

Writing Your Personal Statement – 2026 Entry Onwards

If you're applying to university for 2026 entry, there are some important changes to how you'll write your personal statement. Instead of one long text, UCAS is introducing a new structure: three shorter sections, each with a different question to help you shape your answer.

This new format is designed to give all students the same clear structure and support. Each section has a minimum character count of 350, and the total across all three sections must not exceed 4,000 characters (including spaces). You'll see helpful character counters and guidance in the UCAS form.

The Three Questions

1. Why do you want to study this course or subject?

Think about:

- What interests or excites you about this subject
- Specific areas of the course or industry that you're drawn to
- Your personal journey and what led you here
- Where this course could take you in the future

2. How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course?

This could include:

- Relevant coursework or school projects
- Dance, drama, or performance modules you've taken
- Research or reading you've done around the subject
- Subjects you study outside of exams
- Unassessed but relevant school-based learning

3. What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?

You might want to mention:

- Training, shows, competitions or auditions you've taken part in
- Community or charity involvement
- Part-time jobs, internships, or voluntary work
- Creative hobbies, clubs, or leadership roles (e.g. Duke of Edinburgh, Scouts, Young Enterprise)
- Travel, languages, personal achievements or challenges you've overcome
- Anything that shows commitment, reliability or teamwork

Final Tips

- Your answers should be well written and articulate
- Spelling, grammar and vocabulary all matter – proofread before you submit

- Be specific and genuine – use examples that reflect you
- Write your answers in a Word document first so you can edit and check your word count