

EXCELLENT EXAMPLES OF PERSONAL STATEMENTS 2019

Reading and creative writing have always been passions of mine. When I was 12 years old I was a runner-up in a short story competition across Nottinghamshire. However, it wasn't until A-level study that I realised it was something I was passionate about in an academic setting, as well as being a personal hobby. I particularly loved the depths we reached through generic and contextual study. The explorations that came with A-level learning allowed me to discover my literary voice and opinion. A university setting would be the perfect opportunity for me to explore this further. I am certain I would be a valuable asset, as I am innovative in my ideas and analysis. Having sampled lectures at a few universities, I found the experience and content fascinating.

Through studying *The Great Gatsby*, I became aware of the levels of semantic meaning a writer is able to craft through poetic language and literary devices. Modern Literature, specifically early to mid 20th Century, captivates me the most, particularly the works of George Orwell, Harper Lee and Aldous Huxley. They focus on the important issues of social, racial and gender politics, allowing critical analysis: it gives the reader an angle to interpret from, often leading to new ideas. I like to read texts from a Feminist perspective, as feminism, and other movements for equality, is something I am passionate about. Participating in the Feminist Society at my sixth form has allowed me to build an extensive knowledge of current and historical gender politics, which I can now apply to my literary analysis.

Whilst studying *The Great Gatsby*, I researched critical and analytical ideas about the text, including listening to specific podcasts, reading critical books, containing essays, reviews and articles, e.g. 'Columbia Critical Guides: F. Scott Fitzgerald - *The Great Gatsby*', and watching documentaries. I even saw '*The Great Gatsby*' performed as a ballet. The greater understanding of Fitzgerald's personal life, the historical context he was commenting on, and the artistic representations of the novel, allowed me to reach a greater level of understanding of his work.

My Extended Project Qualification focuses on how the archetype of 'the antihero' is presented differently in male and female characters, and how these representations have changed in the past hundred years. Through this, I have broadened my interests and learned more about the classics of the past century, such as *A Clockwork Orange*, *American Psycho* and *Madame Bovary*. I also analysed more current antiheroes, including those in popular culture and children's books, like Severus Snape from the *Harry Potter* series. Modern Literature is the era that I enjoy studying and reading the most, however Shakespeare's works also fascinate me, particularly as, through doing drama outside of school, I value his work both as a literature piece and as a play script. While as an English Literature student we are taught to find the significant parts of a text, as an actor we are taught to find the significance of every part of a text, which I found to benefit my literary analysis extensively. Acting, dancing and playing piano have allowed me to develop confidence and skills of communication and public speaking, as well as being outlets for me to express myself in a creative context. I love poetry, and I am subscribed to Poetry Foundation - the daily emailed poem has widened my interests in poetry, especially as the poems are often obscure, and are not limited to a certain genre.

I am looking to work in the field of journalism, script-writing, directing or book publishing. I am certain I would like to follow a creative path and hopefully do something that utilises my writing skills and creativity. Pertaining to this, I shadowed a Creative Director at VCCP Advertising Agency in London. Sitting in on meetings and discussions taught me about the advertising world as well as other careers in the Media industry. [ENGLISH LITERATURE]

History has long intrigued me; aged 12 I would return from school, turn to BBC Two and immerse myself in the vast array of antique programmes. Enthralled by intricate examples of Wedgewood and commanding Arts and Crafts dressers, I pursued this interest by working at my local auction house, Arthur Johnson and Sons, for the last four years. Through interactions with the public and researching items which interested me, I was introduced to the early 19th century caricaturists, like James Gillray. This collation of satire, as gathered by Bryant in *Napoleonic Wars in Cartoons* demonstrated domestic opinion towards the international politics of the Napoleonic Wars. Gillray exemplifies contemporary philosophy towards monarchism, nationalism and authoritarianism, enabling a further nuance to my comprehension of the social and political turbulence of the early 19th century.

Political satire was not my first introduction to the Napoleonic Wars however; rather it added a social dimension to a period that I had first encountered, aged 11, through Bernard Cornwell's novel *Sharpe's Tiger*. Charting the British interventions in India; Seringapatam and Assaye, through Trafalgar, and into Napoleon's 'Spanish Ulcer', Cornwell allowed my escape from a regimented history curriculum. Nevertheless, Cornwell's historical note did not satisfy me sufficiently; reading Urban's *Rifles* and Esdaile's *Napoleon's Wars*, I applied a pan-European scope to a conflict that I had only experienced from a British perspective. 'Sharpe' was thus placed into an international context of events such as Austerlitz, Leipzig or Waterloo, the latter of which I planned a trip to with my father. Travelling through the Low Countries, we visited La Coupole and Vimy Ridge, before walking the ground at Mont St Jean and the Butte de Lion. This practical experience of a subject that I had only comprehended academically was aided further when I attended Charles Esdaile's lecture on the misconception of Napoleonic era tactics.

Introduced to university level academic writing via the Brilliant Club, I used previously unseen primary sources to consider how friendship achieved equality in 1790s Radical England. Achieving a 1st, I further concluded that the distinct disciplines of the curriculum are a misnomer; seemingly polarised subjects like History and Philosophy can be combined complementarily. Taking this outlook into my EPQ, I am looking at the reasons for the breakdown of Alexander III of Macedon's empire, but, with reference to Hegel, also examining the succession of the Diadochi, in terms of teleology and determinism. Reading Plutarch and Arrian as opposed to solely secondary interpretation, such as Waterfield's *Dividing the Spoils*, has allowed greater nuance to my research. Continuing to combine academic disciplines in my A Level History coursework, I am examining the Enlightenment philosophy of the Founding Fathers, in relation to the American Civil War.

Through extra-curricular activities such as my Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award I have developed the leadership skills that have aided my work as an Oxford Museums and Collections Family Friendly Volunteer and GCSE Maths Tutor. Standing as the Brexit candidate for an inter-school campaign on the EU Referendum refined skills of moderation and removal of bias, making me validate my opinion and forced self-reflection; fundamental historical skills. I was selected to represent England at the 23rd World Scout Jamboree in Japan, having to, over 2 years, raise GBP3000 to attend. I was in Japan for 3 weeks, culminating in a visit to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial. Harrowingly poignant; the Japanese portrayal of Hiroshima reinforced the need to apply perspective to history. Hiroshima drove my desire to understand and interpret events from multiple and contextual dimensions; allowing a tangible sense of history to be imparted to me, and consequently substantiating the reason why I wish to study it at University.

[HISTORY OXFORD]

The varied role of a doctor can be unpredictable at times; the prospect of seeing patients with a huge variety of illnesses, not always simple to diagnose is very exciting to me. During my second week of work experience with a surgical team, a doctor spent quiet time studying in the morning followed by a very busy afternoon with patients. For me, the challenge, unpredictability, pressure and working in a multidisciplinary team of people with different skills and specialities, all working to a common goal to improve a person's life, is a wonderful prospect and hugely motivating. My first week of work experience at a rehabilitation unit showed me just how much of a positive impact the actions of medical professionals can have on the lives of people, enabling them to lead as normal a life as possible. I understand the importance of treating the person, not just the illness and I respect that people are individuals. I helped calm a distressed patient during my work experience, which demonstrated to me the differing emotional and medical needs of individuals. This shows my compassion, empathy, and social skills which I continue to develop, key qualities required by doctors to gain their patients' trust, allowing them to get the most from their care.

I have developed my organisation, leadership and communication skills through volunteering as a young leader with a Cub Scout group since September 2013. I plan, organise and deliver some of the meetings myself and I enjoy interacting with the Cubs during their activities and seeing how they develop and progress over time. Communicating well with leaders, children and their parents ensures a rewarding and enriching experience for the Cubs. My ability to communicate effectively with different age groups and my continued commitment to the group contributes to its success. I had the courage to promote the need to change the system of recording and awarding badges: gaining full support of the leaders, I implemented an efficient system. I have also practised self-reflection through writing a log book of my work as part of my Young Leader's award. I continue to develop leadership and team working skills while completing my Duke of Edinburgh with Explorer Scouts. When planning for expeditions the group often look to me for leadership to delegate roles and responsibilities to ensure a successful trip.

I have had a job as a waiter in a busy restaurant since July 2015, working 2-3 shifts a week. We work under pressure but in an efficient team with an ethos of perfectionism. People do make mistakes but knowing your limitations, asking for help when needed and learning from mistakes is key to providing quality service. Showing humility by asking for help as a doctor is imperative for patient safety, as it is unsafe to work outside your level of competency.

I manage my time effectively with the above commitments, academic studies and playing the violin for the past 8 years. Long term commitment is important for a doctor, as I have seen that the hours and training are long. Good time management and organisation are required to balance studying with busy clinical practice. It is this lifelong learning, constant challenge and interaction with people of all ages that draws me to a career in medicine. Being confident and able to communicate on all levels is important for doctors to successfully interact with patients and colleagues. Doctors must also have courage to drive positive changes in healthcare cooperatively with their team, and I believe I would have this courage from my work as a young leader. My work experience has given me a fantastic insight into the life of a doctor. The variety was huge, in a lifetime it would be far greater. This showed the scope of a career in medicine, from teaching and management, to medical and surgical specialities. This has reinforced my ambition to study medicine: I understand the commitment this involves and it is a challenge and opportunity I would thrive on. [MEDICINE]

Naturally, I am an inquisitive person who is committed to finding a solution to any given problem. Psychology suits me perfectly, since it encompasses many different areas, from statistics and experiments, to elements from neuroscience and philosophy. Psychology offers endless possibilities, as the question 'why?' can constantly be asked, enabling you to delve further into everyday human behaviour. Whilst studying Psychology the nature-nurture debate has been the focus of numerous discussions, which I have become increasingly fascinated with. I have read different articles on the debate to further my understanding, and think critically about the opinions of these writers. From this I have understood the answer to this question is complex, as is human behaviour, and I am keen to strive for an answer.

Whilst studying Behaviourism I became particularly interested in the treatment of phobias, including that of aviophobia- since my mother has a strong fear of flying. Discussing this with my mother she is now thinking about signing up for 'Easy Jet Fearless Flyer' to unlearn her phobia. This helped me realise how beneficial the study of Psychology can be to everyday life. During the summer of 2016 I completed a week of work experience at a facility committed to improving the prospects of young adults with severe learning disabilities. This gave me the opportunity to have hands on experience working with these individuals; who I developed an empathy with. This reassured me that I will achieve great fulfilment from working with people, where I can see my contributions having a positive impact on their lives.

My A-level subjects have provided me with a strong background for further study of Psychology. Biology has enabled me to develop my research skills, by carrying out investigations, experiments, and statistical analysis before coming to a valid conclusion. Furthermore, English literature has allowed me to write detailed critical essays on various poems and novels, and Psychology has helped me develop my understanding of these characters and their behaviour in a real life sense, compared to just a literary one. Additionally I have helped run Psychology revision sessions in my school, and attended various Psychology University taster sessions, both contributing to my ambition of wanting to study Psychology further.

I have involved myself in many extra-curricular activities, which have improved my confidence and problem-solving skills. In year 12 I took part in Young Enterprise where I was chosen for Operations director- this role required me to lead other students as well as work in a larger group. This position helped me to further develop my organisational skills as we had to meet deadlines, be on time to meetings, as well as source materials for our product. At the start of year 13 I was asked to become part of the Brilliant Club, which consisted of a small group of gifted and talented students. I had several tutorial lessons before writing a 2500 word essay on a predetermined topic. My work was marked by a PhD tutor and I received a 2:1, which corresponds to performing well at an undergraduate level. This gave me confidence in my ability, and prepared me for the standard of university work. I have also achieved my Silver Duke of Edinburgh award, where over the course of the expeditions I became increasingly independent, and kept the team morale high. This was especially vital when one of our team mates became injured and we had to quickly work together as a team, ensuring that we got her immediate medical care.

Being part of two different senior schools has moulded me into an integral member of the wider school community. I am excited to experience yet another educational environment and develop my understanding of behaviour at a higher level. I look forward to bringing a positive contribution to university life, with my enthusiasm, dedication, and motivation to ultimately continue to love learning about Psychology. [PSYCHOLOGY]

My interest in dentistry was first brought to light at the age of eight, when I experienced severe toothache and could not eat or concentrate. My dentist not only treated the tooth, but was kind and understanding. The pain disappeared and I was back to my old fun-loving self. Ultimately, my dentist turned an unpleasant situation into a positive one and has inspired me to pursue a career in which I can help others and also change people's lives for the better. My hobbies during my early childhood involved building models of planes and cars to a high standard. I particularly enjoyed the attention to detail and precision. At that time, I also developed my passion for music. These manual dexterity skills seem ideally suited for detailed dentistry.

At school, I developed a deep passion for science. I am strongly interested in Chemistry and Biology, both of which I am studying at A' level. On an academic level, I have been recognised as one of the top students in my year numerous times, winning awards for achievement and effort. This has continued into Year 12, when I was invited to take part in a national scholars programme, "The Brilliant Club", for which I am receiving tutorials from a PhD student and am writing a university style paper on a biological subject. I have found this both interesting and excellent preparation for university. I feel dentistry would marry both my love for science and my manual dexterity skills.

To expand on my interest, I attended a 3-day Exploring Dentistry Workshop at Nottingham University last December. I found this, along with 3 weeks of work experience, both inspirational and enlightening. The first was at a private dental practice, where one of the dentists I observed was a qualified orthodontist and I found this to be of particular interest. The second and third were at two NHS practices from contrasting socio-economic areas of the city. This gave me an insight into how treatments are customised to the wishes of the individual and the concept of "patient centred care." During these placements, the dentists explained the clinical procedures and helped me gain a clear understanding of the processes involved. I observed a wide variety of treatments including; dental examinations, root canal treatments, crowns, extractions and implant preparation surgery.

One of my personal goals was to complete my Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award, which I completed in August 2016. This involved working within a team and the ability to push myself and others towards a goal until we achieved it.

I currently spend two hours a week volunteering at the local scout group as a Young Leader. I help to organise and run activities. This position of responsibility involves caring for and addressing the welfare of numerous children. My position has also taught me valuable lessons about time management, as I need to make sure the sessions run to schedule.

One of my main hobbies is playing hockey. I am currently the goalkeeper for West Bridgford Hockey Club Men's Second Team and captain of the U18s squad. I have progressed through the England Hockey Single System, have represented my county and have played in a regional team in the Tier 1 tournament. As an effective member of these teams, I have developed good communication and interpersonal skills and have the confidence to work in a team environment with players from a variety of backgrounds and ages.

As mentioned, my other main hobby is music. I am working towards grade 8 Trumpet. I have been a member of Nottingham Youth Orchestra for three years and now play with Nottingham Concert Band, as well as a variety of school ensembles. While at University, I would like to further pursue both music and hockey.

If appointed, I will embrace new challenges and endeavour to fulfil my potential. I also look forward to becoming part of a wider university community and making the experience an invaluable one, not only for myself, but for those around me. [DENTISTRY]

The worlds of sports and business have surrounded me throughout my childhood, with me participating in an array of sports including basketball, rowing, lifeguarding and athletics. Both my parents have set up successful businesses and I am always enthusiastic to gain an insight into the benefits and challenges they face. I have utilised their knowledge and experience to aid in my role as Sales Director for my schools Young Enterprise team, as well as applying it in my academic studies.

During my time as a competitive athlete, I have had the chance to compete in many regional and national competitions where I have caught a glimpse of this multi-billion-pound industry with regards to media, national governing bodies, sponsorship and marketing. These experiences have created the foundation to support my passionate interest in the world of sports business.

Therefore, pursuing a higher education in these subjects will give me the opportunity to study abroad and also acquire experiences in international sports businesses.

My A Level options have given me the opportunity to study across a broad spectrum and has proved to be a decisive influence in helping me establish my desire to pursue Sports Studies and Business at University. I have discovered a love for new topics, most favourably sport psychology, sport in society and business marketing. I appreciate that my studies are very niche, but this, if anything motivates me further to pursue an education in it, in the hopes of encouraging others to develop the same passion as me.

Throughout my academic career I have developed many skills that I believe will be valuable to my future education. One of my greatest challenges was AS Maths, which has helped develop my motivation, dedication and improve my confidence. For my ICT Coursework, I am creating a document management system for my swimming club, which has helped me improve my organisation

and ability to meet strict deadlines. I am certain that these skills will be hugely beneficial and contribute towards my successful education at university and help me achieve my goals for the future.

Outside of academia, I have been a member of my swimming club for over 8 years and have competed in a variety of levels of competition. Being the senior captain of the club has given me responsibility and has developed my maturity upon realising that I was a role model for many young people. Furthermore, I am also a Sergeant in the RAF Cadets and my position has encouraged me to be disciplined and take responsibility for my actions and those who I lead. I have participated in many sports with cadets such as shooting, athletics and swimming. I was the Female National Corps Champion and Record Holder for several events in 2014 and 2015. Having volunteered at many charity events with cadets, I have raised money for local charities and aided my local community in organising events such as helping out in car parks at annual fairs in my area. These events have taught me the importance of giving back to your local community, which is something I would enjoy doing for my university. I have had the chance to meet new people, with whom I share many unforgettable experiences.

Super-curricular activities such as Young Enterprise and Step into Sport have helped me develop my skills in areas such as team work and communication. I have learnt to work with new people and also learnt how to utilise my personal strengths to coincide with other team members to best ensure team success. However, participating in all of these activities both in and out of school has required a lot of organisation and discipline and I am confident that I now have superior time management skills which will prove invaluable in all aspects of my future.

I believe I will be a valued addition to the university community, as my enthusiasm and ambition will drive me to be successful in not only my studies but in other areas of university life including sports, societies and volunteering. [SPORT RELATED]

I am eager to study Law because it excites me intellectually yet equips me with the practical skills and knowledge to pursue a successful professional or business career. Studying history, English literature and philosophy and ethics has been a stimulating and rewarding combination. The skills and techniques learned have been hugely complementary and a significant pattern of themes across these subjects has emerged, revealing the perennial link between past and present. Uncovering the social, political and economic issues that have shaped today's legal system has left me keen to learn more. Of interest to me is the impact of law - its purpose, enforcement, relevance - on an increasingly globalised commercial world.

This link between law and my studies manifested when studying American history and the difficulties faced by the Founding Fathers in crafting a legal framework. It had to be vague enough to keep the respective factions united but in doing so failed to address key issues that led to the Civil War. By contrast, Oscar Wilde's "The Ballad of Reading Gaol" offers a very personal perspective on a past era's attitude to crime and punishment. Historical studies of past conflicts have focused more on the ethical concept of a "just war" whereas today's emphasis appears more about the formal legality of the war itself and the conduct of the protagonists. However, whether studying the trial of King Charles in 1649, or the Nuremberg trials 300 years later, legitimacy for action derives from law. Moving to the present, banks face detailed regulation as governments seek to use legislation as a weapon to avoid another financial crisis. Globalisation and the emergence of digital social media are posing huge challenges to existing laws. Large companies, intent on reducing tax payments and minimising labour costs, use their wealth to test the boundaries between the spirit and letter of the law. Hence legislation becomes more detailed, specific and bureaucratic, leading to debates about sovereignty and individual liberties. Our exit from the EU leaves a huge legal and commercial void. I'm keen to study a course that will help me explore all these legal questions.

Philosophy and ethics has taught me to appreciate the importance of listening to contrasting opinions as we debated humanity's search for meaning, value and purpose. History and English by contrast have involved a more detailed study of written evidence to construct a persuasive argument, a more subtle and intuitive process. Here one must consider added perspectives and contexts, such as human motivations, a writer's vested interests or the particular social mores of a given society. Sixth form collaborative group work is an environment in which I have thrived.

My work experience has been insightful. At Cartwright King I spent time in the criminal law team and attended court. It exposed the economic challenges facing the legal system due to the recent government funding cuts. I will return next year to gain commercial law experience. At SIG, I spent a week in HR involving health and safety law and formal disciplinary procedures. I came to appreciate the benefits of mediation and the skills required to resolve conflict amicably. My school entered the Young Enterprise competition requiring us to form a company, raise capital, design, build and sell a product. As Managing Director, although eager to maximise profit, I was conscious of my legal duty to investors, suppliers and customers. Alongside my studies, I continue to enjoy playing cricket for Nottinghamshire. Sport at this level does involve hard work and coping with pressure. However, I have emerged a more confident and determined person who is willing to take the lead.

I hope to have conveyed a sense of my desire to study law and the impact it has on almost every aspect of our daily lives. Combining this academic desire with my appetite for leadership, commerce and teamwork leaves me ambitious for a career in law. [LAW]

I have always been fascinated by the human body and its function, but my passion was heightened when my grandfather told me that Rothman, Schekman and Sudhof won the 2013 Nobel Prize in Physiology for their discovery of cell transport and organisation by vesicles. From this I researched their work and general cell activity, which sparked my interest in cell structure and how cells cooperate and specialise to operate human body systems. My developing knowledge of biology and healthcare has focussed my interest into understanding the physiology of organisms and appreciating how these have evolved.

Keen to learn more I have read Lewis Wolpert's 'How we live and why we die', a fascinating read. It incorporates my favourite topics such as molecular biology and genetics, yet I found the immunology chapter the most intriguing. It concentrated on the body's healing mechanisms and the spread of disease. I'm excited to study this topic further to develop my understanding of the body's defence mechanisms and how these are coordinated to protect us against illness. As an avid reader of the 'New Scientist' magazine, I recently enjoyed an article by Clare Wilson, 'Is our maximum lifespan 115?'. It is intriguing to comprehend why life expectancy is increasing from an immunological and evolutionary perspective.

A-Level Biology has fuelled my interest in human physiology, compelling me to advance my understanding of cell biology towards cell specialisation and functioning, in particular the heart. I am eager to develop my knowledge of organ systems and use this to comprehend physical observations of the body and link this to my work. Moreover the biological approach in psychology explains behaviour as a result of the endocrine system; it is exciting to appreciate the complexity of brain structure and how the nervous system generates behaviour. I value my study of Chemistry, as it has helped me to understand drugs at a molecular level and their reactions in the body; applying this to understanding why phenomena occur and comprehending situations outside of the laboratory, where I hope to add to the existing research base.

My confidence and interpersonal skills have developed since working at Boots. After 6 months I was promoted to the pharmacy team, where it is important for me to be empathetic, conscientious and understand that areas of healthcare require sensitivity. I was offered the incredible opportunity to extend my knowledge of healthcare by taking a series of Healthcare Advisor exams. This has built my understanding of medicine and the effect of drugs on the body. I have also been exposed to people with a wide variety of illnesses, and used my pharmaceutical training to help them. Despite already having a keen interest in medical biology, my experience of advising customers has intensified my passion for the pharmacology component of the course. Accordingly, I improved my organisational skills, becoming more disciplined to balance my working hours, Healthcare exams and AS Levels. My time management practice will help me at university to appreciate the importance of prioritizing and self-control.

I love sport and am eager to utilize the sporting opportunities at university; I played competitive football as team-captain for 8 years including representing the county at a higher level. Furthermore, I volunteer at a range of running events such as multiple Parkrun courses; so I have developed competence and confidence in leading others. I have enjoyed being a Peer Mentor, having weekly meetings with two students and listening to any personal or social issues they have. I'm committed to guiding and reassuring these students, keeping confidentiality as appropriate.

I'm excited to fuel my curiosity into Physiology, using lectures as the foundation of my knowledge. I'm enthusiastic, outgoing and look forward to embracing all aspects of university life; making the most of my opportunities and bringing positivity to everything that I do.

[PHYSIOLOGICAL SCIENCE]