

Review of personal statement C

October 15, 2019

1 Pros

The panel concurred that the scaffolding for a good statement are there, which is to say that all the elements are in place. However, this scaffolding needs expansion to deliver a compelling statement of motivation and qualification.

2 Areas of improvement

The old writing adage of ‘show, don’t tell’ applies well to this statement: rather than simply state what happened (‘My time here has given me a real appreciation for the research process’), try to write specifically what aspects of the work have given you that appreciation. What was your first eureka moment, when a particularly important idea crystallized for you? When did an important piece of code run for the first time, and what was involved in the struggle to get there? Try to present the experiences that you’ve had as a MS student as less happenstance, and more deliberate (even if this isn’t strictly true).

Second, it would be worth spending some time trying to ensure that phrasing and ordering of the paragraphs is optimal, and flow more linearly through time. Pay attention to transitions, so that these formative time periods read more like a story and less like bullet points.

Finally, do a bit of proofreading to ensure that tenses and spelling are correct, particularly in the first and second paragraphs.

Additionally,