

Example Personal Statement for History

I first developed a keen interest in History after reading Roald Dahl's autobiographies 'Boy' and 'Going Solo' whilst at Primary School. Visiting the Imperial War Museums in Duxford and London has only increased my interest in British and international History.

After enjoying studying Modern History at GSCE, I realised that I would have been happy to explore certain aspects in more depth, as a result I found I had great enthusiasm for further reading. At A Level I was given the opportunity to study American History; from the causes of the Civil War until the end of the Civil Rights Movement. Despite little previous knowledge of American History I quickly became greatly interested and found the specific emphasis on the effect of war on the lives of the 'non elite' something that I definitely would like to investigate further by reading history at University. During my remaining A Level studies, I am looking forward to exploring the Civil Rights Movement from 1865-1980. Within my Literature course I have read the works of Tennessee Williams and Alice Walker which have added to my interest in American History.

For my independent investigation I have chosen to combine two particular interests of mine; the role of Women during the Twentieth Century and the Second World War. My research will focus on the contribution of the Women's Land Army to Cambridgeshire's war effort; a subject which I feel is greatly under investigated. I have arranged to undertake primary source work at The Imperial War Museum's Reading Room, the National Archives, and more locally at the Cambridge Library.

I have been fortunate to be involved in several enrichment activities. Participating in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme enabled me to develop teamwork skills, required dedication and was invaluable in developing my confidence. The Young Enterprise Scheme, in which I was a member of the senior management team, has also been of benefit to me. I believe it has enhanced my appreciation of working within a large group of people, developing my organisational skills as well as helping me to cope with deadlines and working within strict timescales.

The student Debate Team I joined has helped develop my understanding of using evidence and convincing arguments which I can now demonstrate in my essays. For me, a particularly important part of history lies in debate and understanding the conflicting viewpoints presented. As there is always debate, there is no final answer and this is the challenge. I was given the opportunity to study for the Advanced Extension Award in English, through this I hope to focus on literature of 1950s and 1960s. In addition I was recently awarded the PTA prize for History for my attainment in Year 12.

After completing work experience at the Scope charity shop I extended my placement for a further eighteen months. This period of work experience gave me the skills in which to apply for further employment with Next for 6 months to fund my travel plans over the summer. Working at Next developed my communication skills and taught me to cope well under pressure, especially during the busy sales periods. Currently I lead an after school club for young children, a job which requires a great deal of patience, cooperation and enthusiasm particularly when organising games and activities.

Travelling has always been something I enjoy. In 2008 I visited Iceland on a Geography field trip and I found its policy of environmental sustainability highly impressive. Last summer I travelled around Belgium and Holland with a friend. The highlight was visiting the Anne Frank House which I have always wanted to see. I think independent travel has definitely enabled me to mature a great deal and become a more responsible person, something which is essential at university. I feel I have the necessary skills to achieve success with a degree in History and I am determined to take advantage of all the opportunities presented to me.

Example Personal Statement for Mathematics

For numerous years the theorems and techniques that are taught within Mathematics have continued to provide me with a strong and keen interest in the subject, and I am fascinated by the skills that it offers. No other subject holds the importance and depth of Mathematics; neither are their concepts as elegant and unique. The complexity of the Mandelbrot set is a superb example, and the modules of analysis and differential equations are ones that I particularly look forward to at higher education.

Additionally, I find that learning material in Mathematics is not only incredibly interesting, but that it also has a great importance to the majority of professional careers. This importance has always encouraged me to remain focussed on Mathematics, and due to this strong focus I have applied a great amount of attention to the subject and consequently performed highly within it. I also took part in a Mathematics mentoring scheme for pupils in year seven, which allowed me to share my knowledge with others and assist those who required additional support within the subject. This rewarding experience allowed me to work with other members of the school and develop communication skills relating to the explanation of basic Mathematics.

As well as being a very hard-working individual, I am also a friendly and welcoming character, who aims to maintain a balance between academic study and social activity. At fourteen years of age, my enthusiasm for swimming led me to complete the ASA course for assistant swimming teachers, and I subsequently became employed in this position for two years. Upon the conclusion of this employment, I undertook an exhilarating lifeguarding course, from which I gained the official RLSS qualification; moreover, this job improved my confidence and encouraged me to pursue additional employment working with the public. This factor, along with a fundamental interest in technology, led me to seek employment with Apple Retail, working at the Apple Store in Cambridge. Employment in this position has developed essential skills consisting of trust, determination and the ability to adapt to unique situations amongst many.

Along with my A-level subjects and employment, I also participated in the Young Enterprise Scheme during year twelve. The team for which I was a member, named CNC, was very successful in this fantastic competition. The key responsibilities that I held included production of the company logo, development of the team website and the production of our business report, for which we won the prestigious Best Business Report Award. During Young Enterprise, the team managed to pass through the area finals and the county finals with our unique hand-made glass products, accumulating a total of thirteen awards throughout the competition. Towards the end of year twelve I also received two academic awards, including The Governors Prize For Further Mathematics. With the prize money that was awarded to me, I have purchased a book that explains essential higher Mathematics topics that are not taught within A-level courses. Along with the practice of STEP papers, this further reading will expectantly improve my understanding of complex Mathematics beyond the intensity of A-Level, and provide a stable preparation to higher material.

Throughout my education I have always aspired to achieve the very highest standards, and I have continued to study with dedication and pride. University is the perfect opportunity for me to improve my skills and knowledge in Mathematics, meet new people with similar abilities and interests, and to show potential in the subject. I believe that my commitment towards learning and passion for Mathematics makes university the perfect enhancement to my current education, and I look forward to the excitement and opportunities that it undoubtedly holds.

Example Personal Statement for Geography

I have always enjoyed school and from a young age, knew that I wanted to go to university. It was not until I started my A Levels that I came across a subject that I knew I wanted to continue through to degree level. I have always enjoyed Geography but have developed a deeper interest in the subject at A Level because I have studied it in greater depth, and wish to develop this understanding further. In the future, I hope to pursue a career in a geographical field.

I enjoy looking at both human and physical aspects of Geography but prefer studying the link between the natural environment and humans; after all, Geography affects everything about our day-to-day lives. I look forward to evolving the skills and knowledge that I have learnt in my Geography A Level and developing them into an even deeper understanding of the subject.

I am a member of the Cambridge Geographical Association and have attended lectures at Cambridge University. These lectures have enabled me to build on my knowledge from lessons and given me further case studies to use in my exams. They have also given me an insight into ways I could approach a career in Geography, as they have shown aspects of both research and journalism. I have found each equally intriguing. By attending these lectures, my desire to study Geography at university has been strengthened as I found them both interesting and enjoyable.

At college, I am part of the Amnesty International group, which aims to raise awareness of injustice around the world. I feel very strongly about the treatment of others and feel that everyone deserves the right to be treated equally. I have gained many skills through Amnesty such as becoming more aware of social standings and oppression around the world. Joining the group has helped me to link what I am learning in Geography to real situations around the world.

At the Year 12 prize giving, I was awarded the prize for Geography which I feel is a great achievement and something that I can be proud of. I was awarded a revision guide which will greatly benefit my revision for my coming exams.

Throughout my time in education, I have been put into positions of responsibility. Throughout Years 10 and 11, I was a mentor to a Year 7 through the 'buddy-scheme' which was in place at my secondary school. I helped her to develop her reading skills, as well as with any homework and general worries she had about school and friends. I have kept a link with my buddy since moving on to Sixth Form and still speak to her regularly, offering help when she needs it. I feel that through this scheme, I have been able to develop my people skills and this will be a useful to me throughout my time at university.

I am really looking forward to going to university for new ways to push myself academically and gaining independence through living on my own and meeting new people. I am eager at the prospect of developing a deeper understanding into the subject which I enjoy so much.

Example Personal Statement for Computer Technology

In the current global economy the use of computers in everyday life is increasing due to increased dependency on them for e-commerce, communication and as a valuable resource for information. Technology has always fascinated me from an early age, with computers being a very big part of this interest and in particular the technical aspects of how computers work. This curiosity led me to disassembling and reassembling old computers, phones and other forms of technology. I am also keen to help reduce the misuse of computers by protecting them and tracking the people carrying out illegal activity.

Technology is frequently being updated which means one has to adapt to these changes constantly. The practical side of computing is what really attracted me to this field as I am creative and enjoy designing and producing multimedia. My subjects at A-Level reflect this, particularly graphic design and product modelling and information communication technology, as I have used CAD and CAM programs to produce computer-based models and to engrave plastics using a milling machine. I also enjoyed designing and making websites and a multimedia package in ICT. Some aspects of computing for some people can be frustrating, but not to me, I very much enjoy being confronted with a problem to solve involving computers as it helps me learn how to solve it and helps me learn what caused it and how to prevent it reoccurring.

Last year I was involved in Young Enterprise and was appointed the ICT director. This role in the company involved me being organised, knowledgeable about computing and having good communication and teamwork skills. As ICT director I created a short film about how our best selling product was made and I posted this on youtube. I created a website for our company which provided information, advertised the products and enabled customers to order via the internet. Our website had hits from all over the world. This experience taught me some aspects of how to run a business and how to create a business plan. The company reached the regional finals and won 12 awards overall, 2 of them being for use of ICT.

Since a very young age I have had a very strong passion for all things music related. I have played the guitar for 6 years and have been in various different bands. I carried out a work placement with the technical team at the Cambridge Corn Exchange, a 2000 seat venue who have daily musical and theatrical productions. My job consisted of working on the sound and lighting desks, programming lighting sequences for the shows and putting together the set for several shows. I then returned a number of times to volunteer as I wanted to gain more invaluable experience.

I work part time at John Lewis which can prove challenging, but I enjoy it as it is different everyday and there are many different issues to deal with. This department requires a large amount of product knowledge, good people skills and having the right sales pitch determined by the type of customer. This has advanced my organisational skills, my people skills and given me a better knowledge of business. I have also improved skills such as problems solving with certain issues, communication skills and how to handle the occasional difficult customer.

I have a JSLA (Junior Sports Leadership Award) for services to schools around the community. I have also had some first aid training as part of this award and have built on my leadership, planning and people skills. At college I am also dedicated to helping run fair-trade stall. I have always been passionate about sports, playing for various different football teams, which taught me good leadership skills and teamwork. I also enjoy playing golf, which helps me relax after revision or coursework.

I look forward to extending my knowledge and following up my passion of computer technology at university. I would like to take advantage of every opportunity that university can offer me and participate fully in university life.

Example Personal Statement for American Studies

I am passionate about civil rights and would love to pursue this as a possible career path. I am particularly interested in the civil rights movement in America in the 1960s. It was reading books on this period which inspired me to seek a career in civil rights. The first book I read on this period was 'Eye on the Prize' which highlighted key events in the struggle against segregation.

I was then recommended to read David Halberstam's 'The Children' which gave more detail on the students in the movement (SNCC). This showed that you can make a difference from any age and from any background. Some of the most hard-working people in the movement were poor Southerners, such as Fanny Lou Hamer who grew up on a cotton picking field. At the moment I am writing an individual investigation as part of my history A2 looking at whether Martin Luther King Jr. alone deserved to be remembered as the icon of black civil rights.

I am involved with the Amnesty International group in college where we write letters to support campaigns and discuss current issues in the struggle for human rights all over the world. This is a topic which I feel passionate about as often the people most at risk are those without a democratic voice.

The film group for disabled people that I attend has also inspired me. I had not previously met many people with any form of disability and the group has shown me how important it is to realise that ultimately everyone is human and everyone has a right to be treated fairly.

Disabled people need to be accepted like everyone else, even though they may have greater challenges, they should not have to face prejudice in their lives as well.

Cinematography was my first interest, I gained enormous satisfaction from making my Media Studies coursework film. I now see civil rights, in particular the ongoing civil rights struggles in America as the main area of interest I wish to study. However film is a powerful tool, useful for getting messages across to a wide audience. Issues and events can be portrayed in depth in a significant manner, whether positively or negatively.

My favourite film is 'The Wave' (die Welle) which is a German film about how in modern day Germany it would still be possible to create a fascist regime. The Wave was fascinating giving a real insight into how the National Socialist Party managed to become so powerful. It is frightening as it suggests that everyone could easily be manipulated and that situations like Nazi Germany could happen again. The film's impact reinforced my wish to learn more about oppressed minority groups.

I would enjoy the challenge of studying America at a higher level, the development of its politics, economics and social structures and how it has come to play such a dominant role in the world today. America is unique in that it was created by lawyers as a democratic country, with a well documented history which would support extensive study and research.

The interdisciplinary nature of the subject is greatly suited to me, as I have a wide range of interests in American culture and will find it more compelling than studying an individual aspect. I find America alluring as it has always seemed a place of controversy and great change where history is being made. In the UK our culture is strongly influenced by America and I would like to further explore the roots of this and why it has such predominance.

American studies will provide an opportunity, through the year abroad, for me to immerse myself in the American culture. Although I will be researching and learning from tutors, texts and other sources, I believe there will be so much more to be gained from spending a year actually living in the culture, experiencing it first-hand.

I wish to develop my maturity, taking more responsibility for my learning through going to university. I relish the chance both to learn more about American studies and experience life as a student.

Example Personal Statement for Architecture

I am applying to study architecture at University because I wish to develop my ability to undertake design projects which are creative, functional and which show an understanding of the social and physical environment in which they are placed. From my experience so far, I find this process both challenging and very enjoyable. I hope that during the course I will develop my observation skills, my ability to implement creative ideas in a practical context and my ability to improve on them by evaluation, both from myself and others. My interest in architecture has been developed throughout my A level studies.

Studying graphics with materials technology has helped me to understand and follow through the design process. It has taught me to meet self imposed target deadlines and to be self critical. In order to produce develop products which are fit for purpose, I have also used the evaluative skills of college staff and an architect mentor because both of my A level project have been architectural. I have developed my knowledge and understanding of resistant materials and processes as well as my ability to use CAD such as ProDesktop and Google Sketchup. Most of all this subject has given me a desire to produce a high quality of product, both practically and in the presentation of ideas.

Through geography I have learnt that human and physical environments closely interact and are indeed interdependent. These interactions impact both groups of people and individuals and therefore improving the built environment has the potential to improve quality of life.

In mathematics and further mathematics, I have developed logical thought processes and learnt to work carefully at all stages to avoid early mistakes affecting the final answer. In particular, the mechanics module has given me some insight into technical engineering processes and how an academic subject can help solve real world problems. Studies in physical education have helped me develop my ability to be self evaluative and therefore motivated and able to improve.

My main extra-curricular interests are sporting, including both club and county level badminton and participating in two 5-a-side football leagues. I am also working towards the community sports leadership award which builds upon the junior sports leadership award I have already obtained. These activities have taught me to work both as an individual, in a partnership, and as a member of a team. I find that I enjoy these different situations as I am both self motivated and enjoy social interaction. This was also developed through the residential Step into Sport course I attended last summer, which focused on courage, compassion and communication in the context of sports leadership.

I also run a fair-trade cafe at college, because of my interest in improving the quality of life of communities in a sustainable way. This interest was initially stimulated by my being part of a church community as improving the lifestyle of individuals is a key component of any church's work. Being part of the church youth group has enabled me to get involved with a number of creative projects, for example redecorating a commercial coffee shop. I have some experience of a professional environment as I work at an economic consultancy (PA Cambridge Economic Consultancy) where my tasks of data entry and analysis teach me to work under pressure to meet tight deadlines, while maintaining accuracy and attention to detail. This is achieved through comprehensive IT skills.

Completing four A levels alongside the activities above means I am used to a work intensive lifestyle and I have to manage my time carefully, balancing conflicting demands. This will prepare me for an architecture course where I am looking forward to developing a theoretical understanding alongside creative design work so that eventually my work can be functional, aesthetically pleasing and appropriate to its environmental and social context.

Example Personal Statement for Criminology

I have long been interested in the way society functions and more recently, during my A-levels, I have become interested in criminology. This interest has been reinforced by reading Helena Kennedy's 'Eve Was Framed' which discusses the treatment of women in the criminal justice system. The different experiences of prison life for men and women and the often unequal treatment of women by the criminal justice system was most compelling. Such areas of debate have extended my interest in the complex relationship between criminal activity and wider social or cultural conditions. I am also intrigued in the difficult balance that needs to be maintained between the punishment of wrong-doing and the rehabilitation of offenders.

On my own initiative, I have been fortunate to extend my understanding of the English legal system during October half-term, by having a week of work-experience with a local legal firm. I will have the opportunity to shadow solicitors and barristers, gain an insight into the preparation of cases and to observe proceedings in court, I also expect to draft my own will.

My A-level subjects provide a good foundation for the study of criminology. Sociology has broadened my understanding of the development and structure of society and includes units on law enforcement and the relationship between crime, ethnicity, gender and culture; as well as teaching me the value of wider thinking and by reflecting upon key issues and debates I can more easily evaluate and discuss a question contextually. At AS level, Health and Social Care included a module on legislation and the health care services as well as a case study on the Victoria Climbié case. English Literature has provided different insights into human behaviour and taught me how to think critically. History has added new perspectives on how society works, and has also emphasized the need to present arguments that are firmly rooted in evidence.

Part-time work as a customer services assistant for John Lewis has strengthened my confidence in dealing with customer enquires and complaints, and at times, has required quick thinking in order to resolve or reduce conflicts. In addition to paid part-time work I also carry out voluntary work with the WRVS at Addenbrooke's Hospital. This is particularly rewarding as it enables me to address the serious problems experienced by many during their daily lives and also allows me to work alongside volunteers who are considerably older than myself. Both types of work have enabled me to work with people from a variety of backgrounds and to improve my communication skills to a much higher level. I am well motivated and am capable of working independently, but also value working as part of a team.

I also enjoy a challenge and have learnt much from taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme; I completed the Bronze Award in 2007 and am currently working towards the Gold. Completing a five day mountain expedition in Wales proved exhausting both mentally and physically and provided me with a combined sense of challenge and achievement; as a member of a local club I have completed at national as well as district levels in both cross-country events and the 800 metres.

I look forward to further challenges throughout my university career and consider that I possess a suitable blend of interest, motivation, skills and commitment to succeed with my chosen degree course.

Example Personal Statement for Performing Arts

A man once told me "I think, therefore I am not!" I have remembered this quote for many years and it is one which I keep in mind whenever watching or participating in any kind of theatre. I believe theatre is about letting a character explore their feelings and emotions, not just about entertainment. If you are thinking you are someone, then you are clearly not them, but being someone is much harder. I believe that having the opportunity to be someone else is what's most inspired me to pursue a career in theatre.

I have studied drama at school for the past seven years where I have developed a great interest in the subject. I have also been a member of "The Young Actors Company" for several years. Being in Young Actors has given me experience in professional environments and with professional practitioners. I have had opportunities to participate in specialised workshops exploring techniques used by drama schools across the country. These workshops have included skills such as stage combat, physical theatre and character development. Across the last few years I have had many lead and supporting roles such as Aladdin in "Aladdin", and Pertrucio in "Kiss Me Kate".

Alongside these I have taken extra curricular activities such as the RADA Shakespeare certificate and the Arts Award. Both of these I intend to complete at the Gold level. As part of my Arts Award I shall be running a small theatre company starting in January, and we will be working towards putting on a play. I consider directing a performance equally as important to acting in it. Having assistant directed productions before I believe I am ready for this challenge.

My main reasons for wanting to continue on to higher education are quite simple. I would like to expand the skills I already have and learn more about movement, stage combat and different techniques used to develop characters. I wish to progress as an actor and as a director, sharing my ideas and contributing to a variety of performances. I would like to work in a safe environment with fellow actors who are equally as committed, talented, and motivated as me.

I seem to work best in a practical environment as I prefer to express my ideas through performance. Another one of my favourite quotes is "no matter what the idea, if you commit to it then it will work". It is statements like this that have given me the confidence to try almost everything and not be afraid to fail. People learn from their mistakes, and having them is a key element in succeeding. Only once I know I have put in all the effort I can will I be happy with my work.

With the experience I have already gained, and my passion and eagerness for success, I believe the course which you offer is well suited to me. I look forward to hopefully hearing from you and meeting you in the audition.