



Higher Education Handbook 2018 – 2019

The Sixth Form – University Applications



**BRITISH SCHOOL
MUSCAT**

CONTENTS

| | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| INTRODUCTION..... | 3 |
| IMPORTANT DATES – 2018 & 2019..... | 4 |
| CHOOSING A UNIVERSITY..... | 5 |
| CHOOSING YOUR COURSE..... | 5 |
| UCAS TARIFF..... | 7 |
| UCAS APPLY..... | 8 |
| PERSONAL STATEMENT..... | 9 |
| ADVICE FROM ADMISSIONS TUTORS..... | 15 |
| INTERVIEWS..... | 16 |
| UNIVERSITY OFFERS..... | 16 |
| STUDENT FINANCE..... | 17 |
| GAP YEAR..... | 19 |
| PERSONAL STATEMENT EXAMPLES..... | 20 |
| WORLDWIDE APPLICATIONS..... | 22 |

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this booklet is to give you advice and guidance on the application procedure.

Applying to university is an exciting time. Above all university will:

- Provide you with the opportunity to study a subject you enjoy in greater depth;
- Allow you to become more independent;
- Provide you with the opportunity to mix with other students from a variety of backgrounds;
- Increase your career choices as most jobs require a degree and likely earnings over your lifetime.

When considering your university application two particular areas require a considerable amount of time, research and discussion: -

1. The course you wish to study
2. Where you wish to study

Research recently completed identified that a third of students entering university later decided they had chosen the wrong course. **Do not underestimate the amount of time it takes to come to the right decision for you on these two areas.**

In the end the choice can only be yours and it is a very personal decision. Others can help advise but you must be sure that it is right for you. Along with the Head of Sixth Form and your Tutor I can give considerable help and guidance.

I look forward to supporting you in your university application.

Kindest regards.

**Mr. Khushalbai,
Careers Advisor**

IMPORTANT DATES – 2018 & 2019

| | |
|--|--|
| 1 st May | UKCAT registration (Medicine & Dentistry course) |
| 27 th & 28 th June | Oxford University Open Days |
| 5 th & 6 th July | Cambridge University Open Days |
| 18 th September | UKCAT registration deadline |
| 15 th October | Deadline for receipt of applications for Oxford, Cambridge, Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science at UCAS |
| 31 st October | BMAT tests take place at BSM |
| End of term December | BSM's deadline for receipt of all other courses at UCAS |
| 15 th January | UCAS official deadline for receipt of all other courses |
| February | UCAS Extra starts towards the middle of this month |
| 15 th August | A Level Results day |

CHOOSING A UNIVERSITY

Choosing a university and course are closely linked. It is important to consider both together.

If you choose a popular subject such as Law, History or English you will find most universities offer these courses, although the course content can vary greatly.

Things to consider:-

- Is it a campus or city centre university?
- How often might you want to go home and is there a local airport?
- What are the transport systems within the area like?
- What is the accommodation like and how much does it cost?
- What is the university reputation like? Check the teaching quality, graduate employability and league tables.
- What student support is available? For example medical and financial (grants/bursaries and scholarships are becoming increasingly important ways of attracting students). Make sure you research these carefully
- What are the facilities including libraries, sporting, social clubs and societies like?

Do Your Research

You will be spending three years or more at your chosen university so it is important to research thoroughly.

Most students who drop out have chosen the wrong course or university so make sure you:

- Go to Open Days in the summer holidays;
- Review universities websites and other sites such as those at the back on page 7.
- Make the most of the BSM universities fairs and other visits/presentations from universities.

CHOOSING YOUR COURSE

You may know what you want to study but most of you may not be sure. Don't worry!

It may be that you want to continue with your favourite subject or choose one that leads directly to a career, for example medicine.

The decision about what to study is an important one as you are making a commitment to study that subject for 3 years at least, so do not rush it.

Things to Consider

- Some vocational courses can lead to a job, for example medicine, radiography physiotherapy or teaching.
- Some subjects are oversubscribed such as medicine, dentistry, law, and veterinary science.
- You could study more than one subject such as:
 - History and Politics: A joint degree giving equal weighing to both subjects
 - Chemistry with French: A degree giving the majority of the time to Chemistry with a subsidiary in French
 - Combined programme: A degree can combine three subjects. Combined programmes course will vary at each university.
 - Sandwich course: A degree such as Accountancy and Finance can be spread over four years with the third year being working in that area.
- How does the course content vary between the universities? Beware that the content of two courses with the same title can be very different.
- What are the entry requirements?
 - Remember to check GCSE requirements as well.
 - Look at the Entry Profile for the course, detailing selection criteria and desirable personal qualities.
 - Make sure you are doing the correct A Levels for this course.
 - Are there any examinations that you need to take? LNAT for some Law courses, BMAT / UKCAT for Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science

Do Your Research

- Undertake work experience to help you decide
- Think about what you enjoy, both inside and outside of school.
- Discuss options with the Careers Adviser, Head of Sixth Form, subject teachers and family.
- If you are applying to study Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science you must see the Careers Advisor.

Where to Find Information

| | |
|---|--|
| UCAS website | www.ucas.com |
| University course choices | www.whatuni.com |
| University rankings | https://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings https://www.theguardian.com/education/ng-interactive/2018/may/29/university-league-tables-2019 |
| University Open days | http://opendays.com |
| Careers | www.prospects.ac.uk |
| Teaching Quality | www.unistats.com |
| Applications for Medicine / Dentistry | www.ukcat.ac.uk |
| Applications for Medicine / Vet Science | www.bmat.org.uk |
| Applications for Law | www.lnat.ac.uk |

UCAS TARIFF

(<https://www.ucas.com/ucas/tariff-calculator>)

A Level

| | |
|----|-----------|
| A* | 56 points |
| A | 48 points |
| B | 40 points |
| C | 32 points |
| D | 24 points |
| E | 16 points |

AS

| | |
|---|-----------|
| A | 20 points |
| B | 16 points |
| C | 12 points |
| D | 10 points |
| E | 6 points |

5.3 EPQ

| | |
|----|-----------|
| A* | 28 points |
| A | 24 points |
| B | 20 points |
| C | 16 points |
| D | 12 points |
| E | 8 points |

When universities make you an offer it will either be in grades or points e.g;

- History at Manchester University require AAA-AAB (including A in History)
- History at Northumbria University require 128 points (including 48 points in History)

UCAS APPLY

Apply is a secure, web-based online application system which students can use through school – the registered user.

The benefits of this system to students are numerous:

- Applicants can use UCAS Apply wherever there is access to the Internet and not just in school;
- The UCAS website has the latest course information;
- Detailed online help is always available;
- Each applicant has a unique username and password;
- Applications are processed within one or two days of submission;
- Personal Information can be changed at any time prior to submission;
- Applicants can track the progress of their application electronically.

Registration & Application Instructions

Students need to register on Apply in order to complete an application.

- Go to website-www.ucas.com/apply
- Choose student login: year of entry
- Click on register: Registering through a school or college
- Accept terms and conditions
- Enter the **Buzzword** which can be obtained by from Mr.Khushalbai or the Head of Sixth Form.
- Agree you that you are registering through BSM.
- Enter UCAScard number- if you have it with you. If you do not have a UCAScard click on continue without these details and follow instructions.

You will need to remember your username and password in order to login in the future. **Please note** it may be some weeks before you login again, so keep your details safe. Also make sure you choose answers to questions that you are more likely to remember (e.g. Father's first name) which always stays the same, rather than favourite food which might change on a daily basis!

When entering your qualifications you will need to have your certificates with you as you need to know exams boards etc. Modules are not essential but may be useful to show a particularly high or low grade. Either enter all modules for each subject or none at all so that it remains consistent.

For your BSM Sixth Form studies, please enter your AS Level results **AND** enter the A Levels you are studying (put the grades as pending). In effect you are entering the same subject twice but this is essential to enable predicted grades to be shown to your universities.

Personal statements should be typed in Word, then copied and pasted into Apply in Times New Roman size 12 (anything else is automatically converted to this when pasted into Apply. We advise you use the spell-checker in Word (as this function is not available in Apply) and save a copy for your records. If you need to make any alterations to your personal statement, make sure to alter your saved word version and then re-copy and paste the revised version into Apply.

Online help is available in each section by clicking on the help link.

Once your application is completed the following stages will be displayed when you log on:

- Application not checked
- Application checked
- Reference not yet started
- Reference in progress
- Reference awaiting approval
- Application sent to UCAS
- Your application number is xxxxxxxxxx

After your application has been sent to UCAS they acknowledge receipt of your application directly to you and give instructions for you to track your application. It is the students' responsibility to monitor the progress of their application at all stages of the application process.

If you require help and advice with the UCAS Apply system, see the Careers Advisor who can assist you.

UCAS FAQs

What does 'nominated' access mean?

This is someone who you authorize to talk about UCAS application/universities choices on your behalf – usually your parent. You can leave this blank if you want to.

I can't find one of my qualifications on the drop down box?

Try looking in 'Other qualification type not on this list'. If you still can't find it, you can enter it under Other (UK qualifications).

I have forgotten or lost my log in details

Firstly, click on the forgotten log in button. It will ask for your email address and if this matches the one you signed up with it will email the details to you. If you still cannot log in please let the Careers Advisor ASAP.

PESONAL STATEMENT

The personal statement is part of the UCAS form which shows a university admissions tutors what sort of person you are. The personal statement is one of the most important parts of your application. It is your chance to communicate directly with the admissions tutors. It must be your statement. Do not lie or embellish facts about your achievements, you will be caught out. UCAS are using software to detect plagiarism so do not copy examples.

What should a Personal Statement Look Like?

- The first section should contain a strong justification of why you have chosen this subject to study. It should include evidence of research into the nature of the course, especially if it is new or a vocational course-this could take up to half of the whole statement.
- Some evidence from current studies (not just those related to the degree choice subject) of being a keen and well-motivated student.
- Evidence, from outside studies, indicating what makes you tick. This could include other academic activity, university visits, conferences or summer schools as well as interest and leisure activities, part time or voluntary work experience and any other background facts which makes you unique.

Tips for Writing Your Personal Statement

- **Plan ahead** – Think about your personal statement in advance so that you have gathered experiences or read widely around your course.
- **Write clearly** – Write accurately and clearly, one sure way to be rejected is to have spelling and grammatical errors in your statement.
- **Be motivated** – Come across as interested in your chosen course.
- **Be positive** – Sell yourself without providing false information.
- **Seek advice** – Get advice about writing your statement, but not too much as it might confuse you.
- **Redraft** – Expect to complete several drafts of your statement.
- **Don't copy** – Do not copy other statements. UCAS can detect this.
- **Always mention skills** – Especially communication and team working.

Advice about Using 'I'

Beginning many sentences with 'I' is very easy to do, especially when writing about yourself.

Instead, try to create varied sentences with a range of alternative starting points:

Do not write

I am Captain of the hockey team...
 I enjoy playing sport...
 I am studying A levels in...
 I enjoy socialising...
 because...
 I have taken part in...
 I have gained a number of skills...

Instead write

Being Captain of the hockey team...
 Having enjoyed playing sport...
 My A levels subjects are...
 Socialising is important to me
 Taking part in...
 The skills I have gained from...

The following terms can help you connect your sentences and paragraphs as well as to vary the language you use in the Personal Statement.

- In addition – ‘In addition to my work experience I have also gained valuable skills throughout my voluntary work.’
- As well as – ‘As well as my involvement in team games I am also keen on playing individually competitive sport.’
- Reinforce – ‘My involvement in the school voluntary programme has reinforced my decision to study a degree in Nursing.’
- Strengthen – ‘My decision to study a degree in Economics has been strengthened by my enjoyment and success in my A level course.’
- Furthermore – ‘Furthermore, I am particularly suited to a degree in Chemistry because of my love of the subject and my keen interest to further my knowledge of the subject.’
- Apart from – ‘Apart from my involvement with sports I am also involved in amateur dramatics.’
- Not to mention – ‘Being involved in the voluntary work programme, not to mention my work experience, has provided an opportunity to work with a diverse range of people.’
- Enabled me – ‘The opportunity to play in the school football team enabled me to work as part of a team.’
- Provided me – ‘The work experience provided me with an opportunity to work with a range of people.’
- Opportunity to – ‘The opportunity to work with people was provided by my work experience.’

Writing about your choice of course

State your reasons for your choice of course. Here are some suggestions:

| Reason | Explanation |
|--|--------------------------|
| Enjoy the subject | State why |
| Enjoy particular aspects of the subject | State which aspects |
| Look forward to studying in greater depth | State specific interests |
| Work experience confirmed interest | How did this help? |
| Looking forward to putting theory into practice | Anything in particular? |
| Possess the subject skills required for the course | Which skills? |
| Career aspirations | Which career and why? |
| Any other reasons? | Explain |

Writing about Work Experience

State the skills you have gained and match them to the duties you have carried out on your work experience. Which activities from your work experience helped you develop the following skills?

e.g. *Communication dealing with customers or working in a team.*

| | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| Listening | Speaking |
| Working indecently | Computer Literacy |
| Team work | Managing others |
| Working to deadlines | Diplomacy |
| Problem solving | Using initiative |

Writing about School Experience

State the experiences you have gained within the school. Write about your experiences and responsibilities. Below are some suggestions:

House captain, Drama production, Musical Instrument, Voluntary work / helping staff, Debating club. Events organizer / fund raiser, Sports achievements...

Experience

e.g. *Prefect*

What you have gained?

Communication skills, trust, independence

Only write about this area if you have something interesting to say, you do not need to write about all areas of school involvement.

For each relevant experience, consider which skills you have developed:

| | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Independence | Communication | Self-motivation | Public speaking |
| Empathy | Efficiency | Teamwork | Being organised |
| Confidence | Sensitivity | Solving problems | Diplomacy |
| Responsible | Trustworthy | Helpful | Approachable |
| Self-expression | | | |

Writing about your interest and outside of school experiences

Identify and outline the key activities and experiences you have gained in a non-educational environment. Examples include: Hobby, Holiday, Theatre, Part time work, Dancing, Concerts, Music, Film, Cooking, Martial Arts, Painting, Reading in a specialist area, Museums, Cycling, Mechanics and so on.

Suggested pursuits

e.g. *Reading novels*

Outline

Science fiction

Relevance

Enjoy a wide range of literature

Only write these things if you have something interesting to say.

Writing about sporting involvement

State the sports you are interested in playing.

Sport

e.g. *Football*

Details

Captain, won local league last season

Acquired Ability

Teamwork, discipline

Writing your conclusion statement

Read your personal statement so far and do one of the following:

- Think of an experience which you have not already mentioned which relates to your chosen course;
- Think of an experience which you have not already mentioned which relates to your suitability for university OR
- Identify an area which you have already mentioned and find a way of building on it for a concluding comment about your course or suitability for university.

Personal Statement: Max. 4000 words, no formatting

Paragraph 1: Why this course?

- Motivations/reasons for doing the course i.e. why choose this?
- Personal experiences and motivational factors
- Make it cliché free, personal, original and honest, cite examples
- Make sure the opening statements have impact and are impassioned
- Be current/up to date

e.g. Politics personal statement

“The unpredictability of politics is what makes it such a fascinating subject for me. A particular topic that sparked my interest is the extremely volatile relationship between one established superpower and one rising giant: the USA and India...”

Paragraph 2: Super Curricular involvement – prove your passion

- Apply and cite key texts/reading/articles/broadsheet news/key films or documentaries/journals that you have read, know and have influenced your thinking
- Relevant work experience especially importance for Nursing, Veterinary Science/Nursing and Medicine 100+hours needed
- Summer schools e.g. Harvard or LSE
- Be prepared to argue the influence, importance of this with authority and passion. Depth and quality is more important than breadth.

Paragraph 3: Extra Curricular Involvement – Soft Skills demonstration

- IA, sports teams, academic clubs, charity and/or community work. Use examples of this to highlight your team working, interpersonal and personal skills and attributes e.g. leadership, determination or empathy
- Quality of the experience over quantity of skills.
- Demonstrate yourself as a rounded individual

Paragraph 4: The Final Big Sell

- Future plans
- Careers options
- Where do you see yourself?
- How much do you want this place?

ADVICE FROM ADMISSIONS TUTORS

Personal Statements are important for the following:

- Selection for an offer.
- Selection for an interview.
- Asking questions at interview – so make sure you tell the truth!
- Borderline cases – if a course is over-subscribed, your statement may tip the balance in your favour.
- If you just miss the grade in August – the admission tutor may reconsider

But remember grades are very important

What are Admissions Tutors looking for?

- Interest in subject/course
- No spelling /grammatical errors
- Clarity of expression
- Ongoing motivation and commitment
- Ability to balance studies with non-academic life
- Development of becoming an interesting person
- Relevant work experience
- Transferable key skills

What should you avoid?

- Waffle
- Swallowing a dictionary
- Statements with no examples or evidence
- Providing false statements
- Becoming somebody you are not
- Rushing
- Thinking you can write it without advice
- Clichés

Dos and Don'ts

Do:

- Have a plan of action and keep to deadlines
- Find out as much as you can about the course
- Read and listen to advice about writing a personal statement
- Consult books, use the Careers library
- Make the most of what you have done
- Ensure the person on the page is you
- Give plenty of examples (not a list though)
- Write relatively short sentences
- Expect to do several drafts

Do Not:

- Copy other statements
- Make things up to impress
- Use language you do not understand

INTERVIEWS

Applicants for Oxbridge, Medicine, Veterinary Sciences, Health Sciences, Physiotherapy, Nursing and Teaching should expect to be interviewed. Universities are increasingly calling students for an interview in other subjects too. If you are invited for interview, inform the Careers Advisor so we can arrange some interview preparation for you.

Interview Tips

- Try to find out the format of the interview; will you have to take an aptitude test?
- Re-read your personal statement, you will probably be asked to expand on it.
- Look at the department website, it may contain advice about what they are looking for in a candidate.
- Familiarise yourself with the course and think about your reasons for choosing the subject and the university.
- Dress smartly, it creates a good first impression.
- Plan your journey, don't aim to get there at least 30 minutes before the interview; universities are big places and it may take you sometime to locate where you need to be.
- Smile! Maintain eye contact.
- Take your time and think about questions before you answer them.
- Read a newspaper so you can show an interest in current affairs.
- Don't worry if they ask you an awkward question, often they want to see how you react rather than expecting you to have all the answers.

UNIVERSITY OFFERS

Universities will inform UCAS of their decision and write to you. Some universities will do this fairly quickly, others will not respond for some time, so if you do not hear anything for a while don't worry.

If you submit your application on time, the university should respond by 31st March, but many reply a lot sooner. In some instances, particularly Medicine, decisions can be delayed due to the number of interviews being carried out.

Hopefully, you will receive conditional offers which specify a grade or points requirements. If you do not understand the requirements speak to your Careers Advisor.

UCAS Extra

If you do not receive any offers or wish to decline any you have had, you can go through UCAS Extra.

This starts in mid-February and lists all the courses that still have places available. If you decide to do this, speak to your Careers Advisor who will guide you through the process.

Making Decisions

You must wait until you have heard from all your choices before you reply to offers. Once all your offers are in, UCAS will contact you giving you a deadline to make a decision, usually this is the beginning of May.

Any university that has made you an offer may invite you to a visit day to help you make up your mind. You may already have visited the university and know where you wish to go.

You can only accept two offers, one FIRM and one INSURANCE, you must decline the others. The Insurance offer will be lower grades than the Firm.

Remember, you should only accept an Insurance place if you are happy to go there, you are committed to your firm choice should you achieve the grades or your insurance choice if you achieve the lower grades.

STUDENT FINANCE

Please be aware the fee status is determined on the basis of individual circumstances. The following information is subject to change. For up to date information please see www.sfengland.slc.co.uk.

For Applicants with ‘Home Fee Status’ ONLY

From 2018/19, full-time undergraduates applying to study in England could be entitled to two main types of support, a loan to cover their tuition fees, a loan to aid with living cost.

Only those studying for a first degree will be entitled to the support – students already holding an equivalent or higher-level qualification will not be eligible.

Tuition Fee Loans

These will be available to cover the cost of a course up to the £9,250 a year limit.

Most undergraduates study for three years, so their total tuition fee loan will be a maximum of £27,750 pounds.

However, the significant minority that study for longer – for example, those studying medicine may have to borrow more.

Living costs

Living costs (including accommodation, books, food, bills, travel) are covered by:

- Maintenance Loans – The maximum loan for living cost will be £5,000 a year for those studying outside London and £7,675 for those at university or college in London. For students living with their parents, the highest available loan will be £4,375. The size of the maintenance loan will depend on a student's family income.

Graduates will become eligible to repay their loans the April after they graduate. They will pay back 9% of any income earned over £25000. Repayments will continue until the loans are paid in full, but if repayments are still due after 30 years, the outstanding debt will be written off. The £25,000 repayment threshold will increase every year in line with general earnings across the country.

The Student Loans Company website www.studentloansrepayments.co.uk gives examples of levels of payment.

The total amounts of money students end up paying to the government – the major factor in calculating whether they will pay off their loan – will depend on the amount borrowed in fee and maintenance loans and the interest rate that the student face on the loan. Because of interest, and as with any other loan, all students will end up paying more than the original amount borrowed.

Bursaries and Scholarships

Students who are in receipt of a full or partial Maintenance Grant may be eligible to receive extra help from the university in the form of a BURSARY.

These vary considerable and it is important to find out what financial assistance is on offer. Also, ask if there are any conditions to the offer of a bursary or a scholarship, for example, some universities will stipulate you have to put them as a firm choice.

For Applicants classified as ‘International Students’

International students are subject to international fees. Individual applications can be made for specific scholarships and bursaries. Please see the Careers Advisor for details.

GAP YEAR

You can go through the application process and apply for 'deferred entry'.

It is important to check with the university to see if they accept deferred entries, not all courses do.

You are expected to refer to this in your personal statement and briefly outline your plans. It is alright to say you plan to go travelling or gain work experience.

Alternatively, you can apply after your results and can register with UCAS as a past student but see the Careers Advisor to discuss your options and what will be best for you.

Advantages and Disadvantages

You can:

- Travel and acquire key skills;
- Gain experience of a possible career;
- Become self-sufficient and confident, organising your own time and finances.

But...

- A break in academic work might affect your motivation.
- Some university departments don't like it.
- It can be expensive (travelling).
- There is a danger you may not do much and waste the year.

Information is available on taking a gap year in the Careers office.

PERSONAL STATEMENT EXAMPLES

Example 1

As a fluent speaker in English, Spanish and French with a Venezuelan-Irish heritage and a family background of political activism, my interest in Politics and International Relations is made evident by my involvement in the central Young Fine Gael party in Ireland. I have also accompanied my uncle to a protest rising up against Chavez in 2004. Seeing how a vast crowd of people felt so strongly about the political situation was a moment of significant realisation for me; it highlighted the issue of corruption and its effect on society.

A Level History has allowed me to begin studying aspects of Politics. Having studied British Imperialism, I found Lord Mountbatten's role in the 1947 partition of India particularly intriguing. He had a great impact on the situation which suggests Plutarch's theory that great men and their character influence history is tenable. Further to this, the revisionist's theory that Truman's hostility alienated Stalin and crystallised the Cold War, emphasises just how crucial the individual approach is. My interest in politics further developed after reading Machiavelli's *The Prince*. The focus on morality or lack of it is an aspect of his work which I found most interesting.

In studying A Level Mathematics I became captivated by the role it has played in both economic and political events, in particular John Von Neumann's game theory and how it can be applied to anything ranging from Politics to Biology. Marx's use of statistics in *Das Kapital* provided the Bolsheviks with a specific index, thus aiding them to stimulate a revolution. My study of maths has increased my interest in the question of whether governments and politicians are using social engineering to gain support on their individual policies.

I greatly enjoy studying A Level French as it allows me to debate upon issues such as globalisation, war and racism in detail. I found *Candide* by Voltaire a very pleasurable read and particularly appreciated his witty approach to the irony of religion during the 20th Century.

Living in the Middle East for some time, I have experienced autocracy and observed that it can appear to be, in cases like Oman, more harmonious than some democracies. Thus it is not necessarily the type of government, but the responsibility and virtue with which the leader takes their position, that determines the political stability of a country. Thenceforth arises the debate: can we classify a particular style of governing as the correct one or do different models suit different peoples? During my time here I have become President of The Law Society and joined MUN. This has allowed me to refine my oratory skills and taught me how to debate effectively upon International affairs in a diplomatic manner; skills which I will be applying in the coming 2013 MUN conference in Russia.

Aside from academia, I take pleasure in the fine arts. Having played and taught piano from a young age I greatly appreciate classical music, opera and literature; I thoroughly enjoyed reading Shakespeare's *Richard III* which complimented my AS Study of *The Wars of the Roses*. Dostoevsky's grapple on nihilism and utilitarianism in *Crime and Punishment* also proved exhilarating, skilfully attacking the radicals of his time and inciting self-reflection.

Having captained the Irish football team in 2009, I acquired many leadership skills and learned to motivate my team and boost morale despite difficult circumstances, in addition to working efficiently under pressure. I have completed work experience at Trowers and Hamlins law firm in Oman, and in The Cork Opera House; both of which made the importance of having a working relationship with clients and a good reputation evident. I am looking forward to furthering my understanding of International Relations and Politics in the future, and hope to attain a Masters in the subject whilst having a positive influence both academically and otherwise in my future university.

Example 2

My life has been a multicultural mix of societies, beliefs and languages, moving across continents and experiencing the wealth of diversity that this provides. Throughout my childhood, I have been exposed to the positive and negative aspects of a range of cultures, and it has instilled in me an empathetic approach to peoples' principles and a passion to work in International Relations. My desire to work in International Relations is further supported by the academic range of my studies; Business Studies has strengthened my interest in economics and politics, due to a wider understanding of international trade and globalisation.

My interest in current affairs has compelled me to read 'The Independent' and 'The Economist' regularly; recently, a Romney speech on US foreign policy particularly grasped my attention due to my Iranian heritage. I find it interesting to contrast Romney's perspective of Iran as an international pariah with Iran's view of itself as a revolutionary state, which is complex and is often undergirded by fear, because of Iran's nuclear weapon program. 'Propaganda is to democracy, what bludgeon is to a totalitarian state', is one of my favourite quotes by Noam Chomsky, the political critic and activist. Contradiction between propaganda and democracy where citizens are supposed to have an equal say in the decisions that affect their lives, and that propaganda presents only one side of an argument portrays an ideology that reflects most political problems in our world today.

My political and law-orientated interests have resulted in taking part in programs such as MUN and the Law Society, expanding my knowledge in international affairs. I have expressed my confidence as a speaker in many debates and mock hearings revealing my dedication to pursue political and social justice. Additionally, my standing for Head Girl elections emphasises my passion for leadership and an appetite to instigate change, which altogether defines the persona of a political leader. International Relations not only combines political and social understanding, it also requires a cultural and linguistic balance.

Throughout my life, language has been at the heart of everything I do, English being my second language and Farsi my mother tongue. Furthermore, having lived in Iran, England and Oman, it has been a significant feature of my life to absorb languages, as well as to admire and respect different cultures. My studies of French and German not only exemplify my passions for the culture of these languages, but also increase my knowledge of European history and political matters; topics ranging from immigration to racism, as well as cultural topics, which include studying influential French artists - such as Brel and Piaf - and German films - such as 'Goodbye Lenin' and 'Die Welle' - both portraying effects of WWII and Hitler's dictatorship respectively. I always strive to attain greater accuracy in my spoken and written French and German, always looking for le-mot-juste to express myself succinctly and idiomatically.

Aside from academics, I have represented my school in international football tournaments; I endeavor to work with others in order to reach a goal, on the pitch or off. I also study European history in my own time, intrigued by historical figures such as Stalin and Hitler, and the causes and effects of their actions throughout the Second World and Cold War. My variety of subjects is the foundation of my essential qualities. My extensive cultural background, social awareness and international communication, make me an ideal candidate for International Relations. I also express my desire to solve problems in my studies of Mathematics A-Level; as soon as I overcome a challenge, I feel extremely motivated. In turn, this reflects my enthusiasm and abilities to address political matters. I am confident that studying at your university will allow me to pursue my interest in International Relations and develop my command of languages.

WORLDWIDE APPLICATIONS

Students at BSM 6th Form also apply to top ranking universities all over the world including: Canada, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Netherlands and European Universities.

Careers Adviser, Mr. Khushalbhai, arranges for universities to visit BSM. Recent visits have included: University of British Columbia, University of Toronto, New York University Abu Dhabi, Bond University Australia and the Netherlands Center for Higher Education.

Our Careers library is well resourced with prospectuses and information on global universities and the Careers Advisor will support students wherever they decide to apply.

A selection of summer schools/courses

| |
|--|
| http://www.routesintolanguages.ac.uk/events/languages-and-law-summer-school-yr-12 |
| www.headstartcourses.org.uk |
| www.medicmentor.co.uk |
| www.future-foundations.co.uk |
| www.projects-abroad-groups.co.uk |
| www.premedprojects.co.uk |
| www.gapmedics.co.uk |
| www.summerboardingcourses.co.uk |
| www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/widening-participation/activities/summer-schools |
| info@investineducation.co.uk |
| www.exeter.ac.uk/international/preunisummerschool |
| www.medlink-uk.net |
| www.cambridgeimmerse.com |
| www.kefoundation.org |