

Artist's statement

How to write a personal statement for fashion

The writing of artists' statements is a recent phenomenon beginning in the 1990s. In some respects, the practice resembles the **Art Manifesto** and may derive in part from it. However, the artist's statement generally *speaks for an individual rather than a collective*, and is not strongly associated with polemic.

You can create an artist statement format about your whole body of work.

The artist's statement intends to **explain, justify, extend, and/or contextualize their body of work.**

It is imperative that the artist knows how to properly convey their work through their own words. What the artist writes in their statement may be integrated in **wall text, handouts** at an exhibition or **a paragraph in a press release.**

Artists often write a **short** (50-100 word) and/or a **long** (500-1000 word) **version** of the same statement, and they may maintain and revise these statements throughout their careers. They may be edited to suit the requirements of specific funding bodies, galleries or call-outs as part of the application process.

Statements are **a general statement about who you are as an artist.**

An artist's statement can be a single **paragraph**—**several paragraphs are preferable**—but your statement should **never be longer than one page.** While a bio can be written in third-person (e.g. she grew up in Nebraska...; he studied in Vancouver...), an artist's statement has to be written **in the first-person perspective** (e.g. my printmaking technique...; I apprenticed to carve...).

What does an artist statement contain?

- An explanation of **how and why you create your art**. It also contains other interesting facts about yourself and your art.
- Statements about **your personal relationship with art** and why you've chosen to become an artist.
- The **medium** you use for work, the tools you use, and if you work on your own.
- A **description** of your current work and why you chose to make your work the way you did.
- An **explanation** of what your work means to you and what you hope it would mean to those who look at it.

As an artist, you are expected to discuss your own work and the work of other artists. Your artist statement gives you an opportunity to define **the critical conversation you want to engage through your art.**

Write a **200-word artist statement** documenting your understanding of *your creative process, ideas* **or** *focusing on a single artwork*. Present your artist statement in a single page, using font size 11-12 with single spacing.

Consider asking yourself these questions:

- What am I trying to say in the artwork?
- What has influenced my artwork most?
- How do my methods of working (*techniques, style, formal decisions*) support the content of my artwork? What are specific examples of this in my work?
- How does my art relate to the art of my contemporaries?
- Who is my audience?
- What do I want others to understand about my art?

These topics must be discussed **in a clear and concise way in your written artist statement.**

A good artist statement uses **proper grammar, well-formed paragraphs, appropriate vocabulary and reads smoothly.**

It is not a bio, and it is generally written in first person.

★ Artist Statement Checklist ★

- My statement includes facts about my art (ie: materials, how I made it, why I made it).
- My statement includes interesting, "behind-the-scenes" information about my art, or me as an artist.
- My statement uses words that are easy to read, that aren't too fancy or used as filler.
- My statement shares my ideas, but still allows viewers to come up with their own thoughts and feelings as well.

SUGGESTED APPROACHES

Mind-maps → organize your ideas before starting to write.

Give yourself **prompts** to help yourself start writing. For example, “Write down five questions you would want an interviewer to ask you” and “Create a family tree of your artistic influences.”

Next, you can start **free writing**—getting your ideas on paper continuously, without worrying over things like grammar and style. When you begin, you might feel stuck or insecure about your ideas, but try to resist these impulses.

Free writing can often leave you with a long or messy **draft**; it's extremely important that you put as much energy into **editing** as you do writing.

Finally, an Artist Statement is **a writing process** made of a number of **steps**.

It needs time to be properly edited.

Go through the steps..
Start immediately!!



Artist's statement: Guidelines

How to write a personal statement for fashion

Fashion courses at university are incredibly competitive, so how do you make your personal statement stand out?

Be original, think business, and don't quote Chanel

"Fashion is not simply a matter of clothes; fashion is in the air, born upon the wind; one intuits it." That's a quote from Coco Chanel – and it's how not to start a personal statement for a fashion degree.

When applying for a university fashion course, your personal statement won't even be read though if your portfolio is not good enough. Willie Walters, programme director for fashion at Central St Martins, said the personal statement is "secondary" to portfolio work.

"I don't even read the statements unless the work looks interesting," she says. Walters advises applicants to make their portfolio work as clear as possible, and to include research and sketchbook work, as well as photographs of design pieces. "We look for originality and something fresh."

When it comes to the written statement, saying you have a "passion for fashion" is an immediate no-no, says Josephine Collins, course leader for fashion journalism at the London College of Fashion.

Fashion related courses are notoriously competitive, so **avoiding clichés** is an important way to make your application stand out.

Although mentioning your favourite designer is a good idea, you should think carefully about who you cite.

"We always have the same designers quoted. Every now and then someone says they are interested in a more conceptual designer and it makes them stand out. You can tell they are engaging more deeply."

Evidence of engagement with fashion is essential, agree tutors, but make sure you are **thinking about it as a serious industry**.

As well as explaining why you want to study fashion and listing any relevant work experience, it's also important to show **interests outside of fashion**, say tutors.

"Some of our fashion courses are really business-orientated," says Liz Barnes, senior lecturer in fashion at Manchester University, "so demonstrating a commercial mind is key."

Outside interests show **an engagement with general society** that is important for a fashion student, and key to fashion admissions tutors.

It's important to be **up to date on current news**, to prove an academic interest and **to show curiosity about the world** and an inquisitive mind. If you have **an unusual hobby** don't be afraid to mention it as it might help yourself get noticed.

Tutors say **individuality and character** are perhaps the most important things to convey.

"Don't contrive something for the sake of it," academic tutors advise, "**just be honest, be natural and be yourself.**"

Just don't quote Coco Chanel!

ARTIST STATEMENT

My name is Becky Hardman and studying Fashion Marketing and Retail at Harrogate College. I would like to go into Fashion Advertising for magazines. My interests are fashion which I have gained a lot of knowledge over the past two years which includes Visual Merchandising, Marketing Theory, Personal and Professional Development, CAD and Work Related Learning Four. My other interests include walking, swimming and cycling.

My inspirations towards my work are looking at high end designer catwalks and seeing their collections and basing a lot of my work on high end trends. I also like looking at different colour swatches and seeing which colours are involved within the seasons.

I've always been interested at looking at fashion designer's advertisements in magazines and seeing their new seasonal collections. What I also enjoy looking at the adverts are the colours that they use in the backgrounds and how they always stand out.



BECKY HARDMAN

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Becky Hardman' in a stylized, cursive font.

EZRA OKESON

PHILADELPHIA, PA
Germantown Friends School



FASHION + FIBERS:
DRAFTING
FASHION + FIBERS:
DYEING
EXPERIMENTAL
PAINTING
FIGURE DRAWING



EZRA'S ARTIST STATEMENT

People ask me what inspires me, and my genuine answer is that I do not know. While I do feel inspired to work when I see finished pieces and beautiful art, I guess I just don't spend enough time looking at art to have a favorite artist or designer who inspires my work. I tend to draw inspiration from people around me and things in the world. I see someone walking down the street rocking a look and that helps me create. Most of my work is fashion based, so ideas can be far more abstract than, say, a realistic painting. I've found that my three classes have become more connected in my work than I expected originally. Figure drawing is basis for all life drawings, and that has helped me in both my paintings and in thinking of the body as the basis for clothing.

In fashion, every company has an idea of a person they are designing for, and they try and portray that person through the clothing. I have found that, consciously or not, I have created an image of myself through my works. Identity is a personal thing, especially for those of us who have had to come to terms with our own identities. I try to be boldly myself, both in daily life and through my work. By creating genderless clothing and experimenting with different mediums between paint and sculpture, I try to create conversation. I find great art isn't very straightforward; it has to make you think. My goal for my work is to spark more ideas.

JASMINE WILCOX

PHILADELPHIA, PA
Paul Robeson High School

JASMINE'S ARTIST STATEMENT

I create vibrant, constructed pieces for people to wear to express themselves. I believe that in order to feel beautiful you have to look beautiful. Everyone is art. I use traditional African cloth because it gives me a different look. What caught my eye about this particular fabric is the contrast of patterns. Typically, when you look at African fabric nothing has been changed about the material. I used a starburst effect for a pleated skirt, and the two sides of the garment were clipped together with clothes pins, and then topped dyed. The shirt went through the same top dyeing process as the lower belt.

The first step I take when reinventing a garment is tracing garments that I already own. Then, I cut them from the fabric. When the fabric is cut into its shape, I finally connect the geometry together.

What makes my shirt design different from the original is the fit. For the belt design, instead of five to six lines going through the belt, the larger half is the first layer, the smaller fraction is then placed on top to give a layered look. The pleated skirt was my second design, and I reduced the amount of pleats leaving a comfortable fit. The pants are tighter and fall higher. The bow shirt I am wearing was inspired by Moschino. I made a 2-D bow first. Then, I traced a white woven non-stretch shirt. The reason I didn't use a stretch fabric in my final design is because the heavy bow would droop the shirt.

I am a starting designer, so I'll look for something I can possibly do myself. It gets my attention when a garment is basic, but still really makes me think about how to put it together and with what. It inspires me to keep my garments basic and classy. I also keep my garments basic because my fabric has a lot of patterns.

As my instructor, Chrissy, said, "Welcome to the world of the straight lines." This may not seem like a big deal, but it definitely was a change that redefined my craft and eliminated my old bad habits.



FASHION + FIBERS:
DRAFTING

FASHION + FIBERS:
DYEING

EXPERIMENTAL
PHOTOGRAPHY

ZINE + SMALL PRESS

ASHLEE VALLE

PHILADELPHIA, PA
Creative Performing Arts High School



FASHION + FIBERS:
DRAFTING
FASHION
PHOTOGRAPHY
EXPERIMENTAL
PHOTOGRAPHY
DIGITAL EFFECTS FOR
FILM + ANIMATION



ASHLEE'S ARTIST STATEMENT

Being a conceptual artist has driven me to develop skills in various forms of artmaking. My ideas translate into autobiographical series about growth and experiences that have changed the way I perceive or interpret. The series usually consists of three, creating balance amongst the message. A major pattern in the messages of my pieces is new beginnings. My approach to making can go from learning a new technique and directly applying it to the piece, to expressing my growth from experiences I've had throughout the piece. These new beginnings have shaped me into the artist I am today.

Up until this point, concept and style have always influenced my artistic practices. Since I started taking classes in photo, design, and fabrication, I've realized that concept and style is what ties the three mediums together. Looking back at all the work that I've produced over the course of taking these classes, fashion design and photography in particular have meshed into one another to create my overall concept, while adding a distinctive style to the project. This learning experience has taught me plenty, but most of all has made me grow in areas of art that I was underdeveloped in.

FASHION DESIGN PERSONAL STATEMENT:

JUDIE LAW- FASHION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, NEW YORK CITY

I have always been fascinated by the ability of certain colors and items of clothing to change moods or express emotions. Growing up, I enjoyed experimenting with styles to create my own unique look, and I developed a real passion for working with different textures and materials and creating new designs and considered making a career out of my creative skills.

I recently visited the New Designers Exhibition to explore the possibilities of a practical fashion design course. Studying fashion and design skills in practice would give me the tools to start my own business as a fashion designer in future.

I also really enjoy practicing my sewing in my spare time and have studied various fashion and textiles books, ranging from fashion drawing to sewing techniques.

I undertook work experience at a local theatre last year where I gained an understanding of the many roles involved in running a theatre; I really enjoyed learning different new skills, as well as interacting with members of the public and overcoming challenges.

ARTIST STATEMENT : FD

This year I have been studying towards my HNC* in Applied Arts in order to gain valuable experience in a range of new media and develop my art skills. I am interested in all fields of art and design, particularly the design crafts, such as textiles. Textiles influence all areas of my art, whether its pressing textures into metal in jewelry, or using them as for collage in my drawing and painting, and the course has helped me greatly in deciding that this is the path I would like to take further in my artistic career.

I have just started my second term of the course and so far we have completed units in Jewellery Design and Production, Observational Drawing and Creative Process, all of which I have enjoyed and have helped me enhance and develop my range of skills and my creative thinking as an artist, a skill which is very important when developing ideas into successful final pieces, something that all artists do in every field of art.

***Higher National Certificate in UK**

Beyond the classroom I have been attending weekly life drawing classes for the past 3 years in order to allow me to further enhance my skills as a draughtsman. I have attended many extra curricular courses such as non certificate courses in Digital Photography and Art History, Dressmaking Classes, which allowed me to experiment with fabrics and textiles, and have booked a place at a 10 week Hatmaking course beginning in January.

I am also organising work experience at a weaving mill during the Easter break in order to gain valuable work experience and greater knowledge of the industrial side of textiles, which is very important for those seeking a career in the industry. At the end of last year I won The Ian Cooke Award for Digital Photography, and Colours for my artistic performance and dedication to the art school through my help as a primary school classroom assistant. I found it extremely rewarding to help these children develop their artistic abilities and, in some cases, discover a passion for the subject.

Two years ago I did a weeks work experience at Edinburgh College of Art. From this experience I was able to get a feel for life at art college and, being surrounded by the current students, get a glimpse of the artistic level expected from those wishing to study art at a higher level.

I want to study textiles in order to pursue my passion for the art and textiles movements and explore the thin line between the two disciplines, which is something I am extremely interested in. I am interested in every aspect of textiles: form, texture, line, pattern and particularly colour.

I am not only interested in these areas in textiles, but also in art, and I try to incorporate all these things into my drawing and painting. Colour is something I am drawn to, and my favourite artists all use bold colour in their works. Egon Schiele uses murky, gaudy colours which contrast well with his strong line, Gustav Klimt uses rich reds and golds to emphasise a feeling of power, and Jenny Saville uses bold contrasts of reds, blues and greens to create dramatic and expressive pieces.

In my textiles degree I hope to explore colour further than I have previously through use of new media, pattern, and exploration of harmonious and contrasting palettes in my textiles.

I feel studying this course at your institution would allow me to do this, as well as setting me up well for life after university, through its excellent reputation and the courses aim to prepare you for the textiles industry.

I believe the diversity of my interests and my dedication to my artwork show that I am able to organize my time effectively and find balance in my life, preparing me well for higher education. I feel I could become a valuable asset to my college as a whole and look forward to the opportunities this will present for me.

My work.....:

addresses	challenges	determines	imitates	mocks	resembles
adopts	commends	echoes	implies	notifies	reveals
affects	communicates	emulates	insinuates	offers	suggests
deals with	conveys	exposes	introduces	parallels	stimulates
announces	critiques	touts	investigates	parodies	tells
assumes	declares	feigns	mentions	proposes	states
betrays	designates	explores	mirrors	looks at	poses
refers	reflects	offers	reiterates	represents	signifies

3 Language Tools

MONOLINGUAL DICTIONARY

- dictionary.cambridge.org.co.uk

BILINGUAL DICTIONARY

- Repubblica
- Corriere
- [Garzantilinguistica.it](https://www.garzantilinguistica.it)
- Wordreference

GOOGLE IMAGE

Pro Tips

The key to an amazing statement is to write A LOT, then **edit, edit, edit**. You should go through **at least 3 drafts**. Spend a little time away from it, and then return with fresh eyes. **This is not something you can do in an hour – it's going to take time!!!!**

Step One. After you have answered the above suggested questions, **highlight key items (words/sentences)** from your answers above to start writing information in paragraph form.

Write your first draft until you feel like it touches on **the important things you want to say about your work.**

Aim for **3 short paragraphs MAXIMUM.**

Read this aloud to yourself.

Remember, if anything is confusing to you, it will be confusing to your readers!!!!!! Look for moments of clarity and interest.

Step Two: Edit and Paraphrase

Read through your draft several times. Be specific!

Keep refining until you have something you're happy with that **includes a strong opening sentence**. Aim for 3 concise paragraphs. Read it aloud to yourself again. Does it still read clearly?

Ask a Friend to read over your draft for you. Have them review your statement and ask them to provide feedback and suggestions. Get them to check for spelling, grammar, and clarity.

Make edits based on this feedback as you see fit.

Step Three: Wrap it Up

Sleep on it. Tomorrow (or the next days at the latest), read your statement again with fresh eyes. Edit as you see fit, keeping it around 300 words.

In writing, the following **discourse markers** are common:

Firstly, secondly, thirdly, lastly

To begin with...

Moreover, in addition, furthermore

What I mean is..

On the one hand on the other hand...

In sum,

In conclusion,

Type of relationship	Sentence connectors	Position within clause/sentence
Adding something	<i>Moreover; In addition; Additionally; Further; Further to this; Also; Besides; What is more.</i>	<u>Initial position</u>
Making a contrast between two separate things, people, ideas, etc.	<i>However; On the other hand; In contrast; Yet.</i>	<u>Initial position</u>
Making an unexpected contrast (concession)	<i>Although; Even though; Despite the fact that; In spite of the fact that; Regardless of the fact that.</i>	<u>Initial position</u> Starts a second/ subord. clause
Saying why some thing is the case	<i>Because; Since; As; Insofar as.</i>	<u>Initial position</u> Starts a second/ subordin. clause
Saying what the result of something is	<i>Therefore; Consequently; In consequence; As a result; Accordingly; Hence; Thus; For this reason; Because of this.</i>	<u>Initial position</u>
Expressing a condition	<i>If; In the event of; As long as...; So long as...; Provided that...; Assuming that...; Given that....</i>	<u>Initial position</u> Starts a second/ subordinate clause
Making what you say stronger	<i>On the contrary; As a matter of fact; In fact; Indeed.</i>	<u>Initial position</u>