

Tips for writing a personal statement for the Wellcome DTC Application

Your personal statement is your opportunity to set out why you are a suitable candidate for this programme and why this is the right step for you at this time your life.

The tone should be professional, focusing mostly on your academic background, research experience and relevant work experience, but you can still get across aspects of your personality and what you would bring to the programme that may differ to other students.

We will be looking to see that you have good awareness of what this programme entails, and that you have the skills and attitude necessary to succeed in this specific PhD programme. You should tell us what it is about the programme that makes it suitable for you and why you want to do a PhD within this specific programme. This includes evidencing your suitability for a PhD in terms of academic rigour, independent learning and project management and ability to sustain commitment over a long time period. It will also include discussing your interest, and experience where appropriate, in public health, technical and quantitative skills, health economics, and economic modelling. We do not expect a research question at this stage, however, it is worth raising areas you are particularly interested in or are considering for future research. We would also like to know why you have chosen a programme which adopts an interdisciplinary policy-driven approach.

Your personal statement should signpost key evidence from your CV which shows you meet our entry criteria; including evidence of mathematics achievement/experience. You can also flag particular achievements, such as awards or achievements that provide evidence of academic excellence.

You may also discuss in greater detail aspects of courses you have taken or work experience that developed relevant skills or sparked an interest. Try and be specific and provide concrete examples to evidence claims relating to your skills and interests. We want to know what specifically you are interested in and why this topic excites you as an area of research. You may also tell us briefly about your future career plans, and how this PhD will help you achieve them.

The University of Sheffield and the Wellcome Trust are both keen to broaden participation within their PhD programmes to under-represented groups. Your personal statement presents an opportunity to place your academic record within the light of any particular difficulties you may have faced. If you feel your grades have not presented a good reflection of your ability or potential suitability for a PhD, please tell us why.

Overall your personal statement should convince the selection committee that if you are offered a place you would a) successfully complete the PhD to a high standard b) be suitable for this particular PhD programme and c) make a future contribution to research and policy which brings valuable return to the investment in your training and development.