

[PREPARING YOUR WRITTEN STATEMENT FOR GRADUATE SCHOOL OR PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION APPLICATIONS]

Applications for graduate study or professional education often require a written document such as:

- A statement of intent
- A statement of purpose
- A narrative explaining your background and describing why you want to enter this particular program
- A statement of intended research

If you are applying for scholarships, teaching assistantships or bursaries, you may be required to submit similar statements.

Although requirements for the number of words in the document vary according to program, many ask for one or two pages.

Educate yourself before you begin to write. Review the specifics of the program, the faculty biographies, the research projects that faculty and current graduate students are working on and the organizational culture.

Think about your audience. The purpose of a statement is to help the faculty admissions office determine whether you would be an appropriate candidate for their program. They may be considering the following:

- Faculty members in the department who would be available to support you in the area of study you wish to pursue
- An explanation of how you would function in the department's environment with faculty and other graduate students
- Specifically what do you want to study and why? This may include descriptions of the following:
 - > How this particular field caught your interest
 - > Mentors who inspired you with their interest in this area
 - > Related project or research in undergraduate study
 - > Volunteer, travel and employment opportunities where you learned more about this
 - > Acclamations, awards or scholarships you received due to academic or other achievements in this field
 - > Your career and educational goals in this area
 - > If you are interested in working with a specific researcher, explain how your learning interests connect with this faculty member's research
- Do you need to clarify some information in your application?
 - > Some examples are failed or incomplete courses on your transcript, suffering a loss or an illness, or holding full-time employment while you were in school.
 - > This document may give you opportunity to explain your circumstances as you pursued your undergraduate degree.

Read the list of admission requirements on the faculty graduate study website.

- Generally, information on the site defines what should be included in your statement.
- After reading this, if you need more information, contact the admissions advisor for the program and ask.
- Some programs may include a format for the statement on their website.

Be creative, yet succinct. For example, if you are asked to describe your experiences or submit a brief autobiography, long, rambling narratives or much personal information may not be what decision makers are looking for. They are interested in how your background connects with the course of study they offer.

- Answer the questions that you are asked. Go back to the description of what you should write. Then, read your document again.
- Read the document out loud to a friend. Listen for grammatical errors. Ask if what you have written is clear and easy to understand.
- Ask whether the document rambles or if it addresses exactly what the school is asking for.



CORRECT GRAMMAR AND SPELLING ARE ESSENTIAL.

Before you submit the document, ensure that someone else has read it and given you input.

- Connect with MacEwan faculty or advisors for assistance with content and editing.
- Provide them with information from the program that you are applying to along with your statement, so they understand specifically what is required.
- Prepare and edit drafts for feedback.
- Edit again until you and your advisors are comfortable with the content, grammar and style of the document.
- You may also contact the Graduate School Liaison Office for suggestions.

Websites focused on information about Graduate Study may also include articles on writing your statement. The following are some examples:

www.gradschools.com/Category/Get-Informed.html

www.gradsource.com/Articles.cfm

www.gradschool.about.com

CHECK OUT THE OTHER BROCHURES IN THIS SERIES:

DECIDING [Should I Apply for Graduate Study or Professional Education]

RESEARCHING [Considering Graduate School-Research Your Options]

APPLYING [Applying for Graduate School or Professional Education]

FINANCING [Financing Your Graduate School or Professional Education Degree]

RESUME [Preparing Your Resume, CV or Portfolio for Application to Graduate School or Professional Education]

STANDARDIZED EXAMS [Writing Standardized Examinations for Your Application to Graduate School or Professional Education]

INTERVIEWS/AUDITIONS [Preparing for your Interview or Audition for Graduate School or Professional Education]

CHECKLIST [Researching and Applying for Graduate School or Professional Education, A Checklist]

[FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT THE GRADUATE SCHOOL LIAISON AT GRADSCHOOELLI@MACEWAN.CA OR 780-633-3405]

NOTE: THERE ARE SOURCES OF INFORMATION BEYOND WHAT IS LISTED IN THIS DOCUMENT. IN ADDITION, MACEWAN IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACCURACY OF THE CONTENT ON WEBSITE LINKS.