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## Personal Statement Planning Worksheet & Review Checklist

### A Structured Guide for Writing Strong Graduate Statements

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#### Section 1: Research Interests

- What academic or research questions genuinely interest you?
- Why do these questions matter in your field?
- How did these interests develop over time?

Write clearly and specifically. Avoid vague career goals.

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#### Section 2: Academic Preparation

List and briefly describe:

- Relevant coursework
- Academic strengths
- Skills or methods learned
- Areas where you developed advanced understanding

Focus on preparation for graduate-level work.

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#### Section 3: Research Experience

For each experience, note:

- Project or topic
- Your specific role
- Methods used
- Outcomes or findings
- What the experience taught you

Emphasize thinking, problem-solving, and intellectual growth.

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#### Section 4: Program Fit

Answer clearly:

- Why this program?
- Which faculty align with your interests?
- What resources, labs, or strengths attract you?
- How your interests fit the program's direction

Avoid generic praise or rankings.

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### Section 5: Career Direction

- What do you hope to do after graduate school?
  - How will this program help you reach that goal?
  - Keep this concise and academically focused
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### Final Personal Statement Review Checklist

Before submitting, confirm:

- The statement is tailored to this specific program
  - Faculty and research areas are clearly named
  - Research interests are central, not personal history
  - The writing is clear, focused, and professional
  - No spelling, grammar, or formatting errors
  - The tone is confident but not entitled
  - The statement fits the word limit exactly
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### Reminder

A strong personal statement connects **past experience**, **current interests**, and **future goals** into one clear academic narrative.

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