Guidelines for writing a Personal Statement

These notes are intended to provide guidance for applicants who are applying for taught MSc programmes (any MSc that is not an “MSc by Research”) in the School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences.

Word Limit
Your personal statement should not exceed 500 words.

What you should include
The personal statement helps us decide whether you are right for the MSc programme you have selected, but just as importantly, it helps us decide whether the MSc programme is right for you. To help us with this, your personal statement should include:

- something about your qualifications and what you can bring to the course (if your first degree is not obviously relevant to the course you have chosen, you may want to say something about relevant courses you have taken, skills you have learned, or reading you have done);

- an explanation of why you are interested in studying at Edinburgh, and why you have chosen the particular MSc you are applying for (for example you might mention previous work or reading which inspired your interest, or you might explain a little about how you would intend to use your MSc qualification);

- any other information which you feel will help us ensure that you are a good match to your intended MSc programme.

A good personal statement can make a big difference to the admissions process, because (together with your letters of reference) it is the only information we have about what kind of person you are and what you are interested in. Please do take care when writing yours so that we can be sure that you and your chosen MSc are good matches for each other, and that you will have a productive and happy year at Edinburgh.