

Writing a Personal Statement when applying as a Mature Applicant

(i.e. 23 years of age or over on 1st January in year applying)

When applying to University, you must write a personal supportive or motivational statement. This is a great opportunity to present aspects of yourself, your knowledge and experiences that may not be obvious from your course application.

The admissions and academic team use these statements to:

- Select students.
- Some academic staff prefer to interview mature applicants and they will use this information to shortlist for interview. Due to numbers not all applicants will be interviewed so you need to demonstrate your readiness for University.
- This statement is a chance to show you are ready for University, you have the commitment and you have researched the course you want to study in your chosen field. It is a personal statement, not an academic assignment or a CV. You should present relevant requirements in an engaging, genuine, concise, organised and personal manner.

University staff are looking for evidence that the applicant:

- Has researched the courses applied for.
- Prepared for higher education (recent courses/study).
- Has any relevant experience or training.
- Is aware of the demands of full-time higher education (workload, finances, impact on personal and social circumstances etc).
- Has a career goal.

Steps to writing a good personal statement:

***Please do not use AI generated statements. AI generated material will not be considered.**

Step 1: How to begin

The first step is to be clear on what is required, a typed statement is usually around 1000-1500 words and explains why you want to do the course. Take a look at the course description to get an idea of what each University is looking for, it will help you figure out what to include!

Step 2: Brainstorm and research, for example you could base the statement on some of the following questions

- Why have you chosen this course?
- What excites you about the course?
- Is your previous or current study relevant to the course?
- Have you any work experience that might help you?
- What life experiences have you had that you could talk about?
- What achievements are you proud of?
- What skills do you have that make you perfect for the course?
- What plans and ambitions do you have for your future career?

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Step 3: Plan the structure of your personal statement by dividing it into paragraphs. Include an introduction, conclusion and focus on sections showcasing your strengths, experience, and future goals

- When writing your statement start with a 'blank slate' and work solely from your own personal experiences.
- Avoid beginning every sentence with "I".
- Show you have an awareness of the demands of full-time higher education (workload etc).
- Make sure to back up your statement with evidence. For example, if you mention that you enjoyed a specific module in a course, or certain parts of your job.

Step 4: Do not procrastinate

- Write your first draft and you will immediately feel better.
- It is much more productive to write and develop something than to talk and worry about possible options.

Step 5: The ending

Proofread and edit your statement until you are happy with the structure, grammar, spelling and punctuation. Ask one or two people to read over it, we seldom see our own mistakes. Remember, Universities will usually check personal statements for plagiarism.

If you're a mature student, it's a great idea to use your personal statement to share what you've been up to before applying for a course. You might have some valuable experience that could boost your application, whether it's from what you have learned in education or from everyday life.

Important notes to remember:

- Applicants wishing to be considered on the basis of mature years must remember to tick the 'Mature Applicant' box on the 'Qualifications and Assessments' section of the application form.
- Do not forget to send in your supporting documents to the CAO within 10 days of making an application.
- Do not forget to complete the personal statement.

BEST OF LUCK!