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**PERSONAL STATEMENT – COURSE IB & ARABIC #1**

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## Personal Statement ~ Joint Schools Classics (IB) & Arabic

I am fascinated by Classics because by looking to the past, we find our place in the world. Reading books such as Higgins' 'It's All Greek to Me' and Taggart's 'A Classical Education' in 2008 ignited my interest. I enjoy Classics because of the endless potential of linking the ancient and modern worlds. A degree course would most fruitfully allow me to pursue this synthesis.

My A-grade in AS Latin with just 8 months' study is a testament to my enthusiasm for the subject. In trying to grasp the relationship between the ancient Roman and more recent British Empire, I read Kwarteng's 'Ghosts of Empire'. I was captivated by the book's refreshing revisionism on the British Empire which, like the Roman one, continues to influence the present. My ability to rapidly assimilate information will, I hope, ensure my successful academic development and in-depth research.

I have sought to extend my knowledge beyond the syllabus. Studying Ovid's poetry at school encouraged me to compare it with works from my native Somali literature, namely that of Sayyid Hassan. Studying Cicero at school inspired me to partake in public speaking - I set up a debating society and later prepared a team to compete in a national competition. Previously, I had won a highly-subsidised place at a school during my GCSEs, travelling 50 miles as part of my daily commute.

My wider reading has allowed me to establish interesting connections between the ancient and modern; Plutarch's 'Nine Greek Lives' proved to me how an individual legacy contributes to the rise of nations and I thus began to chronicle my grandfather's life, a Somali founding father. Another of Plutarch's works, 'Makers of Rome', mentions Cato's rise from a minor to becoming an honest leader - reminding me of my grandfather's struggle. Pursuing photography enlightened me to the value of visual artistic expression, an idea endorsed by the Romans and Greeks. As a cyclist and cadet seaman, my experiences enhanced my appreciation of Homer's *Odyssey* - a tale involving a struggle against the elements.

I enjoy philology because of how texts can reveal the nature of times and people. Whether it is Euripides's overly tragic plots with the chorus's moral voice or the context of Sophocles's 'Three Theban Plays', I enjoy the timelessness of the scenarios from Orestes's dilemma of avenging his father's murder to senatorial self-indulgence.

The multidisciplinary nature of Classics permits my other A Levels to complement its study. Studying poetry in English Literature allowed me to appreciate verse while my classical knowledge has given me a greater depth of understanding with respect to the myths in Tennyson's poetry. In History I have studied Churchill and Thatcher - reinforcing my belief from Classical reading of the importance of strong personalities.

Running a blog for 5 years has allowed me to develop my global outlook. Through my blog, I have also aided the study of a university student. My awareness of local politics drove me to engage with the West London



Free School, a school based on the classical liberal education. My recent article in favour of Latin was well-received.

As a Deputy House Captain, I am committed to school life beyond academic work. For example, I have started extracurricular projects, most recently a group to challenge gifted students academically. This role has improved my time management which will aid my university life.

After a number of relocations, I am now settled enough to achieve my potential at A2. For example when I joined my present school it was my third place of study in 6 months but I still managed to exert myself.

After reading Classics at university, I hope to pursue Oriental studies to better understand the extent to which East and West are linked, with a focus on Al-Ghazali's work. A Classics course will allow me to further explore a subject with which I have continual interest while utilising my skills and forming the basis of my future academic work.

