

Personal Statements - Items to Review before Submitting

General Information & Content

- I have touched on the fundamentals of a personal statement (past-present-future).
- My statement is not merely a repetition of the curriculum vitae but rather; the statement connects my selected experiences and particular skills to the purpose of the application.
- My statement provides the reader with insight into what drives me (*why am I telling you this story? What lessons did I learn? What impact did this experience have on me or the other?'*)
- In addition to summarizing some information, I also state facts or provide concrete examples.
- The statement refers to my future goals and my claims are grounded in past experiences.
- I have included the name of the scholarship and the degree for which I wish to study.
- I have read the statement aloud and I have had the statement read to me - <https://speechnotes.co/>

Writing Style

- The writing style is characterized by sensitivity to the audience (e.g. by including definitions, avoiding jargon for general readers and by using gender-neutral terms and pronouns).
- The sentences are straightforward, concise, and naturally worded (e.g., write "use" rather than "utilize", "now" rather than "at this point in time," or "we" rather than "the writers").
- There are relatively few sentences over 30 words or two typed lines. There relatively few paragraphs over a half-page long.
- I have used the appropriate verb tense (e.g., the past tense to describe work completed and the present tense for conclusions and general statements).

□ I have checked the following common grammatical issues:

▪ **Correct use of “as”, “since” and “because”**

Generally speaking, “as” means “coincident in time”; “since” connotes “after an event”; and “because” connotes causation.

Correct: “As I was walking down the street, I heard a noise.”

Correct: “Since you ate the cake last night, we don’t have any dessert tonight.”

Correct: “Because he slept in, he was late to class.”

▪ **Floating “it” and “this”**

Ex: “Lucy is in a hurry to finish her assignment. Thus it is causing her to take shortcuts in her reading.” To what does “it” refer?

▪ **“If” and “then”**

“If she has an issue with the homework, she should ask for help.”

Correct: If she has an issue with the homework, then she should ask for help.

▪ **Agreement of pronouns**

Ex: “An individual should question their principles”. An individual” is singular. “Their” is plural.

Correct: “Individuals should question their principles.”

▪ **Infinitives should not be split**

“To boldly go where no one has gone before”

Correct: “To go boldly where no one has gone before”

▪ **Avoid the passive voice**

“The tail was wagged by the dog” (passive voice)

“The dog wagged his tail” (active voice)

▪ **“Only” should appear before the word it modifies**

Research should only begin after subjects consented.

Correct: Research should begin only after subjects have consented.