Personal statements 2026
Top 10 tips for parents

Personal statements have changed for 2026. If you want to support your child with their personal statement here's our top tips...

1. Start in good time

Personal statements take time to write, so encourage your child to start early. Depending on their chosen degree, they'll need to submit their personal statement with their application either by 15 October 2025, or 14 January 2026.

2. Check the answers

For 2026 entry personal statements have changed to a question-and-answer format. Make sure your child's answers reflect their suitability for **all** the courses they're applying to.

3. Help with planning

Talk to your child about what they want to say, and help them plan their personal statement, but don't write it for them.

4. Know the limits

Each question in your child's personal statement has a 350-character minimum requirement. They also can't exceed 4,000 characters overall. Make sure they know their limits.

5. Showcase their skills

Encourage your child to include their achievements, extracurricular activities and relevant hobbies to show they're a well-rounded candidate with great skills.

6. Make it work

Work experience, part-time jobs and volunteering look good in a personal statement. Encourage your child to include them. It's not boasting; it's impressive!

7. Chat about chatbots

If your child uses AI chatbots in their school work, make sure they don't use these tools to write their statement. That would be cheating.

8. Be a proofreader

Offer to read your child's statement to spot mistakes or suggest improvements. But don't be offended if they go it alone – this is their statement.

9. Never share

Make sure your child doesn't share their statement or copy someone else's (UCAS checks for plagiarism). If they do, it could affect any university offers.

10. Be encouraging

It could take several drafts before your child finishes their statement. If they're struggling, offer to help, or encourage them to get support from school.

Although we use the terms parent/child for simplicity, this checklist is intended for anyone fulfilling a parenting role.