

Example personal statements

Take a look at our example personal statements below to give you an idea of the structure and type of content that makes a good personal statement. **Please note the examples provided are purely for guidance only and should not be copied, adapted or referenced in any way.**

Business Management:

I have always been fascinated by business and the impact it has on the world we live in. To gain a better understanding of business, I organised work experience with three different businesses: [example one], [example two] and [example three]. At the [example one], I was given an opportunity to analyse a variety of business ideas and judge whether they were worth investing in. The [example two] was the most interesting for me as I was exposed to the world of buying and selling; equities as well as a variety of other commodities. The firm was interested in investing in container ships and I was amazed at how volatile the prices were. I also gained some work experience with [example three]. I found this large firm intriguing, as it specialises in many areas from real estate to multi million pound investments in equities.

My favourite subject at school is Economics. I enjoy microeconomics and the insights this provides as to how businesses are run. For example, I now understand the difference between fixed and variable costs and how this impacts on business decisions. The course introduced me to many basic business terms, opening my eyes to a whole new language that I look forward to learning more about. Two of my favourite business books are Alan Sugar's autobiography and Naomi Klein's No is Not Enough. Sugar's book provides a fascinating insight into the life of an entrepreneur and I particularly enjoyed his advice on how to set up and successfully manage businesses. Klein's book focuses on the link between politics and business seen through the life of Donald Trump and I was particularly taken by her argument that he is using his presidency to enhance his brand image. I enjoyed a debate on whether the government should have bailed out the banks. I learnt the importance of the banking sector to the economy and the need to ensure that banks are well regulated I am undertaking an EPQ on South Africa and the role that Mandela played in the abolition of apartheid. My EPQ has required significant dedication and independent learning as well as perseverance. My EPQ research demonstrated my ability to think critically, analyse research recourses and develop lines of argument, articulating these in a clear written structure. I took advantage of a trip to South Africa by initiating an interview with an ex-political prisoner on Robben Island which forms an integral part of my research as I often use direct quotes from him to emphasise certain ideas.

Since the age of eleven I have played sport to a high level representing my county at both tennis and cricket. Therefore, I know what it takes to achieve and sustain high levels of success. Cricket has taught me how to work in a team, which is important for group projects at University and for business. I completed a Sports Leadership and a Speaking with Confidence course, both of which enhanced my natural ability to work well in teams. I volunteered to speak at our school's Open Day and felt that I was fluent and articulate.

I am interested in studying a business-related degree because I believe that business should be run for the benefit of all in society. One of the biggest issues facing business and politics today is the increasing divide between rich and poor. According to Oxfam, the wealth of the richest 8 people in the world is the same as the poorest 50%. This needs to change. I recently entered an Economics essay competition in which I argued for greater fairness in income distribution as I strongly feel that the world needs to be a fairer place. Therefore, I would love to study on this course not only to further my own career but also to bring values fairness and equality to the world of business.

Law:

I have a love for words. Words are used in law in a way that is incomparable to any other discipline; the interpretation of words in a courtroom can condemn someone to prison or set them free. The vital importance attached to words has nurtured my interest in the law and is one of the reasons I look forward to studying it.

After reading Wacks' 'Law: A Very Short Introduction' and 'What About Law?' by Barnard, O'Sullivan and Virgo, I was fascinated by the development of the Anglo-Welsh legal system, and began to see it as perhaps our most undervalued export throughout history. My interest in the technicalities of some of the cases related in 'What About Law', notably the debate over the value of nine inches of swimming pool depth in *Ruxley v. Forsyth*, led me to read 'Is Eating People Wrong?' by Hutchinson. Amongst other cases, the book introduced me to the eponymous case of *R v. Dudley and Stephens*. This exhibits how the Queen's Bench Division was mindful of the potential consequences of establishing a necessity defence for murder, demonstrating the power that one court's decision has to affect the entire legal field. Whilst recognising the view as symptomatic of its era, I disagreed with Lord Coleridge's thundering proclamation that it may sometimes be a man's duty to die: his argument is undermined by holding the 'reasonable man' ubiquitous in law to unreasonable moral standards.

The online course 'Law for Non-Lawyers' by Monash University gave me a broad insight into criminal, contract, tort and intellectual property law. My interest in the criminal law drove me to complete the online course 'Crime, Justice and Society' by Sheffield University, giving me a holistic overview of criminal justice proceedings, including the disproportionate effects of imprisonment on women, and suggesting some alternatives to traditional sanctions. A week of work experience in the pensions department of [company 1] allowed me to understand a specialised area of the law and apply it to real-world situations, a skill further developed by a week at [company 2] in-house legal department in relation to the commercial law, notably how mergers and acquisitions law underpins free market competition. The additional experience of drafting a settlement agreement reinforced the imperative that the words I typed had to be clear and final. The most valuable lesson, however, came when I was handed a contract of several hundred pages and asked to look for one critical detail, which taught me the importance of meticulousness. I recently visited the Supreme Court to witness *[A] v [B]*, a very technical Scottish case. Watching the justices decoding the details of the case using comparisons to garden fences and exploding factories reassured me that even at the highest level, the law must remain accessible.

Within school, I have regularly attended law society, improving my debating skills when discussing an area of the law. One of the liveliest debates I took part in concerned the judicial retention elections which take place in some American states. I am also scheduled to take part in the Bar Mock Trial

Competition as a defence barrister, and, in the course of assembling my case, I have learned about the subtlety involved in court proceedings, such as the ability to portray a defendant in a certain way using the examination-in-chief.

Serving as a House Captain in Year 13 has forced me to stay organised and work to a strict time limit, for example when organising events. Through the composition of speeches, my writing has become clearer and more persuasive. Playing 1st and 2nd XV rugby for my school also allowed me to work for and lead a team under heavy pressure.

Personally, caring for my sister, who has been ill for several months, has forced me to sacrifice time with my friends and has maintained my focus in life on the areas which I consider to be truly important. Studying the law, I hope, will be one.

Comparative Literature

Studying English at A Level has allowed me to 'gently dip, but not too deep' into literature. I look forward to immersing myself fully at degree level. I am a creative, conscientious student and I have a whole-hearted commitment to broadening my understanding of our literary heritage. I am never happier than when I feel I have acquired a high level of insight into the unique and multi-faceted style in which a particular work of literature is written. At university, I want to develop my critical skills by engaging with the views of other readers, as well as striving for the most impressive expression of my own interpretations. I also have an ulterior motive for this quest, since I hope to refine my own skills of expression in order to achieve my ambition of becoming a journalist.

At A Level, I have particularly enjoyed texts by Forster, Ishiguro and Gunesekara and in my independent reading, the novels of Austen and Woolf. What I find intriguing is the way an individual creative artist exploits a literary form and thereby extends or even re-defines its possibilities. I hope to explore the origins of genres and the way each evolves in relation to cultural change. I have found Chaucer offers fascinating insights into earlier times and customs, making me more curious about the origins and development of poetic forms. Having independently attended historical lectures, seminars and poetry readings, for example at the T.S Eliot Awards, I have developed my interest in poets such as Plath.

Furthermore, my experience of live theatre as a student of English Literature and Drama and Theatre Studies has provided me with a practical understanding of performance contexts and dramatic texts. Involvement in the dramatic arts both inside and outside of school has developed my communication and research skills. I look forward to refining these skills and to extending my experience of texts in performance. Theatre is an important influence in my life as a performer, practitioner and spectator. I regularly see all the productions I can locally and in London. I am interested in the ways different directors and performance contexts contribute to meaning, as was made evident by comparing performances of 'Macbeth' at Trafalgar Studios and at The Globe. I enjoy experiencing how plays can be exciting and ground-breaking, such as Punchdrunk's 'The Drowned Man'.

As a student of Classical Civilisation, I have become increasingly aware of the influence of Greek and Roman writers on English Literature. I look forward to expanding my understanding of these links. I have seen how Greek Tragedies and Aristotelian theories of drama are still relevant, through studying such tragedies as 'Trojan Women' and 'Medea', while I was surprised to experience the comic force of 'Socrates and His Clouds' based on Aristophanes at the Jermyn Street Theatre, performed with complete conviction and extreme energy. As a student of AS Dance, I appreciated the input of choreography and movement, which would have been a feature of performance in the original production conditions.

A Level Religious Studies has enhanced my understanding of the ways philosophy and religion can and do influence literary and social contexts and has given me opportunities to engage with the original texts of scholars whose prose styles have been literary models in their own right, such as those of John Stuart Mill and Aquinas.

I look forward to the opportunity to develop my interest in a wide variety of creative and intellectual pursuits. I have appreciated the challenges of being a member of the Student Leadership Team, and have enjoyed working as library volunteer, encouraging children to read and refine their literacy skills and introducing a Creative Writing Club for students of all ages. Having seen my poems in print and worked this year on the Newsquest Project, I am keen to produce more articles and creative pieces at university.

Pharmacy

After making aspirin in a Chemistry lesson, I became fascinated by drug synthesis and decided to consider a career in Pharmacy. Researching the undergraduate courses available, I found a new interest in cells and how our knowledge of the body can be applied to producing medicines.

To gain a deeper understanding of the human body, I read 'How We Live and Why We Die' by Lewis Wolpert. This book delved into the microscopic world of cells and how they affect our lives, from getting ill to ageing. This gave me a huge insight into why various processes in the body happen, for example ageing and respiration, and how our very own cells contribute to our wellbeing and, inevitably, our demise.

To understand more about the pharmaceutical industry, I read Ben Goldacre's 'Bad Science'; I discovered how some anti-ageing creams work using specific active ingredients such as Vegetal, but also how unethical companies can deceive consumers by, for example, not declaring the exact concentrations of active ingredients. This opened my eyes to the way companies can mislead consumers and benefit from their own malpractice. Working at a retail pharmacy, I learned how to endorse prescriptions, compile medication trays for patients and make up oral suspensions. I gained an appreciation of the work of a pharmacist behind the counter and learned about some of the medicines prescribed, such as Amlodipine, a calcium-channel blocker, used to treat angina and hypertension. I also improved my communication skills by dealing with patients daily.

Last July, I participated in the CEPMaBC Polymath competition at **** and was proud that my team came second. This experience helped me to develop team-working skills; show leadership; work well under pressure and to adapt to new environments. It also helped me think outside the box and apply my knowledge across all sciences to solve challenging questions. By reading 'New Scientist' regularly, I am developing my pharmaceutical vocabulary and enhancing my understanding of treatment concepts. In an article concerning the clues to aspirin's anti-cancer effects, I was astonished to discover how this versatile drug can be used to treat so many different conditions. I already knew that aspirin is an analgesic and anti-inflammatory used for pain relief, but the recent discovery that it could be used to treat cancer could mean that better cancer treatments will be available. The Royal Society Summer Science Exhibition in July was also inspirational and an exhibit about insect birth control particularly interested me. It demonstrated that, as male mosquitoes carry

dengue fever, scientists could, by changing their genes to make them sterile, significantly reduce the number of mosquitos and thereby the number of people contracting the disease. I reasoned that the same principle could be applied to other insect-transmitted diseases, like malaria, to save more lives in developing countries. Through the various talks I have attended, I have gained a better understanding of research projects being conducted and how simple things like bubbles have the potential to be used to treat people suffering from cancer.

I share my interest in science at school as Chairman of the Science Committee through which I helped organise and run a science fair. We started a homework club, too. This involved organisation and collaboration with other committees, teachers and students. We also taught younger students and helped to prepare them for a chemistry competition. I became Captain of the Economics class *****, after an audition.

By undertaking a Pharmacy course, I hope to develop my knowledge of medicines and their manufacture; learn how drugs are metabolised within the body; gain a better insight into the legal processes involved in marketing new products and ultimately become a pharmacist myself.