

Personal Statement: History

For many people, history is nothing more than ‘things’ that have happened in the past. For them, the study of bygone eras is simply a treasure trove of trivia and something of scant relevance today; something which exists only in the past tense. For me, on the other hand, history is alive. It remains as real today as it did back then, because history is about us all and where we came from. It continues to influence our lives and our world, affecting our present and our future.

My love of history has informed and shaped me as a person. I have an analytical and critical mind, with an ability to see events and issues contextually and not merely as random. I am inquisitive by nature, always wanting to learn things in more depth, and have an appreciation of the nuanced and the complex.

My inquisitiveness and yearning to acquire knowledge means that studies are not a chore for me. Social sciences and languages have always been particular strengths of mine, as I love the explicitly human nature of these subjects. My A-levels in history, politics and English literature have equipped me with excellent communication skills, both written and oral, and the ability to scrutinise and summarise complex material in order to construct innovative and well thought-out arguments.

Throughout sixth form, I have subscribed to both *History Today* and *Modern History Today*. Both challenge my way of thinking about the world, and I greatly enjoy learning about the history of big events, their causes and their consequences. I specifically enjoy military history and how the world has developed as a result of key conflicts. Political history is a firm favourite, too, with history and politics so obviously influenced by each other and irrevocably interlinked. I find their machinations absolutely fascinating.

Outside the classroom, I write for my school newspaper, which has helped me learn to deal with the pressures of time, as well as to hone my writing style. I also play in my local youth orchestra, having obtained grade eight in violin and grade six in piano. I also thoroughly enjoy writing a blog which revisits historical events that happened ‘on this day’. I love the creativity that both writing and music have afforded me, and would love to continue with these pursuits as social and creative outlets at university. I believe that both have given me discipline in what I do and shown me to be persistent and never give up.

For the last year, I have worked on a casual basis in my local pub, which has been very demanding at times, with long hours and a lot of activity. However, this part-time work has helped me to develop confidence in meeting and interacting with new people, and enabled me to work well and cope under pressure. I also did a paper round from the ages of 12 to 16, which I believe proves that when I commit to something I follow through and am reliable.

I am excited about the prospect of going away to study at university. Whilst it will be my first time living away from home, I look forward to being able to develop myself both academically and socially, and know that I have so much to learn during my studies and in my interactions with professors and other students. On completion of my degree, I hope to perhaps pursue journalism or a career in the civil service, and have no doubt that the rigour and demands of a history degree will provide me with solid, transferrable skills for my future.

I know that I am curious about the world around me and that I have an analytical and open mind, as well as a strong work ethic and an ambition to succeed. I genuinely love history and am determined to excel, and look forward to further exploring my interests, filling in my knowledge gaps, and developing intellectually.