

APPROACHING THE PERSONAL STATEMENT FOR MEDICINE

The personal statement provides an opportunity to present a succinct yet compelling snapshot of who you are and the context of why you want to pursue Medicine. There is no single template of an effective personal statement. Every personal statement should be personal & original. To help you get started, consider these three elements.

AUTHENTICITY

Get to the heart of the matter, by sharing your story on why the field of Medicine matters to you. You won't prove that you have the passion for it by simply stating that you do, or writing about it generically: it is through anecdotes of what you have personally experienced, struggled with and learnt from, that makes a statement real and engaging.

Consider these questions:

- How did you become interested in Medicine? (take inventory of the major influences and defining experiences—academic and otherwise)
- Which aspects of Medicine intrigue, excite you? Why so?
- What makes you want to pursue it as a career?



ATTRIBUTES: HEAD AND HEART

Show that you have both a good head and the heart for doing Medicine. Demonstrate that you are well-informed about the realities of working in the healthcare sector. Provide evidence of analytical skills, soft skills and reflection by distilling learning points from your experience. Don't just describe or list. Be thoughtful in selecting the personal attribute(s) that shows you are a good fit for Medicine.



Consider these questions:

- What have you done in and outside of school that demonstrate your suitability for Medicine?
- What insights did you gain from your experiences, such as job attachments (e.g., at hospice, hospital) or volunteering stints (e.g., at old folks' home, student centre)?
- What qualities or personal attributes do you have which make you well-suited for Medicine?

ARTICULATION

Adopt a personal voice and ensure that your points are well-connected and well-communicated. Every point you include should be meaningfully articulated. Avoid over-stuffing: Be concise and succinct. Quality of reflection matters more than quantity.

Checklist:

- Are the details included necessary, or do they distract from your main points?
- Did you convey what you intend to? Try reading it aloud.
- Have you proofread it?
- Have you used full sentences, paragraphs and accurate grammar and punctuation?



"Don't try to figure out what other people want to hear from you; figure out what you have to say.

It's the one and only thing you have to offer." – Barbara Kingsolver

NOTE: If you are invited to the interview, make sure you familiarise yourself with the information you have included in your statement.

References and further resources:

- <https://ocs.yale.edu/get-advice/writing-personal-statement-medical>
- <https://www.medsci.ox.ac.uk/study/medicine/pre-clinical/applying/anatomy-of-ps>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2013/oct/01/personal-statement-for-medicine>
- <https://nusmedicine.nus.edu.sg/admissions/medicine/undergraduate#how-to-apply>
- <http://www.lkcmedicine.ntu.edu.sg/Admissions/Pages/Entry-Requirements.aspx>



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