



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

Thinking about university



**Blessed George Napier
Catholic School and Sixth Form**

Katherine Pagett
Student Recruitment Manager

A presentation
with live
commentary by
Mrs Ellul and Mrs
O'Donnell

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UCAS application explained

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0loBMvhTW9k>

Degree Apprenticeships

- Combines paid work (practical, on-the-job training) and university degree study
- Studied over up to 6 years
- IT, finance, law, nursing, construction, engineering
- Study methods include:
 - Distance learning
 - Day release
 - Block mode learning (full-time study session away from full-time work)
 - Full time study plus vacation work/year in industry
- Paid a wage and tuition fees and training costs are covered
- How to apply:
 - National Apprenticeship Service
 - Direct to employers (can't choose where study)
 - Through UCAS



COLLEGE

A college course can join up with the apprenticeship route.

After A levels, or a Level 3 BTEC diploma, you can study for a HNC (equivalent to first year university) at college.

What do Admissions Tutors look for?

- Apply in time
- Reference
- Will you be able to cope with the academic demands of the course?
- Do you meet the entry requirements?



15th October

15th January

Most BGN
applications are sent
by 15th December

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Meet the entry requirements

- What are they?
- Are they realistic?
- Are there any specific requirements? E.g. GCSE, A Levels, IB, BTEC, EPQ etc
- Work experience?
- Entry Test?



Look at university leagues tables to decide if your grades would attract an offer.

If your MEG is BBB, applying to a university with entry requirements of AAA might get you an offer, but not a place after the August results.



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Personal statements - comments from Admissions Tutors

- 'Highly important'
- 'It's the only way to tell those that are interested in the subject from those that are just good at it'
- 'Forms the basis for the interview'
- 'Especially important in borderline cases'
- 'Important at confirmation/clearing'
- 'I look for students who will be interesting to teach'



Universities look at

- 1 Your GCSE grades
- 2 A level predictions
- 3 Personal statement
- 4 School reference

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Personal statement

- Reasons for course/subject choice
- What you enjoy in any related subjects now
- Interests/ current affairs/ reading around the subject
- Career goals/ what hope to gain
- Interests/hobbies
- School/college experience – positions of responsibility
- Involvement in Higher Education activities
- Work experience/employment
- Skills/personal qualities relevant to the course
- Gap year information, if applicable
- Motivation – Commitment - Enthusiasm



Choose the course first, then the university.

Are you happy to study that subject for the next 3 years?

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Key skills to do well



Medicine

- Sound academic background
- Physical stamina
- Manual dexterity
- Desire to help people
- Able to work under pressure
- Time management
- Methodical
- Interest in science
- Communication skills
- IT skills
- Study skills
- Team working
- Self-motivation

You may need a skeleton

COSTS AN ARM AND A LEG

These key skills apply to other careers as well – medical or not.

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Personal Statements

'I enjoy the theatre and used to go a couple of times a year.' (Drama)

'I am a keen reader and committed to the study of human behaviour through TV soaps.' (Psychology)

'My interest in medicine stems from my enjoyment of 'Casualty' and other related TV series.'

'To be or not to be, that is the question'. It was this quote from Shakespeare's Macbeth that persuaded me to study English.

Type of school, college or training centre	Comprehensive	
School Number		
Date when the applicant is intended to commence study for the course		
Total number in year 10	Full time	150
Number normally proceeding to higher education each year	Part time	0

A

years and throughout this time he has achieved good grades in his GCSE. He is currently completing a four subject course of the basic and many of the more including some extra reading on him to regularly ask why and he will independently on his A2 coursework. He has a good understanding of the has been described as mature, aptitude required to take this subject. He clearly enjoyed the topics and has studying History has allowed Ben to events, plus cope with large amounts of to be general. ents, expres requi

Vague?

Not academic?

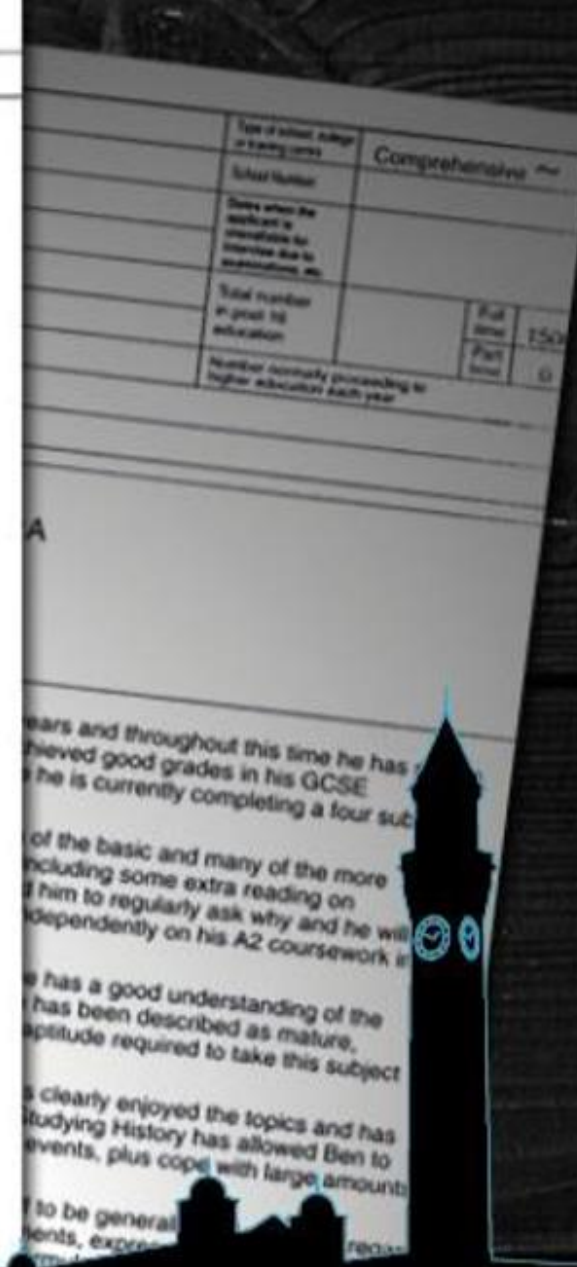
Superficial?

General?

Personal Statements

When I started school, I believed that when it came to examination and coursework, there was always a right and a wrong answer. As I continued my education, I realised that this was not always the case: there is often more than one answer, the validity of which depends not so much on it being 'right' or 'wrong' but rather whether it is supported by reasoned argument. As part of my English A level I studied Henry V. I was struck how, by selective quotation, it was possible to portray Henry as both a selfless hero and a manipulative opportunist. Similarly, in my study of Mussolini for History, it was apparent that he too could be viewed as either a ruthless tyrant or national hero depending on the source material that was selected.

(Law)



This writing is the result of numerous drafts.

They have integrated ideas about different subjects, as well as a flavour of the student's developing ideas on learning.

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Personal Statements

'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 Tutankhamen type of Ruling the World except, succeeding where they failed, because quite simply they lacked the basic understanding of human psychology.'

The image shows a UCAS application form with a silhouette of a mosque in the background. The form includes a table with the following data:

Type of school, college or training centre	Comprehensive	
School Number		
Does your school or college have a specialism?		
Total number of years of education	Full time	1500
Number normally proceeding to higher education each year	Part time	0

Below the table, there is a section for the personal statement. The text visible on the form includes:

years and throughout this time he has achieved good grades in his GCSE. He is currently completing a four subject course of the basic and many of the more including some extra reading on and him to regularly ask why and he will independently on his A2 coursework in.

He has a good understanding of the subject and has been described as mature, with the aptitude required to take this subject.

He clearly enjoyed the topics and has been studying History has allowed Ben to learn about events, plus cope with large amounts of work.

He is to be general, but he is a good student, experienced and motivated.

Waste of time.

Mrs Ellul would not press the UCAS button on this one!

Personal Statements

The occupation of engineers, particularly mechanical, because of their vital role in daily life, is something I have grown to appreciate and now aspire to. My ultimate vision is to be part of a Formula 1 team; the pioneering excellence and precision involved with such an occupation appeals to me and despite its esoteric appearance provides genuine advancements enjoyed by many in their everyday lives.

In Year 12 I did a project on the application and development of technology within Formula 1, and as part of the research, organised a tutorial with the lead engineer of Red Bull Racing. This proved fascinating, his knowledge and understanding of the mechanical components of the cars further fuelled my intention to study engineering, and confirmed to me my aspirations of working in Formula 1. David Treymayne's 'The Science of Formula 1 Design' gave a fascinating insight into the individual components which allow the cars to perform as well as they do. My project allowed me to conclude safety is the primary cause of technological development, the research Formula 1 provides, as well as the budget, allows devices such as Traction Control and ABS to be commercially implemented in the public sector.

Type of school, college or training centre	Comprehensive	Other
School Number		
Does your school/college provide any extra-curricular activities?		
Total number of pupils in school/college	Full time	150
Number normally proceeding to higher education each year	Part time	0

years and throughout this time he has achieved good grades in his GCSE and he is currently completing a four subject course of the basic and many of the more advanced including some extra reading on his own and him to regularly ask why and he will be independent on his A2 coursework in History. He has a good understanding of the subject and has been described as mature, responsible and capable of taking this subject seriously. He clearly enjoyed the topics and has enjoyed studying History has allowed Ben to develop his writing skills, plus cope with large amounts of work and to be general, he is a very good student, expressive and creative.

Ideas are well-linked.

Personal statement examples

‘I have always wanted to either be a doctor or a primary school teacher.’ – Applied for Medicine.



‘I have always wanted to study history or physics’


‘I have always wanted to pursue a Journalism degree’ –
Birmingham does not do Journalism!

Ask your form tutor to read your completed personal statement to point out any weaknesses.


Making a good impression with your personal statement

- At least 75% should concentrate on course/subject related issues
- Grammar/spelling/vocabulary
- Be specific
- Be honest
- Be positive
- Be selective
- Take time – edits required, don't have to start with first paragraph
- Don't plagiarise – Similarity Detection Service
- Don't start every sentence with 'I'
- No lists – analyse your experiences



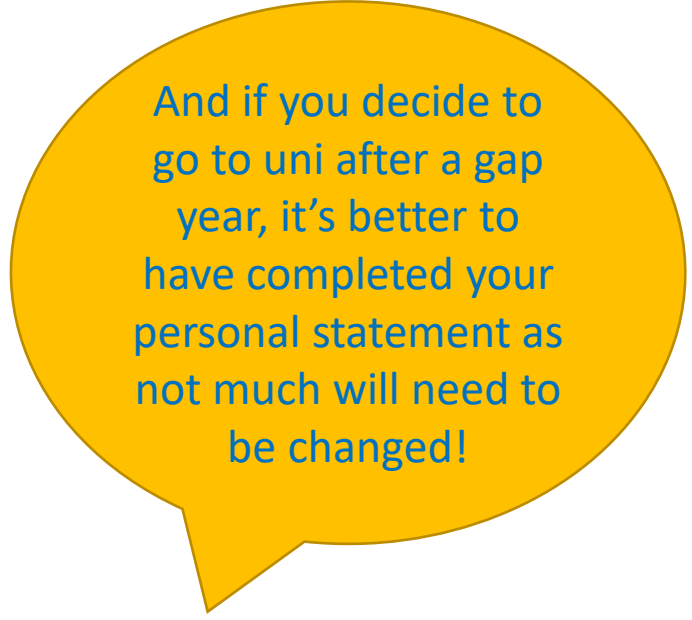


Personal statements
take many drafts to
make them sound just
right.



What if I'm not planning to
go to university?

The statement makes up
most of your covering letter
for a job application.



And if you decide to
go to uni after a gap
year, it's better to
have completed your
personal statement as
not much will need to
be changed!