

## CRITIQUE

Hi there,

In one word, your Personal Statement, although lively, is much too wordy. In other words, you use more words to say things that can be said in fewer words, with little loss in meaning or impact. The result is that you waste a lot of your 500 word allotment. Law school admissions essays are generally fairly short—no more than a page or two—so it is very important to make every single word and sentence count. You will notice below that I have tightened your language and consolidated various sentences.

Second, your Personal Statement sometimes repeats information the admissions reader would already most likely have access to because they have your resume and other parts of your online application.

Third, avoid what I call “generic sentences.” These are sentences that could apply to just about any other applicant. They are wasted opportunities because they don’t convey anything uniquely factual about you. They amount to padding. They do not tell the admissions committee anything specific about your goals, your ability to manage time, your capacity for creative, original thinking, your college extracurricular activities or community involvement, your capacity for making a meaningful contribution to the law school environment, the profession, and the public, or why this particular program is the right one for you. Make each sentence convey meaningful information that the reader can use to evaluate you.

Here are my line-by-line comments:

### Paragraph 1

“To whom it may concern”: No need to add this at all. That saves you five words right off the bat.

“I’m Jason.” They already know this.

“I recently graduated from the University of Ottawa”: They would know this as well.

“a school I am proud to have received my education from”: Notice that this does not add anything to the Personal Statement.

“To get started”: leave this out. Just start.

“I believe it’d make the most sense to first explain why you’d be interested in me before telling you why I’m interested in joining the law field.”

Don't tell them what you are going to say and then say it. Go straight to saying it.

"Although I am no Harvey Specter": Delete. It does not convey anything, other than that you are familiar with the TV series.

"you will find what you are looking for in excellent students in my past experiences": A generic sentence. If this is what they are going to find, it would be better to provide them with the facts that will enable them to find this, rather than saying that they are going to find it.

## Paragraph 2

"Prior to 2018": Vague. Simply say what the time period was. For example, 2015-2017.

"the Parliamentary Office of J.M." Spell out J.M. I assume you are going to do that.

"Briefly put, I was a secretary, taking calls, taking care of her Public Relations online, data entry, etc." not really needed, and certainly too long. You have already said that you were an administrative assistant. People know what an admin assistant does.

"If I would toot my own horn, I am quite proud of that essay." Absolutely delete.

## Paragraph 3

"In my spare time, I am often working on drawing artwork for customers."

This is repetitive. It does not add anything to the preceding sentence because you have already said that you do art commissions.

"my hobby business has been quite successful": this is also repetitive because you have already said that you have made somewhat of a name for yourself online and in your local area.

"enough to always keep me busy": Adds nothing to the essay. The breezy tone and empty content will not go over well.

"and needless to say, balancing my time between the two is no easy feat." Leave this out. It adds nothing.

## Paragraph 4

"and the school paying me to do it wasn't a bad thing either": avoid this breezy jocular tone, especially when it is not really conveying anything of substance to the reader. All you are simply saying is that you got paid. That isn't worth bringing to the admission panel's attention.

“Specifically, I am interested in Civil Rights and Constitutional Law, fighting for what is always right, even if it is not easy”:

The most important thing is that your essay must offer evidence that you are passionate about Civil Rights, Human Rights, and fighting for what is right. You can't just assert it because there is really no proof. I am looking at it from the admissions readers point of view.

“where there appears to be quite the focus on”: the wording of this makes you sound very unsure, as if you have not researched the law school to find out its strengths.

“at this fine institution” will sound as if you are trying to butter them up. It is not particularly offensive, but avoid it nevertheless.

“Let me know.

Best regards,

Jason L.”

Leave this out because it is an essay, not a letter.

Your Personal Statement, after editing, is considerably shorter, but that leaves you room to add missing material. Go through the law school's guidelines again and see how many of them your essay manages to respond to. Here they are once again:

In reviewing Personal Statements, committee members assess candidates according to the following considerations:

Communication skills, including writing skills.

Evidence of capacity to manage workload and time.

Ability to make a meaningful contribution to the law school environment, to the profession and to the public it serves as demonstrated by:

A record of extracurricular activities and community involvement;

Career experiences and achievements;

Personal success in dealing with challenges;

Diverse social, economic, ethnic, or cultural experiences and perspectives;

Interest in specializations and other strengths of the Faculty's program of legal education; and,

Specific career aspirations.

Commitment to upholding ethical standards and to treating all members of the university community with respect.

Below are **two** versions of your Personal Statement. The first one has the **Track Changes showing**. The second is a **clean version** with the track changes accepted. (To see the Track Changes, select "All Markup" (not "Simple Markup") under the REVIEW tab.)

I hope you found my revisions and comments helpful. I enjoyed working on your essay, and wish you the best in the application process and in your future career.

Sincerely,

Franklyn Vardon Ayensu  
Top Admit Consulting  
USA

When you have a chance, please take a moment to fill the brief survey to rate my editing. (A link to it should be in "My Orders.") This lets management know what you thought of my work, but it is of direct financial benefit to me as an editor. Please note that a rating of 4 out of 5 is considered sub-par by Top Admit management. Much appreciated!

### WITH THE TRACK CHANGES SHOWING

As a volunteer Administrative Assistant at the Parliamentary Office of J.M. during 2015-2017, I answered her calls and engaged in public relations work for her office. However, wanting to push myself further, I asked if I could, during less busy hours, read through the bills she was working on. This paid off when I had to write a final essay for school on political and cyber security, a topic I had read up on at the Parliamentary Office, thus successfully applying knowledge gained from work experience to another area.

As a naturally good artist with an entrepreneurial spirit, I have made somewhat of a name for myself online and in my local area doing art commissions by reaching out to people and engaging with potential customers on social media when I'm not volunteering at the Parliamentary Office. I also highly enjoyed serving as a Peer Tutor for my CEGEP colleagues in Calculus, Chemistry, Physics, and English because I have both an analytical quantitative mind as well as literary aptitude.

However, my interest remains the law, specifically, Civil Rights Law, Human Rights Law and Constitutional Law, because I am passionate about fighting for what is right, even if it is not easy. Besides being a recent graduate of the University of Ottawa myself, the key reason I am applying to your law school is that I am strongly attracted by its focus on these particular legal fields, and I hope to build on my passion for righting wrongs through my studies there.

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## **BELOW IS THE CLEAN VERSION WITH THE TRACK CHANGES NOT SHOWING**

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