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Semester Exchange and Independent Semester Abroad

A great personal statement will set your application apart from other students competing for a place at preferred host institution. Here are some examples of what we consider to be excellent personal statements from previous students, to give you an idea of what we’re looking for.

Simon Fraser University, Canada

I discovered my passion for game design during my first year of study at Monash. I was drawn to Canada due to its involvement within the gaming industry, with many leading game developers based there. SFU’s School of Interactive Arts and Technology offers extensive game design subjects and has produced successful industry alumni. With strong connections to an industry I am invested in, I can think of no greater institution to hone my skills than SFU.

I was introduced to SFU through my VCE coordinator who attended the university while on exchange from Monash. His account of his time there inspired me to pursue an exchange period of my own at SFU. He illustrated a culture where I would feel comfortable and driven to perform to the best of my academic ability, reassuring me that SFU is the perfect place for me.

The Canadian landscape has always allured me since my Grandmother began telling me about her upbringing in BC. Studying there would heighten my enjoyment of the learning experience, ultimately motivating me academically.

Representing my secondary school as vice college captain, and volunteering in East Timor schools taught me the importance of demonstrating a positive and professional reflection of your home institution, and I believe I would make a valuable and committed ambassador of Monash at a widely international institution like SFU. I have forged friendships through Monash clubs and embraced all opportunities they have brought. I would love to immerse myself in the SFU student body with similar enthusiasm.

University of Bergen, Norway

Henry David Thoreau once said, “You cannot dream yourself into a character; you must hammer and forge yourself into one”. Having lived in the same city my entire life, I see going on exchange to the University of Bergen as the perfect way to ‘hammer and forge’ myself into the globally conscious and diverse thinker I want to be.

I have always been fond of the outdoors and the prospect of living in a city like Bergen where the surrounding mountains and fjords are easily accessible from the city excites me. Furthermore, the emphasis University of Bergen places on creating an international community, as evidenced by their ‘Excellent International Student Satisfaction Award’, appeals to my intention to use my exchange to expand my knowledge and understanding of different cultures from all around the world.

A significant motivation of my exchange will be to engage in my studies from an alternative perspective. The nature of a law degree is that it is often very specific to the jurisdiction in which you are studying. As such, something I have felt has been lacking in my law degree has been global perspectives. Therefore, I have a particular interest in studying the ‘Comparative Constitutional Law’ unit at University of Bergen as it goes beyond merely learning how a specific constitution operates to instead analyse the possibilities and limitations of modern constitutions.

Ultimately, I hope exchange will provide the ‘hammer’ that I will use to ‘forge’ myself into the person I want to be.

University of Toronto, Canada

For the last three years, attending the University of Toronto has been my goal. I know this institution’s international standing and contributions in the field of International Relations would undoubtedly develop me into the best student, individual, and worker possible. I admire all that the University has to offer to a student of International Relations, particularly through the Munk School of Global Affairs, which represents one of the most prestigious International Relations centres in the world.

Beyond the classroom, I am eager to attend events facilitated by this centre, where many of my female-politician role models such as Christy Clark speak. Undertaking a minor in French Studies, I respect the value the University of Toronto gives to bilingual students. This reflects both my personal values of multilingualism in education and will permit me to wholly embrace the Bachelor of Global Studies model. Conversation groups will foster my confidence as a French student.

For me, this institution also has personal significance. My grandfather grew up in Ontario, for him, an education from this institution is synonymous with success. Carrying on this missed familial dream is very important to me and would make me a very dedicated and grateful student throughout the semester if I were accepted. Finally, I have long wanted to undertake the dual graduate program offered at the University of Toronto and Sciences Po; Master of Global Affairs/Public Policy. I would thus relish the opportunity to experience this university in my undergraduate years.