



**Aston University**  
Birmingham

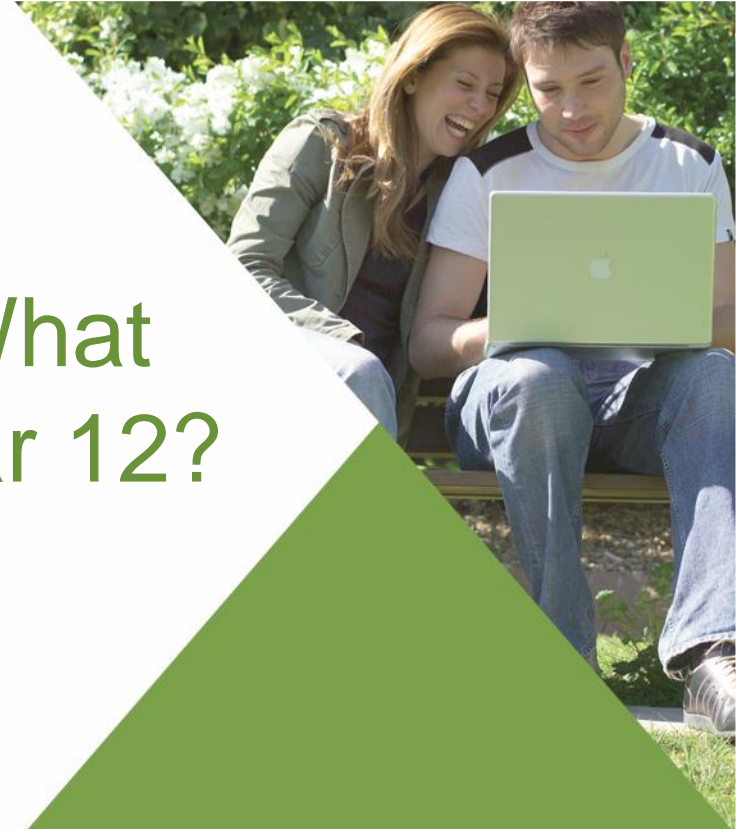
# Applying to University - What should you be doing in Year 12?

**Year 12 and beyond Conference**

**17-12-12**

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**Schools Liaison Officer**



# Making the most of Year 12

## Selection – Factors for university

- ▶ Results
- ▶ Predictions
- ▶ Personal Statements
- ▶ References
- ▶ Interview

## Selection – Factors for work

- ▶ Results
- ▶ Experience
- ▶ References
- ▶ Interview



# Making the most of Year 12

- ▶ Research courses & universities or employment opportunities
- ▶ Do extra curricular activities
- ▶ Gain work experience
- ▶ Go beyond the syllabus
- ▶ Focus on doing well in exams!



# Personal Statements/Experience

- ▶ **Admissions Tutors are looking for -**
  - ▶ Your academic potential
  - ▶ Your academic record to date
  - ▶ A strong Reference

## **Evidence of:**

- ▶ Motivation and Commitment
- ▶ Leadership, Teamwork, Communication
- ▶ Evidence of research into subject chosen
- ▶ Relevant, well written Personal Statement
- ▶ Any IT/Business/Key Skills (if relevant)



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Welcome > Personal statement

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# The Personal Statement

- ▶ **An opportunity for you to “sell” yourself!**
- 1. **Why do I want to study this course?**
  - ▶ What are the reasons for my choices?
  - ▶ Does the course relate to my career aspirations?
  - ▶ Related academic experience or relevant work experience?
  - ▶ Show you know what the course will involve
- 2. **What can I offer to the course?**
  - ▶ How do my academic interests and strengths match up with my chosen course?
  - ▶ Have I done anything which highlights my skills / knowledge / initiative?
  - ▶ Do I have any relevant experience eg paid / voluntary work, overseas travel?

# The Personal Statement

## 3. **My personal interests and achievements**

- ▶ Have I held any Positions **in and out of** school?
- ▶ Am I a member of any teams or societies?
- ▶ Have I been involved in any organised events or projects eg plays, charity work?
- ▶ What are my interests, hobbies, leisure activities?

# The Personal Statement

## Examples

“I am a member of the college chess club. I also play the clarinet in the orchestra.”

“I enjoy the Theatre and used to go a couple of times a year.”  
(Drama applicant)

“My favourite hobby is bee-keeping and I want to be an engineer.”

“I enjoy socialising with friends.”



# University Selection – The Personal Statement

“I have developed my problem solving skills through playing chess for the college; this requires concentration and analytical thought.

I am used to working as part of a team as a member of the college orchestra (I play clarinet), cooperating with others to achieve a finished production”.

# Useful Tips

- ▶ Do write a list of ideas/skills first
- ▶ Do expect to rewrite several drafts and seek feedback
- ▶ Do check University criteria and qualities
- ▶ Do be enthusiastic, honest, clear and concise
- ▶ Don't make lists, consider dividing into 4/5 paragraphs
- ▶ Don't risk humour – it rarely works
- ▶ Don't use gimmicks or quotations unless relevant and you deal with them in a way which highlights your qualities
- ▶ Don't rely on spellchecker – proof read as many times as possible
- ▶ Don't start with “I've always wanted to be a.....”
- ▶ Don't leave it to the last minute!

# Personal Statements - Style

- ▶ Positive words- achieved, developed, learned, discovered, enthusiasm, commitment, energy, fascination....
- ▶ Short, simple sentences in plain English - not contrived, not verbose or grandiose
- ▶ Personal touch if possible - but be careful with humour and vernacular/'chatty' approaches
- ▶ Use evidence wherever possible to support claims/statements

# Sources of Information; Web Sites

- ▶ University and College Entrance Guide [www.ucas.ac.uk](http://www.ucas.ac.uk)
- ▶ University and Higher Education information [unistats.direct.gov.uk](http://unistats.direct.gov.uk)  
and [www.qaa.ac.uk/](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/)
- ▶ Open Days [www.opendays.com](http://www.opendays.com)
- ▶ Course info, rankings and lots of other useful information  
[www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk](http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk)
- ▶ Information regarding Student Finance <https://www.gov.uk/student-finance/overview>
- ▶ Graduate Employment [www.prospects.ac.uk/what\\_do\\_graduates\\_do.htm](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/what_do_graduates_do.htm)
- ▶ Alternative University Guide [www.realuni.com](http://www.realuni.com)