

Got a question about writing your **personal statement**? Don't worry, you're not alone. We're often asked about this section of the application, and chances are your question will be one we've heard from other students. Check out the answers to five of the most frequently asked questions below – they're all from admissions staff at universities and colleges (the people who spend their time reading personal statements!)

### **1. When should I start?**

- *"As soon as you can! Give yourself time to write it properly. Your first draft alone could take you a whole day to write."* Amy Smith, Nottingham Trent University.
- *"Set yourself a schedule. It will take longer than you think to write your personal statement and it is important that you allow time to review your work several times."* Emily Bell, the University of Liverpool.

### **2. What are unis looking for?**

- *"Don't forget about the obvious! Why do you want to study your chosen course? Hopefully it's something you know the answer to and have taken a lot of time to think about so make sure you include it."* Emma Powell, Edge Hotel School.
- *"Enthusiasm, motivation and focus about the subject you're applying to. Mention extra-curricular activities, transferable skills and include what your future career plans are after your degree."* Maxine Charlton, the University of York.
- *"Unis aren't looking for a dictionary definition of a subject. They know what their degrees are about; they want to know what you understand and enjoy about the subject."* Emily Bell, University of Liverpool.
- *"The best personal statements effectively link examples of the student's extra-curricular activities with the university's entry requirements."* Amy Smith, Nottingham Trent University.

### **3. How should I structure my personal statement?**

- *"Put your notes in order according to what the course you're interested in is looking for. If you have any skills and experience relevant to the entry requirements, make sure you say so at the start of your personal statement."* Amy Smith, Nottingham Trent University.
- *"First impressions aren't everything – yes, a lot of personal statements start in the same way. However, don't put so much prominence on writing a witty first line – having a good overall personal statement will make a much better impression."* Emma Powell, Edge Hotel School.

### **4. What should I do when I've written it?**

- *"Check it carefully! Get your teachers, friends, partner, work colleagues or someone else you trust to read it - out loud - to you. It's a great way to spot errors and make sure it makes sense."* Amy Smith, Nottingham Trent University.
- *"Don't forget to save an up-to-date copy somewhere. If you are invited for an interview your personal statement is likely to be read by the person interviewing you and may be used as a starting point for questions. Make sure you can remember what you wrote and back it all up if you are asked."* Emma Powell, Edge Hotel School.

### **5. What other advice do you have?**

- *"Do not mention a specific university. Unless you reveal otherwise, we will think that you really only want to come to us!"* Emily Bell, the University of Liverpool.
- *"Remember you have a lot to offer – you just have to write about yourself in a positive way and sell all the skills and experience that you have."* Amy Smith, Nottingham Trent University.