

Why do I have to write a personal statement?

The personal statement letter is a **mandatory** requirement for the Undergraduate Scholarships Application, and other Saint Mary's University award applications. It is used in the decision making process of all scholarships, awards and bursaries. Applications without a personal statement letter will be considered incomplete and ineligible.

What are we looking for?

The personal statement letter is your opportunity to tell us about yourself, so that we get to know the person behind the A-Number. You are so much more than a GPA, or a registration history or an account balance, but without a strong personal statement, we don't know that. Take full advantage of the personal statement letter to show us that you are a strong candidate, who is deserving of a scholarship or bursary.

What should your letter include?

- **Your education and career goals.** What do you want to do with your degree after you graduate? Are you planning to continue your education, or go into the work force?
- **Your leadership activities.** Show us how you have been a leader, on and/or off campus.
- **Your extracurricular activities.** What are your interests and hobbies? How do you spend your spare time? Are you working part-time?
- **Your involvement with the Saint Mary's University community, and/or the community you belong to outside of school.**
- **Anything that makes you special or unique.**
- **Your financial need situation, only if applicable.** Don't just tell us that you have need, describe your individual situation to us. Why do you have need? What are you doing to ease your financial burden?

What should your letter NOT include?

- **Quotes, sayings, excerpts from scripture.** You only have 750 words, and we want to hear what **you** have to say, not anyone else.
- **Information about SMU, its reputation or history.** We know about SMU's history. Tell us yours!
- **Activities or involvement from high school (or earlier), unless you are currently in your first year.** If you're just completing your first year of university, you can tell us about your senior year of high school, your first year at SMU, and what you want to get involved with going forward.
- **Your childhood, unless it pertains to your educational and/or career goals, or if you've overcome something that now influences your goals or involvement.**

What are the submission criteria?

- 750 words maximum (1 page single spaced or 2 pages double spaced)
- Times New Roman or Calibri font
- Please include your full name and A# on each page in the header or footer.
- Saved as a Word Doc, PDF or txt file only.

Questions?

Please email financial.aid@smu.ca, or go to smu.ca/awards to view our appointment schedule.