Personal statements

• The most important part of the application
• A tool that universities use in their admissions process
• Helps students to distinguish themselves from others with similar grades
• A chance to show off talents, achievements and writing style
• Limited amount of space, keep it short and snappy
• Must be positive
• Show an interest and enthusiasm for the subject

Starting points / questions to ask

Ask the following questions

• What makes you unique?
• Why do you really want to study this subject/course?
• Why should the university choose you over other candidates?
• What are your career aspirations?
• Why have you chosen to study particular subjects in the past?
• What do you hope to gain from university?

Make a list of achievements

• All work experience / part-time jobs / voluntary work
• Interests and hobbies inside school
• Interests and hobbies outside school
• Involvement in clubs / societies / teams
• Think about skills gained from achievements

Advice from admission tutors

DO
• Mention responsibility with examples of duties undertaken
• Be reflective – explain why
• Mention authors/writers and artists when talking about specific research and background reading
• Spell check and read through with teachers and parents
• Be clear and concise – admissions tutors don’t have time to read between the lines
• Be enthusiastic about the course

DON’T
• Mention a specific institution unless only applying to one
• Talk about your A level course syllabus in detail
• Plagiarise – UCAS now have a filter and will know
• Lie or exaggerate
• Try to be a comedian or be over-confident about achievements