

Writing a personal statement

Personal statement

A well written personal statement can help to increase your chances of standing out from other applicants and are usually the sole means of personally expressing your determination, achievements and goals. Make sure your tone is positive and expresses your motivation.

Things to include:

- Why the course you wish to study means something to you (provide examples)
- The course name and the university name
- Extra-curricular activities/community involvement during your later high school years
- Long term goals; any interest you might have in pursuing a career in your area of study
- Consistent story line that focuses on your special aspects and interests

Remember:

- Be positive, be upbeat, be honest about your ambitions, accomplishments, and plans
- Say what you mean to say
- Write simply, rely on nouns and active verbs, not adjectives and adverbs, to carry your message
- Consider the audience
- Make it interesting, make it easy to read; both in terms of writing style and appearance
- Make the opening of each response engaging
- Have perfect spelling, punctuation, and grammar
- Ask others to review your statement
- Apply the 25-30-word, sentence rule!

Things to avoid:

- Talking about achievements from too long ago - for example, from the first two years of high school or from primary school
- Making general statements
- Writing less than one full A4 page
- Saying things that are untrue.

For example:

I have good leadership skills as I was part of the SRC and was involved in community activities such as NAIDOC day.

Too general.

I have developed my leadership skills by being actively involved in the SRC. During my time I was involved in the preparation and joint coordination of NAIDOC day, including advertising presenting concerts to the AECG and supporting Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students to become actively involved.

Provide specific examples.

How to write an effective personal statement

Your personal statement:

- provides you with the opportunity you get to “talk” directly to the admissions on the degree you want to study
- forms the basis of your interview
- provides an opportunity for you to demonstrate:
 - why you think you would be a good student for the program you are applying to
 - why the University should select your application over those of other candidates.

Remember:

- **DON'T** go over page or word limits (1page – approximately 500 words)
- **REVISE. REVISE. REVISE.** Make sure you ask other people to read and critique the statement. This will improve it and may clarify it in your own mind.

Content	Words
Paragraph 1 State your own personal desire to study in your particular field. BE SPECIFIC. What is it that you are doing and why do you want to do it? What will you do if (when) accepted and why? Outline your goals or intentions and what you hope to (will) achieve.	100
Paragraph 2 Which specific degree or program do you want to do, and why do you want to do that particular program? Why do you want to do it at this particular institution? Are there specific lecturers/resources that make that institution the best place to study?	150
Paragraph 3 Examples of extra curricula activities in community activities, volunteering, leadership, sport or school related subjects.	150
Paragraphs 4 Provide some background and personal history as evidence of your desire to further your education.	100

Personal statement example: Roberta Andre

Desire to study

As a young Aboriginal woman, I understand the connections Aboriginal males and females have with each other as individuals, and within their family and communities. I believe having highly educated Aboriginal people in the health sector will assist in increasing the number of Aboriginal people accessing health services. I **aim to support the goal** of closing the health and life expectancy gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and supporting the health status of all Australians.

Goals or intention

Reasons for completing the degree

As a proud Wiradjuri woman, from Dubbo, with close family ties in Moree and other remote communities, I understand the difficulties and barriers that many Aboriginal people experience, in accessing effective medical and health advice. I would love nothing more than to complete the **Bachelor of Health Science in Indigenous Health Studies** and give back to my home town and community. I **believe this particular degree will also support** my desire to work in low socio-economic communities in rural and remote areas of NSW, where Aboriginal health professionals can have a significant impact to the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people. My long-term goal is to support and educate others in the area of health.

Mention the specific degree

School subjects related to the degree

My chosen subjects at school include the required 2 units of Aboriginal Studies and this choice reflects my desire to learn more about my culture and heritage. I have attached a photo of my major work for Year 12 for which I received 100% as an example of my cultural knowledge and family history. I was a participant of the Youth Leadership Program (IYLP) at the Dubbo College Senior Campus. This program supported me to develop my leadership skills. I was actively involved in a **range of activities** including practical leadership experiences, personal development and mentoring. These activities involved **representing** school at local AECG meetings, **volunteering** at Holy Spirit Aged Care facility and participating in NAIDOC weeks. I was also involved in various netball teams throughout my schooling years. The levels of playing included Astley Cup, Ken Eggleton Cup and Western Area representative netball.

Demonstrated extracurricular activities

Long term goals

I **fully intend to reach my goals** of obtaining a degree and have the support of my family and community to reach my goals. **My brother is currently studying nursing at Newcastle University and my sister is studying to be a health worker and coordinates the administration area of Regional Aboriginal Medical Service.** My siblings and I, all have a desire to improve the health outcomes for Aboriginal people. My effective participation in the alternate pathway offered through the Woolyungah Indigenous Centre and the availability of support services will allow me to reach my long-term goal of completing the Bachelor of Health Science in Indigenous Health Studies. This degree will enable me to undertake a range of career options in the health field, while assisting me to make a significant contribution to the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Personal history