

POSTGRADUATE TRAINING SEMINAR

Application Writing: Abstracts, Publications, Research & Teaching Statements

If you are revising a Mathematical Document, don't forget to give it a **STRONG TITLE** (this also applies to your Research and Teaching Statements, below). You may also wish to consider the following less-discussed issues

- Consider the audience: What type of journal is it? Have you looked at the style of the accepted articles?
- Does your abstract summarize the main results and any novel techniques you employ?
- Read your introduction very carefully, as this is the only section some people will read. Do you give the main ideas of the paper and explain why they are important? Do you establish some "prehistory" on the problem you have solved (e.g., past papers and the arguments used up to this point)?
- If you are posting on the arXiv, consider relevant cross-listings (and a catchy title). After posting on the arXiv, it is often useful to wait a couple of days for comments and corrections to come in before submitting to a journal.
- Does the journal have: page/typesetting rules, copyright limits, special packages for diagrams and images?
- You may be asked to suggest 1-2 people who could referee the paper. It should not be someone you are already acknowledging, but can certainly be an author you have cited/someone from your bibliography.

If you are revising a Research Statement, *Be sure that you **directly address the advertised job profile***. You may also wish to consider the following items

- Know your audience: hiring committees, be it for postdocs or lectureships will rarely have more than one expert, and that expert may still not know your precise subfield. Make your introduction clear enough for any mathematician to read, no matter how long or short the statement is meant to be.
- Does the application state the length of the document? You could make an informal enquiry about this with the contact person on the job advert, since different countries have different conventions on this.
- Prepare documents of varying size: a 1-2 pages, 5 pages, and 8-10 pages, depending on the nature of the job/fellowship. After distilling the longest one down for the other two, post the short one online.
- Does the application state whether you need to write a *Statement* or a *Proposal*? This could affect the length of the required document considerably.
- When relevant, you should personalize your statement to include results from people in the department to which you are applying. Then, you will also have a reason to contact someone in that School, bringing your application to his/her attention (if you haven't already spoken at a conference, etc.).
- If someone just read your introduction, the headings of your subsections, the Main Theorems/Results (which should be in bold or theorem format or something of the like), and your conclusion, they would have a reasonable picture of the message you would like to convey.

If you are revising a Teaching Statement, keep philosophical rambling to a minimum. If you can't help yourself, try something like "I believe [philosophy A] can be accomplished through [technique B]. I have successfully implemented this in the classroom through [example C]." If it has not been successful, you can also say so, but steer away from sounding negative about yourself (or more significantly) your students. Consider also the following items

- Keep it short. If you have lots of experience, alert the reader to this immediately and put items into subsections so the reader can choose what he/she wishes to read.
- Stick to concrete facts and examples: describe what comprises your Teaching Experience (TA, lecture, substitute lecturer). Include items such as class size, individual vs. groupwork settings, use of technology.
- Give examples of quantitative and qualitative feedback when possible: what feedback provided? If not, did you solicit students yourself? You can include quotes here.
- Describe how you have benefitted from/contributed to the teaching environment at QMUL (e.g., attended CAPD courses, worked on some of the projects I have proposed in our seminar, conducted Peer Observations, etc.).