



# CONSIDERING GRADUATE SCHOOL

## WRITING A PERSONAL STATEMENT

Writing a personal statement is a necessity when applying to graduate or professional school. The format, length, and topic will vary according to academic discipline and program type, but there are some general guidelines you can follow.

### 1 Identify Resources

Find useful online resources such as those available on [the Purdue OWL website](#) to help you draft your essay(s) and review samples. Seek additional program-specific guidelines when available, like the ones offered through [the MSU Pre-Health Advising office](#) for those applying to health professional programs.

### 2 Determine Your Message

Avoid writing a generic statement. Develop a well-written essay that conveys your knowledge and maturity, shows your sincere interest in the academic discipline, and draws a connection between what they are looking for and what you have to offer. Make sure your message clearly states why that particular program is right for you.

### 3 Review Before Submitting

Follow up with your career advisor, academic advisor, professional mentor, and/or a representative from the MSU Writing Center to help you refine your essay(s) before submitting. Constructing a personal statement takes time; plan to write, edit, and rewrite several times before landing on the final product.

### ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Tailor your statement to each program or school

Make sure to answer the question or prompt

Stick to the guidelines provided for length, format, etc.

Follow a traditional essay format with an introduction, body, and conclusion

Find a compelling angle or hook to tell your story

Provide strong examples to support your claims

Emphasize what is unique, distinctive, or impressive about you

Be positive and sincere

Avoid using general or obvious statements and clichés

Thoroughly check your spelling, grammar, and overall quality of writing