

Mastering your 'Personal Statement'



OUR SUPPORT TO SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

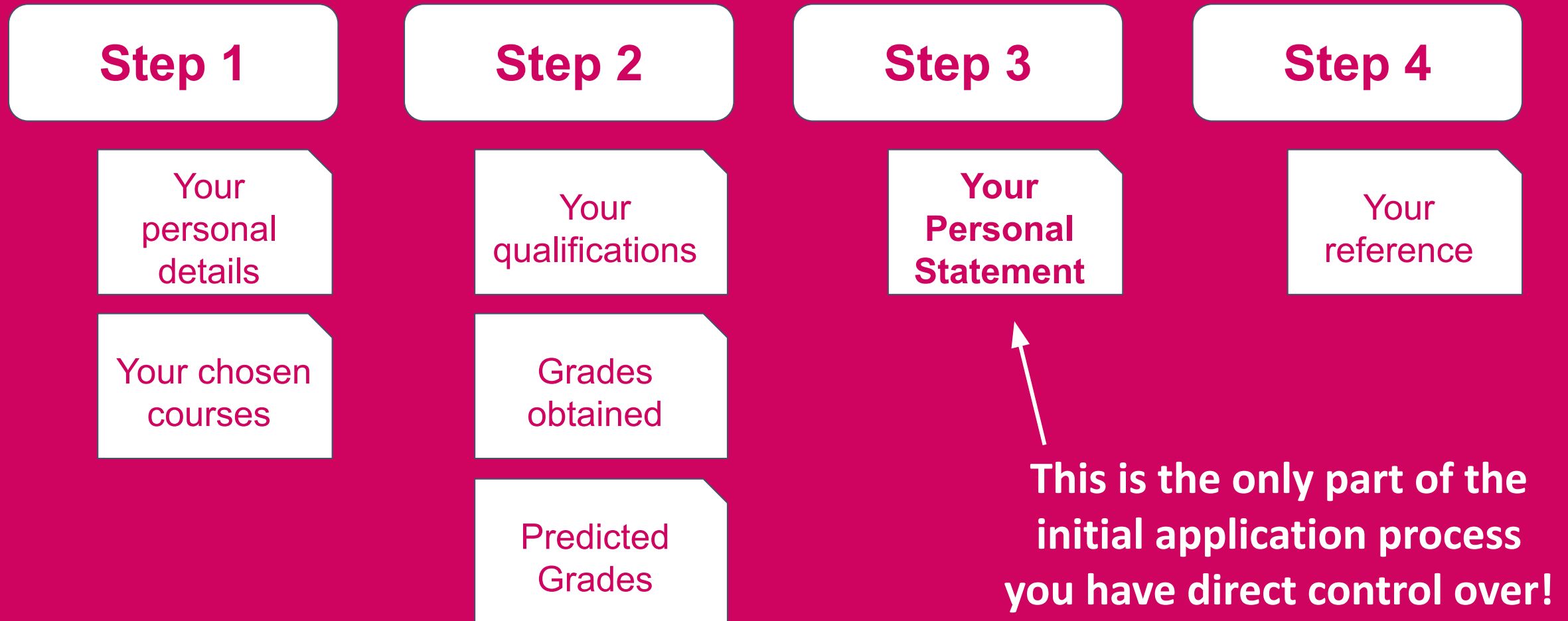
IGNITE





What is a Personal Statement?

It's a part of your UCAS application:



Your Personal Statement...

It is the only place on the UCAS application to *focus* on relevant skills, achievements, and work experience.

You need to demonstrate *very specifically* how these and your *qualifications* are *relevant* to your choice of study.

Who reads it?

It may be read by two or more University staff at each University you apply to. It should make sense to everyone.



What are Universities looking for?

An explanation of **why** you have chosen the course

Examples of your **enthusiasm** and **commitment** to your chosen course

Particular **areas of interest** in your subject area

Examples of what you have done to **learn** or **prepare** for University

An **explanation** of what you have gained from undertaking extra-curricular activities

Examples of achievements which showcase your **experience** and **devotion** to University

It is your chance to -

Impress and stand out from the crowd

To **show off** you interests and passions

To highlight your **motivations** and **achievements**

Demonstrate your **academic** interests

To **secure your place** on your course

Your Personal Statement



- Your personal statement will be roughly **1 page of A4**.
- **Start early** - you'll write several drafts before you're happy with a final version.
- **Every student** across the country has to write one - so think about what makes you stand out.
- **Research** University courses - make sure you're applying for a course you want to study.



What should it include?

- An explanation of **why** you're interested in the course
- Your **enthusiasm** for the subject
- How your previous studies relate to the course you're applying for
- **Relevant** aspects of jobs, placements, work experience or volunteering
- **Activities** or **hobbies** that show a wider interest in the subject area
- **Demonstrate** you're a great candidate for the course and have the right skills, experience and knowledge

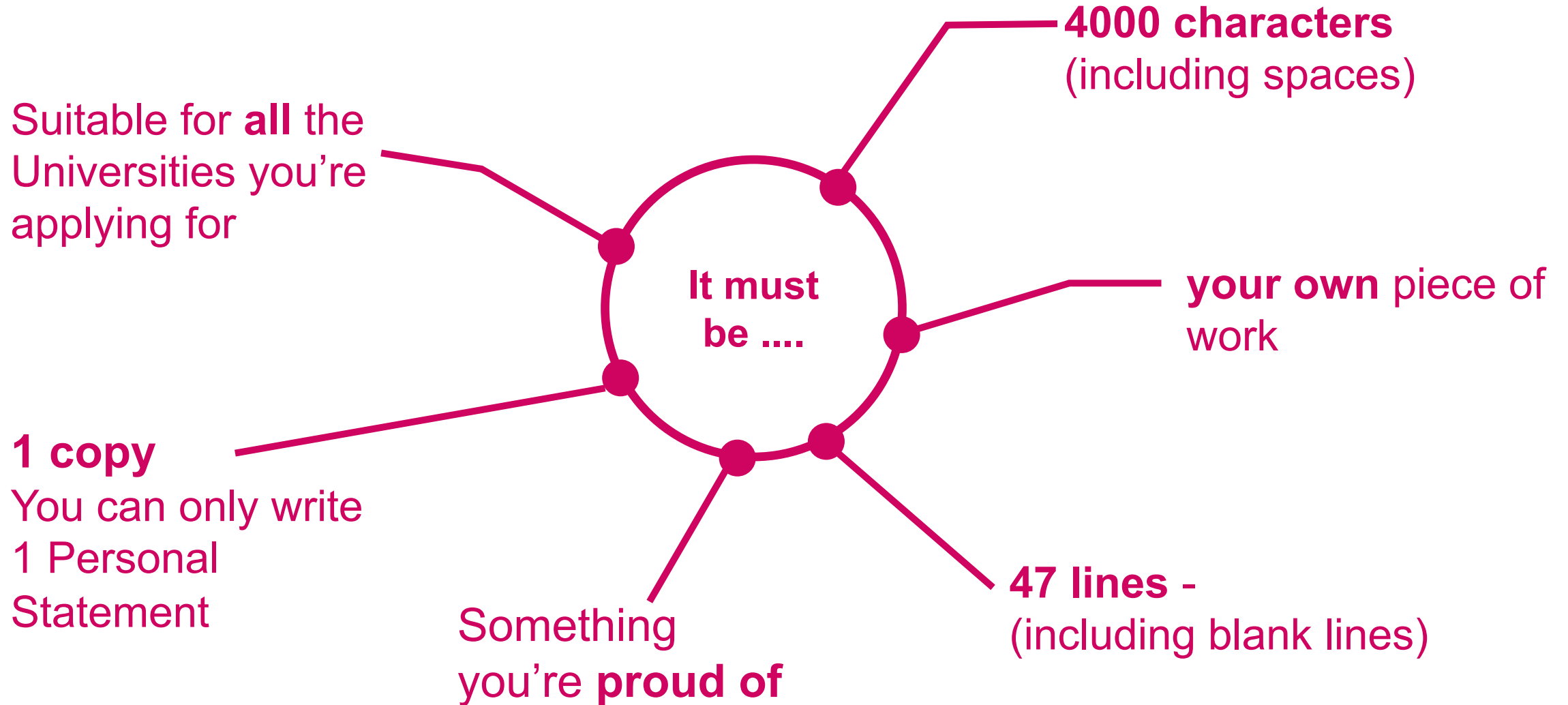


A good template would be -

The majority of your statement should be directly focussed on your academic achievements - A good template is:

An opening paragraph explaining why you want to study the course	At Least 15% of your statement
Academic Interests - highlighting your passion for the course, what interests you about the course, and why you want to study it at University.	At least 50% of your statement
Your hobbies/interests/job	At least 20% of your statement
A closing paragraph about your career aspirations and future goals	At Least 15% of your statement

The restrictions -



Where

should

you

start?





- **Research your course** – look into all the universities that you are applying to
- **Mind map** your academic achievements. Have you read something which really inspired you?
- Organise **your thoughts** into paragraphs. Having everything on paper is very useful.
- Focus on getting the information down - **don't worry** about the detail at this point.
- Think about what makes you **stand out** - achievements, sports, part-time jobs, travels, goals, positions of responsibility

Look at **course descriptions** and identify the qualities, skills, and experience it requires – you can use these to help you decide what to write about.

Tell the reader why you're applying – include your ambitions, as well as what interests you about the subject, the course provider, and higher education.

Think about what makes you suitable – this could be relevant **experience, skills, or achievements** you've gained from education, work, or other activities.

Some ideas to get you started -



Tell us about your extra-curricular activities!



They should demonstrate transferable skills that are **relevant** to the degree you're applying for (e.g. Team-working, Time Management, Commitment)

They should not be a list! - you need to provide **examples** of what you have gained from them.

They should only take up **a section** within your personal statement and should by no means dominate.

How to Write About Your Skills

The **PEE(L)** Method:

Point: I am a committed, determined and a confident public speaker.

Evidence: In year 12 I was Head Girl in my Sixth Form College, during which I volunteered my time and had to speak regularly in school meetings.

Explanation: This is relevant to the Acting course as there are long hours of rehearsals and I will need to be comfortable performing in front of people.

Link: Remember your structure - can you link this to a previous paragraph or point?



Get support!



If you have a question about writing your personal statement, don't worry, you're not alone!

There is a lot of information, support and guidance out there to help you write your personal statement.

Your teachers and career staff will have lots of useful information accessible for you - make sure you attend their sessions on writing your personal statements.

Personal circumstances

If there are circumstances which have affected your educational performance, you can outline them in your personal statement -

Has something caused you to miss school?

- Mental health / Physical health
- Caring for a family member
- Bullying

Have circumstances stopped you from achieving the grades you think you deserve?

- E.g Dyslexia
- Moved around schools

Have any things been out of your control?

- A grief in the family
- A sudden illness



Leave time to **get feedback** and to redraft your statement.

This isn't something you will write in one copy and it will take **several drafts** until you send off your final version.

Do's -

- Do make it academic and subject focussed
- Do use you own experiences and write in your own voice
- Do be Truthful - you don't need to lie
- Do outline your ideas clearly
- Do make it well detailed and use examples where necessary
- Do structure your statement - remember you're applying for University!



Don'ts -

- Don't over exaggerate things you've achieved or articles you've read
- Don't include Irrelevant information
- Don't use cliched phrases such as, 'As Mandela Said...'
- Don't make jokes if they're not necessary, 'A horse and a nun walk into a bar...'



Don't Plagiarise!

Your Personal Statement gets checked in an external system.

This system will compare yours against every other personal statement that's ever existed.

If you copy someone else's you will be caught and Universities can choose to withdraw your personal statement and refuse you the opportunity to attend University.

Final tips!



Check in with the teacher writing your UCAS reference.
**They may be willing to put something in their reference which you didn't have the room for in your statement.*

Find out your internal personal statement **deadline**.
This will be different to UCAS.

Make sure to check you spelling, punctuation and Grammar - get someone to check it over for you!

There is no one “right” personal statement and no “magic ingredient that will guarantee your place on your course”

Key websites for Information -

IGNITE

Applying to university
through UCAS

UCAS



where
students
connect



THE COMPLETE
UNIVERSITY GUIDE
INDEPENDENT • TRUSTED

Over to you...

Any questions?

Email us -
be@bathspa.ac.uk

