Personal Statements

A personal statement allows you to show the college why we should offer you a place on the course. In order to do this successfully, you need to show your interest and enthusiasm for the subject, as well as demonstrate why the course is right for you (this is the part where you have a chance to present your skills, experiences and plans). Tell us about your reasons for applying, relevant interests, work experience, hobbies and special achievements. Please remember that some courses conduct an interview and the more you are able to tell the college about yourself the easier it is to assess your suitability.

The examples below are for information purposes only and should only be used as a guideline and not copied. Remember, this is a 'personal' statement about you. And you are what the college is interested in.

Guideline Section Examples for Personal Statements:

- Reasons for applying for this course?
- Why choose College?
- Relevant Skills
- Relevant Experience
- Personal Interest
- Personal Attributes
- Previous Study
- Future Plans / Career Goals
- For SVQ courses
- Handy Hints
- Things to Avoid
**Reason for applying to this course:**

Why this course? Explain what has led you to choose this college course and what has influenced your decision.

Examples:

“The reason why I chose this course is because I thoroughly enjoy being creative and designing costumes. I hope this course will allow me to develop my skills and understanding of specific tools required when constructing different designs.”

*Textile Design*

“I have chosen this course as I have always loved cooking as a hobby and wish to take this further. I hope to gain a full time job in a kitchen once I have completed all of the different Professional cookery levels. Although I have had no experience in a working kitchen, I have taken part in a 'Chef for the Day' programme at Dundee College and I studied Home Economics in both fourth and fifth year. In fourth year I completed a course of food hygiene training gaining my Elementary Food Hygiene Certificate.”

*Professional Cookery*

“I have chosen this course as I am interested in the prevention, cause and treatment of diseases. I would like to be able to investigate and understand the problems of life such as drug resistance and viral infection. From this course I would like to obtain laboratory-based skills and a deep understanding of disease and the health of human beings. When I was studying higher Biology I was particularly fascinated in how viruses worked and phagocytosis where the phagocytes engulf harmful foreign particles. This was how I ended up being drawn into studying this type of course. This year at school I am studying advanced higher Biology to deepen my understanding of the subject.”

*HND Biomedical Sciences*

“I have always been interested in hospitality management because it is associated with providing services in hotels, restaurants, spas, bars, pubs and organisation of events. The event that reinforced this interest of mine was a field trip to a 5-star hotel. The environment was appealing and attractive. The pleasant and friendly disposition of staff fascinated me, and triggered the need for me to learn more about hospitality management.”

*Hospitality Management*
Why choose College?

Why college rather than university or employment/volunteering, etc.? Explain what has led you to choose college and what has influenced your decision.

Examples:

“I am looking forward to attending college, making new friends and learning new skills. I have applied for college rather than going to University as your courses appeal more to me.”

“I realise it is time to broaden my academic qualifications, to encompass the skills required to work in the IT industry, particularly with the added Cisco Certified Network Associate and Microsoft Certified Technology Specialist programmes bundled into the degree. I feel that adding an HND in Computer Networking and Internet Technology to my original degree would provide me with the necessary edge required to achieve interviews and secure a position; the HND would also show any prospective employer that I am keen and willing to continue my education, that I have not allowed it to stall and my interest in working in a computer orientated environment has not left me.”

“I am particularly willing to continue my study in Dundee College on completion of the HNC programme because of the academic curriculum, learning methodology, knowledge and the leverage that the College has for Hospitality and Tourism Management.”

“I am currently studying Health and Social Care Academy at Dundee College which I am enjoying. I am hoping to achieve my SVQ Level 2 at the end of this course. After I finish this course, I would love to have the opportunity to study the HNC Social Care course where I’d achieve my SVQ Level 3 and either enter employment as a Support Worker or study Social Work at Dundee University.”
Relevant Skills

Explain the skills you already have such as communication, problem-solving, teamwork, etc. and provide examples where you have demonstrated these skills.

Examples:

“In 4th year as part of the school curriculum I worked a full week in a local restaurant. During this work experience I had the opportunity to observe how to serve and take customers’ orders this shows that I am good with the public. Throughout the week I had to do general cleaning jobs and near the end of the week I got to take customer’s orders and serve food and drink to their tables. From this week I gained listening and communication skills which will be useful when I have to work as part of a team in the future. It has also improved my work ethic by the enhancement of my time keeping and organisational skills.”

“At school I gained an Intermediate 2 in Art and Design. During this time I completed a self-portrait using pencil which is my preferred material however I have worked with pastel and watercolour and really enjoyed experimenting with the different materials. Since leaving school I have continued to experiment and hope to work with a larger variation of materials whilst on the Art and Design.”

Art and Design

“I find myself to be caring, patient and trustworthy person which are qualities I believe a good nurse should have.”

Access to Nursing

“I had practical training in a bank for 6 months, which was a part of my studies. My duties included issuing clients with debit cards and assisting a Credit Manager with securities for loans such as filling in clients’ records.”

Accounting
Relevant Experience

Write about your experiences that help demonstrate your qualities, and the skills that you have developed. You could also list the duties you have performed.

Examples:

“I specifically requested to volunteer at the local British Heart Foundation charity shop as this charity is particularly important to me. It supports the field of science that I very much want to become a part of. They aim to fight disease of the heart and to find new treatments. I carry out routine shop duties including stock taking and serving customers.”

*Biomedical Sciences*

“Aside from college, in April 2012, I gained work experience at a beauty salon. I assisted with the set-up of procedures such as waxing and nail extensions as well as general clean-up tasks around the salon and filing client data into the database. I feel this experience helped boost my confidence in terms of interacting with customers and helping with inquiries as well as providing me with furthermore information regarding what it is like to be a beautician both physically and mentally.”

*Beauty Care and Make Up*

“I work part time at Action for Children, Dundee Youth Housing Service at weekends. I was working there full time until I decided I would like to become more qualified in this sector. In this job, I support young adults who are facing homelessness. I help the young people become more independent by supporting them with cooking, cleaning, budgeting, self-esteem issues and helping to build positive relationships, etc.”

*Social Care*

“I am currently a 6th year pupil and I am enjoying the extra responsibilities and opportunities afforded to me particularly in my role as a Prefect. I help supervise younger pupils at lunchtimes and act as a host at parent evenings or events. I enjoy being part of a team, meeting challenges and successfully devising solutions. I enjoy working with others and meeting new people and I look forward to the next stage of my education and career.”

*Civil Engineering*
Personal Interest

Let the college know that you have a genuine interest in the course. Where did that interest come from – school, a hobby and work experience? Mention specific subjects that you are interested in.

Examples:

“I specifically requested to volunteer at the local British Heart Foundation charity shop as this charity is particularly important to me. It supports the field of science that I very much want to become a part of. I carry out routine shop duties including stock taking and serving customers. At times the work is challenging but I firmly believe that it is for a worthy cause.”

“In my spare time I enjoy taking my dog out for long walks, shopping in town, taking photographs, doing yoga and also socialising with my friends and family on the weekends. I am also about to become an art & crafts volunteer for small children in my community.”

“Outside school I enjoy many sporting hobbies and as a member of a local sports club take advantage of the facilities available there as well as at school. I like watching competitive sports, particularly football and I enjoy spending time with my friends. I also like listening to music and attending musical events.”

“In my spare time, aside from working in a busy cafe, I like to spend time socialising with close friends and family. I have known to provide my friends with manicures before nights-out or big events as extra practise for myself. I also attend local ice hockey matches and go ice skating every other week. I attend the gym regularly as well as swimming to keep fit and active.”

“I first became interested in working in care after my stay in hospital in February, after watching how the nurses help, encourage and support all patients it made me realise this is the career I wanted to follow. I have always been the type of person who likes to look after people and always put their needs in front of my own.”
Personal Attributes

Let the college know about you; your qualities and what motivates you. Talk about your strengths, activities you have pursued, achievements reached or challenges faced.

Examples:

“I'm a hard working individual, which gives me the ability to succeed in my work. My strengths are working well with peers and putting myself forward to face new challenges.”

“I used to be a member of Forfar Amateur Swimming Club for a number of years where I trained up to four times a week. Competing in club swimming galas, technical galas and Tayside League competitions has helped me to become a good team player. Whilst at the club, I learned to motivate myself into working to my full potential. From this I also gained motivational skills and improved my creativity through facing new challenges.”

“I worked at a newsagents from January 2007-January 2012. My role was to deliver newspapers every Sunday morning. This involved starting work early in the morning, required good time keeping skills and responsibility for being on time and also required valuable organisation skills. A great deal of discipline was required for this position. This proves my dedication and consistency whilst infusing my motivation to see a task through until the end.”

“I am a very punctual person having never been late to a lecture or class at all this year. To add to that, I am very rarely off, having only been off twice this year due to illness. When I was off however, I made sure that I was caught up on what I had missed and any work that needed to be completed was done in time for going back.”

“I am very good team and take instruction well, I have good communication skills and I know this would help me through this career. I am a hard worker which I express through my rugby and work, don’t like leaving something unfinished. I think of myself as a creative person as I also have an interest in art and design but I don’t want to succeed in a career doing so, as this is a hobby rather than a career.”
Previous Study

Let the college know about previous and current study, including short courses, training undertaken, qualifications achieved.

Examples:

“I am currently enrolled on the Transition to Social Science course at Dundee College. I strongly feel that this is a great opportunity to progress to HNC level to enhance my future career options. I am going into semester two of my course and I have had lots of great feedback both from lecturers as well as my fellow students. This only motivates me further to double my efforts as I want to be the best I can be.”

*Social Sciences*

“I wish to advance onto this course from NQ Games as I am enjoying the feeling of accomplishment every time my code works and something I have made runs. I have always wanted to go onto develop skills I never had and work in an industry which I love and have grown up with.”

*Computer Games Development*

“I am currently on a twelve week personal development programme with the Prince’s Trust. As part of the programme I have taken part in team building activities which have developed my confidence and made me more aware of myself. I have become more focused and pushed myself out of my comfort zone doing many challenges including renovating a garden as part of a community project. The nature of this project allowed me to draw on my artistic side as I have been doing murals on the wall in the garden.”

*Art and Design*

“I have had experience working with children as on the previous NC early education course I was given the chance to work with primary one during my placement that I enjoyed so much that I now attend at the school to help voluntarily. At my secondary school in sixth year I was awarded prefect, this meant I could take part in peer mentoring which is where you can help children in younger years with work they are struggling with in their school subjects, I thoroughly enjoyed this as I love the feeling of helping someone grow and develop.”

*Early Education and Childcare*
Future Plans / Career Goals

Let the college know about how studying this course/being at college may help you in your future plans.

Examples:

“My main objective, in the long term, would be to ultimately have my own business in fashion design. However, I realise that I need to take specific measures to achieve this goal. To do this, smaller steps may be needed to achieve my ambitions.”

“Becoming a professional Chef has always been something I have wanted to do as a career and I would love the opportunity to pursue that.”

“My Main goal is to complete a 3 year degree in Psychology, primarily in the area of Counselling. I want to be qualified to give people professional advice and the help they need within valuable situations that may arise in their life.”

“My reason for choosing this course is that I have always had an interest in civil engineering and plan to progress from the course onto further education at university. After this I plan to take my civil engineering qualification to the army where I wish to become a civil engineering officer in the Royal Engineers of the British Army.”

“My goal for the upcoming year is to continue to expand my knowledge in regards to the field of beauty therapy. I wish to then progress on to HND Beauty Therapy, finally then graduating and going on to work in a spa or salon.”

“I would love the opportunity to study the HNC so I have a more relevant qualification for employment or as an entry grade to study Social Work at University.”
For SVQ courses

Example:

“
I have been working as a full time support worker for 2 years and have been given the opportunity by my employer to undertake my SVQ Level 2 in Social Services and Healthcare. I am employed at the Kingfisher Care Home and my role and responsibilities include assisting residents with all aspects of their care needs. On a regular basis I assist residents to eat and drink, assist with personal care, using, if required, the relevant moving and handling equipment.

I believe that my communication skills have enabled me to work effectively with the residents and contribute to the team working of the home.

I have access to the residents care plans and I am aware that my work practice must adhere to the principles of the National Care Standards and the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice.

I also have access to the policies and procedures of the home and understand the importance of working within these.

I am keen to demonstrate my competency and feel that this award will enable me to achieve this.”
Handy Hints

- Course tutors use personal statements to compare applicants, so try to make yours stand out. Remember the aims of a personal statement. You need to show the admissions tutor why you should be accepted on your chosen course.

- If you are applying to a very popular course, and everyone applying is likely to have good grades, the personal statement is the only thing that will set you apart from other applicants, so you want to try and make yours as good as possible.

- There’s no right answer for how to write it, or any definite formula you should follow – just take your time and don’t worry if it doesn’t sound right on your first attempt. Even the best writers in the world redraft their work!

- A good opening will grab the readers’ attention and cause them to read the statement properly, rather than just scanning it. A good conclusion will mean the reader remembers what you wrote, and hopefully will recommend you.

- Remember - you need to write in a way that is informative, interesting and useful. Along with writing about what you've done, try and explain why you did it, or what you think you learned from it. For example: “I currently have a part time job and this has taught me about teamwork, responsibility and time management in the workplace.”

Things to Avoid

- Using “text-speak” and colloquial language and not writing in full English.
- Simple spelling mistakes
- Being overly negative e.g.- “there are no jobs and no opportunities”
- Copying someone else’s work or online material.