

Personal Statement

My fascination with music began when I started playing the piano at the age of four and has only increased as my musical experience has expanded. The ability of music to communicate and influence individuals in such a profoundly personal way has led me to desire to learn more about it as an academic discipline. The skills that I have learnt through practising, performing, studying and working among other musicians have prepared me to progress further into the study of music.

Studying music as an undergraduate degree is something that greatly excites me due to the vast number of sub-disciplines it embraces. Over the last two years, I have been able to achieve Distinction in both my Bassoon Grade 8 exam and Piano ATCL Diploma, and I look forward to improving my performance skills whilst gaining the diverse learning experience that a music degree offers. My experiences of visiting several music taster days at universities over the last year have particularly piqued my interest in the history of music in Asia, especially Indonesian gamelan.

For the last five years, I have been able to study on Saturdays at the Centre for Young Musicians in London. These Saturdays have been useful not just for my instrumental development but also in exposing me to a wide range of musical styles and skills. For example, I have been able to take part as pianist in the Dance Band playing swing music, as well as bassoon playing in the Chamber Orchestra. I have also been able to perform solo regularly and was fortunate to be one of the soloists in a performance of the first movement of Poulenc's Double Piano Concerto in the Barbican this year. Over the last three years, I have also been part of the London Youth Wind Band which has given me valuable experience of working within a large group of musicians.

I have had several experiences in the world of music that have enhanced my musical awareness in different ways. I recently took part in a week-long music summer school at Goldsmiths where I was able to develop my interest in improvisation, composition and performance in a small-group setting. I regularly teach five students the piano which has helped to improve my communication skills and ability to organise time. This experience has been invaluable to my musical development as I have learnt to challenge the application of my musical knowledge in a more practical way through dealing with both children and adults. In addition, I play the piano at my church every week which has helped improve my leadership skills on the piano. My academic priority has always been music, but I also enjoy studying other subjects, especially my other AS Level subjects, Maths, Further Maths and History. Through these studies I have developed different skills that are transferable into the world of music. History has helped to improve my essay-writing and analysis skills whilst maths has helped me in understanding the harmonies and rhythms of music. Reading J.P. Harper-Scott's "An Introduction to Music Studies" particularly sparked my interest in the theory of music, especially its interesting reference to music's relationship with poetry as a language which communicates through its mathematical patterns.

Outside of music, I help to lead a youth group at my church where I often deliver talks and organise activities. I also wrote for an online magazine for three years spanning 2011-2015 which has helped in prompting me to think of original ideas and keep to deadlines, skills that have helped to increase my efficiency.

Not only has music shaped my own personal life, but it is moulding the world we live in today. Its distinctive ability to transform moods, focus minds and ultimately provide pleasure has inspired in me a determination to take my musical passion further. Studying music as a degree is a hugely exciting challenge, and I believe my range of musical experiences as a performer, teacher and student have prepared me for the demands of a university degree.