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The Network for East Anglian Collaborative Outreach (neaco) is a project aimed at increasing the number of young people going into Higher Education. neaco consists of the University of Cambridge (including its Colleges), Anglia Ruskin University, the University of East Anglia, Norwich University of the Arts, and the University of Suffolk.

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We will also get in touch by email to facilitate your involvement in the Take Your Place programme. Please contact [info@takeyourplace.ac.uk](mailto:info@takeyourplace.ac.uk) if you have any questions about how we use your data.

Explore your options,  
Discover your potential

**TAKE  
YOUR  
PLACE**

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Explore your options,  
Discover your potential

Preparing for a Philosophy /  
RE Application

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# How can we help?

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- This PowerPoint is here to provide you with different ideas to support you with writing a Personal Statement for a Philosophy / RE course, as well as help you through the application process.
- We have put together reading lists, preparation ideas and top tips for the application process for a Philosophy / RE course at University

# Where do I start?!

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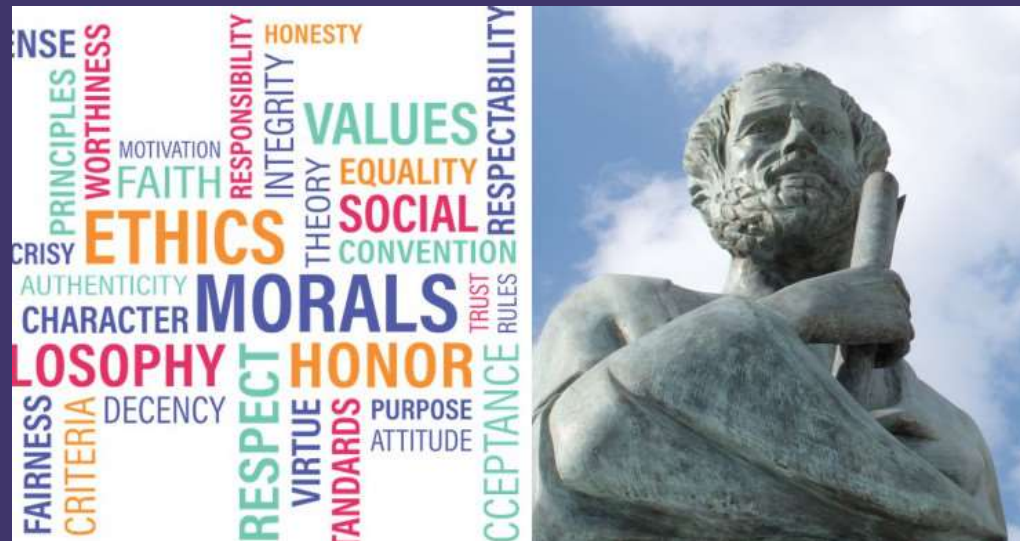
- Lets start with some reading. We recommend using this time to do some further reading on your chosen subject, as it is important that your personal statement contains an academic paragraph.



# An Academic Paragraph

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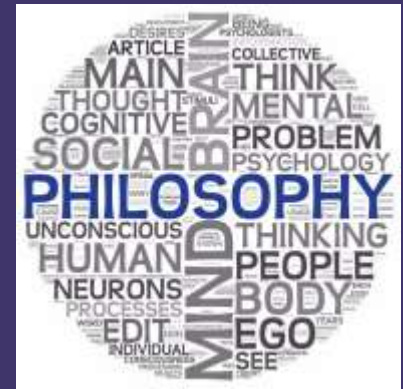
Having an academic paragraph in your personal statement is really important and we suggest using the following reading lists to help. You can use this paragraph to analyse a small piece of text from a relevant book/journal or an article.



# Reading Suggestions

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- BBC religion website: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/>
- Aeon magazine, philosophy section: <https://aeon.co/philosophy>
- Medium magazine: <https://medium.com/>
- New Philosopher magazine - <https://www.newphilosopher.com/>
- The Philosophers' magazine: <https://www.philosophersmag.com/>



## General introductions

*Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction* by Edward Craig

*What Does it All Mean?* by Thomas Nagel

*Think* by Simon Blackburn

*The Problems of Philosophy* by Bertrand Russell

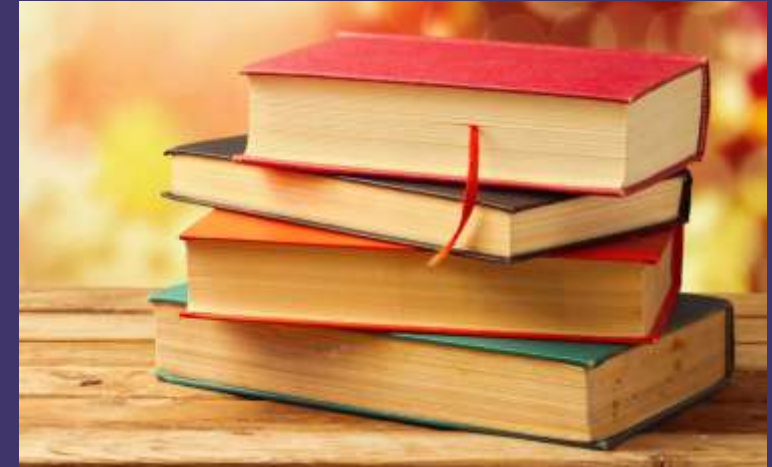
*Theology: A Very Short Introduction* by David Ford

# Reading Suggestions

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## Books

- *The God Delusion* by Richard Dawkins
- *Sophie's World* by Jostein Gaarder
- *The Puzzle of Christianity* by Peter Vardy
- *God Matters* and *Bible Matters* by Peter and Charlotte Vardy
- *The Selfish Gene* by Richard Dawkins
- *Riddles of Existence* by Earl Conee and Theodore Sider
- *The Mechanical Mind* by Tim Crane
- *Paradoxes* by R M Sainsbury
- *Being Good* by Simon Blackburn



- *Practical Ethics* by Peter Singer
- *An Introduction to Political Philosophy* by Jonathon Wolff
- *Aristotle the Philosopher* by J L Ackrill
- *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous* by George Berkeley
- *Meditations* by Rene Descartes
- *Utilitarianism and On Liberty* by J S Mill

# WATCH

- TED talks on <https://www.ted.com/talks>
- Philosophy crash course on YouTube:  
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8dPuuaLjXtNgK6MZucdYldNkMybYIHKR>
- Business ethics: Explore the case study of Union Carbide in Bhopal. Watch the full BBC documentary on the events (*BBC one night in Bhopal*)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rJg19W8x\\_Ls](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rJg19W8x_Ls)



## RECOMMENDED FILMS:

- *The Book of Life* (1998), directed by Hal Hartley
- *Inception* (2010), directed by Christopher Nolan
- *1984* (1984), directed by Michael Radford
- *Little Buddha* (1994), directed by Bernardo Bertolucci
- *Slumdog Millionaire* (2009), directed by Danny Boyle
- *A Short Stay in Switzerland* (2009), directed by Simon Curtis
- *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), directed by Stanley Kubrick
- *The Matrix* (1999), directed by Lana and Lilly Wachowski
- *I, Robot* (2004), directed by Alex Proyas

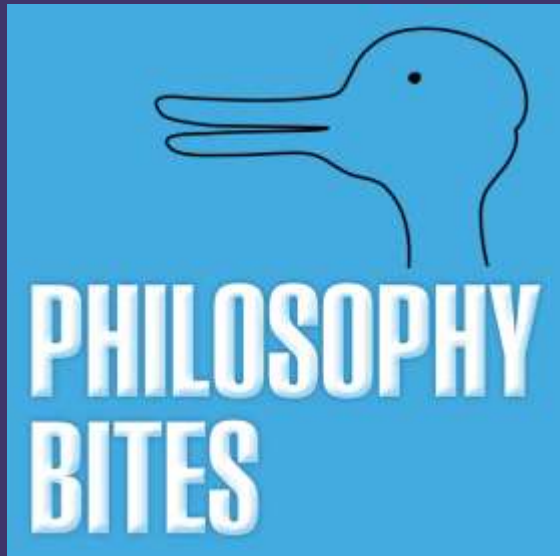


# LISTEN

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## Radio programmes

- BBC Radio 4 – In Our Time: Philosophy - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01f0vzr>
- Philosophy Now - <https://philosophynow.org/podcasts>



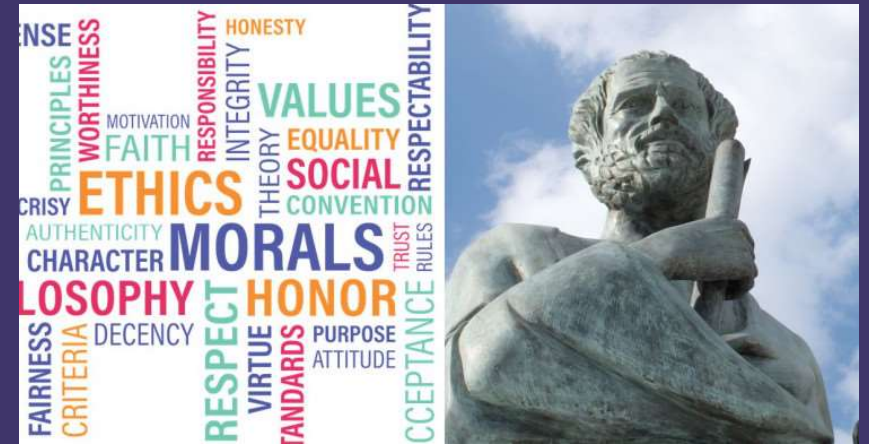
## CHECK OUT THESE PODCASTS:

- Philosophy Bites series of podcasts and books. <http://www.philosophybites.com>
- University of Oxford Philosophy: <https://www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk/podcasts>
- PhilosophyTalk: <https://www.philosophytalk.org/>
- Marianne Talbot's Philosophy for Beginners podcasts: <https://mariannetalbot.co.uk/about/podcasts/philosophy-for-beginners/>
- Philosophy for Our Times: <https://iai.tv/iai-podcast>
- Philosophy podcasts: <https://player.fm/featured/philosophy>

# WEBSITES

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- RE Online - <https://www.reonline.org.uk/subject-knowledge/16-plus-philosophy/>
- Philosophical Society - <https://www.philosophicalsociety.com/>
- Open Learn free course 'Introducing Philosophy': <http://www.open.edu/openlearn/history-thearts/culture/philosophy/introducing-philosophy/content-section-0?active-tab=description-tab>
- TrueTube - <https://www.truetube.co.uk/>
- Never Off Topic - <http://faradayschools.com/re-topics/re-year-12-13/>



- Asking the Big Questions: <https://request.org.uk/>
- Guide to the World's Philosophy: <http://www.philosophers.co.uk/>
- BBC Today: Does science have all the answers? [http://news.bbc.co.uk/today/hi/today/newsid\\_9410000/9410486.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/today/hi/today/newsid_9410000/9410486.stm)
- Life and Death Row programme – BBC iPlayer: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/group/b071iy7p>
- Watch Consciousness & the Brain by John Searle: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j\\_OPQgPldKg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j_OPQgPldKg)
- Watch this TedEd talk on 'Why Would God Allow Tsunamis?': [https://www.ted.com/talks/tom\\_honey\\_on\\_god\\_and\\_the\\_tsunami/up-next](https://www.ted.com/talks/tom_honey_on_god_and_the_tsunami/up-next)



# Online Courses

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FutureLearn - Explore online courses to continue studying, build professional skills and connect with experts. Useful examples include:

- How to Succeed at: Writing Applications
- How to Succeed at: Interviews



OpenLearn - Open University? – These courses have been designed to increase confidence and develop the skills needed to enter Higher Education and succeed with learning.



- The courses are free and they do not have a start and end date. You can start right away or at a time that suits you.
- You can work through at your own pace
- You can spend as long as you like on an OpenLearn course, plus, if you sign up you can track your progress and work towards a statement of participation.
- There are around 1000 courses to choose from -

# My HE+

Thinking about applying to University and looking for ways to explore your subject beyond the curriculum? Then this website is for you. Each topic is produced by Cambridge postgraduate students and academics at the cutting edge of research in their field. The topics provide guided activities, questions to think about and suggestions for further reading.



The main subject pages also give you a quick guide to what it would be like to study the subject at university level and suggest some further resources to check out.

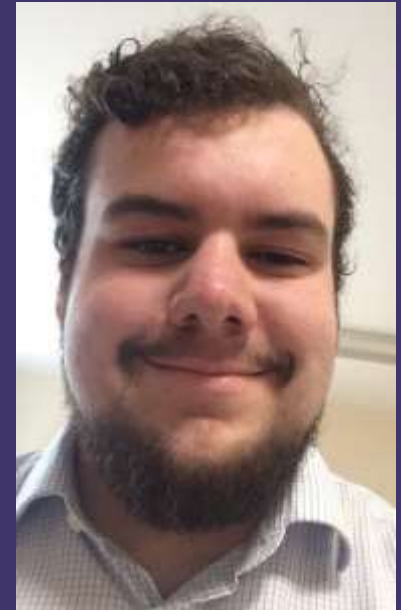
<https://www.myheplus.com/>

# Personal statement advice

## from those who made it!

Aaron Burrows is currently studying *BA Hons Theology, Religion and Ethics* at Winchester University

- Make sure you explain **what you enjoy about the subject** – think about the subject content: are there any philosophical/theological/ethical questions you love exploring? Are there any scholars that fascinate you? Are there any religions you want to learn more about? Explain why and how the degree will accommodate your questions.
- Ensure you **express a desire to learn** and try to make sure this is a degree you are really passionate about! Three years can seem like a long time ... it's even longer when you're not invested in your subject.
- Always state **why you want to study the subject in the first place** and what you hope to get out of your studies – so, think about what you find interesting about the subject; why you want to study the subject; what you want to do with the degree in the future.
- **Extra-reading** is always a positive – this type of degree always expects you to do A LOT of reading, by showing you've read around the subject outside of what is expected at A-level is definitely a good idea. If you have done any extra-reading ... let them know.



KEEP CALM  
AND  
WRITE YOUR  
PERSONAL  
STATEMENT

- To stand out from others, perhaps **talk about a film or fictional book you read** and explain how it dealt with difficult philosophical questions. Almost all films and many books deal with matters of philosophy, ethics, theology, religion and so on. Show them that you can make these links – don't just limit your discussion to textbooks you've read in the classroom.
- Make sure you **read through your personal statement again and again ... and again.** Don't just read it in your head, read it out loud and get others to read through it. Check spelling, punctuation and grammar and be concise with what you are saying i.e. can what you've written in three sentences be condensed into one sentence?

# Find Us Online:



- [www.TakeYourPlace.ac.uk](http://www.TakeYourPlace.ac.uk)



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