

Assisting with the post mortem of a dairy cow during a placement at a Veterinary Centre was a fascinating experience. I wondered why the cow had died; if it had been infected by a pathogen or had an anatomical problem. Other questions followed, ranging from the herd's reaction, to the implications for health and ecology. I find such connections between different areas of biology intriguing. The huge diversity of biology and the constant interactions between living organisms and their environments have inspired me to study this subject beyond A-level.

Comment [OA1]: This is a really interesting opening – it shows not only practical work experience, but also the ability to make links between areas of the subject, and an interest in thinking laterally about the subject.

The natural world captivates me. Reading Peter Forbes' 'Dazzled and Deceived' highlighted the necessity and complexity of adaptation for survival. My visit to the isolated St. Kilda archipelago illustrated these concepts; Unique species, such as the primitive Soay Sheep, are well adapted to the extreme terrain and harsh conditions of St. Kilda with a small, agile bone structure and specialised coat.

Comment [OA2]: This statement captures the applicant's interest in the subject, enforcing building on what has already been said.

Animal behaviour interests me greatly. Shanor and Kanwal's 'Bats Sing Mice Giggle' uncovers ingenious behavioural strategies for an organism's survival and genetic transmission. Matt Ridley's 'Genome' links genetic inheritance to species' evolution and the roles of genetics and environment; I explored these roles whilst completing a report on the origin of genetic obesity and its impact on society. Science raises an increasing number of important moral issues; completing an essay concerning the point at which it is ethical to use euthanasia on a suffering animal underlined many of these issues which underpin modern science.

Comment [OA3]: Mentioning further critical reading is essential when you are applying for an academic degree. Building on what you have read with you own personal experience – and applying what you have learnt in a practical way – is an excellent way to show how you've developed your understanding.

Attending the Monmouth Science Initiative throughout year twelve enabled me to develop practical and theoretical skills beyond the A-Level syllabus and work with other students. The biology section of this initiative focused on DNA technologies such as electrophoresis providing me with an insight into the molecular level of life processes and reinforcing my desire to study biology.

Comment [OA4]: This is quite an original reference point – one that an interviewer might be interested in discussing. When using examples like this, it is worth doing thorough research so that you have

Comment [OA5]: This is good

Attending Cardiff Scientific Society lectures on topics such as forensic linguistics and plant conservation combined with employment at a dairy farm and kennels have enriched my knowledge of the application of biological principles in a wider context. During a placement at the National Assembly for Wales I witnessed meetings on the proposed badger cull and corresponded with Assembly members' constituents. The ecological implications of a badger cull, especially the role which badgers play in an ecosystem are fascinating. I am preparing an extended essay concerning badgers and bovine tuberculosis.

Comment [OA6]: This is really good experience – and contributes to the breadth and diversity of interest that the personal statement conveys. What would have made this even stronger is to have developed this further evidence of reading or extra-curricular work.

I have ten school prizes, an Academic Bursary and sixth form Music Scholarship. I am Music Prefect, have completed grade eight flute, play flute and piccolo in five orchestras and sing alto in three choirs. Acting as a mentor to younger pupils and as interpreter and translator for residents of my German twin town provide me with communication skills. I have gained further teamwork skills through organising and participating in local fundraising concerts for Ty Hafan Children's Hospice and being head altar server in my church. My job in a pharmacy requires a mature and reliable attitude and provides me with an insight into human health and pharmacology.

Comment [OA7]: Not all your work experience has to be directly related to the subject that you want to study: looking at a biological and environmental question like this from a political and economic perspective is very interesting and hugely relevant.

Comment [OA8]: Following up some interesting work experience or reading with a research project is a really good way of consolidating your knowledge.

I am a motivated, able and conscientious person. I believe my academic achievements and extracurricular activities provide me with transferable skills which can be applied and developed in future study. The possibility of reading for a biological science degree is extremely exciting.

Comment [OA9]: This personal statement has conveyed a real enthusiasm for the subject and has highlighted many diverse interests and specialisms. When finishing, try to look back on your personal statement and the themes you have developed and see whether you can link it back to anything. This will give it a very satisfying conclusion and a nice shape.