



Personal Statements for Postgraduate Study



What is a personal statement?

- Part of the application process for postgraduate courses
- An opportunity show you have commitment and qualifications to pursue the course of study

Used by Course Directors / Admissions teams to

- Help select applicants
- Generate questions for interview (where applicable)
- Clarify that you understand the nature of the course

Where to start...?

- **Be clear on what is required**
- Some courses will give guidelines on writing a personal statement
- Word count, instructions, typed, specific information, evidence of experience?
- Read all application guidance documents before beginning your application / personal statement

Layout / Structure

- Have a beginning, middle and an end
- Plan structure of personal statement and divide it into paragraphs
- No blueprint for a perfect statement

Sections could include

- Why you are applying to course/college
- Your academic qualifications and how they relate to the course
- Your personal qualities, skills, work experience and achievements that make you suitable for the course
- Conclusion

Back up statements with evidence

- If you enjoyed a particular module, clarify the aspects you enjoyed
- If you refer to specific experience, say what you achieved and learned
- If you refer to interest outside college, outline the extent of your involvement

Answer these questions....

- Why this university/department?
- Why this course?
- Why you?

Divide your **personal statement** into several paragraphs.

State the course for which you are applying.

Why do you want to do the course/research?

- Be clear about why you have chosen this course - how did your interest in this field develop?
- Show your enthusiasm for the course – give details of any projects, dissertations, modules that are relevant?

Why this university?

- Show that you have done some research on the department and institution
- Explain why you would value the opportunity to study with them.

Personal Statement...

Divide your personal statement into several paragraphs.

Why you?

- What academic skills do you have to offer?
- What personal skills will you bring to the course?
- Highlight your skills and give evidence of how you have developed and used these skills in the past.
 - communication skills, ability to work as part of a team, strong self-motivation, organisational skills.
- Here you are telling them what you will bring to the course.
- What are your strengths?
- What is the relevance of your first degree to this field of study?
- If relevant, point out any challenges you have faced and how you have overcome them e.g., any circumstances that may have affected your academic results in past years.

Sum-up

- Short paragraph highlighting your commitment to this course/career area and your willingness to work hard to meet your goals etc.

To help before you start writing... Some things to consider...

- **Brainstorm and research self-assessment**
- <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/careers/students/starting-out>
- Why did you choose this programme?
 - What are your core values and interests?
 - What got you to this point in your life? (events, people)
 - What are your past successes?

What do you want them to know about you?

- What is distinctive about me? List some key attributes
- What learning influences shaped me? People, books, etc?
- What special courses, modules, skills would make me more successful in this programme?
- What challenges have I overcome in my academic, work or personal life?
- What are my career goals? – You don't have to know this answer here, you might want to deepen your knowledge of a specific subject, the course might be a required step in progressing into a particular career or you may be using the course to build on your current studies and re-direct your career options in a different direction

Documenting your Skills/Experience: Your Course

- Important to highlight relevant skills from your **degree**
- See **Modules** you have completed to date in Course handbook/Moodle or in Coursefinder

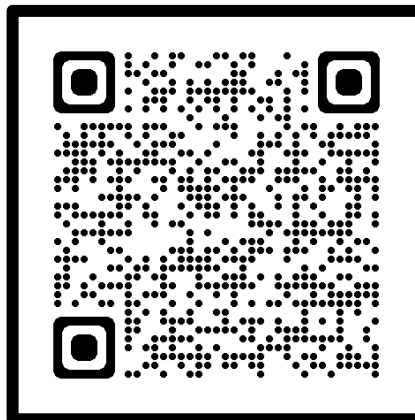
<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/study-maynooth/undergraduate-studies/courses>

Where to find further information

Careers and
Employability Service

As a good starting point visit the **Careers & Employability Service** website -

<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/careers/students/postgraduate-study>



A screenshot of the Maynooth University Careers and Employability Service website. The header features a banner with the word "SUCCESS" in large, bold letters, surrounded by icons representing various career and study paths. Below the banner, there is a navigation menu on the left with categories like "Students", "Employers", and "Staff". The main content area on the right is titled "Basic page Postgraduate Study has been updated." and contains a "Clone content" button. Below this, there is a paragraph of text about postgraduate study. At the bottom, there is a list of links with right-pointing chevrons, including "What is postgraduate study?", "Should I do a postgraduate course?", "What is a Masters/PhD/Conversion Course?", "How do I find postgraduate courses?", "Maynooth University Postgraduate Open Day - Presentations", "Entry Requirements And Closing Dates", "Applications And Personal Statements", "Funding", "Study Abroad", and "PhD Resources".



<http://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/careers/students>

- Careers and Employability Service
- Students**
- Starting Out
 - Some Ideas
 - Clear Idea
 - Upskill
 - Placement
 - Jobs And Experience
 - Postgraduate Study
 - Key Information And Resources
 - Talk With Us
- Employers**
- Staff**
- Careers Connect | Placement Connect
- Graduate Career Stories
- Student Skills and Success

- About Us
- Archive
- Contact
- Events
- FAQs
- News

I need help getting started.

I have some ideas of my next step

I have a clear idea of my next step

Upskill Programmes

Academic Placement

Jobs And Experience

Postgraduate Study

Key Information And Resources

Talk To Us (Questions & Appointments)

- Careers and Employability Service
- Students**
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- Student Skills and Success
- About Us**
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- Contact
- Events
- FAQs
- News
- People

View Edit Revisions Access control

[Clone content](#)

Send us a query or book an appointment in Careers Connect | Placement Connect

Using Careers Connect | Placement Connect - Current Students

Using Careers Connect - Alumni

Appointment Terms & Conditions

Appointments

[Home](#) / [Book](#) / [Appointments](#)

Current MU Students – We offer both In-Person and MS Teams appointments – Please select an appointment time below and click book.

MS Teams Appointments –

MU Current Students, ** Link to join the Teams Meeting will be in your Booking Confirmation email.

In-Person Appointments –

Your Appointment venue will be visible when booking and will also be listed in your Booking Confirmation email.

If you require a meeting to discuss Job Interview Preparation, please send us an [Interview Preparation Meeting request](#) by clicking "Queries" above.

Alumni users cannot book directly – please submit a Meeting request Query, indicating when you are available and we will book you in for an appointment

Additional appointments are added frequently so please check back to view latest availability.



MS Teams: One to One Careers Meeting

Meet with a careers adviser to discuss any of your career quest... [Find out more](#)

[View appointments](#) ▾



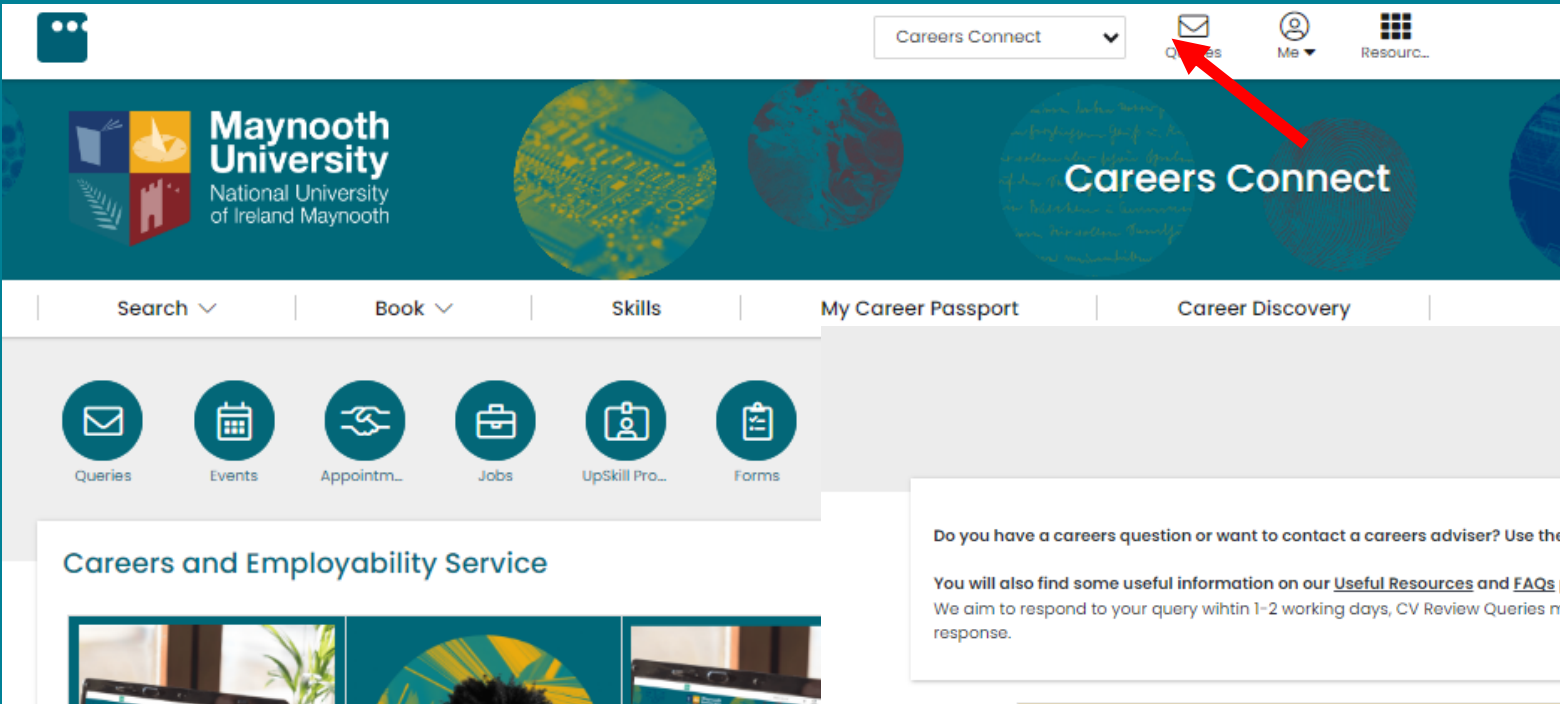
In-Person: One to One Careers Meeting

Meet with a careers adviser to discuss any of your career quest... [Find out more](#)

[View appointments](#) ▾

MU students/graduates can arrange a meeting with our careers advisers

**Careers and
Employability Service**



Use Ask Us to send questions in Careers Connect

Do you have a careers question or want to contact a careers adviser? Use the Query form below to get in touch with us.

You will also find some useful information on our [Useful Resources](#) and [FAQs](#) pages

We aim to respond to your query within 1-2 working days, CV Review Queries may take longer/ During busy periods there may be a delay in our response.

Query details

We aim to respond to Queries within 1 working days.

Type of question *

Select One

Subject *

Query details *

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Careers and
Employability Service

Send us your questions - <https://careers.mufutureconnect.maynoothuniversity.ie/leap/queries.html>



Any questions?

- Use **Careers Connect** to engage with us

- Appointments

- Teams Appointments

or

- In-Person Appointments



- Send us your Questions - Click Ask us 



CAREERS CONNECT PORTAL