



Undergraduate Study

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Selection - Personal statements

Personal statements allow students to tell us about their subject interest, and the process of writing a personal statement can often help a student better understand their academic interests and intellectual motivations.

What should a personal statement contain?

Students are advised to follow the [UCAS advice](#) about what to include in their personal statement. At Cambridge, all admissions decisions are based solely on academic criteria (ability and potential). Therefore, in their personal statement, we are looking for applicants to:

- explain their reasons for wanting to study the subject at university
- demonstrate their enthusiasm for and commitment to their chosen course
- express any particular interests within the field
- outline how they have pursued their interest in the subject in their own time

Such information is often used as a basis for discussion at interview.

How important are extra-curricular activities?

As our admissions decisions are based on academic criteria, we expect to see evidence of students' super-curricular activities – their wider engagement with their area(s) of academic interest, such as reading and other exploration relevant to the course they have applied for.

In addition, we look at how these activities demonstrate other characteristics that will aid students' transition to life at university, such as how they balance their academic and personal commitments, and have developed particular skills or qualities (such as perseverance, independence, leadership or team-working).

A student's participation (or not) in specific extra-curricular activities that are not relevant to the course applied for are not taken into account and do not affect their chances of being made an offer of a place at Cambridge.

However, when composing their personal statement, students should be advised to consider the importance that their other university choices may place on extra-curricular activities.

Cambridge-specific comments

Applicants can make additional comments particularly relevant to their Cambridge application in their [SAQ](#), for instance to highlight particular features of the Cambridge course that attracted them.

This additional personal statement is optional. Applicants will not be disadvantaged if they have nothing to add to this section of the SAQ and should be advised not to repeat information they provided in their UCAS personal statement here as we will have already received a copy of this.



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