

Personal statement workshop

How to write a good statement for your study abroad application





The questions...



International Exchange

Please explain your reasons for applying for International exchange and the partner universities you have listed in this application:

- Your motivations (academic and/or personal) for studying abroad
- What you want/hope to achieve from the experience
- How the universities you have chosen will help you achieve your aims for your study abroad

(Max 1,000 words)



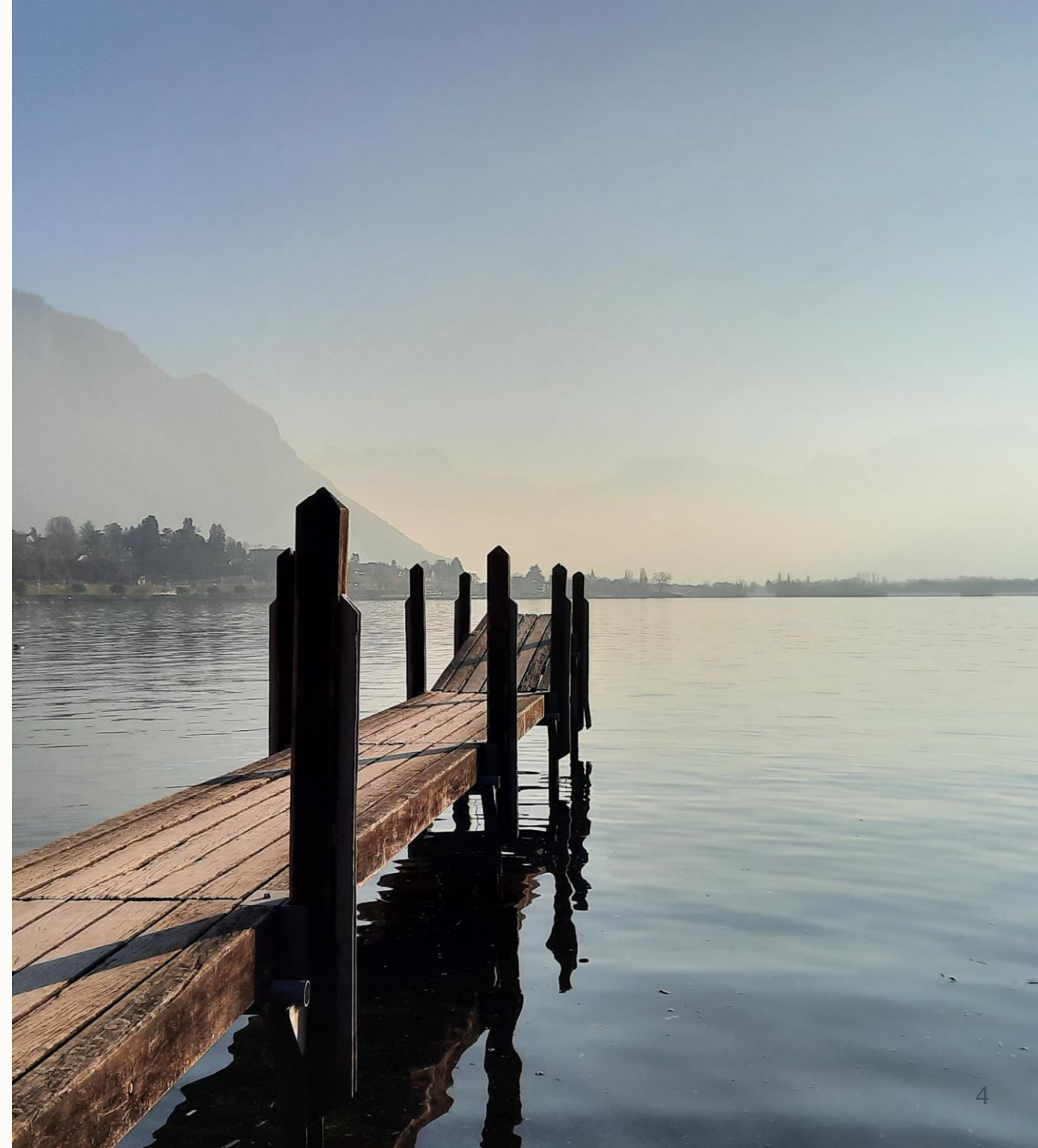


International Summer Schools

Please explain your reasons for applying for international summer schools, including:

- your motivations (academic and/or personal) for applying for an international summer school
- How the universities you have chosen will help you achieve your aims for participating in an international summer school

(max 800 words)





American and Canadian Studies

The personal statement is a question which allows you to demonstrate to the selection committee why you want to study abroad at the partner universities you have selected.

You should demonstrate your motivations, academic and/or personal and your knowledge of the universities and locations that you are applying to.

Word limit: 800 words





What is a personal statement?

It is your chance to communicate your passion for studying abroad, to tell us your reasons for applying and why you should be chosen.

It is a personal piece of writing based on your circumstances and wishes.

What it isn't...

- An academic essay
- A UCAS statement
- A chance to raid the thesaurus
- A holiday plan
- A university ranking table



What makes a good personal statement?

- Evidence of your commitment and academic reasons for choosing your partner universities or summer school courses
- An honest presentation of who you are as a person, why do you personally want this experience?
- Genuine enthusiasm for study abroad, an excellent understanding of what will be expected of you while studying abroad, including the academic, practical, social and personal aspects
- Evidence you have researched and can demonstrate knowledge of the three partner universities/host countries/summer school courses thoroughly

- Personal
- Genuine
- Research
- Real examples

Research

A photograph of a bustling outdoor market. In the foreground, several large, colorful plastic bowls are filled with various fresh produce, including yellow and green fruits. A woman in a yellow jacket and a white hat is standing near a green plastic crate. Another woman in a green shirt is walking towards the camera. In the background, more people are visible, along with market stalls and a sign that says "EU VANG". The scene is lit with warm, golden light, suggesting late afternoon or early morning.

“the systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions.”

Source: *Oxford Languages*

The key to a successful study abroad application is good **research**.

Research exercise





Do your research...

- Find three partner universities, which offer guaranteed accommodation to exchange students.
- What is the easiest way to travel to Lund University from the UK?
- What is the approximate cost of health insurance for Australia (OSHC)?
- What are the recommended vaccinations for Hong Kong?



Showing academic commitment

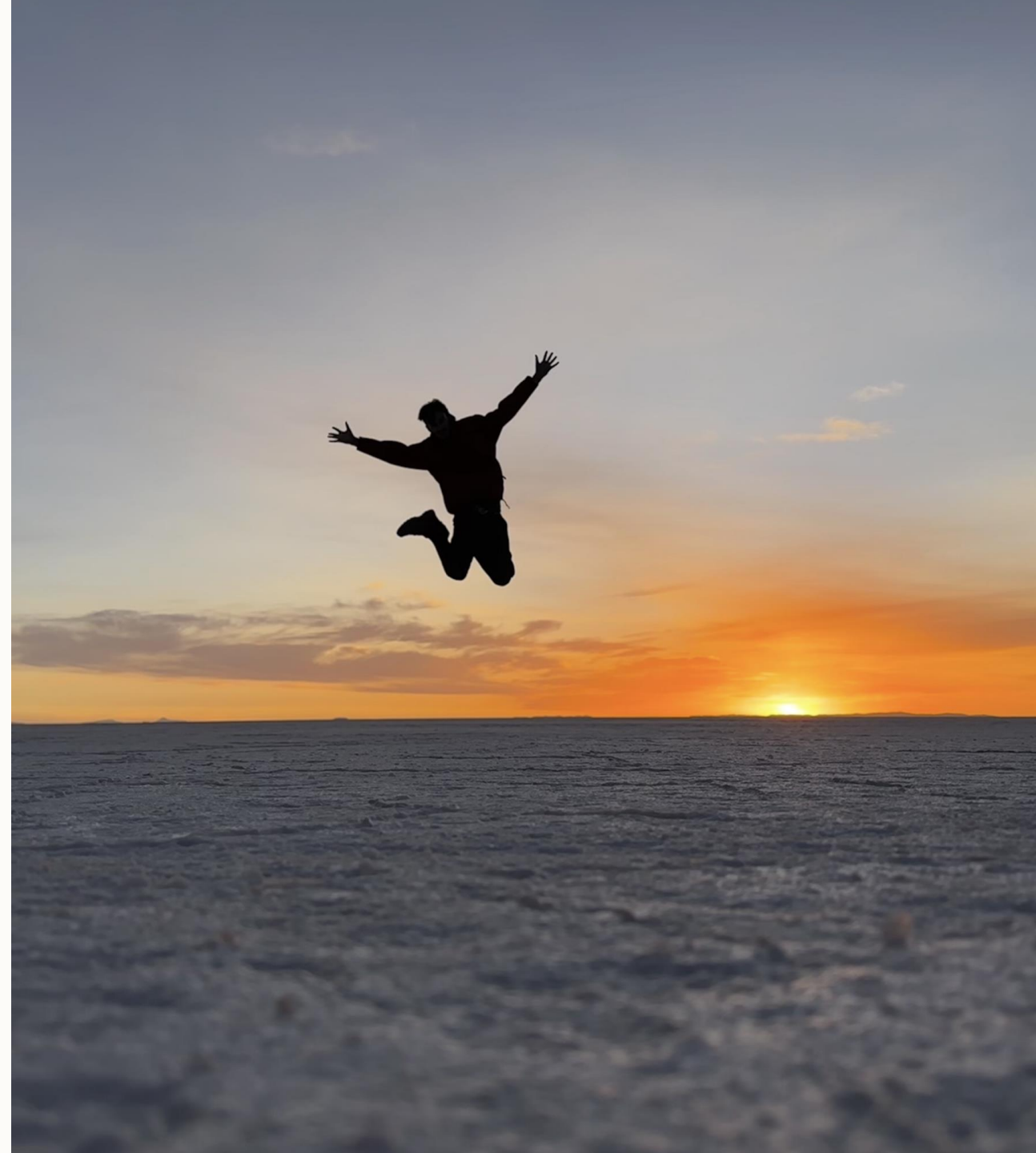
- Use module catalogues to find relevant modules and reference them in your statement
- For integrated study abroad, make sure you have modules to substitute any compulsory modules
- Speak to academic advisors for more advice
- Mention previous experiences and how these relate to your academic/year abroad journey





Showing wider enthusiasm

- What activities can you do in your exchange country?
- What new experiences could you have?
- What is there to do close to your host university?
- Explain the advantages and why these experiences would be worthwhile





Helpful resources

- UoN study abroad website/social media
- UoN study abroad blog
- Partner University websites
- Partner University social media
- Faculty academic advisor
- Previous exchange students

Costs analysis

- helps to make a table to compare flight prices, housing costs, cost of living
- Also can help compare module options at different institutions



Do's and don'ts

Do's

- Understand your audience
- Pay attention to word counts
- Express yourself clearly and plainly
- Ask someone to proofread your statement
- Talk about all 3 of the universities you have applied for

Don'ts

- Select a university you don't actually want to go to
- Don't repeat information included elsewhere in the application e.g. your name
- Repeat generic statements from websites or partner universities websites
- Don't use Chat GPT or AI



How is the personal statement marked?

We do not provide applicants with a marking scheme because it is a competitive application, not an academic assessment

- The maximum mark for the statement is 6 marks
- The personal statement is one part of the overall application process:
 - International exchange: 40% personal statement/60% academic average
 - International summer schools: ranked by personal statement score, then academic average
- Marked by selection committee and quality checked to ensure consistency.
- Marks are final, there is no appeals process





Get in touch & keep up to date



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Student experiences blog: uonstudyabroad.wordpress.com



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Thank you

Any Questions?