

## Section 4

# Writing your personal statement

### What is it?

- It is the only part of the application form where you can talk about yourself, promote yourself and make yourself stand out from everyone else.
- Not all courses interview students, so this might be your only chance to impress the tutors.
- Tutors are busy. They might read your statement very quickly, so it needs to be well written, to the point and easy to read.

### Practical tips

- **Take your time.** Start working on your statement weeks before you need to hand it in and write a few drafts until you get it right.
- **Get help.** Ask for advice from your teachers, careers adviser, friends and family.
- **Use clear paragraphs and headings** to make it easier to read.
- **Check your spelling and grammar** – get someone to read it through for you.
- **Type your personal statement** using a type size of at least 10 or 12 point.
- **Read through your statement** to yourself and out loud. Does it make sense? Does it give a good impression?
- **Always keep a copy** of your statement so that you can remember what you've written (especially if you are interviewed).
- **Don't write anything that you can't talk about at interview!**

### What should I include in a personal statement?

#### Reasons why you are applying.

- **Why you've chosen the course.** Don't mention a college by name as several colleges might read it.
- **What interests you about the subject.** Avoid clichés or corny statements like: "I've wanted to study art since I was a child."
- **What you hope to gain from the course,** including any ideas you have about what you'd like to do afterwards.
- **Avoid general statements** such as: "I want to study product design because it is interesting." Be specific: "One of the reasons I want to study product design is that I like using my mind to creatively solve problems."

#### Information about you: your skills, abilities and interests.

- **What is different about you?** You might be good at solving problems, working to deadlines, working independently, a good team worker, a creative thinker, self-motivated and so on.
- **Don't repeat information** that is on the form somewhere else. For example, don't write about your qualifications in your personal statement.
- **Mention artists and designers you like** and exhibitions you have visited (see section 1 - 'What to do before you apply' for ideas on where to research artists and designers).
- **Anything else about you** that is relevant to your application such as work experience, interests, activities, responsibilities and travel.

#### How should I end it?

- **Don't let your personal statement fizzle out!** This is your last chance to impress so don't run out of steam halfway through a sentence.
- **End on a positive note.** Don't write something general like: "I am looking forward to my time studying illustration." Be specific: "I want to become a professional illustrator and I am very determined to make the most of a degree course that will help me achieve my ambition."