

Careers and Employability Service

The 'personal statement' on the NHS application form

The personal statement on the NHS application form comes in the form of the following question:

'From the Job Description provided please give details of relevant skills, experience and knowledge demonstrating how you meet the requirements of the position for which you have applied. You may wish to give examples from past employment, leisure interests or voluntary work experiences. Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.'

This is the most important part of the application form and writing a good response could get you an interview for the job. It is essential to make a clear, structured and well-presented response which gives full details of your motivation and suitability for the post.

The structure and content could be as follows:

INTRODUCTION:

- Introduce yourself – *'I am a final year student at the University of Southampton expecting to graduate with a 2:1 degree in Physiotherapy....'*
- Summarise your interest & enthusiasm for your profession, the specific post and the employer -why this employer, why this job role

MAIN TEXT:

- Make a case for why you are suited to the post
- Highlight relevant skills (clinical and personal), knowledge and experience
- Match your skills and experience to those being sought as shown in the person specification – provides examples where you have demonstrated these qualities
- Organise your information so that it is easy for the reader to see how you meet the person specification - structure the information and use thematic paragraphs. You could even use sub headings if you want to.

Things to include:

Clinical Placement:

- Where were you placed, when, what kind of experience did you gain?
- If placed with the Trust you are applying to make that clear
- Highlight relevant experience, knowledge and skills gained
- In particular highlight relevant clinical/technical skills, especially those mentioned in the person specification
- Emphasise what you learned/gained from the placements
- Show how your experience will contribute to your ability to do the job you are applying for

Academic Profile/Interests

- Give details of dissertation, research undertaken or areas of particular interest
- Mention courses attended and any additional training undertaken
- Highlight your commitment to CPD
- Mention student membership of professional bodies

Relevant Employment/ Voluntary Experience

- Mention experience gained prior to joining your course and part time employment or voluntary work undertaken during your course
- Emphasise relevant experience
- Part time/student jobs can demonstrate a work ethic and provide examples of relevant skills so it's worth mentioning them but keep the details brief and concentrate on what you gained/learned from the experience

Skills/Personal Qualities

- Identify & highlight your personal skills & qualities emphasising those which are mentioned on the person specification and those which you know are required eg communication, teamworking, organisational, negotiation, enthusiasm etc...
- Highlight the clinical/technical skills that are being sought

Leisure Interests

- The things you do outside of work and study can contribute to your ability to do the job and to cope with the pressure of a demanding workload so it is relevant to include something about yourself. Sometimes a hobby can demonstrate a particular skills which is being sought – e.g. playing an active role in a university society of sports team can demonstrate leadership, or teamworking. Similarly playing sport or getting involved in something you enjoy can help you to deal with stress. Details of hobbies and interest can also give you the opportunity to demonstrate civic involvement, personal values and character

SUMMARY:

- Confirm your interest in post and finish in a positive way. For example, "I would like to emphasise my keen interest in the advertised post which I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you at interview to discuss my application in more depth

Some tips for writing a good personal statement

- Target the opportunity: Don't use the same statement for all applications. Each statement will need a slightly different emphasis, depending on the position you are applying to.
- Make sure the statement addresses the person specification for the post
- Make Sure your statement is well written and grammatically correct. Use good English and make your statement fresh, lively, and enthusiastic. Don't just rely on a spell check, read through your final version several times and get a friend or careers adviser to read it too.
- Be clear and concise. Show the ability to put the salient points across in a few words. Stay within prescribed word limits.
- Give your statement a structure with an introduction, a main body and an end.
- Make sure the statement is well presented
- Be positive and enthusiastic – selectors will read many personal statements and you want yours to stand out.
- Get your final draft checked