

Applying to the University of Warwick – Personal Statements

What is a personal statement?

All applicants applying to an undergraduate course via UCAS at the University of Warwick will need to write a personal statement to submit with their application. The personal statement is your chance to explain why you are applying to study your course, and what makes you suitable for that particular course. It can be up to 4000 characters or 47 lines long.

How important is my personal statement?

At the University of Warwick, your personal statement, along with the rest of your UCAS form, is considered very carefully both by academics in departments and professional staff working within the central admissions team. The personal statement is especially important to us when we are making decisions about who to make offers to. Our courses are very competitive, with often many more applicants predicted to meet the entry requirements than we are able to offer places to. Where this occurs, the personal statement is important to enable us to select potential students for the course.

What should I include in my personal statement when applying to the University of Warwick?

As there is no one correct way to write a personal statement, this document is not able to provide a 'magic formula' which will guarantee you receive an offer from us. The following topics are things that you may wish to include in your personal statement, and could help to provide a base from which you can start to plan your personal statement.

- What is it that really interests you about the subject? Have you already identified some particular areas of interest?
- Have you already studied your chosen subject at A-Level (or equivalent), or have you covered areas of it whilst studying other subjects?
- Have you done any wider reading on the subject?
- Do your career aspirations relate to the subject you want to study?
- Have you completed any relevant work experience?
- Do your extra-curricular activities relate to your course?
- If you are taking a gap year, are you doing anything that will help you to prepare for your course?

Does Warwick look for anything specifically in a personal statement?

We do not have a set list of things that we are looking for, but there are some things that we think help to contribute to a strong personal statement:

- This is primarily an academic statement about why you want to study a particular subject. Therefore, the majority of the statement should focus on discussion of that subject and why it interests you.
- Following on from this, we want to see that you are genuinely committed to your chosen area of study. Generally, this is better demonstrated through discussion of the subject and the experiences you have had, rather than through writing a sentence saying that you are interested in your subject of choice.

- We are looking for students who can critically reflect on what they have read, experienced and learnt and come to their own reasoned conclusions. NB. this is covered in more detail in the next section.
- We also like to see that you can structure an essay and an argument well, including proof-reading it thoroughly.

Can you tell me a bit more about what 'Critical Evaluation' is?

Critical evaluation is the ability to gather information from different sources and come to your own reasoned conclusion. We would prefer not to see lists of books that you have read, subjects you have studied and work placements you have been on, with no reflection on what you have gained from them. Instead, we would rather you highlight a few of the above, and talk about them in greater depth. For example, if you have read books/articles about a particular area of interest in your subject, or if you have undertaken relevant work experience, you may wish to consider whether your wider reading/experiences have provided a different perspective on your chosen subject or even altered your opinion.

Is there anything that I should avoid including in my personal statement?

We would suggest avoiding including the following in your personal statement if you are applying to Warwick:

- As mentioned above, try to avoid listing endless things in your personal statement. Instead, focus on a few topics, and go into greater depth about how they have contributed to you wanting to study your course.
- Given that you do not know who will be reading your personal statement, try to avoid using humour or making any controversial statements.
- As most Warwick degrees are academic subjects, we would suggest that you do not need to focus so much on transferrable skills e.g. communication, time management etc., unless your course specifically requires these skills. If you do mention transferrable skills, then make sure you take time to explain why these are important for your course of study and how you have acquired them.
- If you do mention any research you have done - for example reading a book or participating in a MOOC - do make sure you have actually read it/participated in it. This is to ensure that your personal statement appears sincere. Also, remember that if you are applying for a course that you will be interviewed for, you may be asked about anything you have mentioned in your personal statement.

I am applying for different subjects on my UCAS form. How can I write one personal statement to reflect this? Can I submit more than one?

You can only submit one personal statement with your UCAS application. We will not usually ask an applicant to submit an additional personal statement. The main exceptions to this are for applicants applying to courses in Global Sustainable Development or Liberal Arts. Applicants who meet the entry requirements for these courses will be requested to submit a second personal statement directly to the University. Details on how and when to do this, as well as guidance about what the statement should contain, will be provided at the time of the request. If you are considering submitting another personal statement for an alternative course, we would suggest that you discuss this with the Undergraduate Admissions Team first, and we will advise whether or not we would consider this.

My study has been disrupted due to personal circumstances. Should I mention this in my personal statement?

Warwick understands that your academic progress and attainment may sometimes be affected by circumstances beyond your control. As space in your personal statement is limited, we would suggest that you should either ask your teacher to include this information in their reference, or alternatively you can complete an AWARDS (Access to Warwick Degrees) form. You can access the form by clicking [here](#).