

Starting your UCAS Personal Statement can seem daunting. The first thing you need to know is that creative courses (e.g. Fine Art, Design, Architecture) look for a **very** different statement than non-creative courses (e.g. Maths, Law, Medicine). Think carefully about what is **RELEVANT** in a personal statement for creative courses. How does being school captain, for example, communicate your passion for the course you are applying for? It doesn't really.

If you can talk about why you are interested in the subject, how you make work, the ideas behind your work, exhibitions you've been to see and what you hope to learn, there is a very good chance that admissions selectors will have a much stronger sense of your suitability for the course.

Consider carefully how much information you are actually communicating to someone in what you write (remember, they know nothing about you). We always encourage you to make meaningful statements rather than surface statements. We've given an example of each below:

- Surface Statement – 'I like to draw.'
- Meaningful Statement – 'I use a variety of materials to record what I see from primary sources and I prefer using charcoal because I think it allows me to make more gestural marks.'

Below we have listed some helpful trigger questions which you should use to start generating *relevant* content and thinking about structure of your statement.

1. Why are you applying to study a creative subject at Higher Education?

2. Why have you chosen this particular subject area? (Fine Art, Design, Architecture)

3. Clearly state 3 aspects of this particular course, subject area or institution which have encouraged you to apply.

For example: Studio working environment
Quality of work you've seen at Degree Show
The facilities available to students
Course structure (explain what the course structure is)
City the Institution is situated in (why is this important to you)

4. Explain the content of and what you have learned from being involved in Widening Participation or other extra-curricular creative activities.

5. Tell us about how you make work and what it is about?

For example: What kind of art/design/architecture practice do you have? Do you draw from life, do you make things in 3-dimensions, do you knit, weave or embroider, do you make really large scale work, do you take photographs, do you explore colour, texture or shape, do you abstract images, do you play with text, do you illustrate stories?

Is there a particular set of ideas you've been interested in exploring in your work?

How do you use sketchbooks?

Do you look at books about Art, Design or Architecture? Tell us which ones you've found really helpful and why. Do you make notes about what you read and collect images in a sketchbook?

Talk about at least one historical and one contemporary artist/designer/architect that have influenced your work and how you make your work.

Tell us about the best exhibition you've been to see in the last year and why you liked it.

6. What are your creative strengths? What would you like to improve on?

For example: 'I am good at collecting and sorting my ideas in a sketchbook which helps me to develop my work in lots of different ways.'

'I would like to develop highly specialist skills which I've not had access to yet, particularly lithography, which I have seen other artists use very successfully.'

7. What do you hope to gain from your time on this course?

When you have completed the trigger questions, you can e-mail your answers to wp@gsa.ac.uk for feedback before moving on to the first draft of your Personal Statement.