

UCAS & Personal Statements

Summer School

10th July 2024



The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service

- UCAS is an administration service that handles your application and sends to universities on your behalf
- Use [UCAS How to choose the right undergraduate course for you](#) website to get started and then
- Use [UCAS search](#) website to look through all of the available courses
- Create an account on [UCAS Hub](#) with your institution's buzzword. This will be where you create and send your application from

The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service

Quick Facts

- You get 5 choices
 - One course at different institutions
 - One or more than one at the same institution
 - You cannot rank your choices until you receive all your offers
- One personal statement for all your choices
 - Universities do not see where else you have applied

Higher Education Terminology

BA = Bachelor of Arts

BSc = Bachelor of Science

BEd = Bachelor of Education

Beng = Bachelor of Engineering

FdSc = Foundation Degree in Science

FdA = Foundation Degree in Arts

HNC = Higher National Certificate

HND = Higher National Diploma

Hons. = Honours Degree

PGDip = Postgraduate Diploma

MA = Master of Arts

MSc = Masters of Science

PhD = Doctorate

The image displays three screenshots of UCAS course pages for Engineering. Each card includes a university logo, course title, location, level, duration, start date, and UCAS Tariff Points.

Course	Level	Duration	Start Date	UCAS Tariff Points
Engineering	HNC	2 years	16/09/2024	56
Engineering	BEng (Hon)	3 years	30/09/2024	N/A
Engineering	MEng (Hon)	4 years	30/09/2024	N/A



University of
East London



Timeline to your university application



UCAS Key Dates

<https://www.ucas.com/advisers/managing-applications/application-deadlines>

* 16th October 2024 - deadline for applications to Oxford, Cambridge and most courses in medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine/science



A personal statement is:

- A section on your UCAS application form
 - Maximum of 4,000 characters / 47 lines / 500 words
- Only ONE personal statement for all institutions and courses
- An overview of your skills, qualities, experience, subject knowledge, interests and hobbies
- A great opportunity to sell yourself
- Written about YOU by YOU!



Experience

- Subject knowledge e.g. GCSEs, A levels, BTEC, Access to HE: Diploma
- University taster sessions / summer schools
- Work experience
- Positions of responsibility
- Sports club or society
- Interests
 - Volunteering
 - Awards or competitions
 - Digital projects
 - Podcasts





UCAS Personal Statement Builder

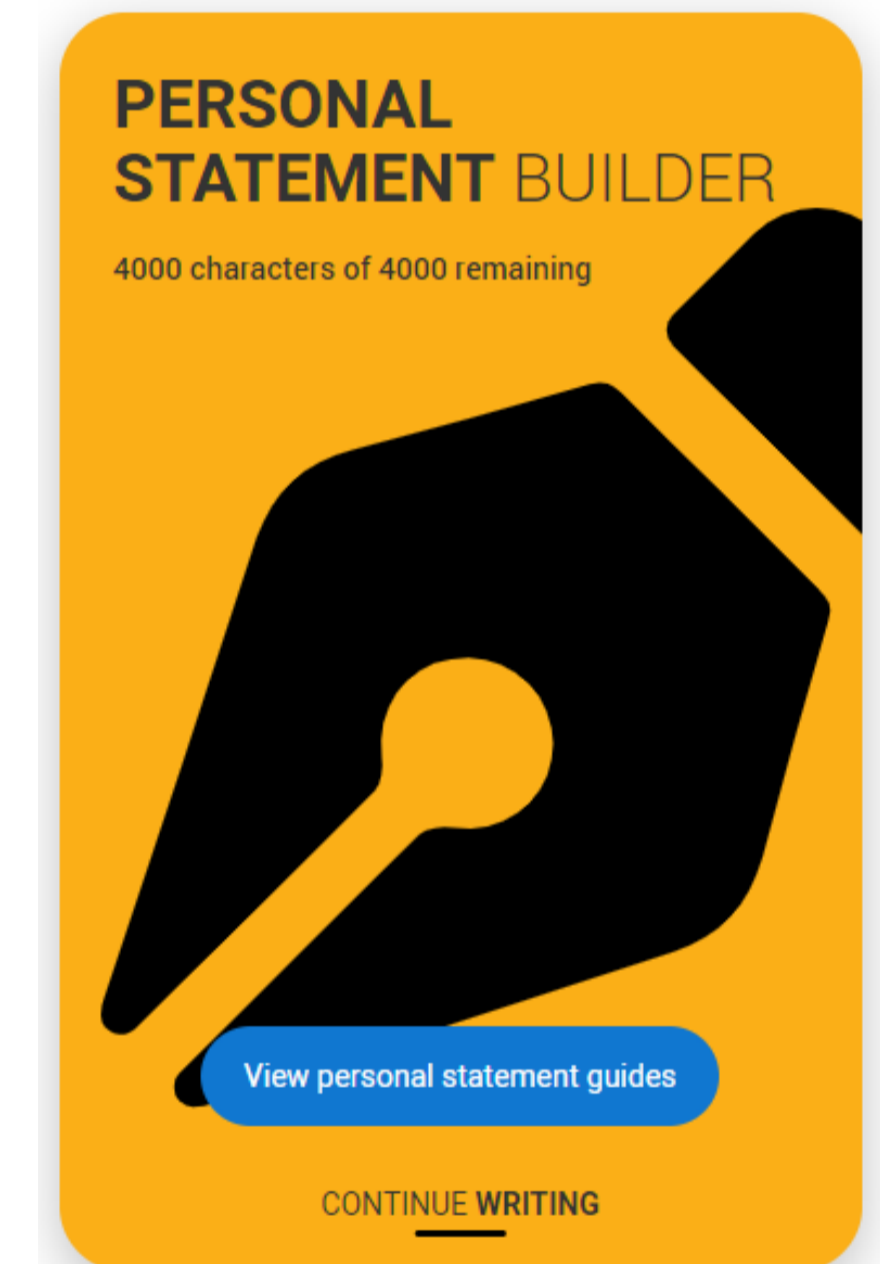
Useful tool to help you structure your statement

3 sections:

- Writing about the course
- Skills and achievements
- Work experience and future plans

You will need to have registered your UCAS Hub account

<https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/applying-university/writing-personal-statement/introducing-personal-statement-tool>





Transferable skills

Skills you already have from school, college, hobbies, volunteering, work experience...

Identify what those skills are and transfer them onto the next step in your education or career



ABC Method

A method to present your academic and work experience examples

Activity – Benefit – Course (ABC)

Activity – What have you done?

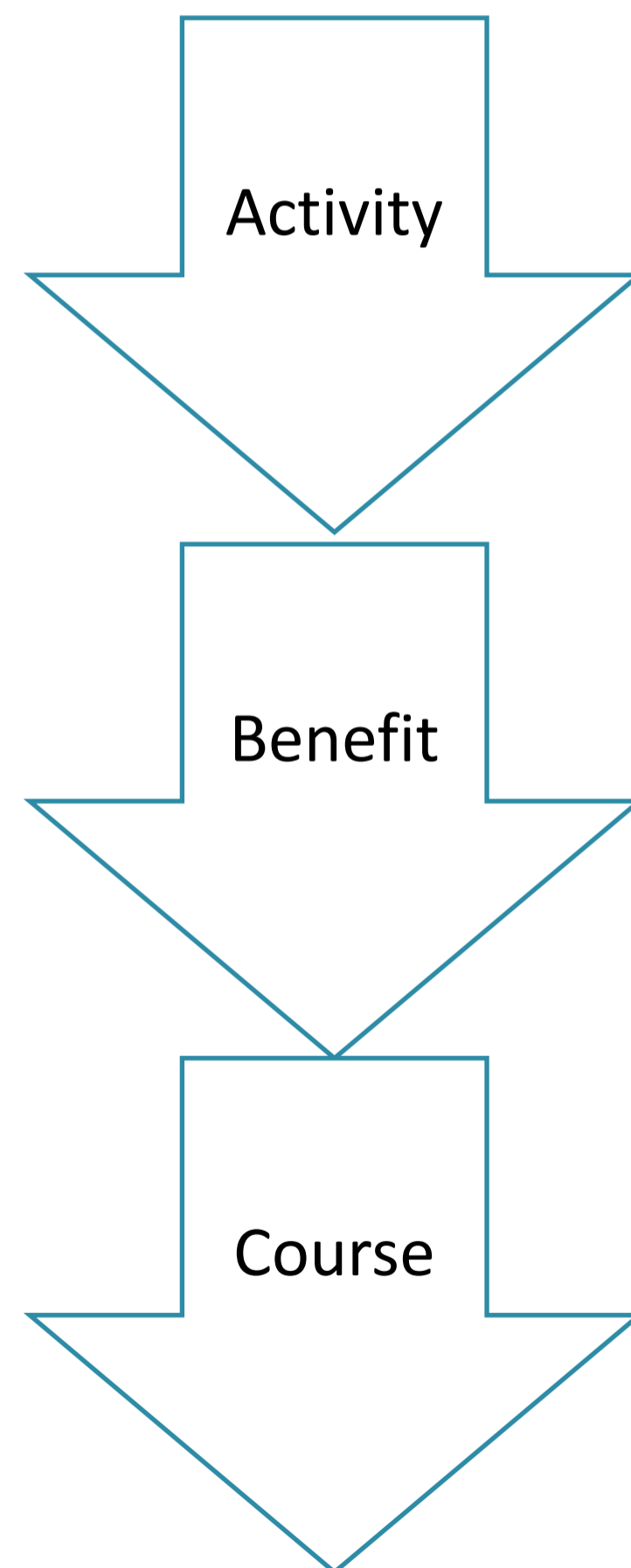
Benefit – What skills have you gained?

Course – How will this prepare you for the course?





Example: Business Studies



- Co-ordinated the creation of a group presentation
- Presented to a large class

- Developed leadership, diplomacy and communication skills

- On an undergraduate business course and in my future career, I am looking forward to using these skills as part of a team and taking the opportunity to lead others





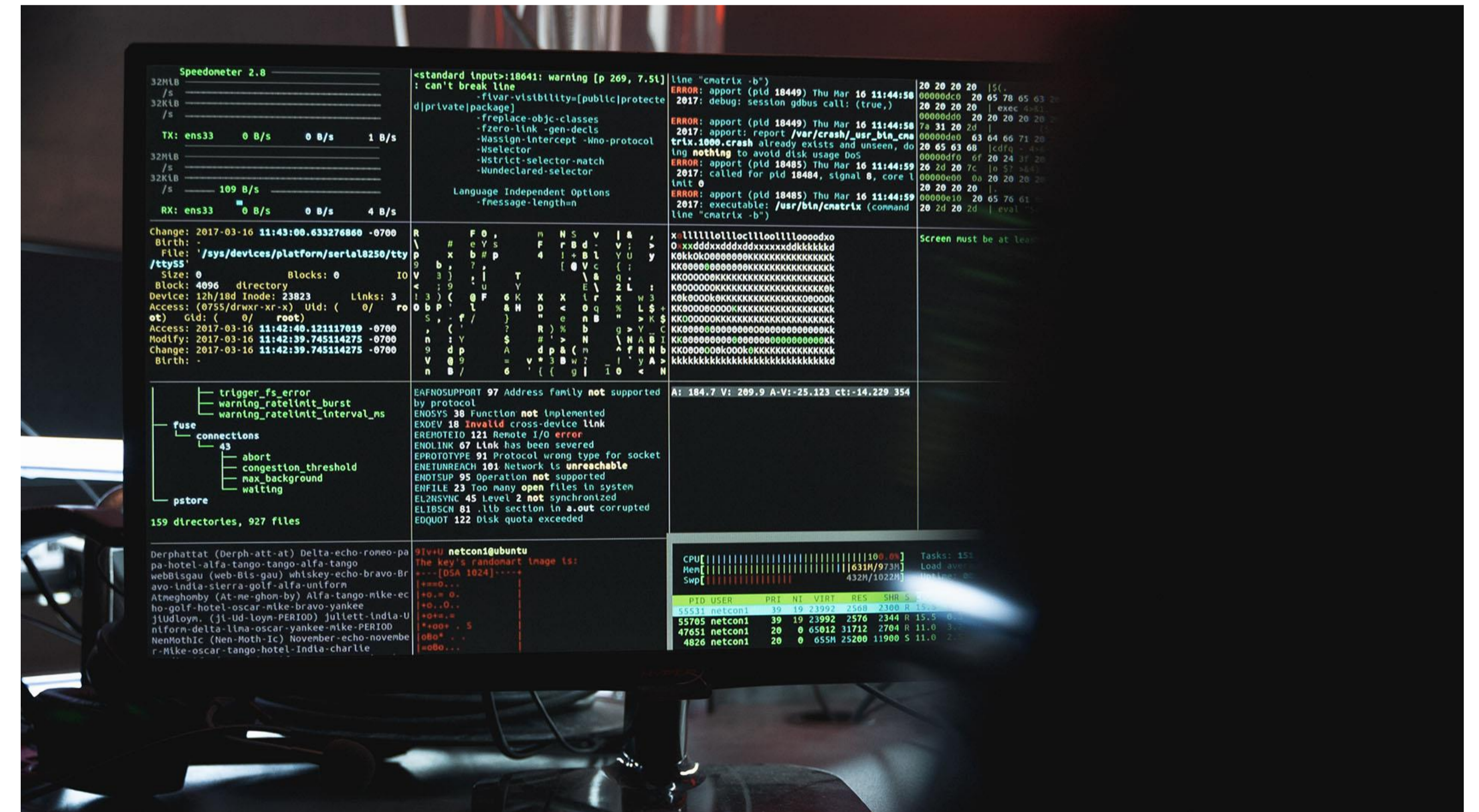
Be original

- How do you stand out from the crowd?
- Write about yourself and avoid common opening lines such as:
 - "From a young age I have (always) been interested in..."
 - "For as long as I can remember I have..."
 - "Throughout my life I have always enjoyed..."
 - "I am applying for this course because..."



Chat GPT and Other AI Tools

- Great care needed with use. UCAS has full guidelines
- Chat GPT and other AI tools are best to use for:
 - Brainstorming your ideas
 - Helping with structure
 - Checking readability





Personal statement – Do's and Don'ts

- **Do** reflect and compile a list of your relevant examples
- **Do** check your spelling and grammar
- **Do** be authentic
- **Do** produce several drafts
- **Do** ask people you trust for their feedback
- **Do** check website course content and entry profiles
- **Do** sell yourself
- **Do** have a beginning, middle and end

- **Don't** use elaborate language that you don't really understand
- **Don't** mention any university names in your personal statement
- **Don't** list your achievements
(Show not tell and give examples to illustrate)
- **Don't** write negative things about your grades
- **Don't** force humour or quirkiness
- **Don't** plagiarise
- **Don't** leave it to the last minute!



Summary

- A personal statement tells universities what you want to study and why
- It includes your ambitions, interests, skills and achievements
- It is structured in paragraphs and has a beginning, middle and end
- It's all about you – let it shine!