

# International Relations Personal Statement (Postgraduate)

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The study of conflicts, international relations and politics could essentially be seen as understanding the way different actors relate to each other. It therefore holds the potential to polarise but also to include and encourage co-operation, which summarises my ideas, thoughts and hopes as to why I wish to pursue this interest.

I have always had a genuine fascination of global politics, conflicts and the way organisations, states and cultures interact and relate to each other. As a young boy I was fascinated by the movies and stories that portrayed a picture of the good and evil in an often dramatic clash, particularly the movies of James Bond.

I believe these movies sparked an interest and curiosity as to how global actors connect through conflict, diplomatic and financial relations, for example.

Needless to say, my understanding of global issues has developed since the highly simplified stories of secret agents saving the world. Through travelling, volunteering and studying in different countries across the world I have further explored this interest in matters of international relations and conflicts. By doing so a foundation for further exploration was built.

However, it was during my last three years of studying Criminology that I realised that my actual deep-rooted interest was rather in political and international security in an ever-changing modern political climate. For example, throughout different modules I visited subjects such as political ideologies, genocide, media and conflicts and the emergence of white-collar crime, to mention a few.

Together with accessibility to great sources through libraries, professors and public lectures in the vibrant city of Cambridge, I slowly but steadily realised that my true interest rather lied within international matters on security, conflict and relations.

While, as mentioned, the subject of criminology may have some features that links it with international relations and conflicts, I would argue that the true strength of having such a degree is the emphasis on seeing the 'big picture'.

In order to understand any geopolitical issue, criminology likewise, it is crucial to analyse a wide selection of factors that might make an impact, for example political, ideological, economical, military, law, history, culture and so forth. My criminology degree saw a great emphasis on just this, namely to understand the complexity of different social issues, thus equipping me with the appropriate tools to undertake an MSc degree in Conflict studies or International Relations.

Per now, my aspiration is to pursue this interest in an academic environment and thus gain the skills, tools and knowledge necessary in a wide range of future options. My desire is that an MSc at London School of Economics and Politics combined with the opportunity to build networks would equip me with the necessary tools to build a career within international organisations that targets matters of international security or state and humanitarian development.

In particular I would seek a career in for example Interpol, UN, NATO or other NGOs such as Norwegian People's Aid, or the Norwegian Refugee Council. I firmly believe that these mentioned organizations would accept only the highest grade of skills and knowledge on the relevant subjects, and LSE with its expert professors and great network of scholars could be the ideal institution for me to collaborate up with in the pursuit of the mentioned demanded expertise.

Despite little direct academic or professional experience in both the fields of International Relations and Conflict studies, I believe that my Criminology degree in partnership with a genuine interest and high ambitions is a recipe of success. To be supervised by the highly qualified staff at LSE with your reputation of excellence on political issues could prove to be inspiring.

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Such a reputation attracts international students from all corners of the globe to London, which I think is a key aspect in the study of international relations due to the facilitation of different perspectives and ideas. Coming from Norway myself, I believe I can contribute with the perspective from a small but significant country when it comes to diplomatic and peacekeeping activity in conflict zones.

During my undergraduate degree I wrote my dissertation on religious radicalisation in Norway, and during my research I sourced documents that reinforced my idea of pursuing a masters and a career in international relations. I touched upon topics such as colonialism, war, foreign policies and religion, and I do believe that LSE not only covers these mentioned topics but also could introduce me to other relevant areas.

I am truly confident that this course will broaden my knowledge and understanding of global issues as a whole. Moreover, my strong work ethics and academic ability to study and contribute at a Masters level could be evident by my First Class classification on both my dissertation and degree as a whole.

For my master's thesis I have yet to conclude on a specific subject. However, I have a greater interest in themes such as political and religious radicalisation, post-conflict state building and globalisation with particular focus on the Middle East as a region. I am especially interested in how a state's failures and successes have the potential to influence the use of violence, particularly in non-nationstates, which is frequently seen in the Middle East.

My interest and passion for these subjects are not limited to academic point of view. I enjoy reading books on world politics, Middle Eastern culture and just now I am reading a book about ISIL and their extensive use of media as a source of 'propaganda'.

Aside from academia, I enjoy several hobbies and activities. I have travelled in various regions of the world and I still enjoy the meeting of new cultures and people. This spring I am going travelling again, visiting different continents, however I dare to say the highlight will be my planned two months in Beirut, Lebanon. Here I intend to start on a basic Arabic language course, with the intention of getting a taster as to how the Lebanese culture and language go hand in hand.

In addition, as mentioned earlier, I am quite so interested in Middle Eastern culture, and I hope to get the opportunity to move there in the future, preferably in professional context. I also appreciate sports, particularly football but also hiking, climbing, martial arts and scuba diving, all of which I have enjoyed both at home and whilst travelling.

In addition, I was a member of Cambridge Union Society in which I attended several debates and lectures on global political issues, which only adds to several other public seminars and debates I have attended. I intend to put these interests of use when engaging in the campus activities and student culture in London. I highly value a vibrant student culture in which different personalities can unfold and express themselves through social, intellectual and sports societies.

In conclusion, I look forward to the challenges and opportunities that LSE can provide, and the idea of being a part of such a recognized institution is truly inspiring. On the risk of sounding pretentious, I do hope to be able to make a difference in our world, and I believe that the next step of achieving so is by starting my MSc in Conflict studies or International Relations at LSE.