

PERSONAL STATEMENT:

In my opinion, languages seem to encapsulate an entirely different way of life waiting to be discovered. As a child whilst on holiday abroad, I would always find myself trying to decipher the peculiar words that everyone could speak except me. This curiosity towards French and Spanish has driven me to want to master these languages.

Keen to prepare the ground for a degree, I have completed extended reading and analysis of novels from my course and beyond, set in varied periods of history such as 'Le Petit Prince' by Saint-Exupéry and de Maupassant's 'Boule de Suif'. When reading 'Le Petit Prince' I was fascinated by how the prince's innocence was portrayed; He admires the beauty of the stars and does not wonder what they are worth, in comparison to the mathematician, which reflects a child's excitement towards a pound coin, simply for its shiny surface. I equally engage with the media by analysing films such as e.g. 'Intouchables', directed by Toledano and Nakache as well as Fontaine's 'Coco Avant Chanel'. Following the 'Charlie Hebdo' massacre I became engrossed by how the French humour was portrayed through their illustrations compared to that of the English media. By watching documentaries, listening to Latin music and studying online lessons, my passion for the Spanish language has grown to the point where I am determined to study how the language varies in dialect and accent within each Hispanic country.

Studying Chemistry and Mathematics alongside French has improved my eye for accuracy concerning grammar and syntax. Furthermore I always find myself pursuing new challenges and opportunities to step out of any secure, familiar environment. Examples of this include signing up to the 9-week 'Camp America' programme and volunteering to educate poverty-stricken children in India. Nevertheless, I consider myself an extremely quick learner: I am also able to establish links between the two Latin-derived languages and so possess the linguistic potential to pick up the Spanish language 'ab initio'.

However, there are aspects of a language that cannot be learnt from a book. In March, I completed an exchange with a student in the Aquitaine region, during which I taught pupils from a local primary school about English culture. During the lessons, I came to understand how little the children knew about our country which fuelled my desire to explore various cultures and break down international barriers. Prior to the exchange, on my own initiative, I sought out a work-placement at the 'Ferme de Candeloup' Hotel, situated on the French-Spanish border. This proved an invaluable experience as conversations with the guests encouraged a flexible mindset to work around language barriers. I also use conversational French in everyday life. Employed as a Sales Assistant at 'Next' PLC, I frequently offer to translate for a customer. Yet outside of languages my other interests include musical instruments i.e. the flute to Grade 7 standard (all grades at distinction/ merit), and violin to Grade 3. I fully intend to become a full and active participant in several societies e.g. sports/ musical groups, and feel I would successfully be able to lead these organisations, having been a Sport, French, Maths and Charity Representative.

The opportunities that arise from studying French and Spanish are challenging, unique and unlimited, hence my immense passion for both these Romance languages. My ultimate aim is to pursue a career in 'language analysis' at 'GCHQ'. I find the Linguistics module in this course particularly intriguing and especially wish to learn more about sociolinguistics which studies the evolution of language. By studying French I particularly wish to focus on my understanding of local dialects/ accents and explore the linguistics behind the language, whilst also exploring the unique Hispanic cultures, including the contrast between Catalan and Spanish language.