

Structure for a personal statement

You have **3 questions** to answer, and **4000 characters** to use between all three. **The minimum character count per section is 350**, so if you would like to focus more on other areas, you can!

- **green- go into more detail and give specific examples**
- **amber- can you go into just a bit more detail about key ideas**
- **red – only 1 detail needed for each activity mentioned**

Question 1: Why do you want to study this course or subject?

This is your chance to show your curiosity, interest, and knowledge of the subject, and to explain why it's the right choice for you and your future goals. **Examples of what you might talk about below:**

Your motivations for studying this course(s):

- ❖ Do you have any role models or important moments over the last few years that have inspired you?
- ❖ What else interests you about this course? Make sure to explain how your current journey has led you to choose this subject.

Your knowledge of this subject area and interests:

- ❖ Consider completing a piece of mini research (academic article, lecture, podcast, chapter of a book). Zoom-in on 1-2 key ideas. Research any new concepts or terminology. Comment on what surprises or intrigues you. Comment on how your opinion of your subject has been altered or changed. Say what you would like to learn next.

Future plans and why this course/subject is a good fit for you:

- ❖ If you have a career in mind, explain how this course will help you get there. If not, think about what matters to you and how what you learn will help you reach your future goals.

Question 2: How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject?

This is the chance for you to show evidence of the relevant and transferable skills you've gained from your time at college and highlight your understanding of how this will help you to succeed. **Examples of what you might talk about below:**

How your current studies relate to your chosen course(s) or subject area:

- ❖ Talk about your most recent and relevant studies – this could be college, school (year 10 & 11), training, or even online courses.

What relevant or transferable skills have you got that makes you a great candidate?

- ❖ Link 2-3 skills relevant to your subject with specific examples from your level 3 courses or any course based activities.

Any Relevant educational achievements?

- ❖ Don't talk about your grades – universities can see those elsewhere. Instead, mention other achievements like being a student ambassador, team captain, winning competitions, doing an EPQ or DofE, etc.

Question 3: What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?

Use this section to mention anything you've done outside of college or personal experiences that show why you're a good fit for the course. Make sure you explain why it matters and how it's relevant to you. **Examples of what you might talk about below:**

Work experience, employment or volunteering:

- ❖ Lectures, seminars, work-experience, online courses, volunteering – what did you learn?

Personal life experiences or responsibilities:

- ❖ Have you had any experiences that shaped your decision to choose this course? If you've had responsibilities like caring for someone, explain how that's helped you build qualities like resilience and empathy **(especially important for caring courses like Medicine, Nursing, or Paramedic Science)**.

Hobbies and interests?:

- ❖ Sports, reading, community work, summer schools – anything that can further show why you'd make a good student. Keep this brief.

Editing Checklist

- Reflecting on childhood memories – only comment on relevant, recent experiences
- Using overly emotive language – passionate, vindicated, destroyed!
- Using a thesaurus to find a 'clever' word
- Overly long sentences – be clear, concise and short
- Slang words/overly casual language – treat this like an essay or exam question!
- Lots of narrative comments – telling the story of your day out at the Art Gallery!
- 80% course/subject related – 20% extra-curricular
- Avoid using long quotes – don't waste word count with other people's words
- Avoid clichés – 'I said business and I mean business!'
- You aren't 'Batman' – 'I want to help people, serve the law and save the world!'
- Be specific & evidence with examples – avoid general comments that could apply to anybody

Personal Statement Structure Sheet

- Values and interpersonal skills are typically more relevant to 'caring' courses - Medicine/Nursing/Midwifery/Paramedic Science etc
- Drafts **should not be** significantly over the wordcount of 4000 characters or 47 lines