



# Written Statements Workshop



# Goals for the Session

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- Provide an overview of written statements
- Develop potential topics through a guided brainstorming exercise
- Take-home activity to continue your writing process
- Answer your questions!

# Written Statements

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## Statement of Purpose

What motivates you to pursue law? How does attending law school align with your ambitions, goals, and vision for your future?

## Statement of Perspective

The Admissions Committee makes every effort to understand who you are as an individual and potential Harvard Law School student and graduate. Please share how your experiences, background, and/or interests have shaped you and will shape your engagement in the HLS community and the legal profession.





# Why do your statements matter?

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- Your statements convey who you are, why you want to go to law school, and how you envision being a part of HLS and the legal communities
- Showcase your writing quality
- Provide an opportunity to tie all of your application components together for the reader

# The written statements are...

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- Professional pieces of writing – your statements should be clear, concise, and straightforward – no need for creative risks here
- A confirmation that you are confident in law school as your next step





# The written statements are *not*...

- All-encompassing statements of your complexities as a person
- A commitment to practicing a certain type of law
- A restatement of another part of your application (e.g., reciting your resume)
- A chance to detail the entirety of your life story
- Lengthy odes to HLS
- Essays you write in only one draft

# Written Statement Format

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- Check each school's instructions!
- For HLS:
  - 1–2 pages each
  - Double-spaced
  - Minimum 11-point font
  - One-inch margins





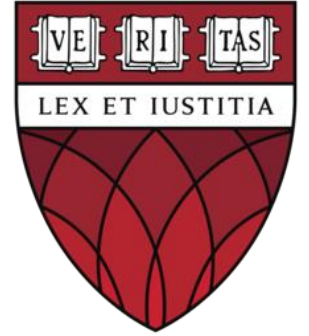
# Statement of Purpose

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*What motivates you to pursue law? How does attending law school align with your ambitions, goals, and vision for your future?*



# Step 1: Get Started!



*Take 15 minutes to respond to the following prompts:*

- List three memorable experiences that have shaped your desire to study law
- Describe two things you have done to explore your interest in law
- How have these experiences confirmed that interest in law?
- How have they prepared you to succeed in law school?
- What areas of law interest you? Why?
- What are three things you could see yourself doing with a law degree?
- Why is now the best time for you to get your law degree?

The background of the slide features a photograph of a grand, classical-style university building with prominent white columns and a pediment. The building is partially obscured by the dense, green foliage of large trees in the foreground. The sun is shining brightly through the leaves, creating a lens flare effect in the upper right quadrant. A semi-transparent white horizontal band is overlaid across the middle of the image, serving as a backdrop for the text.

# Statement of Perspective

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*Please share how your experiences, background, and/or interests have shaped you and will shape your engagement in the HLS community and the legal profession.*

# Step 1: Get Started!



*Take 15 minutes to respond to the following prompts:*

- What kind of student are you? How do you engage in academic communities?
- Name one meaningful job, activity, or experience in which you worked in a group. How did you contribute, and what do those contributions tell you about yourself?
- What experiences have shaped you? More specifically, how do those experiences influence how you engage with your school, work, and/or communities?
- What identities do you hold that are important to you? How do those identities shape the way you think about the law and the ways you engage with the world around you?
- Describe a time when you felt intellectually engaged. Why did you find that topic so compelling?

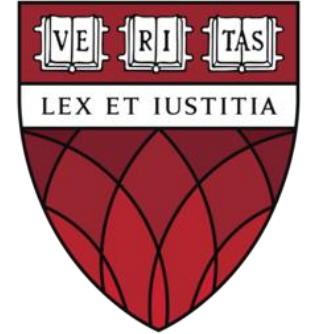
# Step 2: Outline



*Make a plan for how you want to structure your statements.*

- First paragraph: set the stage for the reader
- Body paragraphs: answer the prompts and make sure you incorporate different information in each statement so they are not duplicative of one another
  - Statement of Purpose: convey your motivation(s) for attending law school and how law school aligns with your goals and vision for the future
  - Statement of Perspective: convey how your experiences, background, and/or interests have shaped you and will shape your engagement in the HLS community and legal profession
- Conclusion: tie it all together

# Step 3: Draft and Revise



*Expect to undergo many revisions before submitting your statements.*

*Some tips for revising:*

- Read your statements aloud to identify typos, grammatical errors, and structural issues
- Ask for feedback from people you trust (and people you don't know!) so they can:
  - Tell you their take-away for each statement
  - Flag missing pieces or information
  - Point out anything that is confusing or needs elaboration
  - Provide feedback on the structure of your statements
  - Highlight grammatical and/or spelling errors
- For big changes, rewrite with a fresh page instead of editing



# Common Questions

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- Will I be at a disadvantage if I submit a one-page statement?
- Should I explain why I want to go to a particular law school?
- How can my statements stand out?

# Helpful Resources

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## Check out our website

- *adMISSION: HLS* blog
  - “Real Talk” series
  - “Inside the Black Box” series
- *Application Toolkit*
- J.D. Applicant FAQs

## Tune in

- *Navigating Law School Admissions* Podcast (featuring Dean Jobson)

