 



**UCAS Guide 2023 - 2024**

Name ……………………………………….. Form …………………………………………

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# Introduction

This guide is designed to help you through the process of applying to universities through UCAS. The APPLY system is simple to follow, but help is always on hand if you have any difficulties.

Your tutor should always be the first port of call as they not only know how the system works, but know you and will be able to help you with writing personal statements. They should be involved at every stage of the process and are more than willing to offer advice on courses and institutions where they can, or to point you in the right direction if they themselves do not have the necessary knowledge.

Further assistance and advice can be obtained from the sixth form team or your subject teachers. The onus is on you to make the most of the help that is on offer. If you do, the chances are you will end up with the strongest application possible.

#### Good Luck!

**Mr Bayley**

Director of Sixth Form

# UCAS

There is a single application’s procedure for UK universities and colleges through UCAS (the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service). The UCAS process has 7 key stages;

1. You complete an application form online in which you can apply for up to 5 universities (4 in the case of medicine and veterinary applications)
2. The form is submitted to UCAS who pass the information on to the relevant institutions. When you have completed the online form and paid for the application using a credit card, your school referee will send a reference and authorise your application.
3. UCAS send you an acknowledgement slip with your UCAS number and password, which you can use to track the course of your application.
4. The individual institutions will contact UCAS with their decisions and these will be passed on to you.
5. A Statement of Decisions card will accompany the last decision and you will use this to let UCAS know which offers you wish to accept. Also online, you will see a trigger to accept/decline once you have the last offer.
6. You may only hold two offers, a firm offer and an insurance offer (with lower grade requirements) as a back up. Any other offers must be rejected.
7. When the A-level results come out your firm offer will be confirmed if you have the grades. If not and you have the grades for the insurance offer, that will be confirmed. If you don’t quite make the grades you may still get accepted. If not you will be entered for “clearing.”

The application process starts in July when you collect the buzzword from your form tutor. You can then start to fill in personal details such as contact information and your qualifications and think about your choices. Your teachers will be able to give you support and guidance and will help you to draft a personal statement

# UCAS Facts and Figures

* + UCAS work with over 300 universities who offer over 50,000 degree level courses
  + Last year there were just over 650,000 applicants.
  + Most courses are oversubscribed. On average there are 8 applicants for each place on a typical university course. For courses like dentistry this figure can be as high as 14.
  + Some universities require you to do an admissions test to be considered for the course. Check on the UCAS website using the ‘UCAS Course Search’ facility if this applies to you and book your test early. This may prevent you having to travel miles to find a suitable test venue. Some tests can be sat at school if arranged early enough with Mrs Davies the school’s Examinations Officer. These tests need to be booked this summer or at the very latest during the first few weeks of the autumn term.
  + Everyone must apply online though the UCAS website. So that we can group your applications together UCAS has given us a buzzword that is unique to the school. For 2024 entry the Radyr Buzzword is **Hastings1066**
  + In addition to the course search facility, UCAS have developed a course finder page which links directly to university course admission pages.

Applications can be submitted to UCAS from mid September. It is important to be aware that certain applications, i.e. Oxbridge, Medical and Veterinary applications must completed very soon after the start of the autumn term and that the sooner the applications are completed, the more likely you are to get offers. Do not wait until the official deadlines

# Radyr UCAS Deadlines

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Event** | **Date** |
| Oxford, Cambridge, Medicine, Dentistry,  Veterinary Science and  other early applicant courses | **Friday 15th September 2023** |
| Final UCAS deadline for all other applicants | **Friday 10th November 2023** |

**Important UCAS deadlines**

The following dates are the official closing dates set out by UCAS and accepted by universities.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Event** | **Date** |
| Opening date for UCAS applications to be  sent | **Mid September 2023** |
| Final deadline for Oxford, Cambridge, Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science and  Other early applicant courses | **16th October 2023** |
| Final UCAS deadline for all other applicants | **31st January 2024** |

# Why are Radyr deadlines earlier than UCAS deadlines?

1. To ensure your applications are completed on time.
2. To give you an advantage over other applicants who are applying.
3. The earlier your application is sent off, the earlier you start receiving offers and the more chance you have of getting on to your first-choice courses.

# Choosing Universities and Courses

If you are still unsure about what and where you want to study, there are lots of resources available to help you make an informed choice. For example, you should;

* + Use websites such as htt[ps://w](http://www.theuniguide.co.uk/)ww.t[heuniguide.co.uk](http://www.theuniguide.co.uk/) https://[www.studential.com/](http://www.studential.com/) <http://purepotential.org/> htt[ps://w](http://www.unifrog.org/)ww[.unifrog.org/](http://www.unifrog.org/)
  + Ask your subject teachers who will have a good understanding of the array of career choices and courses available in their subject area. Your choice of course may be governed by your career choice and it is essential to leave options open if you are unsure. It is also useful to remember that 60% of all graduate jobs are open to applicants regardless of the subject studied.
  + Check out the many university prospectuses that are located in the study room, and remember that can also be obtained by ordering them directly from the institution or from their website. You can also use the search tool via the UCAS website <http://search.ucas.com/>
  + Look at the entry requirements for any courses that you’re interested in and then ask yourself whether you’re likely to achieve those grades. Set your sights high, but do not set yourself unrealistic goals. If in doubt, talk to subject teachers about predicted A level grades.
  + Look out for resources in the study room that offer additional help you when looking for the right university and course. For example, there’s the ‘Heap Guide to University Courses, the Times Good University Guide and others.
  + Remember that the best way of finding out whether you’re going to like a university or not is to visit it. Arrange to attend an open day and make sure you talk to as many people, especially students, as you can. Three or four open days are enough for anybody and in fact any more can be counter-productive. The following website lists the open days for universities: https://[www.opendays.com/](http://www.opendays.com/) You can also check out details of Open Days via our Twitter page @RadyrSixthForm.

# Research

Use the table below to complete research about university choices you may wish to study (see the example below for ideas)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| University | Course | Course  Code | UCAS  Tariff | Required A  levels/BTECs | Preferred  Subjects |
| Imperial | BSc | F662 | 144 | 2 from maths, |  |
| College | Geophysics |  | points | physics, |
| London | 3 years |  | (AAA) | chemistry and |
|  |  |  |  | any other A level |
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# How to use the UCAS ‘Apply’ System

The following information is a quick guide to take you through all the necessary steps to make a successful application

* Go to htt[ps://w](http://www.ucas.com/)ww[.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com/)
* Click on the ‘Sign in’ icon and then on the students tab.
* Click then to access the 2024 entry page. Once you do this you will be asked to register for UCAS hub.
* Click on Register and follow the on-screen instructions (your username is allocated by UCAS and is your email address)
* After entering personal details, you will be asked to choose a password. This must be 6-14 characters long and must have at least one lowercase letter (a-z) and one uppercase letter (A-Z). It must also contain at least one number(0-9).
* Check your email for your email verification code. You will then need to enter this to verify your email address.
* Start filling in your application form now by clicking log-in or return later when you will need your username and password to log in.
* When you click log in for the first time, you will be asked how you are applying. You must click through my school/college. Enter the buzzword **Hastings1066**
* If you haven’t been asked for a buzzword, you have not followed the correct procedure. You must register with other students from Radyr Comprehensive otherwise we will be unable to access your application form to add your reference and you will have to redo it!
* Select your form group from the drop-down menu. If you don’t put yourself in the correct group your tutor will be unable to access your application form.
* You are now ready to start completing your application form.

Don’t worry it is impossible to accidentally send the form to UCAS. You can word process you personal statement offline and then paste it into your application. Make sure you print off a copy to give to your form tutor for a final check before sending it to your sixth form referee.

Payment is to be made by credit/debit card online. Only when you are completely satisfied that the form is complete and accurate should you click on the declaration/send to administrator circle. At this point, your form goes to your sixth form referee who can send it back if there are problems

#### How much does it cost to apply?

**For the 2024 entry** the application fee is £27 for a maximum of five choices and £22.50 for a single choice. You will be responsible for paying the UCAS fee yourself. You do this towards the end of the APPLY process. You can do this by debit/credit card.

#### Top Tips

* Make sure you have included a professional sounding email address in your contact details. An email address such as [love2party@bt.com](mailto:love2party@bt.com) will not give a great first impression and could result in you not receiving an offer.
* Ensure that personal details are entered correctly. It is not unusual for mistakes to occur even with a candidates name and age. If you are asked about your occupational background- this is referring to the occupation of one of your parents.
* Check that you have applied for appropriate courses- talk to tutors/ teachers about grades required and whether you are likely to get some achievable offers. Make sure that if you want to defer entry you enter this correctly on your application
* Make sure that you have listed all employment. Obviously if this is a long list you may choose to be selective,
* The personal statement is supposed to be just that- personal. Spelling and grammar are important, as is layout and structure. You have 4000 characters and 47 lines of text- whichever comes first. Make sure you have sold yourself and focused on skills and attributes you have gained rather than just listing experience.
* You cannot use bold, italics or underline. However you can leave a space between paragraphs to make it easier for the reader.

# Decisions by Universities

UCAS is not involved in any decisions about your application: the universities and colleges make the decisions and tell UCAS who then pass the information onto you. Decisions may come quite soon after you make your application, but you may find that the final decision does not arrive until April. You may receive a rejection: bearing in mind that on popular courses with say 2000 applicants, an admissions tutor may only have places for 200 of them, it is clear that rejections are not unusual. If you are not rejected, it is most likely that you will receive a *conditional* offer (in very special circumstances, or if you are applying post A-Level, you may receive an unconditional place). This offer will specify the grades you require to gain a place on the course. It may specify certain grades in certain subjects, or you may get a UCAS Tariff offer. If you do not understand an offer, you should contact the institution immediately.

# What if I receive no offers?

UCAS "Extra" allows you to contact universities, one at a time, to see if they have a place. If they do and they are interested, you send your "Extra" form and await a decision. This can happen as many times as you need it to. If it fails and you are left with no offers in June you can enter "Clearing".

# Decisions By you

It is best to wait until you have heard from all your chosen institutions before making any decisions. If you accept or reject offers before then, you cannot then change your mind. After receiving the final decision, UCAS will then send you a Statement of Decision letter and a reply slip. What you do next depends on the number of offers you have received:

If you only get one offer you can accept it (and thus commit yourself to that place if you get the grades) or reject it and go into clearing, or reapply in September. If you get two or more offers you can *only* accept two. One is your firm choice and the other your insurance choice in case you do not get the grades for your firm choice. Do not accept an offer as an insurance choice if it asks for the same grades as your firm choice.

# Your Subjects and UCAS Points

UCAS tariff points are used by some universities (around a third) when making conditional offers. Instead of asking for grades (e.g. BBC), a university may express the offer as 112 points. However, not all universities use tariff points. The more traditional universities are more likely to make an offer stipulating grades and not points. Also, universities may not, for example, consider BBB at A-level to be the same as ABC at A-level.

Entry requirements and offers that state tariff points may also require a minimum level of achievement in a specified subject, for example '128 points from a minimum of three A-levels to include grade A in A-level Chemistry', i.e. an A in Chemistry (48) and B grades in two other A-levels (40+40).

Bear in mind that there is no double counting. With certain qualifications like A-levels, which build on an earlier qualification like AS, only the higher qualification will be counted.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Welsh Baccalaureate Advanced Skills  Challenge Certificate | AS  level | A  level | New Tariff points | BTEC  Subsidiary Diploma | Level 3 Diploma |
|  |  |  | 112 |  |  |
|  |  |  | 104 |  |  |
|  |  |  | 96 |  |  |
|  |  |  | 80 |  |  |
|  |  |  | 64 |  |  |
| A\* |  | A\* | 56 | D\* |  |
| A |  | A | 48 | D | A |
| B |  | B | 40 |  | B |
| C |  | C | 32 | M | C |
| D |  | D | 24 |  | D |
|  | A |  | 20 |  |  |
| E | B | E | 16 | P | E |
|  | C |  | 12 |  |  |
|  | D |  | 10 |  |  |
|  | E |  | 6 |  |  |

#### BTEC qualifications are given the following tariff;

a distinction \* is equivalent to 56 pts, a distinction 48 pts, a merit 32 pts and a pass 16 pts.

**Remember that most courses accept the Welsh Baccalaureate as an alternative to an A- level or vocational subject. The grades you get in the Welsh Baccalaureate are equivalent to the grades obtained at A-level**

# MAKING CHOICES

A maximum of five choices is available. Some students make just one choice at a local university; others go for two different courses; whilst the majority of students pick the same subject at five different places. Students applying for Medicine / Veterinary - related courses can only apply to four, with the fifth choice being unrelated to this.

#### Tip 1: Making the right choices matters - students should only apply to places they want to go to. If they have not used all their choices, they might be able to add another later, depending on their status.

With over 50,000 courses in the UCAS system, and each with a unique code, it is very important that you double-check that you are applying for the correct course.

**Tip 2: Once you have found a course that you really like, similar courses at other universities will have the same course code (e.g. CM89 = Psychology and Criminology)** Each university can view the application at the same time; choices are not listed in preference order. Universities cannot see where else you have applied. They will only see any other choices after you have replied to your offers. The distance between the chosen university and your family home will affect you as well as your parents.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **University** | **Course** | **Course Code** | **UCAS Tariff** | **Expected A2**  **Grades** | **AS Grades**  **Achieved** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
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# Entrance Tests

Entrance tests are now a fact for some courses, and will increasingly become a familiar part of the admissions landscape. More information is available on the UCAS website at the following link;

https://[www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/getting-started/entry-](http://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/getting-started/entry-) requirements/admissions-tests

### BMAT

The Biomedical Admissions Test (BMAT) is for entry into Medicine, Biomedical Science and Dentistry courses at certain universities.

### UCAT

The UK Clinical Aptitude Test (UCAT) is another admissions test for medicine and dentistry. In some cases, you will need to take both the BMAT and UCAT.

### HAT

The History Aptitude Test (HAT) is for entry to Modern History and a joint-honours degrees involving Modern History at Oxford University

### MML

The Modern and Medieval Languages Test (MML) is for entry to Modern and Medieval Languages at the University of Cambridge.

### MAT

The MAT is a paper-based test. It is a 2-hour 30-minute, subject-specific admissions test for applicants to the University of Oxford’s undergraduate degree courses in Mathematics, Computer Science and their joint degrees. Imperial College London also use this test for their undergraduate, Mathematics’ applicants.

### PAT

The Physics Aptitude Test (PAT) is a paper-based test. It is a 2-hour, subject specific admission test for applicants to all University of Oxford Engineering, Materials Science and Physics undergraduate degree courses.

### LNAT

The National Admissions Test for Law (LNAT) is for entry into law. An increasing number of universities now ask for this.

### STEP

Sixth Term Examination Papers (STEP) are for entry to Mathematics at the University of Cambridge, the University of Warwick and Imperial College London.

### ELAT

The English Literature Admissions Test (ELAT) is a pre-interview admissions test for applicants to English undergraduate courses at the University of Oxford and English at the University of Cambridge.

### TSA

The Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA) is for entry to Land Economy at University of Cambridge and a range of economics, psychology and philosophy courses at the University of Oxford, including PPE. Further information on the nature of the test, including sample questions and a test paper can be accessed at <http://www.admissionstestingservice.org/>

### CAT

The CAT is a subject-specific admissions test for applicants to all University of Oxford Classics and joint school’s undergraduate degree courses. The CAT is a paper-based test. The test is divided into three papers: the Latin Translation Test, the Greek Translation Test and

the Classics Language Aptitude Test (CLAT). Each paper is 1 hour. The number of papers you take depends on which course you are applying for. You can check which papers you need to take at: [www.ox.ac.uk/tests](http://www.ox.ac.uk/tests)

# UCAS Timetable 2023-2024

6SEP

**Applications can be submitted** -06 September 2023

Completed applications can be submitted to universities and colleges.

#### Deadline for applications to Oxford, Cambridge, and most courses in medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine/science -16 October 2023

16OCT

Applications for the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and for most courses in medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine/science, should arrive at UCAS by 18:00 (UK time). Check deadline details in

our search tool. The reference must be completed before the application can be sent to us.

31JAN

**Deadline for the majority of undergraduate courses** -31 January 2024

Applications for the majority of undergraduate courses should arrive at UCAS by 18:00 (UK time) today (check course details in our search tool for the correct deadline). The reference must be completed before your application can be sent to us.

23FEB

**Extra opens** -23 February 2024 (Usually)

Extra begins – if you've used all five choices and you're not holding any offers, you might be able to add another choice. Find out more about Extra.

30JUN - TBC

#### Applications received after 30 June are entered into Clearing -30 June 2024 (Usually)

If you send your application to us by 18:00 (UK time) today, we'll send it to your chosen unis and colleges. After this date, you will automatically enter Clearing. Find out more about Clearing.

4JUL

**Last date to apply in Extra** -04 July 2024 (Usually)

This is the last day you can add an extra choice in their applications for 2023 entry. If you don’t hold any offers after this day you will be able to add an additional choice in clearing.

5JUL

**Clearing opens** -05 July 2024 (Usually)

Clearing vacancies will be displayed in the search tool.

#### The Personal Statement

**Why is this important?**

The personal statement is vital because it is the main place where you can sell yourself and make yourself stand out from the crowd. The content, style and presentation are all important but you must find a way to express your personality. You must build up a convincing and interesting picture of yourself, which will make the admissions tutor WANT to offer you a place. This is why you must write your own personal statement, not someone else. Above all else show your enthusiasm for your subject and show how you can demonstrate it by books you've read, places you've visited, and work experience you've done (not necessarily in that order).

It's very important to look at the departmental websites of the universities you are thinking of applying to; there is often clear advice about what the admissions tutors like to see in personal statements. This is especially true for medicine and law. Take your time. You cannot turn out a polished personal statement on your first try. You will go through many drafts and ask many people what they think.

Try to think clearly about your own personality, aims and aspirations. Why do you want to study your chosen subject? Think about the reading you have done and are doing - what do you find interesting? What about your other interests and activities? Write a list of your main activities and interests and identify what you have achieved that is worthy of note. How can you build this up into an interesting self-portrait without going over the top?

You can write up to about 550 words. Do it in "Word" in the first instance so that it can check your grammar and spelling, and so that you can work at it wherever you are. When you are a good way down the road, paste it into your APPLY form. If it is too long, it is no good changing the font (Times New Roman 12). There is nothing you can do: reduce the length.

#### Section 1 – Your Chosen Subject

Your top priority is to write about the subject(s) you want to study; this will take up more than half of your personal statement. Look at it from the point of view of the department. You will much prefer a student who has a genuine passion for the subject and wants to learn. How can you convince the admissions tutor of your interest in the course?

You should write about;

* Why the subject appeals
* *Evidence* of your interest in the subject
* Knowledge about new developments in the subject
* What qualities and experience you can bring

Remember, this is a *personal* statement. Generalities such as "I want to do Geography because it is interesting" will get you nowhere. Be *specific*. Start off by analysing *why* you want to study your chosen subject, for example:

“My objective in studying Geography is to expand my knowledge of physical geography, especially Oceanography, Ecology and Meteorology. These science-based areas link well with my personal interests and also with issues which, I feel, may well affect the future of the planet.”

This application for **economics** shows a good understanding of the underlying theories and political context of the subject:

“The monetarism of the Thatcher government highlighted Britain's constant struggle between unemployment and inflationary policy priorities. This subject interests me greatly and stimulated further reading, such as "A State to Come", by Will Hutton, which presented me with a more Keynesian approach to policy making.”

So your first paragraph (which can be divided into sub-paragraphs for ease of reading) concentrates on your chosen subject: your objective is to justify your choice of course, and explain what you will contribute.

#### The second section - your achievements and aspirations

Move on to details about your academic achievements, your career aspirations (if known) and subject related activities such as work experience and field trips.

* Mention pleasing results, prizes and successful participation in competitions.
* Show evidence of pursuing your interest in the subject outside school - especially in areas such as work experience
* Explain how the course might be relevant to the career you want to pursue. What research have you done in this area?
* What have you *learnt* from work experience, field trips?
* If you are taking a Gap Year, say why. Explain how the experience will be useful to you.

What *skills* have you acquired (or might you acquire through a gap year) which will benefit you and the university. Not all of these will apply to everybody - you may not have had work experience which relates in any way to your chosen subject, and it is quite likely that you do not know what career you wish to pursue. But you must show interest in your

experiences and a willingness to learn from them.

##### These are all sentences from applications for Law:

* “I was also the winner of the internal Maths Presentation Contest. Here the requirement to master and then convey theories to an audience was a valuable experience. “
* “For my work experience I spent time at a firm of solicitors where I was involved in the immigration department, dealing with finding homes for refugees from Kosovo. Although I was only at the firm for two weeks, I saw how demanding the profession was yet also how personally satisfying the eventual results were. “

#### This comment comes from an applicant for Biology:

* “I am looking forward to a trip to the Philippine islands to work for a month with the Reef and Rainforest Conservation Foundation next summer. The project involves mapping the marine grazes of coral reefs and logging the data onto survey forms which can then be used to keep a tag on the endangered parts of the reefs.”

#### The third section - your strengths and qualities

Finally, a golden opportunity to present your individual strengths and qualities, but this last section should not take up more than about 20% of the whole. Nor should it be simply an interminable list of achievements. Appeal to your reader, interest him or her in what you have to offer and give any evidence you can of leadership positions, of responsibilities you have taken on, of enterprise and originality. They like to see that you are going to mix well, and make the most of opportunities on offer. They want to know you will get involved in university life. They want to know that you have the stamina to take on a course lasting three or more years. So, think about the following (whether in school or out):

* Positions of responsibility, and what they involved
* Events/activities you have organised
* Sporting/artistic interests and how they have been realised
* Charity work, or work for local/national organisations
* Evidence of your ability to work independently and manage your time
* Can you work under pressure? Evidence?
* Will you be able to adjust being away from home?

You won't have a lot of space, so pick three or four of the best and write a couple of sentences on each. You should also include (although not necessarily in this section) any personal circumstances which might affect your exam results or your application (e.g.: disability, family bereavement, illness).

#### The final sentence

Your final fling to impress the reader of your application - so try not to finish your statement on a downbeat note, or with an anti-climax.

"I look forward to the challenge of a university course, and to making a significant contribution to university life" sounds reasonable, but it is very general and formulaic. You will probably find such a sentence at the end of 70% of personal statements, and it may well provoke a yawn.

Your final sentence should be a memorable encapsulation of you, and why your chosen university wants you. It should be eye catching, individual, personal, honestly meant and short if possible.



|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Do** | **Don’t** |
| Plan it first | Sound boastful |
| Sell yourself | Try to be funny or controversial |
| Be honest and sound natural | Use repetitive language |
| Sound enthusiastic | Use text speak |
| Check spelling and grammar | Use over-used words and phrase |
| Proof read and get someone else to proof  read | Leave it to the last minute |
| Remember to include information about activities outside school | Plagiarise from the internet or use someone’s old statement. Universities now have ‘Copy Catch’ word recognition system  to spot plagiarism |
| Evidence your facts where possible | Use negative phrases like- mistake, hate,  panic, problems |
| Use all the space available to you | Lie- they will catch you out at interview |

#### Examples of good personal statements Maths

The idea of proof has always held a real fascination for me. The process of starting from a simple set of axioms and deriving almost any mathematical truth (putting Godel to one side) is what truly separates Mathematics from any other subject. It is the closest we can ever get to absolute truth, and therein lies its sheer beauty and the reason it is the only subject for me. Of course, it's also a good deal of fun.

I have tried to extend my Maths as much as possible beyond the classroom, and whenever I do so I uncover either some completely new and intriguing area of Mathematics or a very neat trick I hadn't thought of in more familiar territory. One example of this is my attendance at weekly lectures given by the department of Mathematics at Bristol University, covering topics from the Mathematics of juggling to quantum mechanics, although some of my favourites have been those on the less exotic "inequalities", which taught me a lot about thinking about problems creatively.

I also attended a summer school run by the National Academy of Gifted and Talented Youth at the University of Durham, where I spent two weeks being introduced to various approachable first year undergraduate topics such as proof by induction, Markov chains and using Maple. This experience not only allowed me to discover areas of Mathematics I would not otherwise have encountered, but also gave me a small taste of university life, as there was a large number of us living in one of the colleges.

I am also involved in the UKMT mentoring scheme, whereby each month I am given a sheet of questions in areas not touched on at A level, such as geometry and number theory, giving me a good opportunity to explore new mathematical ideas myself, and gain a much deeper appreciation of the interconnections within Mathematics and the creation of proofs. I am a member of the school's Maths team and we are regularly successful in competing against teams from other schools in the area. I also attend STEP sessions at local schools when available, as I find the questions much more interesting than the standard A level ones, and thinking about how to solve them has greatly improved my rigour in approaching problems.

Among the mathematical books I have read, I enjoyed "Godel, Escher, Bach", which gives a good grounding in axiomatic reasoning and formal systems, whilst at the same time pointing out their major flaw. I also liked "To infinity and beyond" by Eli Maor, which deals with the concept of infinity, its implications and its paradoxes, both in Maths and elsewhere.

I particularly enjoy the pure side of the A level syllabus, especially trigonometry and calculus, as they involve a certain degree of proof and introduce new concepts. I believe my other academic subjects all complement Mathematics as they are about finding ways of describing reality, be it through language in French or through equations and models in Physics and Chemistry. I find Critical Thinking especially relevant as it is about the construction of sound logical arguments, an art lying at the heart of Mathematics in proof. I have achieved an A grade in all modules across all my subjects.

In my spare time, I practise kickboxing, and have competed in various local competitions.

As a volunteer, I am involved in a year seven Maths mentoring scheme and help at a homeless shelter. I enjoy travelling, and will be going to Nicaragua for a month after my A levels to help in a small village, explore the local jungles and volcanoes and practise my Spanish. I lived in France from the ages of 9 to 12, and learnt to adapt to a new language and culture.

I very much look forward to exploring the new ideas of University level Mathematics, and playing a full part in University life.

#### Medicine

I have always been interested by the workings of the human body and am in awe of its complexities and its astounding ability to renew, repair and resist. I thrive on being with people and I have a strong desire to apply science for the benefit of people. Being a doctor is the most direct and practical way to do this. This motivation and my ability to work hard and with initiative make me a strong candidate.

A Medsim course at Nottingham University confirmed my wish to study Medicine. I particularly enjoyed the mock patient sessions, taking patient histories and was flattered to be singled out and complimented on my rapport with patients. Since deciding on a medical career I have tried to gain as much experience and knowledge of the profession as possible.

Work Experience in Kings College Hospital London was a varied and exciting experience. I had the opportunity to sit in on liver, skin and surgical clinics, shadow doctors in Accident and Emergency, Neo-natal ward, ultrasound and Paediatric Intensive Care Unit but the most amazing experience was observing a triple heart bypass operation at close quarters. While at the hospital, I met and talked to a wide variety of staff and they gave me varied and colourful accounts of the current state of Medicine.

During work experience at Llandough Hospital, Cardiff I shadowed a General Medicine team for a week. I really appreciated visiting the same patients each day, observing change, for both better

and worse. I viewed basic procedures such as taking blood and catheterisation as well as experiencing the discovery of cancer and its devastating effects.

In addition to my work experience placements at local hospitals I have also spent time at Craig y Parc School, a residential school for children with cerebral palsy. This has involved me working with classes and assisting with touch therapy and physiotherapy. Dealing with violent and confused children has developed my patience and determination while working in the residential centre of the school has helped develop my communication skills. Although many of the children at the centre have limited communication and are only able to sign yes or no, there is a great sense of fulfilment when I answer a child’s request and am given a smile or sign of contentment.

Attending the 2018 National Sixth Form Conference in Westminster on the global issue of HIV and AIDS I learnt about its scientific background, in particular, the difference between the HIV virus and the resulting condition AIDS. I was fascinated to discover that it is possible to return to being HIV positive from having AIDS as a result of an increasing CD4+ T Cell count. I also quizzed Gareth Thomas, the Under-Secretary of State for International Development on Government policies relating to antiretroviral treatment in Third World countries. This has inspired me to play a leading role in organising assemblies and lessons on the issue in our school and other schools in Cardiff. I have a particular interest in Third World Medicine and have followed the work of an acquaintance who volunteered for Médecin Sans Frontières.

Away from my studies I have many hobbies and interests. For example, I am a member of Explorer Scouts and am currently completing my Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award. My participation in the 80km expedition in Mid Wales and the “Sun Run”, an overnight marathon, has made me realise my motivational ability within a team.

I enjoy taking part in team and individual sports and have represented my school in netball, hockey, gymnastics and skiing. My netball coaching qualification and involvement in the school running club allows me to inspire youngsters to develop new skills and has developed both my communication and leadership skills. Whilst at Radyr, I have competed in the Welsh and British Ski team Championships and been a member of the Cardiff and Vale senior girls’ team that won the Welsh Cross-Country Championships. My commitment to school sport has resulted in me being awarded the school sports personality award.

My other main interest is music. I play violin to grade 5 standard and have been a member of Cardiff and Vale Music Service Orchestra for 5 years. This has included tours to Chicago and Ireland. The time commitment to participate in a great number of extra curricular activities has been a challenge to balance with schoolwork but has developed the organisational skills and flexibility that will be required in the study of Medicine.

I plan to take a Gap Year before pursuing my studies. Volunteering abroad will allow me to experience care in other parts of the world as well as living in a different culture. I feel I will return more well rounded, mature and focused for my study of Medicine.

I am aware of the demands of a medical career but my motivation, commitment and desire to become a doctor has only been strengthened through work experience and volunteer work. I believe that my personal qualities and academic ability make me well suited for a career in Medicine and I am looking forward to meeting the challenges that lie ahead.

#### Medicine

My drive and desire to study medicine and become a doctor did not stem from one single moment but through gaining knowledge and experience of work in the medical field over several years. A high pressure job that combines intellect and hardwork, a sense of duty and commitment to patients and the whole community is the perfect job for me. Carrying out work experience in UCL Hospital and University Hospital Queen Mary’s, Roehampton gave me realistic experience of life as a doctor and the responsibilities it involves. I shadowed doctors in the outpatients clinic in departments such as cardiology, urology and diabetic medicine. I learnt about good bedside manner by observing a phlebotomist from clinical haematology around geriatric wards, and by spending time in various departments such as audiology, radiology, pharmacy and administration on I learnt how the hospital functions. The clinical exposure was inspiring and helped me see how rewarding a career in medicine would be.

Through attending health care related Aim Higher summer schools and courses in universities such as UEA, Imperial College and St George’s University I have developed my understanding of a career in medicine. I especially enjoyed learning clinical skills such as incubation and measuring blood pressure. I have also become aware of the topical issues facing scientists and doctors in the world today through The Open University undergraduate short course in Human Genetics and Health Issues. The course has expanded my knowledge of genetic diseases and has also developed my independent learning skills.

Through extracurricular pursuits I have acquired skills which I believe are important in health care. During the last two years I have taken a pivotal role in organising a student exchange with our link school in Misikhu, Kenya. This was a humbling experience which involved a large amount of fundraising, communication, perseverance and dedication. In Kenya we set up a computer room and taught ICT to the students and this year on their return trip to the UK we set up a Fair Trade link to promote and ensure sustainability for the Misikhu community. My

involvement with the exchange has stimulated my desire to become a doctor so that I can continue to make a real difference to people’s lives.

This year I have the privilege of exercising my leadership skills by being a Deputy Head Girl with responsibility for the House system. This involves organising events such as the summer fete and charity fundraisers whilst also supporting the Head Girl and other school officials. My role has taught me how to delegate, be diplomatic and be an assertive leader as part of an effective team, as all doctors in the NHS must be. I have also developed my compassionate and caring temperament over many years by being a student mentor, which involves listening to, giving advice to and building relationships with particularly vulnerable students. It has given me experience of working with fragile and sensitive people and I believe this will help me relate to patients and their families.

Outside school I enjoy playing piano and violin, achieving Grade 7 in both, and taking a principle role in orchestras and concert bands. I have participated in musical tours to cities such as Venice, Salzburg and Paris and I believe my love of music, which over the years has taught me discipline and diligence, will help me deal with the stress and challenges which are involved with studying medicine. I am confident that all the above will help me achieve my aim to become a dedicated doctor; they have taught me to multitask and withstand the great amount of pressure involved in the medical profession and have also given me unforgettable experiences that will help me in all aspects of my life.

#### Art and Design

Since I was very young, I have always been a very creative person. During my time at school, I have always enjoyed subjects where I can let my imagination run wild and which allow me to express my personality and creativity. I have decided to study for a design-based degree because I want to pursue a career in an industry that is inspiring and constantly evolving. I am excited at the prospect of studying a subject that will not only develop my ability to think more independently and creatively but also one which is applicable to so many different career pathways.

I am currently studying for A levels in Art & Design, Textiles and Drama and enjoy subjects where I can work creatively as an individual and as part of a team. I was inspired to take Art & Design when I was younger by my grandfather who is an accomplished artist. Seeing his work in a London gallery alongside artists such as Picasso has been a great inspiration to me. Throughout the course I have experimented with a lot of materials such as clay, silk and canvas. I enjoy the freedom

that exists within the subject and also the research and planning that goes into every piece of work. My love of textiles came initially from seeing my grandmother create garments from scratch working as a seamstress. I loved helping her and soon started designing and making my own clothes. Seeing my designs come to life gave me a real buzz and is one of the reasons why I have chosen to pursue design as a career.

I am a highly motivated and hardworking student who has excellent interpersonal skills. While studying for my A levels I have undertaken part time work to develop my interpersonal and transferable skills. I currently work part time as a sales assistant for a high street fashion company, which is giving me invaluable experience of dealing with the general public, and working as part of a team.

During my time at sixth form, I have taken part in many activities that have developed my interpersonal skills further. For example I recently volunteered to help a large group of younger pupils prepare musical and literary entries for the school’s Eisteddfod. I found the experience very rewarding, as it has helped to improve my communication, organisational and leadership skills. Taking part in the schools Welsh Baccalaureate programme has also helped me to develop many transferable skills. For example I recently helped to set up and run a business within the school as part of a team enterprise activity. My team set up a confectionary-based business, which was very successful and profitable. The project gave me experience of creating, developing and marketing a product as well as target setting and meeting deadlines. I enjoyed the design and marketing aspect of the task and would like to develop my skills in this area further.

I am a highly motivated and conscientious student who is excited at the prospect of studying at university. I am keen to experience all aspects of student life and to be involved in the wide range of extra curricular activities that universities offer.

#### Geology

My desire to learn more about how landscapes are formed and why they are so different across the planet provides the basis of my interest in Geology. Throughout my education, I have always found physical geography fascinating, especially tectonic plates and case studies involving the mechanisms behind volcanoes and earthquakes. I also have a keen interest in Science, studying Biology and Chemistry avidly in school. By studying Geology, I would have the opportunity to pursue this interest with a science based degree that incorporates and applies theory from across all areas of science.

To develop my knowledge, I have spent several weeks on various work experience placements. In one placement I was able to shadow an engineering geologist. I was given a variety

of tasks to do such as drawing a cross section of a site using geological maps and information from boreholes.

In another recent placement, I spent two weeks in the chemistry department at Cardiff University, gaining experience in Professor Alleman’s laboratory. During this time, I worked alongside PhD students carrying out research on Turpenes. The placement gave me an opportunity to develop my laboratory skills and to use specialised columns and spectroscopic techniques such as mass spectrometry and nuclear magnetic resonance. I really enjoyed working in a research laboratory and am very keen to find out about current areas of research in geology.

I am a very athletic person and love sports and outdoor pursuits. I have completed both my bronze and silver Duke of Edinburgh awards, which have enhanced both my team and leadership skills. Over the last two years the awards scheme has given me opportunity to help out with local scout meetings and work with around forty 11-14 year olds every week. I have gained lots of confidence from this experience and feel that my interpersonal and communication skills have improved considerably. I now enjoy debating issues and recently was selected to represent my school at a United Nations conference to discuss the need for alternative energy resources.

In addition to this I have developed many other new skills, for example I have recently achieved 8th Kup in Taekwondo, grade 5 on the clarinet and a credit in the Young Enterprise Company Award. I have really enjoyed working as part of a team and contributing to the wider community and feel that the experience has developed me greatly as a person. I am currently working towards both a gold Duke of Edinburgh award and a Community Sports Leaders award. I am very excited at the prospect of studying Geology at university and believe that my academic ability and dedication to my subject make me an ideal candidate. I am a very committed and enthusiastic student who is keen to contribute to all aspects of university life. I am aware that

taking a degree is a big commitment, but I am highly motivated and determined to succeed.

#### Fashion

I have decided to study for a fashion-based degree because I want to pursue a career in an industry that is dynamic, exciting and inspiring. Pursuing such a degree will allow me to develop not only my creative skills but also my knowledge of design, merchandising, manufacturing and business. To learn more about the industry I have undertaken work experience at a major high street department store, spending time at their buying and merchandising offices. The experience made me aware of the variety of career opportunities that exist in the fashion industry and developed my interest in the retail sector. My ambition is to become a successful

businesswoman within the industry and I believe that I have the passion, drive and commitment to achieve this.

I am currently studying for A levels in Economics, Mathematics and French. Studying economics has given me a good knowledge of basic economic theory and its relevance in the understanding of real life scenarios such as consumer behaviour, costs and trade. I am also very aware, in the current financial climate, of the need to maximise efficiency. Studying Mathematics at sixth form has improved my ability to analyse data as well as developing my cognitive and problem solving skills. During my time at school I have enjoyed studying foreign languages. I consider myself to be a skilled linguist and believe that the ability to converse fluently in another language will give me a competitive edge in todays’ global business world.

At school I am currently a prefect, where my responsibilities include supervising younger pupils during lunchtimes and supporting pupils with learning difficulties. I have also particularly enjoyed working with younger pupils, helping them to prepare musical entries for the school’s annual Eisteddfod competitions. These experiences have improved both my organisational and communication skills. In addition to this I have also represented my school at netball, twice being part of a county championship winning side. Playing sport competitively has improved my ability to work with others and made me more resilient.

Away from school I am a keen musician playing both the guitar and keyboard to a high standard. I regularly play in concerts and have raised hundreds of pounds for the Stroke Association. I also enjoy meeting new people and developing new skills. For example in Year 12, I studied Spanish GCSE at evening class and found the experience both enjoyable and rewarding. I am a highly motivated and conscientious student who works well both independently and as part of a team.

To further develop my interpersonal skills, I have undertaken work experience at the purchasing department of a large pharmaceutical company. During the placement, I received first hand experience of working in a sales team. This experience has improved my team and communication skills and has given me confidence in dealing with the general public.

I am very committed to my studies and am excited at the prospect of studying at University. I believe I have the talent, the motivation and the personal qualities to achieve success in my chosen field of study.

#### Marketing and Management

Whether it is the annoying singer on the 'Go Compare' advert, or the body beautiful

associated with fragrances, advertisements "stick", I am interested in how companies portray

their products and develop their brands in order to attract their target market. I guess viewers believe that if they buy a certain fragrance, then they too will look as handsome or as beautiful as the model selling it to them. Clearly marketing has huge power to influence consumers,

and this is why I am determined to study it as a degree.

I have been lucky enough to attend talk by the Vice President of research and development at Unilever, the well-known, international company with products ranging from food and beverages to health care. This lecture gave me the opportunity to ask questions related to how such a huge company manages their marketing whilst selling their products in 180 diverse countries. Unilever make and sell a quarter of the world's soap bars making them market leaders. It is aspects of businesses like this that highlight what can be achieved by successful marketing. As a result, I am keen to learn what strategies a business may take in order to achieve the highest possible profit and potentially become market leaders. I believe that the way in which a business markets their product is the key to success. If the public are not aware of the product it will not be demanded, thus marketing is used to make potential customers aware of a new product. Equally, if the product is already in the public eye a business may be looking to increase the number of customers in order to retain or obtain high profits. Ansoff's Matrix is one framework that is popularly used to examine marketing strategies. This, along with other strategic tools and theories, are areas I would like to explore further.

My A Levels have given me the skills required to pursue a degree in marketing and management. Whilst business studies has given me the foundation of knowledge for this particular degree, I am also adept at calculating challenging mathematical equations and I am used to working with quantitative data, useful when manipulating numerical information such as profit and loss accounts. Learning Spanish at both GCSE and AS Level, along with the experience of an exchange, has given me a familiarity of another culture and a high level of vocabulary to converse in another language. Last year I completed an extended project, which has widened my skill set, plus working in an independent manner gave me an experience of what studying will be like at university

I have been chosen to be head girl at my current school; this involves taking an important leadership role among my peers whilst simultaneously managing my studies. After an application and selection process I was awarded the position based on my personality, empathy and positive attitude to life. I regularly play sport and attend the gym in my free time. This has taught me to work as part of a team and requires full commitment. This also keeps me fit and on the ball, essential when working in a fast paced business environment.

My weekend job of waitressing has made it necessary to think on my feet and deal with

uncomfortable situations, such as handling demanding customers. I have also spent a number of

weeks working in various schools, resulting in me teaching children between the ages of 3 and 13. Whilst I appreciate that this is a different age range to that I will encounter in business, it does however highlight that I am adaptable.

Having visited many open days, I am determined to work hard in order to gain the grades necessary to continue my studies. I instantly felt at home on arrival, and most importantly, my experience of lectures and conversations with current students and staff made me appreciate that university is most definitely the place I would like to be

#### Law

“Where law ends, tyranny begins”. This statement made in 1801 by William Pitt, whom I studied within A Level History, still remains true, as without the rule of law even the simplest of societies would cease to function. I am particularly fascinated by the gradual progression of our legal system through its ever-evolving nature to meet the needs of society. Reading “Understanding the Law” by Rivlin has allowed me to explore this in greater depth through cases that have significantly changed parts of the law, such as Bushell’s case, where a jury’s refusal to be punished for their verdict advanced the cause of freedom.

The “Young Graduates for Lawyers programme”, for which I was selected through an application and interview process by Global Graduates, has furthered my enthusiasm to read law. The programme, consisting of twelve sessions, gave me exciting opportunities ranging from meeting trainee solicitors at top law firms to discussing various practical legal problems. A role-play regarding an unfair dismissal of an employee, for instance, aimed to encourage our groups to find possible solutions without resorting to court mediation. This problem highlighted the need for careful analysis of the terms of a contract to establish whether they had been kept, whilst thinking creatively, and negotiating on behalf of the client. I found this and other role-plays, both challenging and thought provoking in a way that allowed me to explore beneath the surface of the problems and creatively find practical solutions.

Work experience at Arora Lodhi Heath solicitors has enabled me to actively learn how legal problems are actually resolved. Moreover, working on a case which had seen media attention was a very exciting prospect, but one where I had formed a bias towards the accused because of newspaper articles I had read. Provided with further facts, I learned that the media’s judgment had been based on its emotion to the crime, rather than the actual facts. This experience has taught me to maintain a critical distance from emotional prejudices, and to instead put reliance on devising opinions through a logical and reasoned thought process. By reading “The Economist” and “The Times” law supplement I keep up to date with current legal

matters. This has assisted me in exploring the dilemmas that arise from parts of the law, such as whether it should protect society from potential terrorist attacks at the expense of fundamental civil liberties, and whether, as with the case of the NatWest three, the law has a job to protect British citizens from extradition to countries where harsher laws may apply without reciprocal arrangements in place.

At sixth form, I have taken an active role in many different aspects of school life. For example, I am an active member of the school’s debating team which has giving me good experience of presenting my views and opinions to different audiences. The team has been very successful, recently coming first in a Cardiff University Debating Society competition. In addition to this I have taken part in a number of my school’s musical and theatre productions including Shakespeare’s “The Tempest,” Ben Elton and Queen’s “We Will Rock You,” and Bob Carlton’s “The Return to the Forbidden Planet.” Taking part in these productions has involved hectic rehearsal schedules and fitting this around my studies had improved both my flexibility and time management skills. I am also a keen sportswoman and have represented my school in netball, and hockey. I have also been selected to represent my county at Netball in various competitions.

Outside school, I am a very athletic person who enjoys outdoor life. I have completed both my bronze and silver Duke of Edinburgh awards, which have enhanced both my team and leadership skills. I am now working towards my gold award which has recently involved me taking part in an expedition to Kenya. During my time there, I climbed Mount Kenya and became involved in community projects, working with the country’s street children. I not only found the experience very humbling and rewarding, it also has improved my confidence, resilience and interpersonal skills.

I believe that my ability to successfully manage a busy extra-curricular schedule while maintaining a high academic standard gives me an advantage when studying at university. I am very excited at the prospect of studying for a law degree and believe that my dedication and enthusiasm to the subject makes me an ideal candidate.

#### Biology

I have always enjoyed science subjects at school, particularly Biology and am fascinated by all things connected with the natural world. As my interest in Science developed, I became fascinated in the vital role that biology plays in our everyday lives. Studying Biology at A-level has increased my enthusiasm for the subject and confirmed my desire to study it at degree level. Although I have enjoyed all aspects of the A-level Biology course I am particularly interested in biochemistry, genetics and ecology.

To learn more about my chosen field of study, I recently visited the biosciences department of Cardiff University. Whilst at the university I spent time with two busy research groups and enjoyed learning more about their different areas of research. The first group, led by Dr Michael Taylor was involved in genetics research, carrying out cell differentiation studies. I was particularly interested to learn more about how cells become different from each other and develop into specialised tissue. Spending time with a second research group led by Professor Lynne Boddy helped me to learn more about the effect environmental change has on biodiversity and ecology.

I believe that I have many of the qualities that would assist me in being a successful Biosciences student. I am hardworking, organised and a good communicator. I work well both independently and as part of a team, and enjoy problem solving.

At school I have been heavily involved in extracurricular activities. I am a keen sportswoman and have represented my school at hockey, netball and athletics. I have captained a number of these teams, which has given me a good experience of leading others and improved my communications skills. During my time at sixth form, I have also taken part in many pupil support schemes; giving up my time to help younger pupils with learning difficulties. These schemes have included a paired reading project, where I worked on a one-to-one basis with pupils to improve their literacy skills, and the school’s annual eisteddfod, where I helped pupils prepare music and dance entries. I found these experiences very rewarding and they have improved both my communication skills and my ability to motivate others.

I am an enthusiastic, hardworking and highly motivated student who is excited at the prospect of studying for a degree at university. I am keen to take part in all aspects of university life and am determined to achieve success.

##### Teaching

A desire to work in a challenging and rewarding profession where you can make a difference to the lives of young people is the reason I have chosen to pursue a career in teaching. Since early childhood I have always been someone who enjoys helping others and over the last few years I have become more and more attracted to working in the primary educational system. To gain a better understanding of what life as a primary teacher entails, I am currently undertaking voluntary work at my local primary school. I love working at the school and enjoy being part of the staff team. Spending time at the school has increased my knowledge of pupil behaviour, development and learning styles. It is also giving me experience of classroom management strategies, assessment for learning and SEN provision. In addition to this, I am gaining valuable

experience of working in a classroom environment to bring out the best in young people and to help them discover the world around them. This experience has given me the passion, ambition and enthusiasm to study for a teaching qualification after A-levels.

While studying at 6th form, I have played a full role in many different aspects of school life. I am a very caring person who has relished taking part in many of the school’s pupil support schemes. For example, I have acted as a ‘buddy’ for year 7 students, helping them to make a smooth transition from primary to secondary school. In addition to this, I have supported younger pupils with learning difficulties as part of a paired reading scheme. These experiences have improved my communication skills and inspired me to volunteer for similar activities. I recently supported a group of younger students, helping them to prepare musical and literary entries for the school Eisteddfod. This involved me organising practises as well as choreographing dance routines. I found the experience very rewarding and it has helped to improve my organisational and motivational skills.

My hobbies and interests outside school include reading and keeping fit. My favourite author’s are Torey Hayden and Haruki Murakami as I enjoy their style of writing and the way that they tackle emotive themes. I exercise regularly at my local gym and enjoy mixing socially with different people.

I am a very responsible person and enjoy helping to take care of children. Regular babysitting has improved my ability to make decisions independently and helped to develop my communication skills further.

I am currently employed as a waitress for a local catering company and enjoy the experience of working as part of a team. The job involves me working in a variety of different locations ranging from 5 star hotels to small family gatherings. This has given me lots of confidence in dealing with members of the public and improved my patience and self-discipline. Working part time alongside my studies has also developed my organisational and time management skills.

I am passionate about studying for a teaching qualification at university and fully committed to taking part in all aspects of university life. I am fully aware of the hard work that studying for a university degree entails and am ready to take up the challenge.

##### Midwifery

I am very excited by the varied and challenging role of the midwife, and I have explored this through both work experience and taught learning environments. In order to find out more about the role of midwives I have completed substantial hours of work experience in both hospital

and community settings. Through this experience, I have come to respect that midwives are not just involved in the birth of the baby, but also with ante and post-natal care. I appreciate that there is more to midwifery than practical work and that training, administrative duties, and teaching play integral parts. Whilst spending time on two labour wards, I observed natural births and Caesarean sections in both high and low risk circumstances. I have also volunteered at a mother and baby group in a socio-economically deprived area of Cardiff, where women took part in antenatal activities (e.g. health promotion). I have shadowed a community midwife, where I observed care for a non-English speaking pregnant woman and care for a mother and baby experiencing problems with feeding. Through this experience I realised that a midwife has to adapt her care to the individual circumstances of the mother.

To explore more about what is expected of a midwife, I attended the Nottingham University Nursing and Midwifery conference and learnt about the responsibilities of both community and hospital midwives. I was most interested in how The Francis Report has changed standards of care. I carried out further research after the lecture and learnt how the report has encouraged transparency within the health service to allow improvements in quality of care. I chose highly relevant A Level subjects. In Biology, I have gained a deeper understanding of the human body. Psychology has given me an understanding of human behaviour, and in Sociology, I have been able to see how society is formed of people from varied backgrounds. I am completing the Welsh Baccalaureate, which develops communication skills through essay writing and language learning. For the individual investigation, I researched the differences in infant mortality rates between Wales and Jamaica and considered the possible underlying causes.

I have developed many transferable skills that will help me in my career as a midwife. Firstly, I have worked as a babysitter for 2 years, and have developed empathy and communication when working with young people and families. I enjoy extracurricular activities and have been a member of several orchestras, which have taught me listening skills and appreciating different roles in team situations. I have learnt to delegate roles within a team, and feel comfortable undertaking leadership roles. I developed this skill whilst a Community Captain in my school, which involved organising events such as 'Children-In-Need' fundraisers. I also spent a month on a volunteering expedition in Malawi in 2014, which gave me rich experience of working with diverse populations. Whilst in Malawi, I also developed my organisational and time-management skills as part of the cooking team and had to organise all of the meals. Throughout this experience, my confidence grew and I am comfortable participating in group discussions and developed assertiveness.

In summary, I have learned that a midwife is an independent practitioner with

responsibility for providing medical and wellbeing care and support for women from all sections

of society. I aim to support women through the life-changing events of pregnancy and childbirth, and to become an advocate for all women. I recognise the importance of treating women as individuals and involving them in significant life choices regarding both their own and their baby's health. I also realise that I would provide support and guidance for the whole of the family unit regardless of circumstances, and would be working as part of a multidisciplinary team. I believe that I have the skills and commitment to follow this exciting and challenging career.

##### Modern Foreign Languages

Language is more than just a powerful tool for communication - it is what defines our identity, our culture and ultimately what makes us human. My obsessive fascination with language, its intricacies and meaning, has moulded my life over the past 6 years. Since beginning to learn the basics of German, aged 12, I have strived to speak like a native and to grasp a true understanding of the German culture.

My German studies have always been a dominant element of my life outside the classroom, where my thirst for immersion in the language could never be quenched. I would listen to German radio stations, read news websites such as Der Spiegel and dive into absolutely everything German. Spending time on language courses and exchanges in Germany made my passion for language- learning increase exponentially, culminating in my decision to read Modern Languages at university. Having developed a successful relationship with UK-German Connection, I have attended seminars in Berlin and was selected to take part in their pupil course. I was recently a Youth Ambassador; this role gave me a greater opportunity to encourage UK-German relations in my local area. Following a month's work experience at a Gymnasium in Baden-Baden, assisting teachers in language lessons, my language skills improved immensely. The experience confirmed my convictions to seek a future where the study of language is central to my life. I sat my German A-Level, independently, 2 years early and I have won the Cardiff-Stuttgart Association's annual essay competition on '60 Jahre Staedtepartnerschaft zwischen Cardiff und Stuttgart - was verbindet uns?'.

This past year I have attended advanced German and French classes at Cardiff University; I am currently attending a course on 21st century German literature on the theme of terror. The mathematical qualities of the structure and coding of language captivates the way I view the world. I relish having a good puzzle to solve and to me learning new languages is the ultimate mental workout; training the brain to travel along a different wavelength to speedily apply the complex rules of grammar, all the while appreciating the subtleties and idiosyncrasies of a particular language and culture, is my passion.

After having explored German, French, Spanish and Welsh to differing degrees, my AS studies of Russian history ignited an interest in the Russian language with the use of the Cyrillic alphabet and its complex case system. I am also interested to further explore the path the country has taken over the past century from Tsarism, revolution and the Soviet era to the present day. The week I spent on work experience in Moscow with the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, aiding with translation and speaking with employees, along with the Debate Chamber course I attended on International Relations, helped me to understand more about Russia's position in the world today and its relations with other countries.

This summer I spent a life-affirming 3 weeks in Belarus volunteering at a summer camp for severely disabled children. Other than attending to the children's physical and emotional needs I worked within the team of volunteers to organise daily activities. Working through the exhaustion and language barrier, and pushing myself past my limits, I left compelled to become a more active member of the charity, and have a firm intention to return next summer. Apart from languages being my life, I have been a member of my school council, held the role of community captain, taken part in various debating competitions and remain an avid contemporary dancer. Having had an insight into university life while attending subject masterclasses and the UNIQ summer school I am excited for what the next chapter of my life will entail. The diversity which a degree in Modern Languages presents, with the option to delve deeper into literature, history, philosophy and linguistics, is what I feel will make room for my infatuation with language to thrive.

##### Engineering

My love for engineering began at the Cheltenham Science Festival, seeing the Bloodhound land speed record car, amongst many other engineering marvels. It was fascinating to learn about how it is aerodynamically tested to ensure the vehicle has minimal drag and how its three engines provide 135,000 horsepower, amongst a catalogue of other cutting-edge features. Discovering the range of real-life applications and possibilities of engineering has given me an appreciation of how it influences our lives, convincing me that this is the path I want to follow.

Studying maths and physics has further fuelled my interest in engineering. Hooke's work on the proportionality of force to extension in elastic materials fascinates me. Development of this principle in Thomas Young's proportionality of stress to strain offers an insight into interesting theories such as hysteresis curves and the response of systems to varying stresses and strains. Real life examples are equally stimulating and I was particularly interested in the use of the hysteresis curve in tyre design optimisation. The differences between the requirements of tyres in motorsport

and cycling are such an example. I enjoyed discovering that energy loss in tyres needs to be kept to a minimum in cycling to conserve the cyclist's energy. In F1 motorsport conversely, tyres are modelled so that they create sufficient heat to soften the tyres and enhance grip.

Reading 'Invention by Design' by Henry Petroski gave me a greater understanding of the principles and application of the laws I have become familiar with. For example, reading about the influence of Hooke's Law in the manufacture of everything from paper clips to lift cables and how even the slightest amount of 'springiness' will impact functionality. I can see this relationship from my knowledge of Young's Modulus and Hooke's Law, noticing the inverse proportionality of extension and the Modulus of elasticity.

I have gained insights into engineering, along with others such as accounting, on two occasions. When on placement at HCD Group, an engineering consultancy business, I could apply my mathematical and physics skills to help with simple beam calculations. I was given various measurements and equations to calculate deflection and sheer strength, following a process to find the correct beam that would have sufficient properties to support the structure. My second work placement at FEI Foods, in the accounts department presented me with stimulating challenges, such as presenting purchasing data in easy-to-analyse graphs, and creating tables for things such as staff holidays. I used knowledge I had learned from statistics, such as calculating values for the mean, variance and standard deviation of datasets. The freedom given in the presentation of the data furthered my problem-solving skills and initiative to create something that would be helpful to the accounts department.

I am able to apply my skills to many scenarios. On a month's expedition in Peru I was appointed group financial controller. This required me to budget and keep track of outgoings, a challenge that needed me to look at a range of goods and services necessary to keep a team of 11 supplied. Having this responsibility furthered my ability to think for myself as well as honing my leadership skills.

In my spare time I enjoy playing rugby. Having played for 11 years, I received a cap from the club as a mark of my commitment, culminating in winning the Cardiff district championship for two consecutive years. I am a keen musician, playing guitar and bass guitar. These skills, developed over the past 6 years, have allowed me to play for around 200 people on several occasions.

I will approach an engineering degree with enthusiasm and commitment and I look forward to learning more about the practical application of theory in engineering, both for my personal satisfaction and the improvement of the world about me.

##### Music

As a musician, I am always fascinated with the way a piece can move a person. Through the years I have come to realise that music can invoke passion, sorrow and joy, sometimes all in the same piece. For me, the experience of learning pieces and performing them to an audience is unlike any other, and for this reason I wish to continue my studies in music.

I am a harpist currently studying to sit my grade 8 ABRSM exam in summer 2017. My journey as a harpist began in primary school, when I was given the opportunity to have music lessons. Since that moment, my love for the instrument has only grown, and I have made sure to take any opportunity offered to me. I have been a member of a local harp ensemble, "Dynamic Harps", for 4 years, and also have performed with an amateur orchestra. Working within a group has massively improved my sight reading, as well as my time keeping and ability to work with others. The numerous performances I've had the pleasure of doing has improved my confidence and developed my stage presence in an invaluable way. It has also helped me have the courage to create my own solo performances, and accompany other instruments and singers.

This year, I completed a work experience week alongside my harp teacher where I was able to see what is was like to be a self-employed harpist. During the week, my responsibility was to create a website for our harp ensemble, as well as observing how to take calls and booking from prospective customers. I enjoyed the experience a lot as it opened my eyes to the challenges of self- employment but also the fulfilment that performing for people provides.

Aside from Music, I have a deep interest in theatre. As a devoted actor, I needed to find a medium through which I could continue practicing my acting ability. I have been a member of Everyman Youth Theatre for 2 years. I have been incredibly lucky to be cast in Shakespeare's Hamlet as a female Polonius, and most recently Queen Isobel in his Richard II. One performance of note is the one-to-one immersive theatre monologues, which involved sitting face to face with a single audience member and reciting monologues that we had written. This was a challenge, as it required total conviction, concentration, and commitment to the role. It took a lot of practice and rehearsal, which in turn benefitted me and I believe that I achieved an effective and unsettling performance. Being part of an acting group has helped me improve myself in a variety of ways. The performances have encouraged me to step up and be more confident in myself as a person. I also feel that working in a community of friends and peers has provided an environment in which I thrive.

I am currently studying English A-Level alongside Music and Psychology. I feel as if this is a good combination, as it gives me room to be creative while also keeping up my literacy and time management skills, given that both English and Psychology are essay subjects. English A-Level has

been a great asset to the musician in me, as I have learnt how to be analytical and critical of pieces, which has transpired into my playing. I am able to analyse the pieces I am learning, and then perform them in a way that truly captures their emotion, through using techniques I have learnt in class.

In conclusion, I am a well-rounded student, and I endeavour to work hard to perfect my skills as a musician. I am keen to develop myself further in the next four years through practice, workshops, and masterclasses. My goal is to improve my technique even further and become a confident and well-rounded performer.

##### Psychology

I have witnessed first-hand how a mental illness can control a person. My Grandmother has been suffering with bipolar disorder almost her entire adult life and has now recently been diagnosed with dementia. This originally sparked my interest in Psychology, as I felt compelled to learn more about why this has arisen and how it can entirely change a person. Through individual research, my interest in the subject has broadened. Research such as Development and Validation of a Screening Instrument for Bipolar Spectrum Disorder: The Mood Disorder Questionnaire, which recognised the importance of diagnosis and treatment of bipolar disorder inspired me to continue my studies in this area and led me to explore other areas of psychology.

I have become increasingly interested in cognitive psychology and how brain injuries can affect our cognitive processes such as the way a person thinks learns and remembers. In addition, the perception of emotional expression through eye movement tracking greatly interests me and I would love to continue my studies into this at university.

Upon reading 'Hadol and Hyacinths: A Bipolar Life', written By Melody Moezzi, a deep vocation to pursue practicing psychology was reinforced further. In her work, Moezzi intimately documents her bipolar disorder and its detrimental effects, as well as the roots of such feelings being found in the isolationist and denying atmosphere of an Iranian Muslim family and background. Analysis of this work has provided me with an insight in to how manic-depressive and psychotic illnesses when nourished, can be soothed, and, contrastingly, when ignored, can be exacerbated. Other works such as 'An Unquiet Mind' by Kay Redfield Jamison have highlighted how each individual suffers differently at the hands of mental illness. This has intrigued me deeply.

Outside of school, completion of the bronze and silver Duke of Edinburgh awards have made me aware how people individually deal with stressful and demanding environments. This experience improved my communication and teamwork skills, which I feel will be an advantage at university when working with different people in different environments. In addition, the Duke of

Edinburgh has shown that I am persistent and hardworking, which can be reflected in my schoolwork and extracurricular activities.

Working for several companies in retail has aided me in understanding the psychology of consumerism. I have worked in a local garden centre for a year and have developed many of my existing skills, such as my problem solving. Working in a group and individually has allowed me to assess a situation and find the best way forward to overcome a problem or obstacle. I feel as though this skill will be necessary studying Psychology when working to complete group assignments and having to approach others for help or knowledge.

I have also volunteered at numerous institutions. Firstly, I have volunteered with a local primary school, helping on a week-long residential school trip. This allowed me to gain an insight into the psychological development of children and how they respond to instruction. I also volunteer at my Grandmother's nursing home every Sunday. It interests me greatly as I observe the weekly developments and changes in her behaviour and personality. I created a questionnaire in order to track her behaviour every week and to note any changes in her responses. Finally, I joined St. Johns Ambulance. This experience has taught me invaluable first aid skills, and how to work effectively under pressure.

I have worked with a variety of people and thrive in new environments. Psychology has consistently fascinated me throughout the years and to have the opportunity to study the subject at degree-level would be intensely rewarding.

**Personal Statement Writing Frame**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section 1 -** what do I want to study and why?  **Structure**   * Why the subject appeals * *Evidence* of your interest in the subject * Knowledge about new developments in the subject * What qualities and experience you can bring   (This may be broken down into sub- paragraphs)  Don’t mention any university by name!  Originality and genuine enthusiasm or realism is key!  Possibly reference a key piece of literature, topical development or experience that initially hooked you! |  |
| **Section 2 - experience, achievements, skills**   * Relevant achievements (prizes, competitions) and subject related activities such as work experience, webinars, talks, literature, placements, and field trips (**Try and link them together)**. * This should be relevant to your course, before possibly making relevant reference to the skills gained from your other A Level subjects.   **Follow the ABC approach:**   1. **Activity** – what – **experience (placements and experience, webinars, talks, literature etc. Try and link them together)** 2. **Benefit** – skills gained 3. **Course –** what was learnt that is relevant to your course in terms of skills, competencies, and motivation, career aspirations! |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section 3 – hobbies, interests & employment**   * Positions of responsibility, and what they involved * Events/activities you have organised * Charity work, or work for local/national organisations * Evidence of your ability to work independently and manage your time * Can you work under pressure? Evidence? Challenges overcome * Will you be able to adjust being away from home?   **\*Follow the ABC approach!** |  |
| **Conclusion –**   * Your final sentence should be a memorable encapsulation of you, and why your chosen university wants you. It should be eye catching, individual, personal, honestly meant and short if possible. * **Don’t introduce new ideas**, but reiterate the things that make you a strong candidate |  |

**What Skills have I gained?**

Here are some examples of skills you have gained, which you could use in your personal statement:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Examples of skills developed** |
| Work experience  (school + other) | Punctuality, responsibility, team working,  initiative |
| Hobbies | Commitment, curiosity, skills training, use  of time |
| Sport/music/art/drama | Dedication, patience, teamwork,  enthusiasm, stamina |
| Computers | Manual dexterity & coordination,  competition, technical skills |
| Reading | Concentration, calmness, energy,  curiosity, imagination, knowledge |
| Travel | Planning, budgeting, organisation, cultural  sensitivity, adventure |
| Looking after relatives  (younger or older) | Leadership, patience, responsibility, sense  of humour, empathy, initiative |
| Prefect / 6th form committee | Communication, confidence, diplomacy,  listening skills, responsibility |
| Voluntary work | Social conscience, reliability, motivation,  caring, sharing, responsibility |
| D of E | Fitness, determination, self-belief,  resilience, initiative, imagination |
| Languages | Intellect, cultural sensitivity, verbal  communication, listening skills,  interpreting |
| First aid/sign language | Sensitivity, communication skills,  gentleness, practicality, memory |
| Driving | Consideration, competence, safety  awareness, responsibility, care |
| Youth clubs, scouts, guides,  church | Discipline, loyalty, commitment, team  spirit, personal development |

# DON’T FORGET ALL THE SKILLS YOU HAVE UTILISED THROUGH WBQ! (WWO, IOLP, COMMUNICATION, PROBLEM SOLVING, ICT, RESEARCH-II)

## Useful Links

<http://www.applytouni.com/>

This website is an independent platform which allows students to access all the information required in order to continue with their studies at degree level.

https://discoveruni.gov.uk

National website for comparing UK higher education course data.

https://[www.ucas.com/alternatives/gap-year/gap-years-ideas-and-things-think-about](http://www.ucas.com/alternatives/gap-year/gap-years-ideas-and-things-think-about)

If you're thinking of taking a gap year before coming to university, this website is a great place to start your planning.

[http://www.push.co.uk](http://www.push.co.uk/)

An independent website which offers bite size chunks of information including *top 10s* of more things than you would imagine possible!

https://[www.theuniguide.co.uk](http://www.theuniguide.co.uk/)

An independent website offering advice and guidance about applying to university.

<http://www.studentfinancewales.co.uk/>

Student Finance Wales - The government's website with information about financial support for students in Wales.

[http://www.opendays.com](http://www.opendays.com/)

Directory of university and college open days. Offers calendars, open day descriptions, contact information and useful advice.

<http://purepotential.org/>

A fantastic resource offering advice to state school students who are interested in applying to university and school leavers/apprenticeship programmes.

[http://www.studential.com](http://www.studential.com/)

A website for UK students explaining the application procedure for applying to university, with helpful guides, advice and FAQs