

Writing a Sheffield Progress Personal Statement

A personal statement is a description of your qualities and skills. You have to write one when you apply to Sheffield Progress and normally as part of other applications and CVs too.

Your statement will help employers and tutors decide whether you're right for the job or course so it needs to be written carefully.

Please note:

This guide does not cover writing a higher education personal statement as this needs to be tailored to the course. Use www.ucas.com for information and tips.

Personal qualities and skills

Describe what you are like as a person, for example, are you outgoing? hardworking? reliable? practical? creative? Do you get on well with people? You need to back up what you say with evidence, e.g. if you have a good school attendance record then that can show you're reliable. If you speak any community languages, or have skills such as first aid, give details.

School

You have probably already listed your subjects, qualifications and predicted grades but in your statement you should write about your best subjects and the ones you enjoy most and also explain why, (especially if you're applying to study them at A Level). Describe a piece of work you're proud of. Mention any awards or certificates, responsibilities and any involvement in school productions, events or sports teams (even though they might not be recent because of the pandemic). If your attendance is good and if you get on well with staff and other students then say so!

Contacts with employers

As well as describing any work experience, talk about lessons where you've had contact with employers, job fairs, open events, mock interview days and any company visits (both real and virtual).

Hobbies and interests

Write about what you enjoy doing outside school. For some of you, this might normally mean sport, youth or community groups, clubs and teams, musical instruments, special awards / certificates or any books, films or music that you enjoy. But if you can't think of anything to say, don't worry, there's more help on the next page.

Future plans

If you're applying for an apprenticeship or vocational (work related) course, explain why you're interested in this type of work and what you hope to be doing in a few years' time.

If you're applying for A Levels and don't have any job ideas yet, try and talk in broad terms about the kind of work you might enjoy, e.g. health or care, using science, IT, etc. You could also talk about choosing subjects that will keep options open.



'What can I write if I don't have any hobbies?'

Don't panic! 'Hobby' is just a word for something you enjoy. Start by writing a list of all the things you do out of school time, even if you don't think there's anything special about them.



Now think about what you enjoy about each activity and write down any skills it has taught you.

For example:

- If you like gaming, you could write about how you enjoy competition and how you need to be quick thinking, decisive and good at keeping cool under pressure. If you have entered any competitions, give details.
- If you spend a lot of time talking to friends, you could describe how you're good at keeping in touch with people. Think about the role you play in your friendship group, for example, whether you're the one who organises everything, or the one people turn to when they're upset, or who always steps in if there's an argument.
- If you follow a team you could write about how it teaches you loyalty and resilience (dealing with setbacks).
- If you listen to music, say which bands or artists you like. If you normally enjoy live music, describe the best gig you ever went to. If you've ever made your own music, give details.
- If you watch a lot of TV, describe the kind of programmes you like plus any characters/personalities you admire and explain why.
- Describe any responsibilities at home, e.g. looking after brothers or sisters, cooking meals, walking the dog, helping someone with their medication or with using IT.



Now think of your own examples. Whatever you do, don't make anything up – you might be asked about it!

Social media

Some organisations check your social media profiles if you apply to them. Think about what you would want an employer or tutor to see and use the privacy settings. Above all, remember that once something is online, it's there forever!

Remember!

This is only a guide. It's important that your personal statement reflects you and your personality so feel free to do it your own way.

