



# Writing your Personal Statement for Going Abroad

Global Opportunities

# Introduction

Your personal statement is an opportunity for you to explain your motivations for applying for a study/work placement abroad, to show us you have researched the destinations that you have applied for.

Key Points to Cover in Your Statement:

- Your academic interests/development goals.
- Your career development and future study goals.
- Your broader motivations for applying and how your application relates to your personal interests and development.
- How you will be an effective ambassador for Newcastle University.

The answers which score highest throughout each question are those which demonstrate **clear research** into the universities/courses/ destinations you are applying for.

# Introduction

Personal Statement is made up of answers to **4 questions**.

Maximum Word Count: **300 words** per question

Total Points Possible: **64 points**

Questions 1, 2, and 4 are split into *two parts* each, worth equal marks – make sure you answer **both parts**.

More information about the GO application process and the statement marking rubric can be found on our [website](#): Global Opportunities > Experience the World > Outgoing Exchanges > How to Apply

Exchange spots at some partner universities are *extremely* competitive and are open to students from across multiple academic schools. You will need to **write a strong statement** to be offered a place at these partners.

# Question 1 – Academic Interests and Development

Please explain how you would benefit from this experience in terms of your **academic development**. Consider your **academic interests** and any areas that you would like to develop.

*Word Count: **300 words** maximum*

*Worth: **16 points***

# Assessment Rubric: Q1 – Academic Interests and Development

## *What Markers Look For*

Explains how participation in the placement will support academic development and achievement.

**8 marks**

Link academic opportunities available (e.g., facilities, module options and other learning opportunities) at the partner(s) to own academic interests and areas for development.

**8 marks**



## *What You Should Write*

Explain **WHAT** your academic goals are.

Explain **WHY** it is important that you achieve these academic goals.

Describe **HOW** attending University X or working at Company X will help you achieve these academic goals.

**WHAT** does X offer as an institution that no one else does?

You do not need to list each of your choices for this question, but we would expect to see some **evidence of you researching** and considering your **chosen destination(s)**.

## Question 2 – Employability and Careers

Please explain how you would benefit from this opportunity from a **career development** perspective. Consider your plans for **future employment** or study **and any graduate attributes** that you may acquire to support your development in this area.

*Word Count: **300 words** maximum*

*Worth: **16 points***

# Assessment Rubric: Q2 – Employability and Careers

## *What Markers Look For*

Explains how participation in the placement will support plans for future employment or study.

**8 marks**

Indicates commitment to developing graduate attributes (such as problem-solving, intercultural competences, and communication skills) through participation on chosen placement and outlines how they intend to develop these attributes.

**8 marks**



## *What You Should Write*

HOW will going abroad support your future employment (or study)?

WHAT necessary soft skills will you learn from this opportunity? WHY are these important skills to have for yourself?

Show - don't just tell - your commitment to developing graduate attributes and soft skills necessary in the 21st Century. Outline HOW you intend to develop these attributes post-placement.

## Question 3 – Broader Motivation

Please **explain** your **broader motivations** for applying for an international study/work placement. Consider how you might develop your language/cultural competence and how the placement destination(s) might support your **extra-curricular** engagements.

*Word count: **300 words** maximum*

*Worth: **8 points***





# Assessment Rubric: Q3 – Broader Motivation

## *What Markers Look For*

Explains how participation in the placement supports the development of own interests/engagement/competences (e.g. sports/music/language/culture). Makes specific reference to features at the host organisations/destinations.

**8 marks**



## *What You Should Write*

WHICH of your extracurricular activities relate(s) to intercultural opportunities or reflect(s) a global mindset? WHY?

HOW will you continue to develop/pursue these interests while abroad? WHAT resources do your top choices offer that foster your hobbies?

Outside of academia and your professional life, describe HOW your personal life would benefit from going abroad.

## Question 4 – Personal Attributes

What **personal experience/attributes** do you already have that make you an effective ambassador for Newcastle University, and how will you **commit to developing** these attributes through your participation in this placement?

*Word Count: **300 words** maximum*

*Worth: **16 points***

# Assessment Rubric: Q4 – Personal Attributes

## *What Markers Look For*

Evidences attributes of an effective ambassador (e.g. respectful of diversity, open-minded, diligent, enthusiastic, culturally aware, engaged) and demonstrates previous experience of applying these.

**8 marks**

Evidences commitment to developing personal skills while overseas (e.g. resilience, independence, inter-cultural competences, communication skills, confidence, cultural awareness) and outlines how they intend to achieve this development.

**8 marks**



## *What You Should Write*

WHY should *you* get this placement?

Describe HOW you engaged with (and value) differences in your academic, professional, and personal life. Have you had intercultural awareness training or an intercultural experience before?

WHICH personal skills do you feel you need to strengthen? WHAT FOR?

WHY is this global opportunity important to you?

An international placement is a great opportunity for personal development, so **reflect on your current strengths and areas for development**, and how you intend for your chosen placement to support this growth.



# Assessment Rubric – Accuracy and Presentation

## *What Markers Look For*

Provides detailed and accurate answers.  
Writes in full sentences, has spell-checked answers and attempted to use correct punctuation and grammar.

**8 marks**



## *What You Should Do*

Taken time and care to write as best you are able. Use spell-checkers and editing tools effectively.

The maximum word counts are an indication of the level of detail expected for each answer, and you should not write more than this. Overly short answers will not score highly.

# FAQs

**Q - Should my statement be written as one long essay or as individual answers to each question?**

A – You should answer each question individually; this will be clear once you begin your application on Terra Dotta.

**Q – How can I tailor my statement to *five* different partners with a such a limited word count?**

A – For every question, we are looking to see if you have researched and appreciate the institutions or destinations you are applying for. Some students have written a mini-paragraph for each choice, while others have focused only on their top two or three choices. However ever you choose to structure your statement, you should be making practical and informed connections between yourself and your desired locations.

**Q – Does my preference order matter on the application?**

A – Yes. You should submit your preferences in order with your favourite first – this will be used to help us allocate placements. However, please do have a variety in your preference; do not only put University X as your first, second, and third choice.

# FAQs

**Q – How many places are available at each host university?**

A – Unfortunately, we are unable to provide a specific number of spots available for each partner university. For more competitive universities (e.g., in Australia, Canada, and USA), full time placements can range from 1-7 places a year, however this is a rough estimate, and you should still apply to these universities if you really want to go! To ensure you have the best chance of getting a place, your personal statement is a great opportunity to stand out.

**Q – Is it worth applying for a backup placement if I am applying to particularly competitive universities?**

A – Yes, absolutely! If you do apply for backup placements, make sure to still research them fully to make sure that you would still benefit from/enjoy a placement there – they should not be included as an afterthought.

# If you have any questions, please come along to our...

## Virtual Personal Statement Workshops

**29<sup>th</sup> November, 4-5pm**

**6<sup>th</sup> December, 4-5pm**

## In-Person Drop-in Clinic

**13<sup>th</sup> December, 2-4 pm**

## Virtual Drop-in Clinic

**20<sup>th</sup> December, 2-4 pm**

You can also contact us at  
[Global.Ambassadors@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:Global.Ambassadors@ncl.ac.uk)