



Writing an Effective Personal Statement

Main Topics

- What is a Personal Statement?
- Building a strong Personal Statement
- Writing your Personal Statement



What is a Personal Statement?

What is a Personal Statement?

- An essential part of your UCAS application for higher education where you explain why you're a good fit for your chosen course
- You answer three key questions:

Why do you want to study this course or subject?

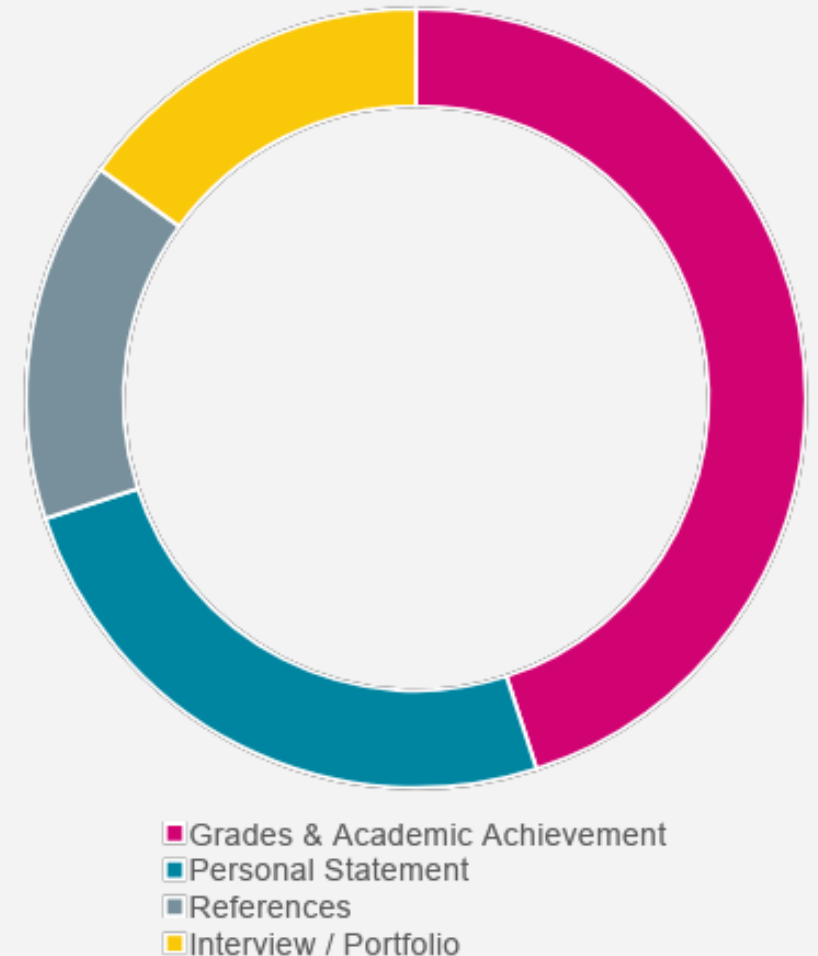
How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course of subject?

What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences helpful?

- Size: 4000 characters total – minimum 350 characters per question

Why is your Personal Statement important?

- Helps Admissions Tutors understand your motivation and suitability
 - These are the people who make you an offer to study
- Opportunity to demonstrate skills, experience, and passion beyond just grades
- A chance to stand out from the crowd in competitive applications



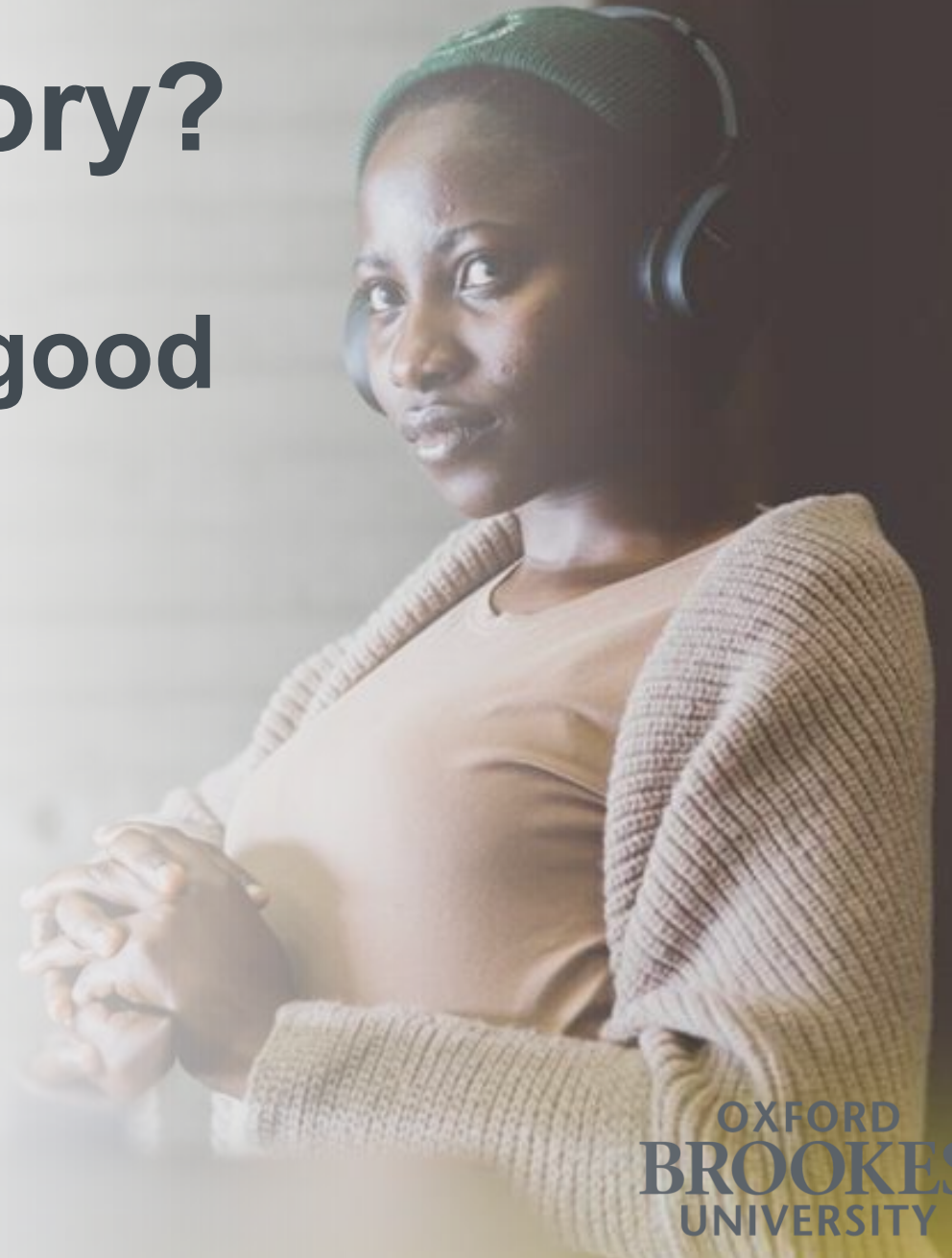


Building a strong Personal statement

What's your unique story?

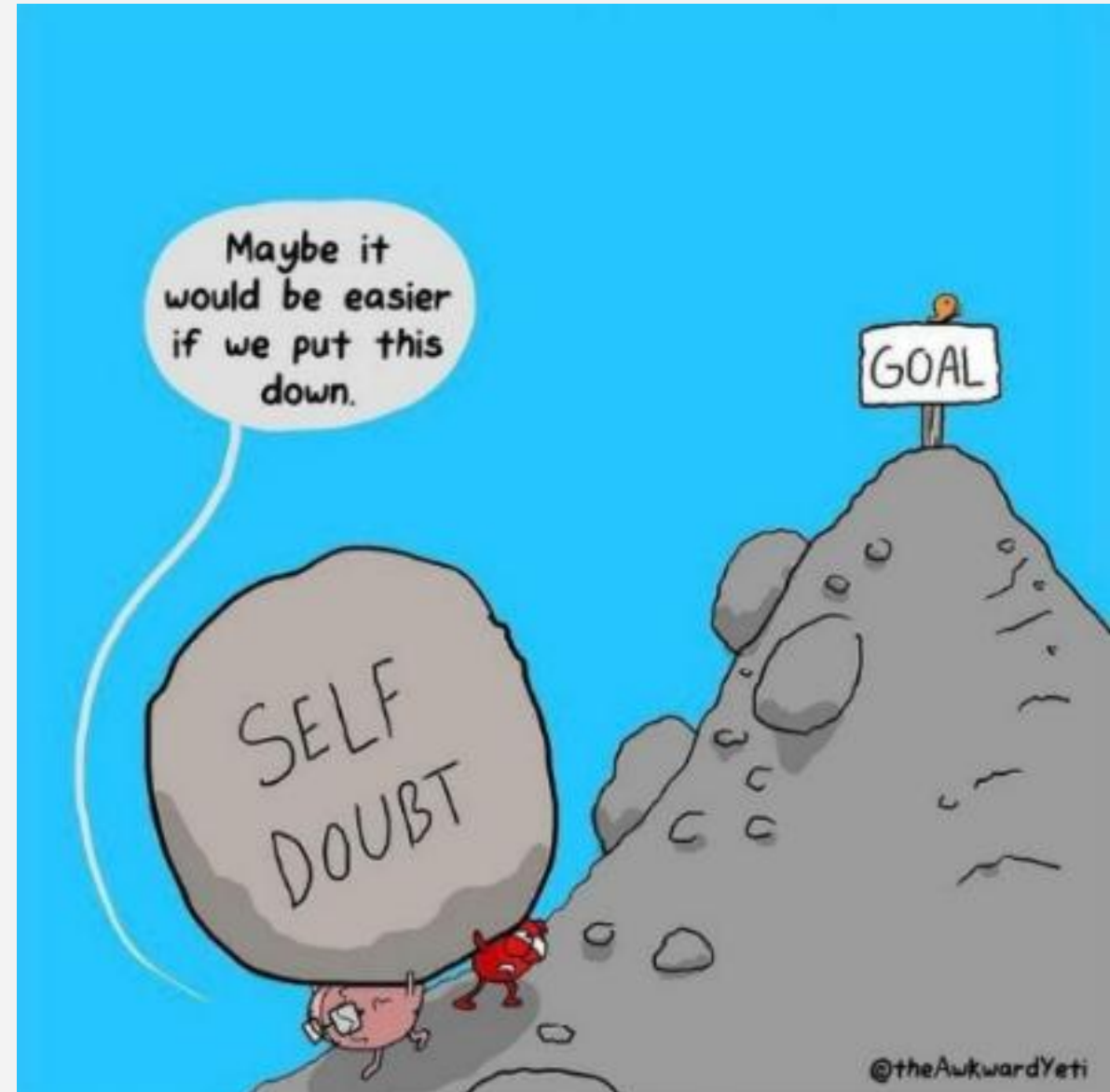
Think of one thing you are good at... IT CAN BE ANYTHING

Share a specific experience or achievement that shows why you're good at what you chose



Being positive about yourself can often be a challenge... but it is a vital skill to develop

- Personal Statements
- University interviews
- Degree Apprenticeship applications / interviews
- Job applications/interviews
- Meeting new people



Q1. Why do you want to study this course or subject?

Aim: demonstrate your passion, curiosity and interest.

This could include:

Motivations for studying this course

- 1) Is there a role model or moment that inspired you?
- 2) Do you enjoy this subject and want to learn more?
- 3) What drives you to pursue this course / subject?
- 4) How have your experiences led to this course / subject?

Knowledge of this subject area and interest

- 1) Have you researched a topic that really interests you?
- 2) Is there something you are excited to learn more about
- 3) Has a book, podcast, or expert (etc) inspired your interest in the subject?

Your future plans (demonstrate how this course is a good fit)

- 1) Do you already have dream job or career in mind?
- 2) How could this course support / launch your career?
- 3) What's important to your future, and how could this course help?

Q2. How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject?

Focus on what's most recent or relevant to the subject or course(s).

This could include:

How do your studies or training relate to your chosen course(s) or subject?

- 1) Can be from your current or previous studies
- 2) From any formal learning – e.g. school, college, training provider, online courses

What skills do you have that make you a great candidate?

- 1) Did any subjects help you develop key skills for your chosen course(s) or subject?
- 2) Did a particular project or module show you where your interests and strengths lie?

Do you have any relevant educational achievements?

- 1) Universities will already see your grades – don't waste space repeating them
- 2) Highlight your achievements like competitions, leadership roles, or representing your school/college

Q3. What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences helpful?

Be reflective: examples should demonstrate how you're a good fit for the course(s) or subject.

This could include:

Work experience, employment, or volunteering	Personal life experiences or responsibilities	Hobbies, extracurricular or outreach activities	Achievements outside of school/college
1) In-person or virtual work experience 2) Paid work or volunteering 3) KEY – reflect on what you’ve learned and how it connects to your course	1) Have you overcome a challenge that influenced your decision? 2) Have personal experiences helped you develop key qualities relevant to the course or subject?	1) Think about activities like sports, reading, community work, or summer schools 2) Think about any activities outside of your main studies that show why you’d be a great student	This could include leadership roles in local clubs, competitions, or qualifications you've earned outside the classroom.



Writing your Personal Statement

Starting the statement

- Where do I begin?
- How do I write an engaging opening that doesn't feel clichéd?

Structuring your ideas

- How do I organise my thoughts and ideas cohesively across the statement?
- How do I balance the need for academic content with super-curricular and extracurricular achievements?

Showcasing relevance

- Which experiences should I include and how do I relate it to my chosen course?
- I'm struggling to provide specific, reflective examples that demonstrate my skills and motivation



Where do I begin?

- **Tip:** start by brainstorming! Jot down **key ideas** for each of the 3 UCAS questions.
- **Solution:** don't stress about the perfect opening. Focus on **getting your ideas down first**.
- **Approach:** start with **why you are passionate about the course** – what sparked your interest and made you decide to pursue it?



How do I find the right voice and avoid clichés?

- **Tips:** avoid starting with overused phrases like ‘I’ve always been passionate about...’.

Be yourself – don’t try to sound like someone else.

- **Solution:** be **genuine** and **honest**.

Think about a **specific moment or experience** that ignited your interest.

- **Example:** ‘A visit to a local museum sparked my curiosity about art conservation, and since then, I’ve explored this interest through...’



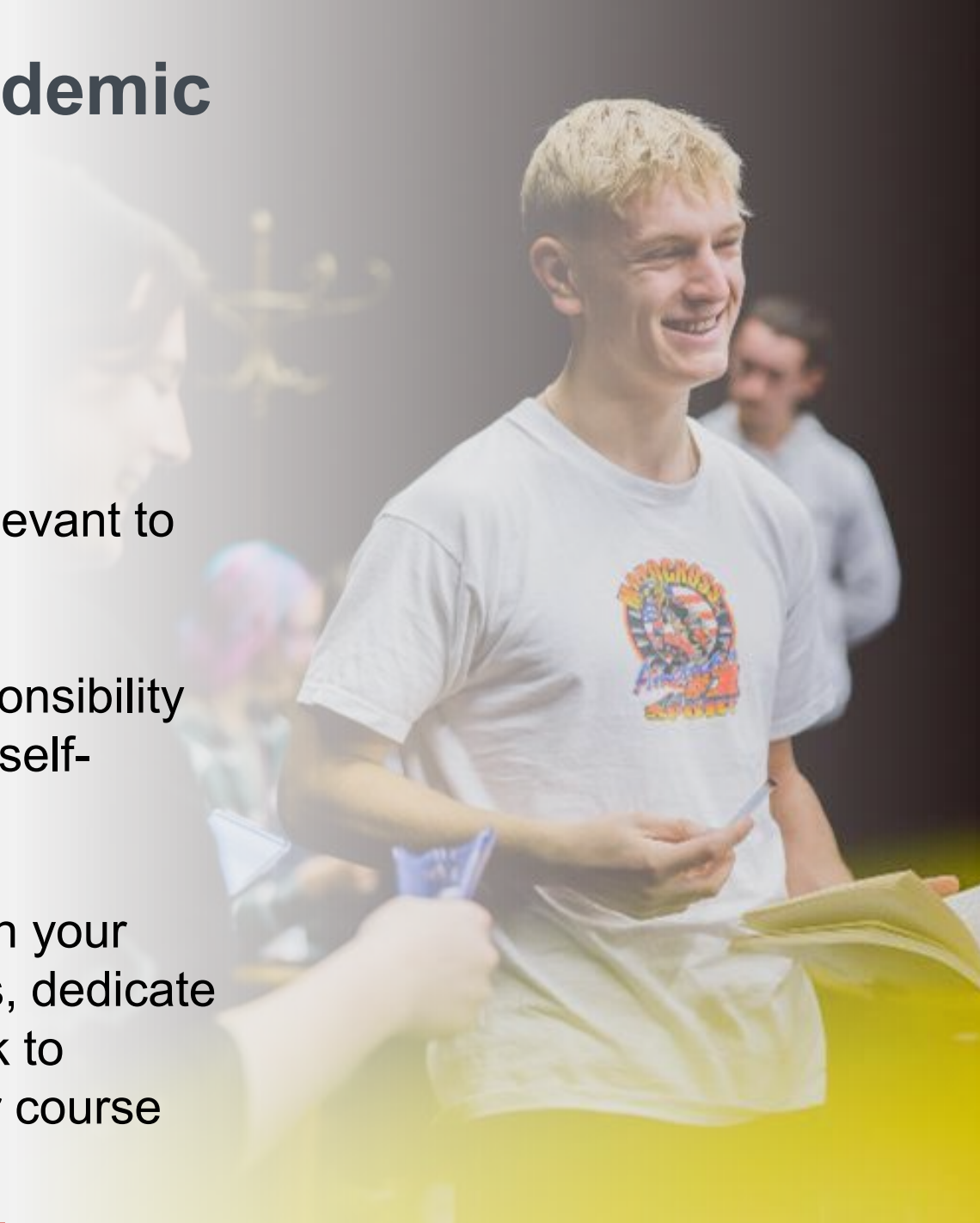
How do I organise my thoughts and ideas cohesively across the statement?

- **Tip:** Allocate your character count based on your strengths, responding clearly and directly to each question
- **Solution:**
 - Q1: Focus on your motivation and passion for the subject
 - Q2: Emphasise relevant academic achievements / qualifications
 - Q3: Highlight extracurricular activities that have given you transferable skills or insights related to the course
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- **Remember:** Your statement is reviewed as a whole, so don't worry too much about which section to include your ideas in



How do I balance the need for academic content with super-curricular and extracurricular achievements?

- **Tip:** Integrate, don't separate
- **Solution:** Highlight how they've developed skills relevant to your course
- **Example:** Leadership in a team or club shows responsibility and commitment, mirroring key university skills like self-discipline and organisation.
- **Remember:** Allocate your character count based on your strengths. If you have strong academic experiences, dedicate more space there. Stronger extracurriculars – it's ok to expand on them, as long as you relate them to your course



Transferable Skills

- Supportive
- Enthusiastic
- Approachable
- Curious
- Adventurous
- Patient
- Consistent
- Energetic
- Patient
- Dependable
- Good Listener
- Engaging
- Reflective
- Decisive
- Creative
- Wise
- Organised
- Considered
- Understanding
- Thoughtful
- Open-minded
- Giving
- Resilient
- Positive
- Fair
- Honest
- Modest
- Leader
- Spontaneous
- Practical
- Calm
- Determined
- Insightful
- Caring
- Conscientious
- Sincere
- Kind
- Disciplined
- Strategic
- Reflective
- Passionate
- Courageous
- Appreciative
- Hopeful
- Principled
- Empathetic
- Humorous
- Co-operative
- Flexible
- Detailed
- Analytical

Using the PEEL or ABC method:

P

Point: what have you done?

I'm part of a debating club at my school.

E

Evidence & Explain: what skills have you gained?

E

Example: Debating has given me lots of experience in presenting arguments and communicating my ideas clearly.

L

Link: how has this prepared you for the course?



A, B, C - Activity, Benefit, Course

A: Activity; what have you done?

I set up a debating club at my school.

B: Benefit; what skills have you gained?

Debating has given me much experience in presenting arguments and communicating my ideas clearly.

C: Course; how will this prepare you for the course?

This is relevant to Law as I am able to compare and contrast information and use it to evidence my points, which is necessary in either defense or prosecution.

Can you use AI to write your Personal Statement?

To get prompts to help guide your reflection on your experiences, skills and motivations in response to the UCAS questions is ok.

BUT...

- **Never copy from it** – this could be considered cheating, and your application may be rejected!

AI lacks the **unique voice** and personal insights that admissions tutors look for. The goal is to convey **why you're passionate** about the course and how **your experiences** have prepared you for it. **Only you can provide this.**





Any Questions?