact that you had met Olympic winner Duncan Goodhew, and why he inspired you.

Remember to keep the discussion personal. How much you revel about yourself is up to you. Many students fall into the trap of keeping the reader at arms length.



## Real customer quotes

“Just to let you know I have filled in your online satisfaction survey – I am really speechless at your great editing work”.

Min-Chih Yao

August 17th 2006

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## Helping you... across the world

## Real customer quotes

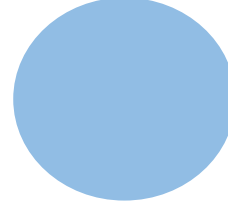
“Wow, my personal statement looks great, thanks very much”

Lise

October 14th 2004

Service: Gold editing

Service: Bronze editing



### WHAT WE OFFER YOU

We believe in a thing called quality and want to provide you with the best online editing service. That is why we don't just recommend how you can improve your personal statement, we actually rewrite sentences for you.

Submit your first personal statement draft today and in less than 72 hours, our Oxford admission experts will transform your personal statement so it includes:

1. A powerful introduction that captures the readers' attention straight away.
2. Clear, engaging, practical reasons, of why you wish to study.
3. Bright, fresh thinking themes running throughout the personal statement.
4. Creative, objective, and specific paragraphs that connect with each other.
5. A conclusion that is bursting with energy.

We have helped lots of students get into uni across the world by developing fresh, original ideas that engage the admission

officer straight away. Whether you need help to make your words scintillate or you seek assistance in organising your personal statement, we tailor our services to suit you.

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Get Into Uni Limited  
2nd Floor, 145-157  
St John Street,  
London, EC1V4P

T: 0845 227 0315  
E: [info@getintouni.com](mailto:info@getintouni.com)  
W: [www.getintouni.com](http://www.getintouni.com)