Personal Statements

Making a strong application to Higher Education

Fay Lofty Widening Participation Officer
Getting to grips with UCAS

www.ucas.ac.uk/students/apply
Rule of invisibility: what the university sees

Student X

**CHOICE DETAILS** [Invisibility applies]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice</th>
<th>Inst code name</th>
<th>Inst code</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Campus</th>
<th>Short name</th>
<th>Further details</th>
<th>Entry Point</th>
<th>Home</th>
<th>Defer entry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>BRITN</td>
<td>B72</td>
<td>LQV0</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>BA (Hons)</td>
<td>Compact/Compact Plus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cultures, Histories, Literatures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>BRITN</td>
<td>B72</td>
<td>QV33</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>BA (Hons)</td>
<td>Compact/Compact Plus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>English Literature and Community History</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I've had 5 rejections. What's wrong? But you're so clever ... It's the personal statement.
Admissions tutors look for

- Qualifications and academic record
- Academic ability
- Commitment to subject area
- Motivation
- Personality
- Potential to succeed in higher education
- 70% academic, 30% personal
Quotes from admissions tutors

• ‘It’s the only way to tell those who are interested in the subject from those who are just good at it’.

• ‘Forms the basis for interview.’

• ‘Especially important in borderline cases.’

• ‘I look for students who will be interesting to teach.’

• ‘Important for confirmation/clearing.’
The personal statement

• **One** personal statement for up to **five courses/universities**
• 4000 characters
• Your opportunity to sell yourself
• Well structured
• Grammar/spelling/vocabulary (no slang)
• **Analytical, not just descriptive**
• Concise (don’t waffle)
• Current and relevant
• Explain any unusual circumstances
• May be used as basis for an interview – be honest
• Don’t start every sentence with ‘I’
• No lists
• Try not to be fascinated or passionate
What should you include

• Reasons for choosing the course/subject area
• Show knowledge of and interest in areas likely to apply to the degree
• Career aspirations
• Work (paid and/or voluntary) experience
• **How is it relevant, what have you gained?**
• Skills and abilities
• Interests and hobbies
• Positions of authority
• Deferred entry/gap year plans
Some examples:

“If I should be accepted to your university I would wish to pursue my chosen field of study, psychology, for one very basic reason: I want to Rule the World. I’m not talking your run of the mill big company or being prime minister, no I’m talking about Julius Caesar, Napoleon Bonaparte, King Tut type of Ruling the World except succeeding where they failed because they lacked the basic understanding of human psychology.”
Example: good

“Work experience at my local county court allowed me to obtain valuable knowledge of the civil court procedures. I was given responsibility to carry out a wide variety of activities which have improved my ability to work with people of all backgrounds.”

Analytical Relevant Evidence
Pro-active Experience
Buzz words Concise Well written
“I work as a receptionist in a hotel and sometimes supervise my colleagues.”

So What? What skills/qualities? What relevance to the course?

“This has developed my communication, negotiation and leadership skills which, I believe, are skills that a primary school teacher would require. I am also able to prioritise tasks and manage my time well, a skill which I employ in my studies as well as my work.

“I interact with many different people of all different ages, from different cultural backgrounds.”

So What? What skills/qualities? What relevance to the course?

“I respect diversity and listen to and take into account the views of others this has enabled me to effectively deal with some difficult situations, which I might also encounter in the classroom.”

University of Brighton
Plagiarism – do not be tempted!

We wish to alert you to the following application(s) highlighted by our Similarity Detection Service:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similarity</th>
<th>Similarity Application</th>
<th>Personal ID Number</th>
<th>Name Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>view transcript</td>
<td>1021158692080195645</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>view transcript</td>
<td>1025375729080743446</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>view transcript</td>
<td>1025336912080726759</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>view transcript</td>
<td>1021676225080057860</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>view transcript</td>
<td>1023421385080431174</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>view transcript</td>
<td>1025570249080764865</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>view transcript</td>
<td>1025676205080804828</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>view transcript</td>
<td>1025582925080799580</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>view transcript</td>
<td>1025029978080699969</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>view transcript</td>
<td>1022910873080780256</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>view transcript</td>
<td>1023144885080607517</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each applicant above has been contacted and will have access to the similarity transcript via UCAS Track.

Please forward this information to the relevant individuals at your institution for processing in accordance with your own institutional guidelines.
Creation is a powerful skill, an intriguing ability evolving from our originalities and perspectives. By formulating our own unique creations, we may endeavour to create a parallel between our imagination and the world in which we live.

Self expression is what differentiates us as an individual. It is my passion for success that acts as a catalyst for inspiration and therefore provides me with a prominent sense of ambition and desire. Working for Housing 21 has given me an opportunity to appreciate the aesthetic beauty prevalent in the world today. This insightful demonstration has allowed my passion to evolve further, hence determining my decision to continue at a more advanced level. I believe the course will challenge my creative potential, culminating in the formulation of my own understanding of infrastructure and urban regeneration. In effect, community development is a potent, influential force in my life that has given me a sense of direction and meaning. Infrastructure installs in me a belief that I can achieve and reach new heights, therefore acting as a foundation for success and fulfilment in the future.

I am clear that I want to pursue a course in the area of the built environment, because it will enable me to combine the strongest aspects of my personality; a fascination with design, particularly arrangements of light and space; enthusiasm for solving practical problems; and working with other people. These qualities together with my ambition to develop as a person, further my knowledge with my insatiable drive have brought me both academic and vocational success and fulfilment. It is my desire to travel around the world and experience other cultures and broaden my horizons. With this in mind, possessing a set of transferable skills and knowledge, gained from this course, will be invaluable for me in the future.

Although I view learning as a crucial area to focus upon in my life, I strive to be more complex than this, making myself a more well rounded individual. Essentially, maintaining a healthy body is a prerequisite to achieving a healthy state of mind. Therefore, I frequently visit the gym and participate in a variety of sporting activities, both traditional and unique. Personally, I enjoy sports such as tennis, hockey, trampolining and skiing. In effect, these events allow me to work within a team orientated environment, whilst maintaining my individualistic sense of achievement. Conversely, I also attempt to integrate my passion with photography into my free time. On many occasion, I utilise ICT facilities. This contrast of leisure and learning enables me to develop a clear sense of balance within my life.

- There are 19 similar sentences, which is 90% of the sentences considered.
- These 16 sentences were found at www.studential.com on Jun 28, 2015
- 3 further sentences were found in 2 files.
- Original words
Any questions?

compactplus@brighton.ac.uk