



University College Dublin
Careers Network

Personal Statements

For the Réalta Master in
Engineering Scholarships

Nicola Fortune,
UCD Careers Network

**By the end of this session
students will be able to:**



Session Objectives

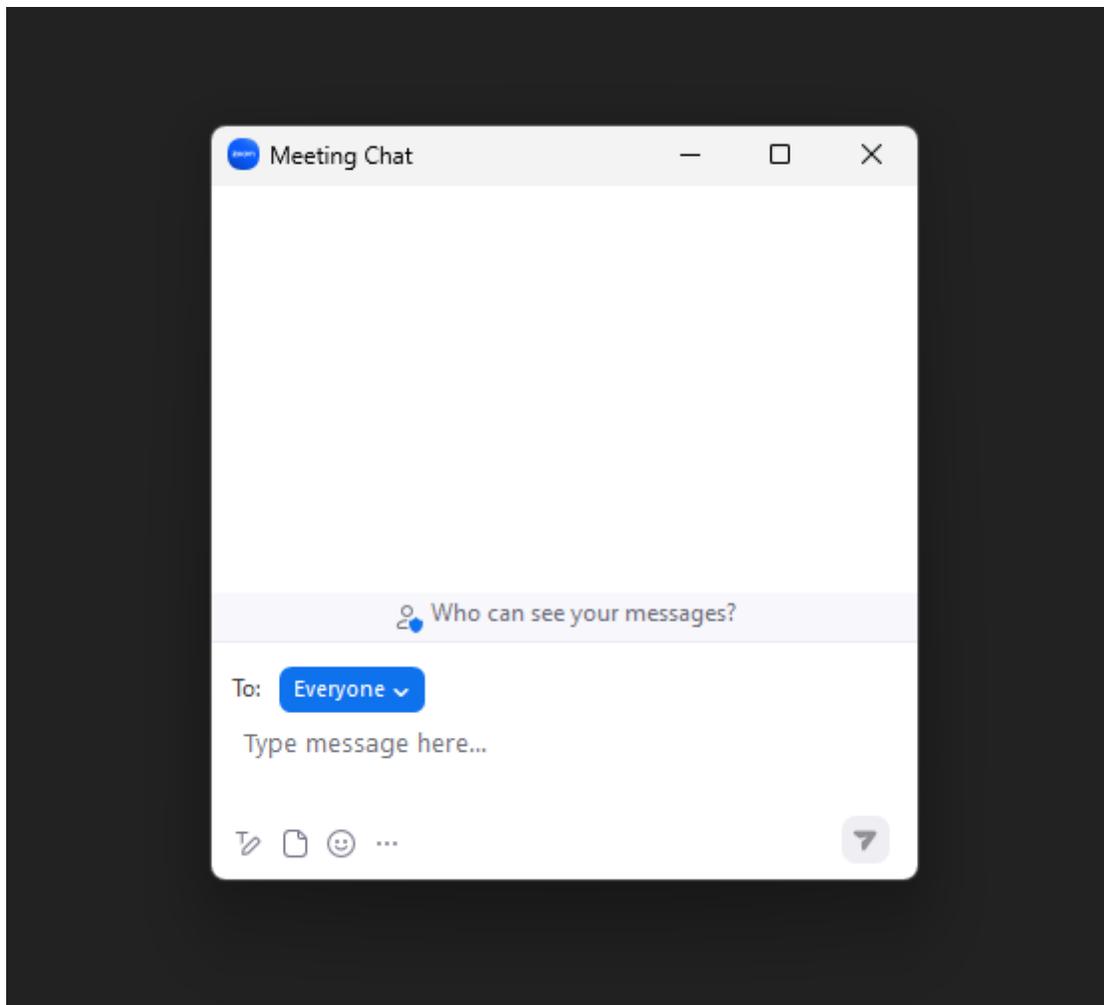
- Identify the key components they will include in their own personal statement
- Outline the basic structure of their personal statement



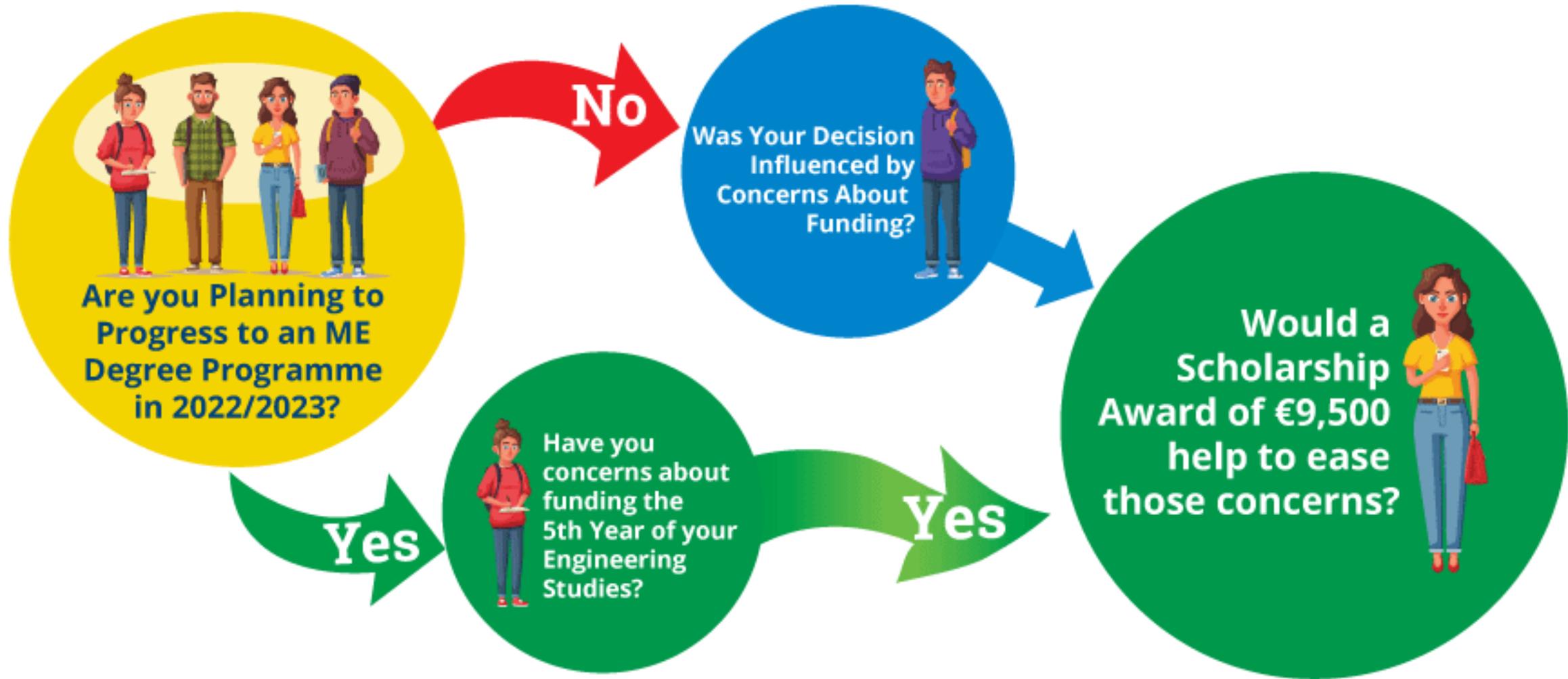
**Nicola Fortune,
UCD Career & Skills
Consultant**



**Sue Philpott,
Director,
College of Engineering and
Architecture Office**



**Use Chat Function to
ask questions or clarify**



Make an application for 1 of the 20 Réalta Scholarships for Stage 3 Engineering Students



**Feedback from
Previous Recipients:**

"Because of my scholarship, I have been able to focus all my energy on the final year of my studies. Beyond the financial benefit, which of course was hugely significant and allows me to graduate debt-free, being awarded this Scholarship felt like a recognition of my efforts, which was a massive confidence boost."

"The Réalta Masters in Engineering Scholarship has allowed me to finish my degree with dignity and less stress than I may have had otherwise...I can hopefully get into a job which will provide both financial stability and security for myself and my family."

GETTING STARTED



Step 1: Review the Process & Plan

Access the Google Application Form

Review the sample application form

Review requirements for personal statement

Identify referee & ask (e.g.: Academic, GP, Student Adviser, Coach, Former Employer etc.) Someone who is relevant to the context you describe

Plan your timeline for submitting

Queries to Sue Philpott, Director, UCD Engineering & Architecture College Office - sue.philpott@ucd.ie

Step 2: Start Drafting

Copy application form questions to work on in word

Draft initial answers to questions in word

Write first draft personal statement

Step 3: Editing & Submitting

Review draft personal statement

Get feedback on statement from a trusted person/friend

Edit based on feedback

Insert into live application form
(cannot save progress)

Submit Application by 28th May

Why are
personal
statements
used?





SHARE
YOUR
STORY

"The Personal Statement is really important to the Assessment Panel. It gives the applicant an opportunity to tell us more about themselves and their circumstances than what their application form questions, or indeed their examination results might reveal. We get a snapshot of the real person behind their application: not just their academics, but their interests, background, and any challenges they may be facing in their lives (especially any factors that are likely to prevent them opting for the ME programme pathway) upon completion of Stage 3, e.g. accommodation/ commuting/ other issues."

Your perspective

To contextualize your story

Share who you are as a person – interests, activities etc.

Share the challenges you have faced

Outline how you have succeeded while also dealing with challenges

Outline how receiving this scholarship will impact you

Personal Statement



Sample Structure

Introduction

Personal background- academics,
volunteering, extracurriculars

Relevant challenging personal or
financial circumstances & how you have
overcome them so far

How this scholarship would allow you to
fulfil your goals

Conclusion

Introduction

What could you include?

Currently
studying....

Planning to study
....

Long term plans..

Brief overview of
why you are
applying for
scholarship

**Make a note
for your own
statement**



Background

A holistic overview of who you are

Academic
interests/
achievements

Extracurriculars

Volunteering

Work
Experience

Internships

Engagement in
UCD Eng/ UCD
wider community

OR can include
an outline of why
unable to
engage

**Make a note
for your own
statement**



Relevant Circumstances

Examples of Relevant challenging personal or financial circumstances

career change

mature student

dependents
and/or carer role

accommodation/
commuting
challenges

balancing
college/work
requirements

Family situation
e.g. first gen,
financial
challenges

.....and how have you overcome these so far

**Make a note
for your own
statement**



**How this scholarship will
impact you**

What could you include?

Give you access
to
accommodation

Allow you to buy
a car to
commute

Pay for childcare
etc.

Allow you to
work less hours
to focus on
studies

Allow you to take
opportunities

Relieve
pressure/stress

Allow you to
participate more
fully in college
life

**Make a note
for your own
statement**

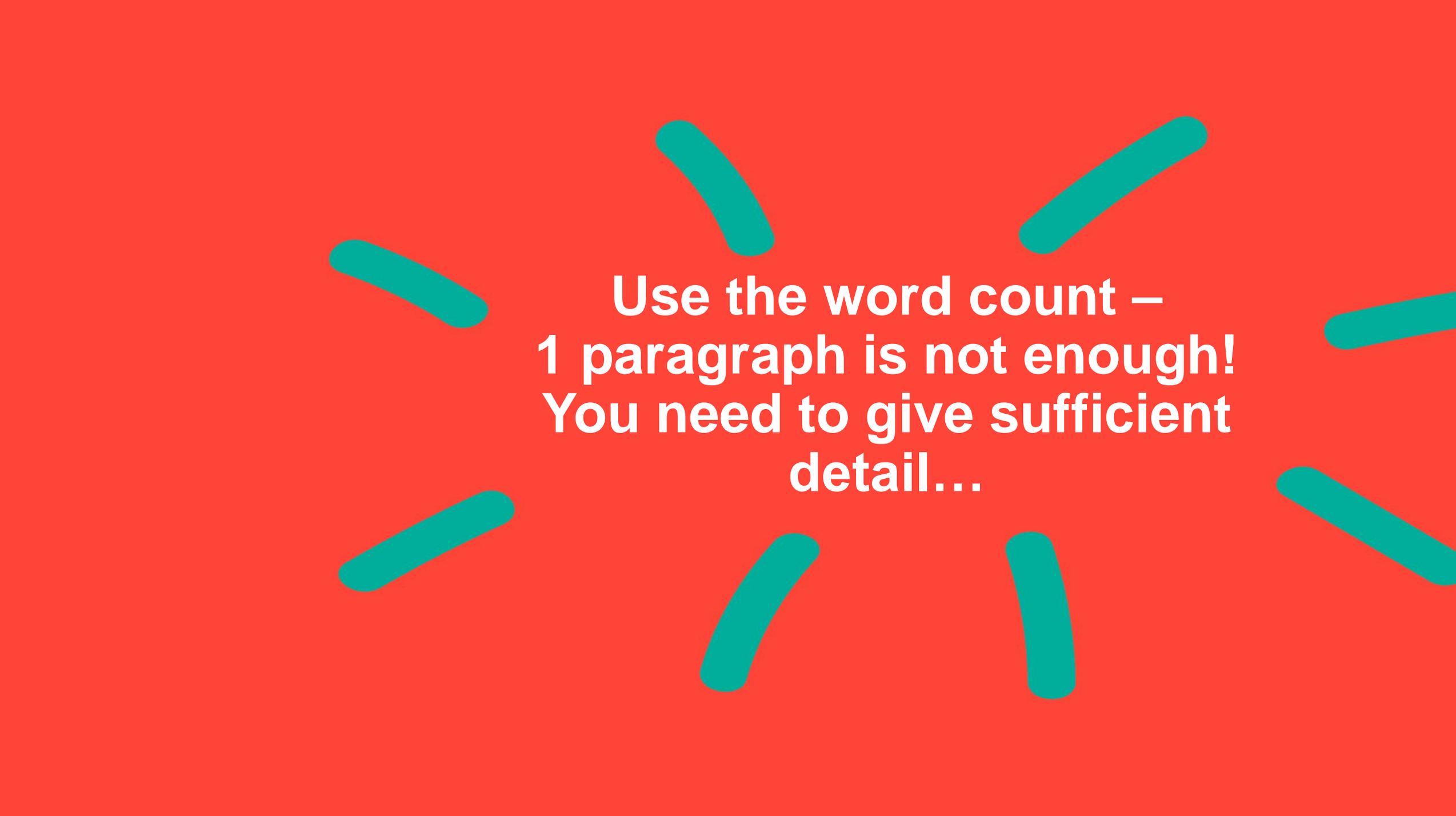


Approx. 1 page-
500 words max
(3200
characters)*



word
count

*Optional supplementary statement only if needed

The background is a solid red color. In the center, there is a circular arrangement of ten teal-colored brush strokes, resembling a sunburst or a decorative border. The strokes are of varying lengths and orientations, creating a dynamic, hand-drawn effect.

**Use the word count –
1 paragraph is not enough!
You need to give sufficient
detail...**

Refine and Polish



Be ruthless – Is any section, sentence or word superfluous, ambiguous or apologetic?

Are all verbs strong and active?

Are you duplicating information / being repetitive?

Is there a clarity of thought / logical flow of ideas?

Check and re-check spelling and grammar

Common Pitfalls

Common Pitfalls

Not enough detail- break down factors and how they are relevant

Too short- use close to the allowed word count

Not giving yourself time

Lack of effort e.g., spelling, grammar

Submitting a first draft, instead of getting feedback and refining (as outlined)

The image features a solid coral background. In the center, the word "Questions?" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font. Surrounding the text are several thick, teal-colored brush strokes of varying lengths and orientations, creating a dynamic, hand-drawn effect.

Questions?