

## **Year 12**

### **Ask A Student Ambassador**

**Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

1. \* Student Ambassador01: Hi, my name is Valentina and I am currently in my second year studying International Relations. The theme for today's forum is Ask a Student Ambassador. For those of you who are new to the forums, you are welcome to ask me questions either directly related to the theme or about any other aspect of university life. Anything I can't answer I will refer on and someone from the Exeter Scholars team will get back to you with a response in the next few days. For those of you that have logged on before, welcome back!

Before we start, I just want to give you a quick overview of how the session itself works in case you've not used one before.

When you post a message, it will be sent to me to reply to and will show on your wall as awaiting reply. When I reply to your message it will then post to the public wall for you and everyone else to see. Until I have replied, no-one else will see your message. Bear with me, as when it gets busy it will take me a few moments to reply – but don't worry, you won't have been for

2. \* Student Ambassador01: Also answering your questions today is Tamara and they will introduce themselves to you in a moment.

3. Student Ambassador01 2: Hi, my name is Tamara and I am currently in my third year studying English Literature and French (BA). I'm looking forward to answering your questions on all things related to university life.

4. \* Siobhan Harper: Hi everyone. This is Siobhan from the Exeter Scholars programme. I'm here alongside Tamara and Valentina, and I'll be answering general questions about the Exeter Scholars programme, coronavirus updates, and anything else of that nature.

5. \* Siobhan Harper: IF YOU POST A QUESTION IN THE ONLINE FORUM, THEN YOUR PARTICIPATION WILL COUNT AND BE RECORDED – EVEN IF YOU DON'T GET AN ANSWER. WE WILL TRY TO ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS TONIGHT, BUT IF WE'RE NOT ABLE TO DO SO THEN AN ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION WILL BE EMAILED TO YOU AS SOON AS WE CAN.

6. abigail dougherty: What's on offer here that will provide opportunities for you to develop your employability skills? Are there any connections with local employers?

\* Student Ambassador01 2: Hi Abigail. Thank you for this question. The university does a lot to help with employability. For example, we have a dedicated 'Careerzone' which have a physical office on campus where you can go to get careers advice from advisors. You can also attend various sessions through this

service, including sessions on how to boost your CV, insight sessions held by employers, and others. They are running online sessions too at the moment. They also have an online job board where graduate employers advertise. Aside from this, tutors and professors are always happy to give advice on future prospects and careers. I hope this helps.

7. abigail dougherty: thank you! :)

\* Student Ambassador01 2: You're very welcome.

8. Spencer Shepherd: How much time do you spend in lectures on a weekly basis?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Spencer, this depends on the course that you want to do. I study International Relations and I have about 4 lectures a week (90min each) as well as 4 Tutorials (50min each). If you have chosen a course already, you can have a look at the different modules which tell you how much contact hours and independent studying you will have to do!

9. Claudia Baulf: how do we get reimbursed for the travel expenses now we can't see each other face to face?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Claudia. Thanks for your question! If you mean the Exeter Scholars travel expenses, then we are still processing and paying these for any sessions that you attended in person but have not yet claimed for. Please simply complete the travel claim form found here: [www.exeter.ac.uk/exeterscholars/currentparticipants/travelbursary/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/exeterscholars/currentparticipants/travelbursary/), and follow the instructions to return it to the Exeter Scholars team. I hope that this helps!

10. Saffronflint: How do you suggest we make the most of virtual open days?

\* Student Ambassador01 2: Hi Saffron. This is a great question. Virtual open days can be a bit weird at first, but there is still a lot you can make the most of. I suggest creating a list of questions you would like to ask at the open day before hand, so that you are able to get the information you need via live web-chat services (like this one) that many open days provide. If you can do a virtual tour of the university, that is also great - after all, you need to get a feel for the place you might be living in for the next 3+ years! Also, make sure to note down key information about courses including content and exam/coursework balance. Lastly, don't be afraid to contact the uni admissions teams after the open day if you have further questions.

11. Molly Rendle: Hi, When do you need to start looking for uni halls accommodation? And when do you apply to them?

\* Student Ambassador01 2: Hi Molly. This can vary slightly from university to university. Usually if you have confirmed an offer with a university, they will then keep you informed on when you need to apply for accommodation there, and not before your confirmation with them. Obviously if you go through clearing this will change. In terms of looking for halls, do your research as early as you can so that you

can compare prices and options. This way you will have a good idea of the different options available, and not be rushing to pick last minute. Often, you will have to choose a 'top 5' halls, and the university will allocate you one of these as best as they can.

12. Leah Dowrick: how did you pick your top five universities?

\* Student Ambassador01 2: Hi Leah. This really depends on you, but there are a few important things to consider. Obviously the course content of the university course you would like to study is really important, and you can find information about different courses on each university's website. Look at the content, the required reading, the weighting between coursework and exams, and which modules are optional and core. Then, think about location. Is this a city you would like to live in? How far is it from your home town? Can you picture yourself living here and being happy? Finally, is this a campus or a city university, and which would best suit you? These are all questions to consider. Make a table of pros and cons for each university you look at.

13. Casey Phillips: how much does student accommodation cost at Exeter

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Casey, this really depends on which accommodation you chose. On this website there are a few listed including the prices:  
[www.exeter.ac.uk/accommodation/students/prospectivestudents/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/accommodation/students/prospectivestudents/).

14. Madison Eathorne: in addition to the student loan, how much is required to get through university per annum?

\* Student Ambassador01 2: Hi Madison, that is a great question, and it really varies case by case. One of the first things to consider is how expensive accommodation will be at your chosen university, as this can vary a lot. The most expensive prices tend to be in and around London, with other areas being cheaper, and prices vary city to city. Generally speaking, living in University halls is more expensive than privately rented accommodation, so if you move into a private house with housemates after your first year, you will be spending less on accommodation. Other things to consider are how much you will need to spend per week/ month on food, transport (will you be able to walk everywhere? Will you need a public transport pass? A railcard? Will you be bringing a car?) , and your social life. These things can be quite personal and again vary from place to place, but are all things to consider. For example, I try and stick to a budget every week for food and socialising, which helps me a lot when it comes to managing my money.

15. Harry Dearing: What do you look for in a course to make sure it's the right one for you?

\* Student Ambassador01 2: Hi Harry, thank you for your question. When looking out for a course, you want to research your options well so that you can compare them all. I recommend looking carefully at the breakdown of course content. What exactly will you be studying, and is this something you are really interested in? You should also make note of which modules are core and which are optional, and how

much flexibility each course will give you to choose modules. Furthermore, have a look into whether the course is more coursework or exam based, and consider which you prefer (most courses are a mix, but the split will vary). Don't forget to consider the location of the university, as you want to make sure you will be happy living in that area for 3+ years. I found making a comparison table of courses I liked was very helpful.

16. Max Lomas: What are the main points to consider for first year with regards to Catered or self-catered?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Max, this really depends on your preferences. I really enjoyed the independence and flexibility of self-catered in my first year. However, it can also be great to live in catered halls because you spend a lot more time with your friends! Here you can find some more information: [www.exeter.ac.uk/accommodation/students/prospectivestudents/howtochoose/#a0](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/accommodation/students/prospectivestudents/howtochoose/#a0).

17. Chloe Somerwill: Hi, how did you find the transition between A - Levels and University?

\* Student Ambassador01 2: Hi Choe, this is a brilliant question. I think a lot of students are concerned about this at first! The biggest change for me from A levels to university was that I was solely studying the subjects (I study a combined course of English Literature and French) that I was really passionate about in a lot of depth, which meant I found all of my lectures and seminars really interesting. Of course, the learning style is different - it is more independent, and that can be a change, so you need to make sure you can organise your time well and manage priorities. The great things about being a first year though, is that you are in the same boat with plenty of other students at university for the first time, so speaking with peers is a great way to find out what is working for others, and takes the pressure off. There is also a lot of help for first year students at Exeter to help with the transition from college, such as essay-writing workshops, wellbeing workshops, and mentoring schemes with older students.

18. Millie Hollidge: Hi, what would you say was the key reason you chose to go to Exeter University?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Millie, thanks for your question! I chose Exeter because I loved the campus (it's very green) and the location of the campus, walking distance to town is about 10min! Besides my course I enjoyed the huge variety of societies that were offered. And I also really enjoy the location of Exeter in general, it's great to go to the beach or enjoy Devon/ Cornwall. Hope this helps, let me know if you have any further questions.

19. Lauren Lavill: Hi, if you choose to do an industry placement with your course, can the industry placement be abroad, or does it have to be in the UK?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Lauren. Thanks for your question! This entirely depends on the subject that you're interested in studying and whether they offer industrial placements abroad – but some subjects certainly do offer industrial experience outside of the UK. You can find out this information by searching for your course of interest here [www.exeter.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/) and then go to the 'Course

variants' tab. The answer should be there, but please do email [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) if you can't find the specific information you're after – we'll be happy to find this out for you. I hope that this helps!

20. Stacey Cole: At my school, they have asked us to think about personal statements. What are your top tips?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Stacey. Thanks for your question! Personal statements can be really tricky, but there is some guidance that makes them a bit easier! You can make yourself stand out by engaging with the subject you've chosen, and demonstrating clearly why you've chosen that subject and why you should be offered a place to study it. About 70–80% of your personal statement should be directly relevant to your subject. You can then bring in transferable skills that you have that show why you would be a good student in that subject. The Exeter Scholars programme offers a personal statement checking service, so you can send your personal statement to [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) and we will check it over for you. We can do this as many times as you like, so you can send us the roughest draft and we'll help you with it! I hope that this helps.

21. Jasmine Birch: How have you found continuing?

\* Student Ambassador01 2(private): Hi Jasmine, I don't quite understand your question - could you rephrase it please? Thank you!

22. Joseph Silk: Hi, I wanted to ask about virtual open day and whether you are able to get a real sense of the university from them and are there subject specific open days?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Joseph, thanks for the question! Yes, I do think with the material provided at the university you are able to get a sense of the university. There are many other students and staff that are happy to help you with any questions you might have about student finance, accommodation, student life, etc. So far, there are no subject specific open days but of course you can ask the questions you have about specific subjects on virtual days!

23. Verity Winn: How valuable would you say work experience is whilst studying?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Verity, I started working in my second year and for me it has been great to get some distraction from all the uni work. The uni offers many jobs for students and many students also work in town. SO I would definitely recommend it, however it is very important not to forget that university has priority in everything and that your job does not restrict you in studying. Hope this helps!

24. Ben Heyes: Hello, do you have any advice when it comes to writing a personal statement?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Ben. Thanks for your question! Personal statements can be really tricky, but there is some guidance that makes them a bit easier! You can make yourself stand out by engaging with the

subject you've chosen, and demonstrating clearly why you've chosen that subject and why you should be offered a place to study it. About 70–80% of your personal statement should be directly relevant to your subject. You can then bring in transferable skills that you have that show why you would be a good student in that subject. The Exeter Scholars programme offers a personal statement checking service, so you can send your personal statement to [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) and we will check it over for you. We can do this as many times as you like, so you can send us the roughest draft and we'll help you with it! I hope that this helps.

25. Ethan Bingham: In your personal statement can you talk about more than one subject?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Ethan. Thanks for your question! Yes, you can talk about more than one subject in your personal statement – the trickier part is to balance the personal statement so both subjects are represented fully, and also to consider whether all of the universities that you are applying to do both subjects. However, this is a common thing for students to deal with, and so universities are very used to seeing personal statements with more than one subject mentioned!

\* Siobhan Harper: You can make yourself stand out by engaging with the subjects you've chosen, and demonstrating clearly why you've chosen that subject and why you should be offered a place to study it. About 70–80% of your personal statement should be directly relevant to your subject, so if you're writing about two subjects then you should be looking at 35-40% of the total statement for each subject. You can then bring in transferable skills that you have that show why you would be a good student in those subjects. The Exeter Scholars programme offers a personal statement checking service, so you can send your personal statement to [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) and we will check it over for you. We can do this as many times as you like, so you can send us the roughest draft and we'll help you with it! I hope that this helps.

26. maggiedorey: Do you find working whilst studying achievable? Would you recommend having the extra financial support? Do you feel you are supported and encouraged to find a work placement both during and after uni?

\* Student Ambassador01 2: Hi Maggie, some great questions here. Many students do have a part time job while studying, and as long as you are able to manage your time effectively and remain organised, this is very feasible. The university generally recommends you do not take on more than around 15 hours a week of paid work alongside your studies, but anywhere under that mark is usually a manageable amount. Personally, I always worked during my university holidays rather than during term time, as summers and Easter can be quite long breaks, and I saved up the money for term, but I have friends that prefer to do the opposite and have a job while at University, and have their holidays free. In terms of finding a work placement, yes I do feel very supported. At Exeter we have a 'Careerzone', which is a service that helps with all things employability. They provide careers advice and workshops, insight days run by graduate employers, and also have a jobs board where student and graduate jobs are advertised.

27. Kyle Stevens: Any recommendations for filling in the UCAS personal statement?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Kyle. Thanks for your question! Personal statements can be really tricky, but there is some guidance that makes them a bit easier! You can make yourself stand out by engaging with the subject you've chosen, and demonstrating clearly why you've chosen that subject and why you should be offered a place to study it. About 70–80% of your personal statement should be directly relevant to your subject. You can then bring in transferable skills that you have that show why you would be a good student in that subject. The Exeter Scholars programme offers a personal statement checking service, so you can send your personal statement to [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) and we will check it over for you. We can do this as many times as you like, so you can send us the roughest draft and we'll help you with it! I hope that this helps.

28. Eleanor Tucker: What do you recommend most when writing a personal statement?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Eleanor. Thanks for your question! Personal statements can be really tricky, but there is some guidance that makes them a bit easier! You can make yourself stand out by engaging with the subject you've chosen, and demonstrating clearly why you've chosen that subject and why you should be offered a place to study it. About 70–80% of your personal statement should be directly relevant to your subject. You can then bring in transferable skills that you have that show why you would be a good student in that subject. The Exeter Scholars programme offers a personal statement checking service, so you can send your personal statement to [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) and we will check it over for you. We can do this as many times as you like, so you can send us the roughest draft and we'll help you with it! I hope that this helps.

29. Olivia Bates: I am supposed to be starting writing my personal statement but I don't even know what course I want to do let alone what career I want to do. Is there any advice you can give me that could help?

\* Student Ambassador01 2: Hi Olivia! Firstly, know that there are plenty of people in your shoes. I would start with thinking about which subjects you are most interested and passionate about, and consider whether studying these would be enjoyable, and lead on to careers that you think might be interesting. Nothing has to be concrete here - many students change their minds about careers and not everyone goes in to uni knowing exactly what they want to do - in fact few of us do! If you are really unsure, there is the option to take a gap year to think about your prospects a bit more. This can be a great opportunity to get some work experience which could give you a better idea of what you may want to study, or to volunteer in a sector you may find interesting. Lastly, there is lots of information on university course pages, so I recommend looking at university websites and having a read of what each course entails, so you can get a feel for the options out there.

30. Jasmine Birch: How have you found it to continue to learn during in the pandemic and do you feel you have had enough support from the university?

\* Student Ambassador01 2: Hi Jasmine, thank you for your question. Studying in the pandemic has brought up challenges, and a shift in learning style to more online resources, but generally the university have been hugely supportive and understanding. In terms of small group lessons, we have been doing those through Microsoft Teams, and this has proved quite effective for me as a languages student. With regards to research, although access to the physical library is currently restricted, this really is only the 'tip of the iceberg' - so many resources are online these days and we have access to those with our university library account, so research for assignments is still very feasible in this sense. Otherwise, I get the sense that at Exeter the university is constantly striving to better their provision of education during this time. They are very empathetic, giving us regular updates on the situation and asking for our feedback about our experiences of online learning.

31. Will Hooper: How do you balance your social life and studying?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Will, thanks for the questions! It is definitely possible to balance social life and studying. I found the most helpful to have specific time plans for my work. Also, for me it helps just to do my studying at uni and have my social life at home, this separation also helps that you can relax when you go home. Furthermore, the uni offers loads of different societies on campus, having different hobbies definitely helps to balance out the studying part too! Let me know if you have any more specific questions!

32. kezia mcgregor: what other types of extra-curricular activities are there that will count towards uni applications, like the scholars programme

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Kezia, I would recommend contacting the Uni on this, [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) as I am sure that they will be able to give you a much more detailed answer on this than I can!

33. Abdul Almerai: If we send our personal statement for you to check, are you able to put our personal statement throughout the plagiarism checker and send us the results?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Abdul. Thanks for your question! I'm afraid that we aren't able to do this since we do not have access to TurnItIn (the plagiarism checking software). However, if you're concerned about plagiarism then the best ways to avoid this are to acknowledge any quotes or ideas that you write in your personal statement, and try to write in your own words. The Exeter Scholars programme offers a personal statement checking service, so you can send your personal statement to [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) and we will check it over for you. We can do this as many times as you like, so you can send us the roughest draft and we'll help you with it! I hope that this helps.

34. Abdul Almerai: Are we able to have a copy of the criteria that the interviewers relate to during an interview? Like the things they look for and make note of during an interview.

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Abdul. Thanks for your question! You can certainly find this information. I recommend emailing Charlotte, the Medical School coordinator for Exeter Scholars, at [medicalschoolloutreach@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:medicalschoolloutreach@exeter.ac.uk). She should be able to provide this information for you. I hope that this helps!

35. Erin Humphris: Hi, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, schools and universities have gone virtual. Once restrictions have eased more and schools and universities are allowed to go back, is Exeter planning to remain virtual or are they planning to go back to 'pre-COVID-19' normal lectures, etc.?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Erin. Thanks for your question! As I'm sure you can appreciate, we don't currently know for certain what will happen in the next academic year. However, the University's plan is to have a blended approach of face-to-face lectures and teaching where possible, and online alternatives for those that require it. The University is also specifically planning for the changes that would need to be made for social distancing. They are following Public Health England and World Health Organisation advice carefully, and of course will ensure that any plans made are in line with the guidance. You can find more information about how the University is dealing with the covid-19 situation here: [www.exeter.ac.uk/coronavirus/prospectivestudents/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/coronavirus/prospectivestudents/). I hope that this helps!

36. Francis Motyczak: what do they mean when they say how are you suitable for the course (in relation to personal statements)

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Francis. Thanks for your question! 'How suitable you are for the course' is really trying to get at what specific skills and transferable skills you have that would make you a great student on that degree programme. So, for example, if you're applying for a Mathematics degree, you could talk about your experiences at school / college in building skills specific to Maths and building your interest in that area; you could then talk about your communication skills, time management skills, and organisational skills, that would demonstrate that you would be a diligent student who enjoys the subject and wants to study it in more detail.

\* Siobhan Harper: You can make yourself stand out by engaging with the subject you've chosen, and demonstrating clearly why you've chosen that subject and why you should be offered a place to study it. About 70–80% of your personal statement should be directly relevant to your subject. You can then bring in transferable skills that you have that show why you would be a good student in that subject. One piece of advice is to not worry about the length when you first write it – just get all your ideas down on the paper, and you can edit it down later to make sure it's the right length. The Exeter Scholars programme offers a personal statement checking service, so you can send your personal statement to [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) and we will check it over for you. We can do this as many times as you like, so you can send us the roughest draft and we'll help you with it! I hope that this helps.

37. Erin Humphris: Have you got any tips for writing a personal statement?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Erin. Thanks for your question! Personal statements can be really tricky, but there is some guidance that makes them a bit easier! You can make yourself stand out by engaging with the

subject you've chosen, and demonstrating clearly why you've chosen that subject and why you should be offered a place to study it. About 70–80% of your personal statement should be directly relevant to your subject. You can then bring in transferable skills that you have that show why you would be a good student in that subject. The Exeter Scholars programme offers a personal statement checking service, so you can send your personal statement to [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) and we will check it over for you. We can do this as many times as you like, so you can send us the roughest draft and we'll help you with it! I hope that this helps.

38. Max Lomas: What are the main points to consider for first year with regards to Catered or self-catered?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Max! This really depends on your preference. I myself really enjoyed the flexibility and independence of living in self-catered halls in first year. However, my friends in catered halls said that they loved spending so much time with their friends and not having to cook after a long uni day! This information might help you further:  
[www.exeter.ac.uk/accommodation/students/prospectivestudents/howtochoose/#a0](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/accommodation/students/prospectivestudents/howtochoose/#a0).

39. Bethan Sharples: Does Exeter offer time in another country as part of its courses?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Bethan. Thanks for your question! They do indeed – but not for all courses. The study or work abroad option is available for a lot of degree courses, so hopefully it would be offered for the subject that you're interested in! You can find out this information by searching for your course of interest here [www.exeter.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/) and then go to the 'Course variants' tab. The answer should be there, but please do email [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) if you can't find the specific information you're after – we'll be happy to find this out for you. I hope that this helps!

40. Harry Payton: Hi, will the interviews taking place later this year for Exeter University be virtual or will it be face to face, Thanks.

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Harry. Thanks for your question! I'm afraid that we simply don't know yet whether subject interviews will be taking place face-to-face or online; the University is currently planning a blended face-to-face and online approach to teaching from September, while of course following Public Health England and World Health Organisation advice carefully, with any plans made are in line with the guidance. I expect that the Medicine Admissions team are putting together plans for both eventualities, and this will be confirmed by the time interviews are offered. I'm sorry that I can't give you any more certainty at this stage, but I hope that this helps!

41. keera: was it easy settling into university life and living on your own?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Keera, thanks for the question, I can totally understand your worries, starting a new life in a new place can seem quite daunting. However, the good news is that it is very easy to settle into university as there are so many offers and societies to find friends and try new

hobbies. The campus is very diverse and it is easy to find like-minded people. You also get used to living on your own, and if not immediately, you still have your flatmates to share your thoughts with if you want! Let me know if you have any more questions!

42. Megan Whitefield: Hi. What tips can you give when attending a University interview. Thanks

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Megan. Thanks for your question! It's difficult to give interview tips in a written format like this – however, the Exeter Scholars programme runs an interview skills preparation day in November, and this is currently being planned to take place online. This event will look at general interview skills and tips, but also specifically Medicine interviews and their specific format. Information about this will be circulated via email in the new academic year, so I hope that you'll sign up if this is of interest! In the meantime, however, you can find advice on the UCAS website ([www.ucas.com/undergraduate/after-you-apply/undergraduate-interview-invitations](http://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/after-you-apply/undergraduate-interview-invitations)) and the Complete University Guide ([www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/student-advice/applying-to-uni/university-interviews](http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/student-advice/applying-to-uni/university-interviews)). I hope that this helps!

43. Coby Williams: What are lessons like during the pandemic?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Coby, the lessons during pandemic all happened online via Zoom or online power point presentations. As a student you get used to studying alone and without the help of a supervisor so it was relatively easy to change to online courses for me. Hope this helps, let me know if you have any further questions!

44. Millie Hollidge: How do I grab universities' attention with my personal statement?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Millie. Thanks for your question! Personal statements can be really tricky, but there is some guidance that makes them a bit easier! You can make yourself stand out by engaging with the subject you've chosen, and demonstrating clearly why you've chosen that subject and why you should be offered a place to study it. About 70–80% of your personal statement should be directly relevant to your subject. You can then bring in transferable skills that you have that show why you would be a good student in that subject. The Exeter Scholars programme offers a personal statement checking service, so you can send your personal statement to [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) and we will check it over for you. We can do this as many times as you like, so you can send us the roughest draft and we'll help you with it! I hope that this helps.

45. Oliver Latto: Hi. Would you recommend going catered for in the first year so you are more able to focus on your academic studies?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Oliver, this really depends on your preferences! I myself really enjoyed the flexibility and independence of self-catered accommodation in my first year. However, a few of my friends in catered halls said that they loved spending the meals with their friends and not having to cook after a long day at university. Here is some information on how to choose between catered and self-

catered: [www.exeter.ac.uk/accommodation/students/prospectivestudents/howtochoose/#a0](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/accommodation/students/prospectivestudents/howtochoose/#a0). Let me know if you have any more questions!

46. Will Walsh: Hi, Do you have any advice about the transition between A-levels to university?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Will, my personal advice is to relax in your transition to university! If you want you can start a bit of reading for your subject or do some research on what the uni offers for extra-curricular activities and what else you can do in town/ around campus! Hope this helps!

47. Madison Eathorne: how long would you recommend a personal statement to be?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Madison. Thanks for your question! A UCAS personal statement can be up to 4000 characters long, which is roughly equivalent to one side of typed A4 paper. My advice for when you're starting to write it is to not worry about the length when you first write it – just get all your ideas down on the paper! You can then edit it down later, and this will help you to include the most important parts and delete the less important bits. The Exeter Scholars programme offers a personal statement checking service, so you can send your personal statement to [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) and we will check it over for you. We can do this as many times as you like, so you can send us the roughest draft and we'll help you with it! I hope that this helps.

48. Dragos Turdeanu: Hello! What are the measures University of Exeter is going to put in place from the new academic year due to Covid-19?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Dragos. Thanks for your question! As I'm sure you can appreciate, we don't currently know for certain what will happen in the next academic year. However, the University's plan is to have a blended approach of face-to-face lectures and teaching where possible, and online alternatives for those that require it. The University is also specifically planning for the changes that would need to be made for social distancing. They are following Public Health England and World Health Organisation advice carefully, and of course will ensure that any plans made are in line with the guidance. You can find more information about how the University is dealing with the covid-19 situation here: [www.exeter.ac.uk/coronavirus/prospectivestudents/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/coronavirus/prospectivestudents/). I hope that this helps!

49. katherine raynor: was it hard to find accommodation after first year?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Katherine! No, for me it wasn't at all. Because there is such a huge demand for housing there is also a huge supply. If you are struggling the university is more than happy to assist you with finding accommodation! Here you can find some more information: [www.exeter.ac.uk/accommodation/privatehousing/afterfirstyear/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/accommodation/privatehousing/afterfirstyear/).

50. Adam.sg: Hey, How do you select applicants and what aspects do you look for in a personal statement and what would be your tips on writing a really outstanding personal statement?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Adam. Thanks for your question! The applicant selection is done by the University's Admissions team, and interviewers in subjects that have interviews (e.g. Medicine). Personal statements can be really tricky, but there is some guidance that makes them a bit easier! You can make yourself stand out by engaging with the subject you've chosen, and demonstrating clearly why you've chosen that subject and why you should be offered a place to study it. About 70–80% of your personal statement should be directly relevant to your subject. You can then bring in transferable skills that you have that show why you would be a good student in that subject. The Exeter Scholars programme offers a personal statement checking service, so you can send your personal statement to [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) and we will check it over for you. We can do this as many times as you like, so you can send us the roughest draft and we'll help you with it! I hope that this helps.

51. Laura James: Hi, do you find time to take part in extra-curricular activities such as sports teams easily around your lectures?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Laura! Yes, I personally do. As Exeter has a huge variety of different sports you can easily balance lectures and your hobbies. The training times for these times are also mainly outside of lecture times! Hope this helps, let me know if you have any further questions!

52. Rosie Zapple-Davies: Hi, what is the most important thing to focus on when writing your personal statement?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Rosie. Thanks for your question! Personal statements can be really tricky, but there is some guidance that makes them a bit easier! You can make yourself stand out by engaging with the subject you've chosen, and demonstrating clearly why you've chosen that subject and why you should be offered a place to study it. About 70–80% of your personal statement should be directly relevant to your subject. You can then bring in transferable skills that you have that show why you would be a good student in that subject. The Exeter Scholars programme offers a personal statement checking service, so you can send your personal statement to [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) and we will check it over for you. We can do this as many times as you like, so you can send us the roughest draft and we'll help you with it! I hope that this helps.

53. Freya: Can I defer entry for Medicine if I get in? Thanks :)

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Freya. Thanks for your question! I'm afraid I'm not certain about this. The best thing for you to do is to email Charlotte, the Medical School coordinator for Exeter Scholars, at [medicalschoolloutreach@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:medicalschoolloutreach@exeter.ac.uk), and she will be able to inform you about this. I hope that this helps!

54. Ryan Fell: what are the main points universities look for in personal statements?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Ryan. Thanks for your question! Personal statements can be really tricky, but there is some guidance that makes them a bit easier! You can make yourself stand out by engaging with the

subject you've chosen, and demonstrating clearly why you've chosen that subject and why you should be offered a place to study it. About 70–80% of your personal statement should be directly relevant to your subject. You can then bring in transferable skills that you have that show why you would be a good student in that subject. The Exeter Scholars programme offers a personal statement checking service, so you can send your personal statement to [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) and we will check it over for you. We can do this as many times as you like, so you can send us the roughest draft and we'll help you with it! I hope that this helps.

55. maggiedorey 2: What would be one main piece of advice for starting uni in terms of working and accommodation and finance?

\* Student Ambassador01 2: Hi Maggie. My main piece of advice would be to learn how to budget your money. Think about the sources of income you will be getting, and make a list of things you will be spending the money on, then try to work out roughly how you have per month for different aspects of life (accommodation/food/ travel/social life/purchases etc.). Making an excel table could be helpful, and there are online templates for this. Keep tabs on what you spend so that you are able to stick to your budget and feel in control of your finances.

56. Jasmine Birch: Do you have any tips or advice for taking the UK cat test?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Jasmine. Thanks for your question! I'm afraid I don't have any advice for the UCAT, but I would recommend emailing Charlotte, the Medical School coordinator for Exeter Scholars, at [medicalschoolloutreach@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:medicalschoolloutreach@exeter.ac.uk). I'm sure she'd be able to point you in the right direction for advice and resources. I hope that this helps!

57. Ahmed Hasan: Hello there, thank you to the student ambassadors and Mrs Harper for the time and effort. I am currently writing up my personal statement and unsure of how to structure my personal statement. What balance do you advise between academic and extracurricular in a personal statement? Thank you very much.

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Ahmed. Thanks for your question! Personal statements can be really tricky, but there is some guidance that makes them a bit easier! You can make yourself stand out by engaging with the subject you've chosen, and demonstrating clearly why you've chosen that subject and why you should be offered a place to study it. About 70–80% of your personal statement should be directly relevant to your subject. You can then bring in transferable skills that you have that show why you would be a good student in that subject. One piece of advice is to not worry about the length when you first write it – just get all your ideas down on the paper, and you can edit it down later to make sure it's the right length. The Exeter Scholars programme offers a personal statement checking service, so you can send your personal statement to [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) and we will check it over for you. We can do this as many times as you like, so you can send us the roughest draft and we'll help you with it! I hope that this helps.

58. Jamie Barnes: what should you include in a personal statement?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Jamie. Thanks for your question! Personal statements can be really tricky, but there is some guidance that makes them a bit easier! You can make yourself stand out by engaging with the subject you've chosen, and demonstrating clearly why you've chosen that subject and why you should be offered a place to study it. About 70–80% of your personal statement should be directly relevant to your subject. You can then bring in transferable skills that you have that show why you would be a good student in that subject. The Exeter Scholars programme offers a personal statement checking service, so you can send your personal statement to [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) and we will check it over for you. We can do this as many times as you like, so you can send us the roughest draft and we'll help you with it! I hope that this helps.

59. Lucy Watton: Hi, why did you choose a campus uni over a city one?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Lucy! I personally preferred campus university because walking distance between lectures is very very short. Also, you have everything in one place: uni, friends, hobbies, cafés, a supermarket, the list goes on and on! I found this to be very practical, not having to take a bus in-between lectures and seeing your friends in one place makes uni life much more easier! Let me know if you have any further questions

60. Lucy Lake: On average, how often would you say people go back home from uni. I am excited about going but I also get quite homesick. Do you have any further advice on how to deal with this?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Lucy, this is quite difficult to say. In my experience, everyone finds something at uni to settle in easier. Be it friends, a really cool flat, cool team mates, their subject or a new hobby! So this would also be what I would recommend to you: Even though it does seem quite daunting at first sight to move to a new place, definitely find something that you love. For me that was starting the guitar and joining a sports team where I found a lot of friends! I hope this helps, please let me know if you have any further questions.

61. Ella May: Hi, have you taken a gap year/would you recommend taking one? Thanks

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Ella! This really depends on your preference. I myself did a gap year and it was the best time ever. I enjoyed the freedom and independence while working and travelling. However, I have a few friends that started uni right away and they enjoyed to dive into their study field straight away after school!

62. Louis McCracken: what is most important to look for in a university?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Louis, I would definitely say besides the details and modules offered by your course (also grade requirements) you can take into consideration if it is a campus/ city uni, the location of the university and access to transport, the extracurricular offers of the university (e.g. if they

offer your favourite hobbies) and also look at pictures from the campus and what the city has to offer. Hope this helps!

63. Max Walker: how important is your personal statement from the university's point of view?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Max. Thanks for your question! This does depend somewhat on which degree course you apply for. Largely, the most important factors are your grades, but the personal statement is read and considered alongside the rest of your application. As I'm sure you can imagine, making offers and allocating places on courses is an extremely complex business, and I'm afraid I don't know all of the details behind it! But it's always better to be safe than sorry, so I definitely recommend putting effort into your personal statement – after all, it's the only place on your UCAS application that you can really talk about you, your interest in the subject, and why you would be a great student for that subject.

\* Siobhan Harper: You can make yourself stand out by engaging with the subject you've chosen, and demonstrating clearly why you've chosen that subject and why you should be offered a place to study it. About 70–80% of your personal statement should be directly relevant to your subject. You can then bring in transferable skills that you have that show why you would be a good student in that subject. One piece of advice is to not worry about the length when you first write it – just get all your ideas down on the paper, and you can edit it down later to make sure it's the right length. The Exeter Scholars programme offers a personal statement checking service, so you can send your personal statement to [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) and we will check it over for you. We can do this as many times as you like, so you can send us the roughest draft and we'll help you with it! I hope that this helps.

64. Kate Matthew: Hi :) I am looking at English with Study in North America at Exeter, which has the second year abroad integrated into the three year course. After seeing this I have been looking at other courses that offer a year abroad, do you think it is better to do a four year course with a year abroad of a three year course with a year abroad integrated into it?

\* Student Ambassador01 2: Hi Kate. I have just come back from my year abroad in France (I was in Aix en Provence, in the South) and it was the most amazing experience. I cannot recommend it enough! The benefits of a three year course are that you get the opportunity to travel whilst still completing your degree in 3 years, which may save you some money, but this will depend on the course, and it will obviously save you time. However, a downside may be that you find that once you have settled in in your first year of university, you are moving away again quite quickly for second year, which is unsettling for some, but just a new adventure for others! My course is 4 years long (third year abroad) and this has been the perfect pace for me. I think I would have found it stressful to organise my year abroad whilst in first year. But it really depends on you and your preferences.

65. Hannah Ward: How long should a personal statement be?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Hannah. Thanks for your question! A UCAS personal statement can be up to 4000 characters long, which is roughly equivalent to one side of typed A4 paper. My advice for when you're starting to write it is to not worry about the length when you first write it – just get all your ideas down

on the paper! You can then edit it down later, and this will help you to include the most important parts and delete the less important bits. The Exeter Scholars programme offers a personal statement checking service, so you can send your personal statement to [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) and we will check it over for you. We can do this as many times as you like, so you can send us the roughest draft and we'll help you with it! I hope that this helps.

66. Riya Johnson: Will Exeter be having a virtual open day?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Riya. Thanks for your question! The University of Exeter is indeed hosting Online Open Days. You can find more information, including dates, and book a place here: [www.exeter.ac.uk/undergraduate/visit/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/undergraduate/visit/). I hope that this helps!

67. Amber Rogers: Is there much support when looking for second year accommodation?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Amber, yes there is support from the university. Have a look here: [www.exeter.ac.uk/accommodation/privatehousing/afterfirstyear/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/accommodation/privatehousing/afterfirstyear/).

68. Hovin Assad: How much free time would you estimate is available during the years of study?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Hovin, this really depends on how much time you invest in your studies! I personally try to work Monday-Saturday and take Sunday off, but this is also the beautiful thing about university life: you can decide yourself how your schedule should look like and how much free time you need!

69. Kate Matthew: I really love theatre/music/dance but I am not thinking of doing this for a degree, but instead have it on the side with societies etc. Is there a good balance within societies of people studying that subject and those who are just doing that society as a hobby?

\* Student Ambassador01 2: Hi Kate, this is a great question! One thing that I love about University is the huge range of societies out there. At Exeter we have numerous theatre and musical theatre societies, as well as different dance groups and bands/ orchestras. You would have a huge range to choose from. Try to ask about the different options available at different universities at each open day/ virtual open day that you go to. Generally you do not have to be studying that subject to join that society, I could join Italian society as an English Literature student, for example. The main thing is having an interest in the society!

70. JayC: Other than distance, subject, grade requirements and quality of education, what else should we consider when deciding?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi! Yes, I would definitely also look at extracurricular activities as well as the campus! E.g. is it a campus/ city university, where is the location of the university with regards to the city and what does the campus have to offer.

71. Lucy Watton: How employable is biosciences compared to other science degrees?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Lucy. Thanks for your question! This is a very difficult question to answer because it's hard to measure employability – and it also depends what career you're looking to go into! You can find employability information on every subject page of the University's online prospectus (e.g. [www.exeter.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/biosciences/biochem/#your-future](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/biosciences/biochem/#your-future)), which highlights what recent graduates are now doing, suggested career paths, and some data from surveys of this information. For a lot of employers, simply having a degree in any subject is great, as this demonstrates transferable skills like time management, organisation, communication skills, research skills, etc. I hope that this helps!

72. Adam.sg: Hey, following from my last question is there an advantage to submitting my application early and does it look better to hand it in earlier?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Adam. Thanks for your question! There is no advantage to getting your application in early, except your own peace of mind! All universities do their offer-making in different ways – so some will make offers as applications come in, and some will wait until all applications have been received and then make offers all in one go. The important thing, of course, is to get it in before the UCAS deadline (15th October for Medicine courses and any degrees at Oxford and Cambridge, and 15th January for \*almost\* everything else)! I hope that this helps.

73. Lalita W: What would you say the best thing about Exeter University is? What made you choose Exeter over other universities?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Lalita! Besides my subject and the quality of education, I personally really enjoyed the beauty of the campus as well as the huge variety of extracurricular activities! Also, Exeter has a great location to visit the beach or explore Devon/ Cornwall. I hope this helps, please let me know if you have any further questions!

74. Reshma Thapa Magar: Hi, what types of revision do you suggest for UCAS test? Can you recommend any websites which are helpful?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Reshma. Thanks for your question! By UCAS test, do you mean the UCAT test, which is for prospective Medicine students? If so, then I recommend emailing Charlotte, the Medical

School coordinator for Exeter Scholars, at [medicalschoolloutreach@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:medicalschoolloutreach@exeter.ac.uk) with your question. I'm sure that she'll be able to help with some advice and resources. I hope that this helps!

75. Will Walsh: Do you have any advice on the transition from A-levels to university

\* Student Ambassador01 2: Hi Will, Thank you for your question. One big change from A Levels to University is the level of independent research required at Uni. My biggest tip for this would be to stay organised and to manage your time well so that you can effectively manage your priorities. Buying a planner that you can write down assignment due dates, dates of exams and any extra-curricular activities is a great way to stay on top of all this. Generally there is a lot of help for first year students with things like essay writing, time management and generally settling in to university in first year through campus services and wellbeing services - these are great things to look into to help feel supported in the first weeks!

76. Louis Buschtoens: Do you have any tips for adjusting to university life when it starts?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Louis! Yes, I personally found it easy to adjust to university by joining societies and starting new hobbies! This definitely helps you to find a lot of friends. On the academic side, there are different workshops for study skills and time management which I found really helpful for my subject and exam preparation! I hope this helps, please let me know if you have any further question!

77. Ben Spencer: Will it be tougher to be offered a place next year if lots of people defer from this year?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Ben. Thanks for your question! I'm afraid we simply don't know about this yet, as everything about deferrals and 2021 entry is still so up in the air and no firm decisions have been made. However, any updates will be listed on the University of Exeter coronavirus information pages ([www.exeter.ac.uk/coronavirus/prospectivestudents/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/coronavirus/prospectivestudents/)). Please rest assured that the University – and all universities – are aware of how this situation may affect students in your year group and position, and they are working to find a solution that is fair to everyone. I hope this is reassuring, but I'm sorry that I can't give any more concrete information!

78. Laura Mo: Hi, when you are in self-catered accommodation, do you find that you eat out more or cook more

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Laura, I was in self-catered accommodation and I maybe ate out 2-3 times a month. So, I was definitely cooking a lot which I really enjoyed! Hope this helps, please let me know if you have any further questions!

79. Laura Mo: Will study abroad courses go ahead as usual and can you opt of the year away if it doesn't suit you

\* Student Ambassador01 2: Hi Laura, thank you for your question. The University of Exeter is currently communicating with its international partners to confirm how study abroad courses will function in the coming year. For most courses you can opt out of a study abroad year, unless this is a mandatory part of the course (such as for degrees in modern languages. You can find more information here [www.exeter.ac.uk/coronavirus/placements/studyingabroad/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/coronavirus/placements/studyingabroad/) or by emailing the Exeter Scholars team directly on [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk). I hope that this helps!

80. Francis Motyczak: how would you demonstrate that you are suitable for a course in a personal statement?

\* Student Ambassador01 2: Hi Francis, thank you for your question. One of the biggest things that universities will look for is that you have a passion for the course you are applying for, so try to make this shine through in your personal statement. After all, you want to be applying for a course you are going to enjoy! It is also important to demonstrate how you engage with topics related to your course outside of college hours. For example, if you are applying for an English Literature degree, you could mention the authors or historical periods you find most fascinating and why. Furthermore, showing that you are a well-rounded person is also valuable. For example, if you have worked or volunteered outside of college, do include this in your personal statement too.

81. Ethan Bingham: Why did you choose Exeter University?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Ethan, besides my subject and the quality of education, I personally chose Exeter because of the campus. It has a perfect location and has loads to offer (cafés, restaurants, sports facilities, etc.). Also, I really enjoyed the location of Exeter itself to go to the beach or explore Devon and Cornwall! Lastly, I'd say because of the huge variety of societies and extracurricular activities. This really helped me settle into the community. Hope this helps, please let me know if you have any further questions!

82. JayC: Are there going to be any in person open days in the near future?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Jay. Thanks for your question! All of the Open Days for this application cycle have now moved online. You can find more information, including dates, and book a place here: [www.exeter.ac.uk/undergraduate/visit/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/undergraduate/visit/). I'm afraid that this means the earliest in-person Open Day would be May 2021 – assuming that they are able to go ahead at that stage, of course. We also run Offer-Holder Visit Days, which are similar to Open Days but for students who are holding offers from the University, which you would be invited to if you received an offer from Exeter. These take place in February and March 2021, and similarly we don't yet know whether these will be able to run in-person. I'm sorry that I can't give you a more definite answer, but I hope that this is useful information.

83. charlie clarke: how have you found making friends at uni?

\* Student Ambassador01: hi Charlie, I personally have found it very easy to find friends at uni because there is such a huge variety of extracurricular activities. Therefore, it is much easier to find like-minded people as you have all interests covered! Let me know if you have any further questions!

84. JayC: If a student has a need to stay at home while at uni but lives far away, is there an opportunity for subsidised travel.

\* Student Ambassador01 2: Hi Jay, thank you for this question. I would advise that you contact the Exeter Scholars team directly for an answer on their email: [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk).

85. Lowena Dunstan: I am considering nursing and with the term time being longer do you know if this affects the accommodation available?

\* Student Ambassador01 2: Hi Lowena, thank you for this question. Usually university halls accommodation can be flexible regarding term dates, offering earlier move-in dates, for example. The exact dates that you can stay will depend from university to university. For more information please contact the Exeter Scholars team that can provide a more detailed answer: [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk).

86. Rachael Trethewey: Would you recommend getting an en-suite room or getting a shared bathroom?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Rachael, this really depends on your preference. I personally enjoyed having my own bathroom. But sharing one can also have a lot of benefits: you don't have to clean as often and most of the times it is much cheaper!

87. Naomi Jenkins: Hi, are there university newspapers/magazines which give students the opportunity to write their own articles? Also do you know if this is the case for all universities – I know that Oxford has something like this and I was wondering if Exeter does too.

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Naomi, yes there are and you can write your own articles! Here is the main newspaper of the uni: <https://exepose.com>. But there are many more! However, I am not sure that every uni has this.

88. JayC: Are there any courses that hold aptitude tests or entrance exams in the admission process?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Jay. Thanks for your question! The subjects that interview at the University of Exeter are: Medicine, Medical Imaging, and Drama (auditions). Physics also had an interview process up until this year. Medicine also requires prospective students to sit a test called the UCAT (University Clinical Aptitude Test), and there is a related test for some Law degree called the LNAT (Law National

Aptitude Test) (although I don't believe this is required at Exeter). If you have any particular questions about these tests, please do email [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) and I'll find the answers for you. I hope that this helps!

89. Freya Rose: When is a good time to start writing your personal statement?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Freya. Thanks for your question! You can start as early as you like! If you've not had a deadline set by your school / college, then this might depend on what degree you want to study. If you want to apply to Medicine or any degree at the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge, then you will need to have your full UCAS application completed by 15th October – so you'll want your personal statement completed in good time before that! If not, then your UCAS application will need to be completed by 15th January, so this gives you more time. I would definitely recommend having your personal statement completed at least one month before you submit your application, just because you want to make sure that you're completely happy with it / have time to make changes if necessary.

\* Siobhan Harper: The Exeter Scholars programme offers a personal statement checking service, so you can send your personal statement to [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) and we will check it over for you. We can do this as many times as you like, so you can send us the roughest draft and we'll help you with it! I hope that this helps.

90. Lalita W: would you recommend becoming a student ambassador?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Lalita, personally, yes definitely! I have worked as a student ambassador my whole second year (I wish I started in first year) and it has been great so far. First of all, it is a very flexible job, this means that you can easily balance it with your studies and social life. Secondly, it is well paid. Thirdly, all of the document stuff you need to apply goes through the uni, which in my opinion makes the application process much easier than for other jobs. I would definitely recommend it!

91. Lisa Skone: Is there anything I should avoid when writing a personal statement?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Lisa. Thanks for your question! Your personal statement can only be 4000 characters (roughly one page of A4), so the most important thing to avoid is unnecessary information. For example, you don't need to mention your predicted grades or your sixth form subjects, because this information is already included elsewhere in your UCAS application. However, it's actually easier to talk about what you should include! You can make yourself stand out by engaging with the subject you've chosen, and demonstrating clearly why you've chosen that subject and why you should be offered a place to study it. About 70–80% of your personal statement should be directly relevant to your subject. You can then bring in transferable skills that you have that show why you would be a good student in that subject. One piece of advice is to not worry about the length when you first write it – just get all your ideas down on the paper, and you can edit it down later to make sure it's the right length.

\* Siobhan Harper: The Exeter Scholars programme offers a personal statement checking service, so you can send your personal statement to [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) and we will check it over for you. We

can do this as many times as you like, so you can send us the roughest draft and we'll help you with it! I hope that this helps.

92. Toby O'Donoghue: How would you go about writing a person statement for a combined course while still showing enough passion in both subjects?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Toby. Thanks for your question! This is a balancing act for a personal statement – the tricky part is to balance the personal statement so both subjects are represented fully, and also to consider whether all of the universities that you are applying to do both subjects. However, this is a common thing for students to deal with, and so universities are very used to seeing personal statements with more than one subject mentioned! You can make yourself stand out by engaging with the subjects you've chosen, and demonstrating clearly why you've chosen that subject and why you should be offered a place to study it. About 70–80% of your personal statement should be directly relevant to your subject, so if you're writing about two subjects then you should be looking at 35-40% of the total statement for each subject. You can then bring in transferable skills that you have that show why you would be a good student in those subjects.

\* Siobhan Harper: The Exeter Scholars programme offers a personal statement checking service, so you can send your personal statement to [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) and we will check it over for you. We can do this as many times as you like, so you can send us the roughest draft and we'll help you with it! I hope that this helps.

93. Joshua chivers: What's the difference between a primary and a secondary campus?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Joshua, I am not completely sure what you mean. I would assume that your course (the lectures and seminars) are based on Streatham campus and St Luke's campus. This means that you will have some contact hours on each of these campus. However, the distance between both is just about 20min and there are loads of busses! I hope this answers your question, please let me know if I can be of any further assistance!

94. JayC: If your course has a professional work placement, is it provided directly by the uni or do the enrolling students have to seek them out?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi! Generally the uni does offer support in finding a placement but you can also find your own if you wish. Here you can find more information about work placements: [www.exeter.ac.uk/careers/internships/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/careers/internships/). If you have any more questions please feel free to answer the uni at [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk).

95. Nye Herron: What kind of support are you offered for mental health while studying at Exeter?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Nye, I found that there is a lot of support for mental health while at university. You can find more information here: [www.exeter.ac.uk/wellbeing/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/wellbeing/). Hope this helps, please let me know if you have any further specific questions!

96. Rosie Zapple-Davies: Hi, what are the advantages of studying abroad for one year during your course?  
Thanks

\* Student Ambassador01 2: Hi Rosie. I have recently come back from my year abroad in France (although I did a work placement), and it was the most amazing experience - I cannot recommend it enough! Studying abroad is such a great initiative for a lot of reasons. Firstly, it allows you to live in a different environment, to travel and become a more open minded person. Secondly, it is a very personally rewarding experience, allowing you to increase your independence and confidence. Also, students that have studied or worked abroad for a year hone many employability skills, like communication, interpersonal skills, and language skills, which will make you stand out to employers. Lastly, it is a truly unforgettable experience!

97. darcey greenland: with the effects of covid-19 meaning some of this year students will defer their place till next year due to finances, will the university consider larger intakes for courses to accommodate the extra people

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Darcey, this website can give you further information on this: [www.exeter.ac.uk/coronavirus/prospectivestudents/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/coronavirus/prospectivestudents/). If this does not answer your question, please feel free to email the Exeter Scholars team at [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk).

98. Sophie Langan: Is Exeter a Russell Group university?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Sophie, yes it is. Here is some further information: [www.exeter.ac.uk/about/facts/russellgroup/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/about/facts/russellgroup/). Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

99. William Hope: What can we expect of this programme in Year 13?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi William. Thanks for your question! In year 13, we principally offer advice and support with UCAS applications, personal statements, and interviews – and any other questions that you may have, of course! The other thing that happens in year 13 is the opportunity to become a Senior Scholar: once you've completed the five sessions, have passed the programme, and are therefore an Exeter Scholar, the next step is to become a Senior Scholar. To do this, you should apply to study any degree at the University of Exeter – although only if you want to, of course! In January 2021, we will invite every Exeter Scholar who has applied to study at the University of Exeter to complete the Exeter Scholars online assessment: [www.exeter.ac.uk/exeterscholars/currentparticipants/onlineassessment/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/exeterscholars/currentparticipants/onlineassessment/).

\* Siobhan Harper: Successfully passing the online assessment means that you will be a Senior Scholar, and will gain access to the enhanced benefits package when/if you actually come to study at Exeter: [www.exeter.ac.uk/exeterscholars/benefits/benefitspackages/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/exeterscholars/benefits/benefitspackages/). So there's nothing further for you to do until the online assessment invitation in January. But remember that, in the meantime, we're always available for questions and help with UCAS applications, personal statements, and any questions you have!

100. Oliver Rose: is it manageable to play in a sports team while doing a challenging degree?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Oliver, I personally have not only found it possible but vital to play in a sports teams while doing my degree! I would definitely recommend it no matter how challenging your degree s as it helps you to de-stress and find a balance in your own life! Let me know if you have any further questions!

101. Sophie Langan: Do you have to sit the LNAT before applying for Law at Exeter?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Sophie. Thanks for your question! I do not believe that you need to sit the LNAT for Law at Exeter, and I can't see it listed as an entry requirement on the online prospectus (). However, I'm keen to double-check this for you, as I'm not 100% certain. Please do email [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) with this question, and I'll get an answer to you as soon as I can. I hope that this helps!

102. Jonny wilson: Is there student parking on the campus?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Jonny, there is student parking on Streatham campus. You can find further information here: [www.exeter.ac.uk/students/carparking/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/students/carparking/). Hope this helps, please let me know if you have any further questions!

103. Sophie Langan: What things do you think will change due to Covid-19?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Sophie, you can find further information about the effects of the virus here: [www.exeter.ac.uk/coronavirus/prospectivestudents/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/coronavirus/prospectivestudents/). Hope this helps, please let me know if you have any further questions!

104. Hyrum Willis: What financial help is there for students at Exeter?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Hyrum. Thanks for your question! The University of Exeter provides advice and guidance services for finance, and I expect that this is true of most, if not all, universities. You can find out more about the kind of information and support available here: [www.exeter.ac.uk/students/finance/studentfunding/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/students/finance/studentfunding/). In terms of financial aid, and assuming that you don't mean in terms of bursaries and scholarships (which I can also tell you about!), the University of Exeter has something called a Hardship and Retention Fund. Most, if not all, universities will have

something similar; it's basically a fund that helps students if something happens and they are not able to support themselves, and is carefully assessed, so not everyone can get it. You can find out more about this here: [www.exeter.ac.uk/students/finance/studentfunding/hardshipandretentionfund/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/students/finance/studentfunding/hardshipandretentionfund/). I hope this is reassuring!

105. Emily Rees: Hiya, do you find it difficult to financially cope whilst self-catering, doing any extra curriculum activities or going out and are there any bursaries available to apply for? :)

\* Student Ambassador01 2: Hi Emily, thank you for this question. Generally speaking, self-catered accommodation at university is cheaper than catered accommodation, and will also teach you to budget on your food spending, which can help to cut down your living costs. As long as you make a budget per month/ week and stick to it, this can be managed - try to work out how much you can afford to spend on food/ socialising/ transport etc. Most universities have hardship funds or bursaries that you can apply for, in addition to scholarships, and these resources will vary from university to university. To find out more about what Exeter has to offer, send an email to Exeter Scholars at [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk), or take a look at these webpages: [www.exeter.ac.uk/students/finance/studentfunding/nspandbursaries/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/students/finance/studentfunding/nspandbursaries/).

106. Ella Stoenescu: Hi, due to the pandemic, all work experience placements I've applied to were cancelled. How important is work experience for the personal statement? What else could I do instead of work experience?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Ella. Thanks for your question! A good way to engage with your subject outside of the classroom and in place of work experience is to read around the subject as much as possible, especially if you have any particular specific subject interests. There are loads of places to find pdfs and free / on-sale e-books online (e.g. Verso Books, or search 'free academic e-books'), and there has been a huge increase in the availability of these books because of the pandemic. Being able to talk in detail about even a few books in your subject field can really boost your person statement. But also, then please don't worry – remember that most students are in the same boat, in this respect. Universities are also extremely aware that this is going to have a knock-on effect on work experience and students' personal statements, so everyone understands the difficult situation you're all in. There are plenty of other things that you can put in a personal statement though!

\* Siobhan Harper: Personal statements can be really tricky, but there is some guidance that makes them a bit easier! You can make yourself stand out by engaging with the subject you've chosen, and demonstrating clearly why you've chosen that subject and why you should be offered a place to study it. About 70–80% of your personal statement should be directly relevant to your subject. You can then bring in transferable skills that you have that show why you would be a good student in that subject. The Exeter Scholars programme offers a personal statement checking service, so you can send your personal statement to [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) and we will check it over for you. We can do this as many times as you like, so you can send us the roughest draft and we'll help you with it! I hope that this helps.

107. Jem Fawssett: Are you expected to study outside of term time?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Jem, this depends on your course. Generally yes, you tend to study for exams in January after the first term and you study for exams in May after second term. Depending on your course you have deadlines for essays/ coursework outside of term time. However, in summer there are no deadlines for coursework. Hope this helps, please let me know if you have any further questions!

108. Holly Marchington: Is a year's study abroad, or a year in industry more beneficial to a student?

\* Student Ambassador01: Hi Holly, this really depends on your preference! A year abroad can be great to learn a language and get to know a different culture. On the other side, a year in industry will help you to gain experience in a job sector which can be very helpful for your future career. Here you can find resources to the year in placement: [www.exeter.ac.uk/careers/internships/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/careers/internships/), as well as the year abroad: [www.exeter.ac.uk/studyabroad/outbound/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/studyabroad/outbound/).

109. darcey greenland: also the majority of people apply for uni via UCAS, however can you apply directly to Exeter?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Darcey. Thanks for your question! Unfortunately you can't apply directly to the University of Exeter, and your application will have to go through UCAS. However, your UCAS choices can all be different courses at the University of Exeter, if that's definitely where you want to go! If you have any more particular questions about this, please do email [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk), and I'll be happy to answer them. I hope that this helps!

110. Eliza Munday: Hi, thank you so much for all your help. I'm just wondering, if we're planning to start uni in 2021, when should we start looking into student finance?

\* Siobhan Harper: Hi Eliza. Thanks for your question! If you're planning to start university in September 2021, then you should apply by the middle of May 2021 (I don't believe the exact date has been set yet). It is not a hard deadline, because you will still be able to apply after that date; however, doing so may delay you receiving your funds in time for your course start date. I would recommend starting to think about your application in January or so – this gives you time to complete the application with time to consider everything and no rush. You can find information about the application process here: [www.gov.uk/apply-for-student-finance/when?step-by-step-nav=18045f76-ac04-41b7-b147-5687d8fbb64a](http://www.gov.uk/apply-for-student-finance/when?step-by-step-nav=18045f76-ac04-41b7-b147-5687d8fbb64a). You will see that the application is not yet open for the academic year 2021-22, but you can bookmark this page for around January time to find the relevant information for your year group. And you can always email [exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:exeterscholars@exeter.ac.uk) if you have any particular questions. I hope that this helps!

111. \* Student Ambassador01 2: Thanks very much for taking part in today's online forum; I hope you've found it useful! Details of the next session can be found at [www.exeter.ac.uk/exeterscholars/currentparticipants/liveonlineqaforums/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/exeterscholars/currentparticipants/liveonlineqaforums/). If you have questions in the

meantime, please contact the Exeter Scholars team, who will be happy to help:  
[www.exeter.ac.uk/exeterscholars/contact/currentparticipants/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/exeterscholars/contact/currentparticipants/).