

### **Personal Statement**

My fascination with the field of psychology came about almost unintentionally, as a result of a childhood fascination with magic tricks. While I started, as most do, with basic card tricks and the like, I later became especially captivated by mentalism. Specifically, the work of Derren Brown, who stood out to me for often revealing the secrets behind his tricks. And a common theme between them was of course, psychology. Although I continued to practice my tricks (once winning a Year 9 talent show with a display of mentalism), this proved the catalyst to my exploration down the psychological rabbit-hole.

I began exploring all areas of psychology, and found myself especially drawn to the social psychology of conflict (in part influenced by being a member of Army Cadets), as well as abnormal or clinical psychology. It was here that I began to learn about how much psychology can be used to help people, as well as entertain them. While my psychology A-Level included modules covering many areas (including cognitive and developmental), this only served to enforce my decision to pursue the clinical and/or social fields specifically. My improved understanding also made me more consciously aware of my own misconceptions around mental health. I found myself more acutely aware of the signs of mental illness, and more engaged in conversations on mental health. I soon hope to volunteer with organisations like Mind or the Samaritans to continue these efforts alongside my studies. I even took efforts to prepare for such roles during my time at sixth form, as a co-founder of our own mental-health club. There, we engaged in safe, candid conversations around mental health, as well as offering other students confidential information around mental health support services available to them.

This is also why I now have ambitions of becoming a clinical psychologist. I hope to gain the skills and knowledge necessary to help many individuals through their own mental health issues. In particular, I hope to specialise in trauma; in order to help those dealing with conditions like PTSD following troubling life events. For instance, refugee patients from war-torn countries are particularly at risk of such issues, and because of their previous culture they may be apprehensive about seeking help. I hope to do my part in changing that, and be there to help them.

As previously mentioned, I have also been involved in my local Army Cadets for many years. The sense of duty and discipline this has instilled in me has been highly valuable throughout my education, as it has inspired me to take every meaningful action and opportunity I can in achieving my goals. Not only this, but the camaraderie and physical improvement have been valuable in aiding my own mental health - which is why I believe I am well-suited to helping others in improving theirs, through whatever means work best for them.

I do still have the same child-like fascination with magic that was my catalyst into pursuing psychology, and regularly watch the professionals at work. And while I can still pull off a few tricks to amuse friends, I am no longer as active as I once was in light of realising that my true ambitions are in clinical psychology. However in my spare time I still channel my passion for performing with my local amateur dramatics society. Most recently, I played Horatio in an open-air production of Hamlet which received rave reviews from local critics.

Academically, I have regularly been amongst the highest achievers across secondary school and sixth form. During secondary school, I was identified as gifted and talented in Maths, Science, English, D&T, and IT. I furthermore achieved grades no lower than an A across all GCSEs. I continued this to A-Level, achieving A-grades across the board during my AS year, with the same predicted grade for my second year.

So while I no doubt have many varying interests and passions, I sincerely hope to dedicate my life to the field of clinical psychology.