

## Similarity Detection Service FAQs

### **I cannot log in to Track to see my personal statement similarity report.**

Please contact our Customer Experience Centre on 0371 468 0 468 (UK) or +44 330 3330 230 (International) for advice. We're open Monday to Friday, 08:30 to 18:00 (UK time)

### **I made a mistake - can I change my personal statement?**

Once you have sent your completed application to us, we **cannot** change your personal statement or upload a new one. You may be able to send a new statement directly to your choices. If you do, remember to quote your UCAS PID. Please do not send it to UCAS.

### **I applied last year so this must be because I re-used my previous personal statement?**

Your current personal statement **will not** routinely be matched with your previous personal statement. We carefully check if you have applied before and will stop your new personal statement being reported. However, if you have applied again in a **different** name, and you believe you have received a similarity report in error, please let us know.

### **How has this happened? My personal statement was all my own work.**

The software has checked your statement against other statements held on our database and detected similarities in the text. If you have shared any part of your statement with someone else or used any text from the internet, this may be why your statement has been reported.

### **I have looked at the similarity report, but I don't understand what the different colours mean?**

There is detailed information on [ucas.com](#) about the [Similarity Detection Service](#), and the report you have received.

### **Do the universities I have applied to know that my personal statement has been reported?**

If similarities have been detected in your personal statement, we notify you and each of your choices at the same time. We advise you to contact each of your choices and to follow their advice.

### **Can I withdraw my application and submit another one?**

If you have only just submitted your application, you may be able to withdraw it and resubmit another one – our Customer Experience Centre will be able to confirm this for you. However, you may not need to do this, so we would strongly advise contacting your choices first for advice about the next steps.

### **I have applied for more than one UCAS scheme – is this why my statement has shown similarities?**

You can use the same personal statement for UCAS Undergraduate, UCAS Conservatoires, and UCAS Teacher Training applications. Our checks will prevent your own statement being reported if you have applied for more than one scheme.

**I have a twin and we have done lots of the same activities – is that why my statement is similar?**

The similarity detection software we use is complex and screens for similarities in the text and sentence structure of personal statements. It is highly unlikely that two individuals sharing the same experiences would independently write identical sentences. We also cannot confirm whose statement has matched with your own, due to data protection regulations.

**My teacher helped me and checked my personal statement before I sent it, so this must be a mistake?**

Your teacher may have reviewed your personal statement for spelling and grammar, but they do not have access to our similarity detection software. Also, if they gave you a template to use, or you used any sentences from the internet, this may be why your statement has been reported.

**This was not my fault – my agent mixed my statement up with someone else's. What do I do now?**

We cannot change your personal statement once it has been sent to us. You should contact your agent as soon as possible and make sure that each of your choices has a copy of your correct statement.

**This is my own work – someone must have hacked into my email account and used my statement.**

We have checked your personal statement against other statements held on our database and we have reported similarities in the text. However, if you think the security of your UCAS account has been compromised, please contact our Customer Experience Centre as soon as possible.

**Can you tell me who my personal statement is matched with?**

We cannot tell you who submitted the matching personal statement, because of the Data Protection Act 2018, and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

**Is this why my application has been unsuccessful?**

UCAS will only advise your choices about the similarities in your personal statement. We are not involved in the decision-making process. You should contact your choices directly for any feedback regarding your application.

**Does this mean that my application is now cancelled?**

No, the similarity detection alert does not affect the ongoing processing of your application. Please contact your choices directly for advice about your personal statement and the progress of your application.

**I don't think this is right – how do I appeal?**

Once a similarity detection report has been generated and your chosen choices notified, it cannot be removed, and there is no subsequent appeal process. You should contact your choices for further advice about your personal statement and provide any further information directly to them.

**I applied last year and I want to use my old statement – is this OK?**

It's OK to reuse your previous statement if you have applied before. However, if you are now applying in a different name, make sure you fill in the 'Previous Name' box in UCAS Apply. We will then know it's you when we process your personal statement.

**I am worried that my personal statement will be flagged by UCAS. Can you check it against the similarity detection software before I send it in?**

No, we cannot 'pre-screen' statements before they are submitted. However, if you make sure that your statement is all your own work, and you don't share or copy anything from the internet, it is highly unlikely that your statement will be reported.

**Now I have sent in my UCAS application, can I post my personal statement on the internet?**

We do not advise you to post your personal statement on the internet and you should think about this very carefully. You might want to reapply through UCAS in the future, and if your statement is used by someone else, you may find that you are reported for similarity if you use it again.