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How do you explain who you are, what you care about, and where you're going with just 4,000 characters?

## UCAS and Personal Statements Webinar

Dominic Fuge

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## Overview of this session

- Brief introduction (to the book and self)
- A personal statement to assist:
- University application strategy

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## Dominic Fuge

- Head of Careers and Higher Education, at CSFC Cambridge
- Former school
- Background in teaching
- Studied at Cambridge, Edinburgh and Durham
- Attends international "Tidy-ins", "Tidy trips" and conferences

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### About this upcoming publication

- Drawing upon experience and recent interviews with universities
- Contains a total of 32 figures and tables - it's a resource, too
- Six full personal statement examples, each with a commentary
- Full and comprehensive for all levels (e.g. both new and highly experienced staff)
- Unique content and includes hot topics (e.g. use of AI)
- Written for students as well as professionals

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### Chapters

- Chapter One: Introduction and background
- Chapter Two: Finding your right course
- Chapter Three: Developing your super-curricular profile
- Chapter Four: The writing
- Chapter Five: After writing
- Chapter Six: Opportunities and challenges of using AI
- Chapter Seven: Personal statement examples

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### Old vs. new UCAS personal statements

Old	New
4,000 characters of free text	4,000 characters with three set questions (350 minimum in each section)
Recommended to be super-curricular (from GS)	Recommended to be super-curricular (from GS)
A clearly defined structure as recommended - intro, main body & conclusion	Flexibility with choice on where to place this content

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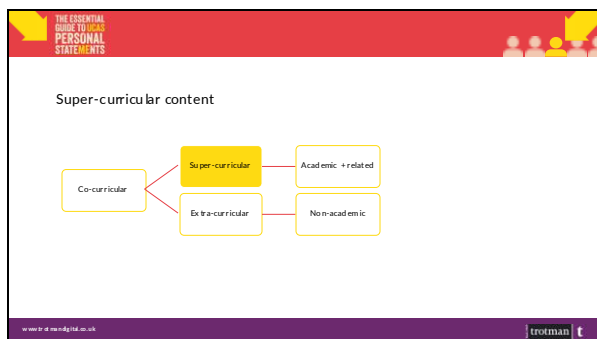
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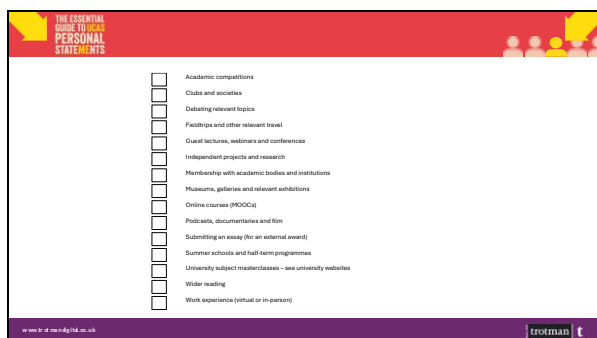
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THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO UCAS PERSONAL STATEMENTS

### The new three personal statement questions

Question 1: Why do you want to study this course or subject? 50-60% 2.2/3

Question 2: How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject? 30-40% 1.4/3

Question 3: What else have you done to prepare yourself for education, and why are these experiences useful? 10% 0.4/1

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**THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO UCAS PERSONAL STATEMENTS**

**Question 1: Why do you want to study this course or subject? (2,181 characters)**

Being raised in Bangkok's gold trade, my curiosity in Economics grew. Through my parents' gold shop, I pondered gold's high commodity value. Growing up in the shop, I surveyed customers' behaviour and the nature of the business. I questioned gold's distinctive characteristics of rarity, divisibility, cultural significance, and economic utility. I soon realised its investment appeal as a liquid entity and something able to withstand inflation and recession.

With my interest in the financial world, I questioned the past importance of gold. I examined the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis. I sought to understand how the Financial Crisis could have been prevented, creating a timeline of gold. I noticed the countries facing the worst of the crisis all lacked gold reserves. Historically, physical gold had little credit risk and was an asset outperforming others. Hypothetically, if these Asian countries reserved gold rather than foreign currencies, the aftermath perhaps could be less critical. I further researched this cataclysm, reading articles from the Economist and a paper entitled "Thailand's Monetary Policy Since the 1997 Crisis" by Nakornthab, and never thought that when the Thai government floated the Baht it would cause a chain reaction triggering the region's downfall.

My rumination of such world crises led me to read Taleb's "The Black Swan". A black swan event being one of rarity, extreme impact, and retrospective predictability. Taleb argued that many current models are outdated and lack robustness to predict such events, particularly with his explanation of survivorship bias through World War II aircraft armor anecdote. I believe tackling and preventing economic turmoil should come with precautions. Global issues cannot be solved using past solutions. Regardless of how similar an event is historically, we humans typically ignore little details and are careless to reach conclusions, as evidenced in duplicitous situations like the "Dot-Com" Bubble.

From a childhood interest to a fundamental part of my current studies, Economics illustrates and solves society's greatest challenges. I see Economics as a pathway to my ambition of alleviating economic hardship.

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**THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO UCAS PERSONAL STATEMENTS**

**Question 2: How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject? (1,375 characters)**

A Level Physics taught me to think logically in a process-driven way, undertaking Isaac Physics challenges and receiving a Gold in the Physics Olympiad. My team also won the Space Design Competition, where I calculated the costs of production of a new space settlement and most efficient resource allocation, linking to my Economics interest. Maths allowed me to refine my abstract reasoning skills, and I achieved a Silver in the UKMT Senior Challenge. Prior to my A Levels, I also maintained a keen interest in these subjects, earning a Gold and "Best in School" in the UKMT Junior Challenge 2 years in a row. I also was awarded Gold awards yearly in the PMAA mental maths competitions, illustrating my ability to solve problems quickly.

Partaking in the CH London Essay Competition 2025 I received "Highly Commended". The task was to analyse possible impacts of Russian economic sanctions. I researched data and views from various sites and employed A-Level Economics knowledge to examine impacts across these regions: South America, Europe, Asia, and Russia. I argue that Europe was most likely to see the worst impacts, given their overdependence on Russian gas and that many countries are part of the EU trade bloc, which constrains Russia's actions, whilst alternative nations remain more neutral. This experience taught me about critical thinking and enhanced my analytical skills.

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**THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO UCAS PERSONAL STATEMENTS**

**Question 3: What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful? (441 characters)**

I enjoy language learning, currently practicing Mandarin, reaching HSK3 level, as it is particularly useful in a globalised world where economics knows no bounds. I am a player for my local club's football team, earning the sportsmanship award. Moreover, I enjoy music, improvising songs on the piano, whilst also teaching myself the guitar. This shows my holistic development and willingness to contribute to all aspects of university life.

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