

## Personal Statement Exemplar 1: History

History is, innately, an intrinsic element to understanding how the world functions. Events of the past have chipped away at the shape of contemporary society and still continue to today, ever-changing. Historians have a central role in deciphering the past - why did the radicalisation of black civil rights groups in America occur? What compelled Stalin to order a campaign of executions and intimidations in the year 1937, The Great Terror? Who was Henry VII, and how did he secure his position on the British throne as a usurper? What draws me most to the study of history is that there are no definitive answers to any of these questions; answers depend on the perception of the person, and what I want most is to be a part of the historical conversation.

From analysing sources to extensive debates, my love of history has intensified. Studying American Civil Rights during my A levels has proved a pivotal moment in my personal journey; the fight for civil rights, revolutions, and war are sometimes courageous, often controversial events that challenge traditionalism and change ideas. Historical activists such as Sylvia Rivera, Malcolm X, and Richard Oakes have proven this, and it is these trailblazers that have fuelled my passion further, leading me to pick up books such as 'The Stonewall Reader'. This chronicled the fight for queer rights in the USA through different accounts, interviews, and extracts, and reading works from the likes of Holly Woodlawn's 'A Low Life In Heels' and Dick Leitsch's 'The Hairpin Drop Heard Around The World' opened my insight into what it was like to live through such an influential revolt against oppression. Similarly, after reading Orlando Figes' 'Revolutionary Russia', I was taken by chapter 17, 'The Beginning of the End', in which Figes provides a detailed account of the Khrushchev Thaw and the eventual collapse of the Soviet Union. Khrushchev's speech provoked a looming sense of faithlessness in the people, especially among youth who had little connection to Russia's revolutionary roots. This, combined with other factors, is what caused the downfall of the world's first Communist state.

As well as History, my other A levels lend themselves well to my educational progress. Geography has allowed me to explore sources in depth, and conduct research in a more analytic light, whereas Sociology has been crucial in developing my understanding of the context of culture within time periods. Studying three essay-based A levels, although a challenge, has been immensely useful in building my organisational skills, which I know will be foundational to managing my life at university.

Taking part in work experience at The National Holocaust Centre truly solidified my infatuation for history. I had the privilege of listening to four Holocaust survivors, and I was also introduced to the curating team, where I was able to handle fragile artefacts and digitalise them for the website. My time at the centre was enlightening and it enabled me to think more critically about possible career paths after university, and I have taken a liking to museum curating and research after my visit.

Alongside my work experience, having the opportunity to study my subject of choice at The University of Edinburgh, through the Sutton Trust Summer School, was invaluable to me. I chose to study history, and was able to visit monuments in my research about

the transatlantic slave trade, such as the building for The Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society. My experience was exhilarating, because I had the chance to experience University life first-hand and see what my future in further education could be- I thrived in a university setting, and I am willing and ready to give back to a university community as much as I earn from it.

## Personal Statement Exemplar 2: Biology/Science

After studying the circulatory system, heart and cardiovascular disease in my A-level Biology course, I realised the core of my interests lies within humans and disease. Reading 'The Body' by Bill Bryson, I developed a profound enthusiasm for the intricacies of the human body and the diseases that threaten it. I discovered aspects of the subject that my A-level studies have not offered to me: such as just how many organic molecules, cells, and processes we utilise to live. Global public health has faced several challenges in recent years, including cancer, obesity and diabetes, and of course the COVID-19 pandemic - but at the heart of these obstacles are passionate medics, academics and researchers who have given me an ardent desire to explore the field of biomedical sciences, especially cellular and systems physiology.

The intensive Biomedical sciences course will confront my understanding of physiology and the threats of disease and how these intertwine with functions at the cellular and molecular level. After completing an online course delivered by the University of Michigan on Cardiovascular, Respiratory and Urinary anatomy - it highlighted to me the extent that the body continuously regulates, oxygenates, and energises cells and tissues every second. This is taken for granted by the masses, but I am excited to investigate every nuance the human body has to offer. Having taken part in the UNIQ Summer school biology residential, I had the opportunity to experience a lab practical in which we separated proteins in milk using polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis and how to use single channel pipettes. Leading me to research the use of proteins in medicine, I watched a TED talk by Melissa J. Moore on 'how mRNA medicine will change the world' - in which she perfectly described our bodies as remarkable protein factories. Most interesting was von Gierke's disease, a tragic example of when the manufacture of proteins goes wrong. I further researched this, finding the use of bacterial DNA in vaccines against SARS-CoV-2, in an article by the University of California - San Diego, which gave me a greater scope of understanding of how life itself can be used to engineer medicines.

Studying Physics has exposed me to a variety of lab skills, including using micrometers and practicing proper safety, and has built on my evaluative and critical thinking skills. I was enlightened by how diffraction is used in X-ray crystallography, imperative in the clarification of the structure of DNA. My ability to think beyond conventional parameters has allowed me to excel in aspects of physics, which will be of use to me in the field of biomedical science when probing deep into pathology and genetics.

Alongside Physics, Mathematics has shaped my interests and I am looking forward to participating in statistics classes, since I have learned how to test hypotheses and do statistical analysis - applicable to the course in research components. Rescuing rabbits has been a prime opportunity for me to discover my interests in biomedicine. On occasions I have given them

injections and medicines and through various vet visits I have seen the translation of medicine. Invigorating my interest in the field, it condemned me to be curious about how these medical technologies are engineered. I enjoyed taking part in school open days, taking on a role of leadership in inspiring others. I have also participated in various Pride events, as I am passionate about progressive change.

I hope to gain the skills to conduct my own research and gain experience working in a clinical setting, applying my knowledge to help individual cases. To educate and bring awareness to others about the complexity of humans and disease is a lifelong goal. I am looking forward to opening pathways to develop my appreciation for biomedicine into a fulfilling career.

### **Personal Statement Exemplar 3: Maths**

Maths offers a universal route to understanding our interconnected world and is integral in offering solutions to material global problems. My natural curiosity and aptitude in Mathematics has further developed my logical problem-solving skills and enabled me to understand complex problems with real-world relevance. For example, the laws underpinned by Kinematics and Newton's second law have led to endless applications and advancements in technology. Studying Maths at degree level will provide the gateway to my future career and involvement in new developments and discoveries in the future.

A Level Maths has expanded my mathematical reasoning abilities and enabled me to solve multiple-step questions involving interleaved topic content. I am incredibly self-motivated and as such I have independently learned topics from the A-level Further Maths specification, a course not offered at my Sixth Form college. In doing so, I have developed my independent study skills, which I believe will be a vital tool in a student driven learning environment.

I also study Psychology and Business at A Level. The formal written nature of these subjects together with the experience gained from researching will be beneficial to my project in Year 3. Skills learned in conducting Hypothesis Tests in Psychology has enabled me to evaluate the extent to which the results are valid and form meaningful conclusions. Furthermore, by presenting in Business, I found my confidence and communication skills have grown. Again, skills crucial for Higher Education.

Whilst in Sixth Form, I have volunteered in Yr11 Maths lessons with students to provide exam help and support. This allowed me to gain a wider understanding of how others learn and process the subject whilst reinforcing my GCSE knowledge. My leadership skills were strengthened when I became Student Leader of the Sixth Form, where I had responsibility to ensure that the voices of my peers were heard. I also developed connections and collaboration between the Sixth Form and younger years. By forming these connections with the younger years, they are introduced to further education and inspired to achieve. This provided me with a platform to further develop my communication skills. In addition, I organised and advertised a food bank during winter to support my teachers "Be Kind in Business" advocacy, where food was donated from all year groups to help those in need. This enhanced by prioritisation skills by meeting pickup deadlines. Furthermore, I was successful in securing a place on a Sutton Trust Summer School on the Economics Stream. This reaffirmed the direction of my studies towards Mechanics and Pure Mathematics, solidifying my decision to study Mathematics at University. I gained independence during the summer school as I experienced living in halls of residence; I had to be self-reliant in terms of time-management for session and events, providing a preview into the future years ahead.

My Part-time job as a Lifeguard requires monthly training and demands focus and vigilance poolside. My teamwork skills have

developed as I support my colleagues in all aspects of our job, which include first aid on and off poolside and maintaining a high level of hygiene and cleanliness. I've learnt how to maintain a work-life balance and be financially responsible to support myself; these being skills which will lend themselves highly beneficial to university life.

I am a highly driven, committed learner with a natural mathematical curiosity. I am particularly excited by the prospect of taking the Fluid Dynamics and Quantum Mechanics modules later in the course as these will allow me to specialise my knowledge and expand my current foundation from A Level Mechanics. University will allow me to grow as a person, allowing me to become more self-reliant and thrive in an interactive forward-thinking learning environment. I am resolved to embrace all experiences and challenges.