



University of
Salford
MANCHESTER

A HANDY GUIDE TO
APPLYING FOR
UNIVERSITY &
WRITING YOUR
PERSONAL
STATEMENT





THE DECISION TO APPLY TO UNIVERSITY IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT YOU WILL MAKE. THIS GUIDE IS DESIGNED TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT TO EXPECT THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS.

This guide gives recommendations on how to formulate your Personal Statement, and includes helpful links you can follow up online if you need further information. We have included a step-by-step guide to applying to university, information on Open Days and some handy hints on writing your Personal Statement.

UNDERGRADUATE OPEN DAYS

Saturday 20th June 2020

Saturday 10th October 2020

Saturday 7th November 2020

Book Here

salford.ac.uk/undergraduate/open-days



Make the most of meeting with careers advisers and teachers, and talk things through with your family and friends to ensure you are making informed decisions about your future.

UCAS Exhibitions take place nationwide every year (usually between February and September). It is useful to speak with University representatives and learn more about the Universities and courses you are applying for. Don't be afraid to ask plenty of questions on the day you visit to find out more about each of the institutions. Ask about the courses you're interested in, what funding there is, accommodation, and what life at university is like.

WANT TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD?

Search our extensive range of courses using our "Find your Future" feature at: www.salford.ac.uk

Join us on one of our Open Days. They are a great opportunity to visit the campus, take part in subject-specific talks and learn more about the wider University experience. We would advise you book onto one early on in the application process, as your experience will help you when it comes to writing your personal statement.

STEP BY STEP GUIDE TO APPLYING TO UNIVERSITY

STEP 1



**Choose universities
and courses**
March - September

STEP 2



**Attend university
open days**
Typically May-October

www.salford.ac.uk/undergraduate/open-days

STEP 3



UCAS Deadline
15 January

Deadline that guarantees your UCAS application will be considered by your chosen institutions.

STEP 4



Begin to receive offers
November - March

You could receive offers within a matter of weeks. Do not be alarmed if it takes longer - each institution will have different admissions processes.

STEP 5



Apply for finance
From January onwards

Start as soon as you can.
www.gov.uk/student-finance

STEP 6



Applicant visit days
Typically February-April

If you have been made an offer from Salford, you will be invited to attend an Applicant Visit Day

STEP 7

Deadline for accepting place
Early May

By the end of April, you should have received your offers. If you applied by the January deadline, you must make your firm and insurance choices by the date set in early May.

STEP 8



Book accommodation
Typically February-April

If you haven't done so already, we suggest you apply for accommodation now by visiting www.salford.ac.uk/accommodation



STEP 9

Deadline for student finance
End of May

You should aim to submit your Student Finance Application by this point.
www.gov.uk/student-finance



STEP 10

Results Day
Mid August

You will need to keep an eye on UCAS Track throughout the day to check for any updates to your offer.
www.ucas.com

GET READY

August - September

We'll start to send you everything you need to know and do before joining us. It's time to start your exciting new life as a university student.

WRITING YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT

You've made the decision to apply for uni and now you have the task of writing your personal statement. So where should you start?

Before you put pen to paper it's best to do your research. Look online at the module breakdown of courses you are interested in. This can help you identify any key skills required. Make sure you're aware of any specific requirements that a university is looking for. For example, are they looking for work shadowing or placement experience. Are they looking for strong evidence of your academic achievements? Remember, this is your opportunity to show Admissions Tutors that you're going to make a great student! Don't forget the character limit – it's 4000 which is approximately 28 tweets!

To help you structure your personal statement we've developed some guidelines for you to use as a template. It's a good idea to get your rough ideas down first, then work up a first draft. Typically statements are three to four paragraphs in length.

This template is designed to help you focus your thoughts and ideas.

Be prepared to write several drafts and to keep revising your statement based on the feedback that you get. It depends on your writing style but most applicants go through three to eight drafts before they're ready to submit.

Once you're happy with it you'll need to upload your personal statement into UCAS. As a handy tip, it's useful to write your personal statement in Microsoft Word first. That way you can be sure of your line and character count and you can run a spelling and grammar check too. When you're ready you can just copy and paste it into your online UCAS application.

Remember: Don't underestimate how much research you need to do! Knowledge around course-specific content, modules you would study, and overall course structure is essential information you need when writing your personal statement. Make sure you set aside plenty of time for research as well as writing. It needs to be your own work. Plagiarism is detectable with software used by UCAS.

INTRODUCTION

Think about: Giving a positive, lasting first impression with a strong opening statement.

The introduction ought to catch the attention of the Admissions Tutor. You should show your knowledge of the course, use positive language and encourage those who want to read it, to want to read on.

Avoid: Cliché statements - a quick online search will bring to your attention some of the most "overused" phrases – avoid these! Make sure your statement is original and interesting.

MAIN BODY

Ensure this is focused and well-written and you will need to exhibit what you have learned from the experiences you are writing about.

Think about: Relating your experience (e.g. work shadowing) to the field of study, and showing how it contributes to your understanding of the course.

Remember to consider including the following:

- ✓ Why have you chosen the courses you are applying for? Is there an aspect of the subject that you find particularly interesting?
- ✓ Talk about your experience, how it relates to the field of study and how it contributes to your understanding of the course(s)
- ✓ Outline your skills and qualities
- ✓ This isn't a list of achievements, or a list of your qualifications - talk around your achievements and how they have built your knowledge of the subject area
- ✓ Academic abilities – think about where your strengths lie. Is it in report-writing, research, presentations, working to deadlines?

TIP Take a look at the "entry requirements" tab on the corresponding UCAS page for your course - this will help you understand what the university is looking for. Are there any prerequisites for the course?

WORK EXPERIENCE

Think about: Your experience and talk about why you did it, what you learnt from it, and how you have developed skills that will help you complete your course.

- ✓ Talk about anything relevant but remember your most recent skills are best. Don't simply list your work history!
- ✓ Any particular experience, especially placements and

volunteering, that are prerequisites for your course should be included in this section.

- ✓ Did you develop any transferable skills from any part-time work or volunteering?
- ✓ Remember, you don't have to have had work experience that relates exactly to your course. Admissions Tutors are looking for examples where you have shown that you have pursued your subject or a related area outside of what is expected of you at school. Even if you just made the tea or did some admin at an office, this can contribute to a course application.

YOUR INTERESTS

Think about: Keeping a formal tone, and when introducing a hobby or interest, relate it to your personal development.

- ✓ Use this paragraph to write about any out-of-school qualifications you have such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award
- ✓ Include relevant social activities and hobbies, for example football coaching
- ✓ You might not have a hobby, but what about any causes you are dedicated to? Have you done any fundraising?
- ✓ Travel experiences can be a nice touch but keep them relevant. Did you develop cultural awareness; an interest in learning a language? Did travelling play a part in helping you choose a university course or career interest?
- ✓ How do your hobbies and the skills you've learnt from them relate to your course?
- ✓ Are you deferring entry? Include this here and give a reason why

CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH

Think about: reinforcing your suitability for the course with a positive, memorable summary of your strong points.

- ✓ Keep this concise and summarise your key strengths
- ✓ Close the personal statement by bringing it back around to how you are socially and academically ready for university
- ✓ Always focus on your key strengths - there is no room for negativity

FINAL TIP Treat your personal statement as an academic piece of work, and ensure you have proofread it several times for spelling mistakes and grammatical errors.



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www.salford.ac.uk

Course Enquiries Service
T: **0161 295 4545**
E: enquiries@salford.ac.uk



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