

So, what is a personal statement?

A personal statement is a bit like a pitch document. It's an opportunity for you to share your story and explain why you're a good match for a subject. Whether you're applying to a course which asks for a portfolio or not, the personal statement is the place to use your voice. From what's brought you to your current position, to what you hope for in the future and what draws you towards creative education. We welcome students from all backgrounds who are challenging, curious and creative. Tell us who you are and who you want to become.

Please note: While these tips will help you with your undergraduate application, remember to also check the specific page for your chosen course to ensure you've considered the specific criteria as it varies from course to course.

Find out more at arts.ac.uk/courses

Don't get too stuck in the past

We love hearing about your journey, but what does your future hold? What will you bring to the area you've chosen and how can it propel you further? You've chosen to move to London from a different location so include a bit about what's made you arrive at this decision. Perhaps you've taken a few years out – use that to your advantage. Tell us about your transferable skills and experiences which align to your selected pathway.

Give it context

You may be applying for a few courses within a wider subject area, but with only one personal statement generally allowed, aim to be broad. We seek similar qualities across courses, so it's more about how you demonstrate your ability. Are you being relevant? Maybe you've mentioned wanting to study within a creative environment but overlooked why the subject area appeals to you. If applying with a portfolio, ensure there's a cohesive link. You may even be invited for an interview, so avoid including anything you won't feel comfortable talking about in person.

Consider the structure

Include the punchiest points to create a text with intent. A logical approach is key – while your story may have layers, we don't want to be left puzzled trying to piece it together. Ask yourself a series of questions and return to them to stay on track. There's no right answer. Every applicant will have their own version – that's what makes a statement personal.

Watch out for errors

You've worked hard, so show attention to detail by catching any glaring errors. Not everyone feels confident producing written work, but don't worry. Ask someone to help you identify any flaws. There are lots of tools to check spelling and grammar but nothing beats the human eye. Welcome the dictionary, but be wary of the thesaurus – don't be tempted to litter your statement with unfamiliar words. It's supposed to be a reflection of you, so stay honest.

It's all about you

This document is dedicated to you. What attracts you to the area you've applied to? It doesn't have to be the obvious. Maybe you've chosen jewellery design because geology left you fascinated with minerals. Our course pages include selection criteria – making the perfect prompt. How can you show us you work well as part of a team? Maybe it's a group project you're proud of or a society you set up. We want your point of view.

Practice makes perfect

Before you submit your statement, check you're completely satisfied. Read it aloud – does it have your voice? This can also identify if you've forgotten anything or if a structural adjustment will improve its impact. Write a few different drafts. Your statement shouldn't be something that's rushed or written the night before the deadline – even if you are a 'leave it to last minute' person!