

Statement of purpose guidelines

As the name denotes, the Statement of Purpose (SOP) is a personal testimonial about who you are as a person; your inspiration for your career path so far; your professional preferences and interests; and your future plans. SOP is your chance to communicate directly to the admissions committee; to explain how you stand out from several other applicants with similar qualifications; to assure the admission committee that you have the thirst for knowledge and add value to your class.

SOP is also a platform for you to pitch for scholarships. A good SOP boosts your chances to secure a scholarship and it may persuade the admission team to offer you a spot. An ideal statement of purpose isn't too long but you may elaborate based on the word limit fixed by the university or the country you have chosen to apply for. Mentioned below are some valuable tips to draft your SOP.

- 1) Purpose of choosing this programme
- 2) Your family background – only if it influenced your academic/career plans
- 3) Brief academic background - schooling/undergraduate study, distinctive academics/extracurricular achievements
- 4) All relevant industry visits, internships, projects, workshops, dissertations taken up during your period of study. If possible, try linking them to the programme that you're applying for.
- 5) Connect relevant work experience (if any) with the proposed programme of study and include awards/achievements at work (if any).
- 6) Community service, charity work, interests, social clubs, hobbies, sports, etc.
- 7) If your education will help run your family business better, be sure to emphasise on the scope and application of the programme knowledge on the family business.
- 8) Your career plans for the future with respect to the programme and after graduation. Additionally, explain why an overseas education will help you achieve your short term and long term career goals.
- 9) Justify the choice of your university/country
- 10) Conclusion

The Ideal SOP Structure

- Begin the SOP with an anecdote (meaning an instance/example) on what motivated you to pursue further studies in this particular subject. Mention your source of inspiration or an incident or a story related to it. In order to achieve this, you'll have to go back in your memory to an important event or a personal experience that influenced your academic or career choices. Select a suitable story which is significant to the theme of your programme.
- Provide a background to what you learnt at college – through practical experiences and projects that show your competence in the subjects. Explain how all of that motivated you to take up advanced study in that field.
- The SOP should include details on the purpose behind pursuing further education in this particular subject at this point in time. Mention a research area or a topic of specialisation of your interest (if any).
- Talk about the skills you would like to develop through this programme and how pursuing this programme will help you accomplish your career goals.
- Mention your short term career goal. Elaborate on your plans right after completing your programme; the kind of work profile you'd like to take up; the type of company; and industry you plan to be involved in.
- Mention your specific long term goal. Elaborate on your career plans 10-15 years from now; and how you plan to contribute to the industry then. You must be very specific as the SOP is all about providing specific information.
- Explain the reason behind choosing this particular country over your home country or any other international destination.
- Explain the reason behind choosing this particular university. Mention the distinctive features of the university that fit your requirements. State the name of the faculty that offers this programme and their research areas (if applicable). Talk about how the university's research centres/labs, events, clubs and subject areas/electives align with your study goals. Make sure to thoroughly research the university website to produce these details.
- Elaborate in a paragraph about your volunteer work, community service or any extracurricular activities; and explain how these experiences have helped you grow. You can also explain how you would be able to contribute to the university's student organisation.
- Conclusion – Wrap up the SOP with 2-3 lines of conclusion.