

## Super-curricular Activities into Personal Statement

- This is how you use these activities in your personal statement.

1. <b>WHAT?</b> : Select something that you have done.	1. <b>WHAT?</b> <i>Reading/ Attending/ Listening/ Work Experience in/ Participating in/ Visiting</i>
2. <b>SO WHAT?</b> : What were you struck by? What questions did it raise?	2. <b>SO WHAT?</b> <i>I was struck by/ I was particularly interested in/</i>
3. <b>NOW WHAT?</b> : What did you do to find out more?	3. <b>NOW WHAT?</b> <i>This led me to/ To further my understanding/ In response, I/ Fascinated, I/ Extending my knowledge, I</i>
4. What struck you about this? ( <b>SO WHAT</b> again!)	
<b>Example 1</b> “Reading A Very Short Introduction to Molecular Biology (1), I was struck by a segment on regulatory RNA molecules. I was particularly fascinated by the concept of RNA used in the regulation of gene expression (2). This led me to a Nature article about Riboswitches: RNA molecules that can bind to a ligand and change their physical conformation (3). This happens in the expression region of the riboswitch, and determines whether the RNA is transcribed or not... Taking biochemistry at degree level would allow me to learn more about cell function and control... (4)” <i>Biochemistry</i>	<b>Example 2</b> “During the summer I attended the UNIQ programme (1). I experienced a variety of lectures, the most interesting of which was about the use and abuse of the corporate form. It focused on the repercussions of the Salomon case and I saw how the courts have attempted to 'pierce the veil' of the corporate form (2). Subsequently, I read an article in the Student Law Review (3) explaining that the difficulty of the Salomon decision was that it created a 'facade' that allowed shareholders to escape liability for fraud (4).” <i>Law</i>
<b>Example 3</b> “After reading John Donne's "The Flea" (1), I was intrigued by his choice to represent love for a woman through the conceit of a parasite, eating away at himself. I saw this as an example of Donne's alleged misogyny furthering the stereotype of women as "cruel and sudden", in contrast to his predecessors who idealized and even worshipped them (2). However, I think it is equally interesting to consider the view expressed by Ilona Bell that Donne does not present the woman as singularly cruel, but as being capable of independent thought and challenging patriarchal authority, even if Donne himself viewed that in a negative light and considered it a perversion of gender roles.” <i>English</i>	

- Effective personal statements will emphasise your engagement with academic activities, subject knowledge and the subject relevant skills you developed from doing it. This academic engagement will demonstrate your interest and suitability for your chosen course rather than saying, ‘I’m passionate...’
- Some of your paragraphs might use all of the 4 stages above (‘What?’, ‘So What?’, ‘Now What?’, ‘So What?’ again) but some might simply expand the ‘What?’ and ‘So What?’ to show off your critical thinking.

## Personal Statement Structure

<b>Q1) Motivation for course</b>	<b>Why do you want to study this course or subject?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current studies</li> <li>• Outside reading</li> <li>• What has inspired you?</li> </ul>
<b>Q2) Preparedness for course</b>	<b>How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course/ subject? Emphasise super-curricular</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What have you read, watched, visited, or listened to that has inspired you?</li> <li>• Why was it interesting?</li> <li>• How do these activities support and compliment the course you are applying for?</li> <li>• Use A-levels as stepping stones to show you have gone beyond</li> </ul>
<b>Q3) Preparation through other experiences</b>	<b>Extra-curricular</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try and focus on transferrable skills.</li> <li>• Selection criteria for other universities.</li> </ul>

## Talking about Extra-curricular Activities

<i>Link experiences to skills useful for university:</i>	<i>Or keep it short and simple:</i>
“Balancing my work in school as a language and student council prefect, as well as working part-time, has greatly improved my organisational skills, as well as teaching me how to properly arrange my time.”	“To relax I play hockey and was captain of the team at school. I enjoy Music and Dance; achieving Grade 8 in Dance, Grade 7 in Piano and Singing, and competing at a national level in Dance.” <i>Medicine</i>
“...represent my school in hockey and netball, for which teamwork and commitment are crucial.” <i>Human Sciences</i>	“Outside academia, I enjoy reading, playing hockey, and taking part in drama productions, both on and off stage.” <i>Biochemistry</i>

## Editing Guidance

➤ Proofread. Aim for precision and economy in language.	➤ Read aloud. Your ear will pick up what your eye has missed.
➤ Make your language active	e.g. <i>In the summer I was delighted to take the opportunity of attending a summer school at the University of Oxford... becomes... Attending UNIQ, I learnt...</i>
➤ Avoid generalisations	e.g. <i>I like law because I like right and wrong... becomes... Fascinated by property law, I...</i>