Exemplar 1

Children’s nursing requires patience, responsibility and empathy; something I have learnt through having a big family and taking care of my siblings. I want to work with children as, although it is demanding and hard work, it is also incredibly rewarding. Nursing is an extremely hard profession, but my determination and compassion towards people in need will put me in a good position to excel. This year, I have found an even greater respect for healthcare professionals through the way they have battled through coronavirus, increasing my desire for a career in nursing.

My A levels have helped me for my future profession. The attachment topic in psychology has taught me a much better appreciation of the variation in the stages of children’s development and the need to treat each one as an individual. I also have a better understanding of the brain and how it functions. I have expanded my knowledge on how biology affects the way we behave and how social pressures can influence humans and how they function. This has shown me how important communication skills are as people respond in different ways, so I need to personalise how I communicate with others.

I have always had a fascination with anatomy and physiology which is the reason I chose biology for A level. I particularly enjoyed the digestive system and the respiratory system. I am keen to developing a greater depth of understanding in these topics at university.

Although a significant step up to A level chemistry, my enthusiasm and perseverance for the course has meant that the pieces are beginning to slot together and I am seeing the links between biology and chemistry. The subject has developed my practical skills, particularly the ability to record data precisely and accurately; skills essential in nursing. I also regularly attend an after school BioMed club which has increased my confidence in chemistry and developed my problem solving skills. Topics I found particularly interesting were biologics, coronavirus and drug testing.

In February, a nursing workshop gave me the opportunity to speak to specialised hospital nursing staff, confirming my career choice. The team of nurses also taught us CPR and how to safely put on body casts. Seeing the pride and satisfaction they get from their job had a big impact, as there are very few careers where you see the same kind of pride, passion, and professionalism. I have also completed a FutureLearn course, specifically based on nursing. This gave me a chance to hear from nurses all around the world. It was very insightful as although many of them were positive, there were a few negative aspects. This was crucial for me as although the honesty made me realise how challenging nursing can be, it also reinforced the rewards.

Work experience at a primary school gave me the opportunity to work with children with a range of backgrounds and needs. This opened my eyes to the level of patience needed to communicate with children in a range of ways to help them understand. Most importantly, I realised I had the skills to help a child and their parents understand what is happening to them at a traumatic time helping them deal with their emotions.

As part of my DofE Award, I volunteered in a charity shop and enjoyed speaking to different types of people, helping them with their needs. Volunteering gave me more confidence communicating with a range of people. My current job has developed my communication further, but also resilience when speaking to upset customers; an essential skill for nurses due to the pressures of the profession.

I enjoy reading and have recently found an interest in reading books about nurses and their experiences. I especially enjoyed ‘The Language of Kindness, a nurse’s story’ by Christie Watson, as it was honest and explained balancing nursing with everyday life. It also briefly went into nursing training, which I found fascinating as it was an insight into the training ahead of me and I am excited to start.

Exemplar 2

From my research, I know Adult Nursing can be an incredibly challenging, highly demanding and stressful career at times. However, I feel that the rewards and fulfilment that the career brings easily outweighs this. I have chosen adult nursing specifically because I have always been fascinated by the biological sciences as well as using my knowledge to help improve the lives of a wide range of people at a vulnerable time in their life. The course appeals to me as it offers a hands on approach with 50% of the course as placement. I believe that I would be a suitable student as I thrive best when I can apply my knowledge to practical situations and learn from others. Combining academic study with physically getting to practice the procedures in a supportive environment, will enable me to further develop the skills and confidence to become an effective member of the nursing profession.

I have been inspired to take this subject to university level through various documentaries and virtual open days where I’ve been able to gain a deeper understanding of the degree and what the course entails. The key thing that I have learnt from undergraduate and postgraduate students is that the ability to develop those special relationships and make a significant difference to people’s lives can bring so much enjoyment and satisfaction day in day out. I also had first-hand experience of the importance of communication and empathy when watching the carers and the practise nurse helping my grandmother remain at home despite being in the later stages of dementia. A key skill was the communication between all of the other agencies supporting her as well as with us, as her relatives and primary carers. Work experience in a care home reinforced how important communication and compassion is in nursing. Although I was mainly supporting residents with their feeding, encouraging them to participate in activities or just chatting to them, it was rewarding to see how a simple conversation could make a huge difference to that individual’s day.

Both biology and psychology have enabled me to get a better understanding of the importance of considering both the physical and emotional aspects of well-being. All of my A-levels are heavy on content and applying my knowledge so have required constant reviewing outside lessons to learn the material in depth; this will be an essential skill when studying nursing. I have had to be accurate and methodical when carrying out practical work recording data precisely. I have also evaluated case studies in psychology and geography and used the data to support conclusions; all skills transferrable to nursing.

My part time work has also developed skills needed in nursing. Working in a busy coffee shop in the quays during the Christmas market, increased my confidence communicating with a range of different people and working as part of a team. Remaining calm under pressure and dealing with stressed customers during the pandemic in my other job, definitely helped with my negotiating and time management skills.

I am a keen table tennis player, competing at country and national level. This requires a great deal of dedication and perseverance to fit all the training around my studies and job. I am also good at controlling my emotions to get the best performance possible and have spent time supporting and coaching new members of the club. As a senior member of the club I need to set high standards and lead by example.

In summary, nursing is a career for empathetic, hard-working, dedicated and confident individuals with team-working and leadership skills as well as the ability to deal with stress under pressure. I strongly believe that I have developed these skills required to bring about a difference to not only the patients’ lives, but to the families who are struggling and needing reassurance.

Exemplar 3

From a very young age, I have always wanted a job working with people and make a positive contribution to other’s lives. My friends describe me as having a kind and caring nature, with the ability to show empathy. I had initial thoughts of nursing and my interest became stronger when a few of my close relatives had to spend a lot of time in hospital. Sitting by their bedside and watching how nurses cared for them in their time of need warmed my heart, and made me realise this is the career path, I felt passionate about and would like to take. Their dedication to helping people feel better inspired me and cemented my motivation to do the same for others. It isn’t that they were able to miraculously cure my relatives, but the care and compassion shown to help improve the quality of their lives, when they were scared had a big impact.

Through primary and the early years of secondary school, I struggled and must admit that I did not really enjoy school very much. However, I overcame these issues and, as my educational path has continued, I have matured and really started to enjoy the subjects I am taking, fully embracing sixth form. This perseverance and commitment will help me when studying nursing.

I took health and social care as an option for GCSEs and enjoyed it so much that I took it as a BTEC in Sixth Form. I now enjoy studying and applying the knowledge I have learnt in everyday situations. The module on the human lifespan was fascinating, studying how health and society affects each stage of development from birth, through to adolescence, adulthood and older age. Looking at the arguments between nature and nurture and the theories behind it made me realise nursing isn’t just as simple as treating a symptom, as everyone is individual with different backgrounds and circumstances.

My applied science studies have developed my knowledge and understanding of the human body. I enjoyed learning about the anatomy and physiology of the body systems and would love to gain further detail from my nursing degree. The course is practical-based so I have developed skills in carrying out procedures effectively and obtaining and recording data accurately and precisely; all essential in nursing. I have also developed my research skills during my coursework. My current topic in physics is focused on radiotherapy where I am looking at the different techniques and evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of each one.

I believe that the nursing profession can be very challenging and hectic at times, however, from talking to nurses, I know it is also the most emotionally fulfilling career available. I have always respected and looked up to the nursing profession and the pandemic has only served to further reinforce the admiration that I have for the NHS. Nursing is a career where you never really finish training and I like the idea of being faced with new challenges every day. It also comes with many rewards and a real sense of job satisfaction. I had work experience confirmed in Gloucestershire Royal Hospital during July of 2020 in order to get a better understanding of the different nursing units, however, due to the unfortunate circumstance of COVID-19, it was unable to go ahead. I am signed up to some virtual work experience that they are offering in February.

At the start of lockdown in March, when the real severity of Coronavirus was known, I decided I wanted to do something to help others during these difficult times, so I took the initiative to enhance my people/ communication skills and applied to Morrison’s to become a key worker. In lieu of work experience, this has helped to build my confidence and taught me how to deal with unexpected situations. It has also taught me how to be methodical and organised in my approach to things and maintain calm under pressure. I believe that all these qualities are transferable to my chosen career path of nursing.

Exemplar 4

I have always wanted to work in healthcare and become a nurse but, having moved here from Italy, I do not have the GCSE requirements needed. I intended to sit the IELTS this summer but testing centres have closed due to COVID-19. I am sitting A-level mathematics which shows my ability is above GCSE standard. I have worked regularly for 6 months to gain relevant work experience in a home care environment but I know my A-levels will not allow me to enter nursing directly. This route will be a way I can show my determination and ability to become a nurse.

My work as a carer has shown me how much I would like to be part of a team that takes care of people and does everything possible to make them feel better emotionally and physically. At the start of lockdown, I volunteered to go full time as I knew how important the contact was for my clients. Communication and relationship skills are most important in my workplace; you need to be able to communicate to clients and their relatives as well as your colleagues to understand and collaborate, providing the best care for the clients. Many are in constant pain, lonely and sometimes give up when it comes to taking medication or carrying out personal care. I often have to talk and support them in the low times so that they see a way through and don’t feel a heavy load on society. I will see a change in the client and will make a note in the book or if it is more serious I would contact the office to suggest a visit from the district nurse or GP, showing how important communication is between not only the client, but all the other people involved in care.

I need to be physically fit when hoisting and assisting my clients with appropriate equipment. I am also regularly exposed to unpleasant conditions as most clients have mobility issues and require personal care. I need to maintain a safe working environment for me, my colleagues and clients. I need to be able to cope with constant and rapid change as we go from house to house. My shifts are often long depending on how many clients need to be assisted. These are the things that will make me well-prepared for a career in nursing. I know both the rewarding and difficult sides of the job.

Working while in full time education, shows I can organise my time to meet school deadlines and training assessments. I need to plan my week in advance in order to not miss any appointments or deadlines, similar to what I will experience at university.

Last summer in Italy, I got work experience at an institution for the study and the treatment of children with leukaemia, shadowing doctors. Each day, I would transcribe blood results received by the laboratory and gained experience observing how results are analysed and decisions are made about treatments. I interacted with patients and their families and had the chance to observe how nurses worked and the importance of teamwork between all levels of staff.

Before moving to England, I was learning English, Spanish and German which will help with communication on the wards. I play the piano and enjoy gymnastics helping me relax after a stressful day. Studying mathematics and sciences has helped me to broaden my understanding when it comes to both problem solving and working in an analytical manner.

In school I have taken part in the School Council, discussing with the other members the problems there are in school and suggesting solutions, developing my teamwork and problem-solving skills. I’ve been nominated EAL ambassador, welcoming and helping the international students that join our school. This has expanded my communication, confidence and organisation skills.

I am passionate about becoming a nurse and would like to show you my potential by studying at your university. I have learnt so much about healthcare as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak and am certain I can make a big contribution to the future of the NHS. I want to have a rewarding job where I feel I make a real difference to people’s lives.

Exemplar 5

Being a person who desires to improve people’s lives, combined with my fascination at pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period, I believe midwifery is an ideal career for me. I have had this aspiration confirmed during a week’s work experience at Gloucester Hospital in the Gynaecology Department, including time in the delivery suite, and clinics for antenatal, urodynamic, hysteroscopy and gynaecology. I was privileged to witness two C-sections and a vaginal birth, enabling me to see the respect and compassion with which the midwives treated the women, their baby and birth partner. I was reassured that in witnessing my first births, I could cope with the challenging sights and emotions of pursuing this career.

In addition to my A-levels, I have broadened my understanding relating to midwifery by reading literature by authors such as Grantly Dick-Read, Sheila Kitzinger and Ann Oakley. I understand the priority of upholding womens’ individual preferences, and promoting normal physiological birth in a healthy and supportive way. Sara Wickham’s monthly birth updates have opened my eyes to some of the modern discussions in midwifery, such as the induction crisis and birthing the placenta. I particularly enjoyed reading about oxytocin, a hormone that stimulates contractions and the production of prostaglandins for labour. FutureLearn courses on Maternity Care and Assessment of the Newborn have furthered my knowledge about the issues and roles in midwifery. I have attended fortnightly biomedical sessions, developing my understanding of ethics in medicine, such as how to talk about dying or illness in a sensitive and honest manner. My commitment to learning has been evident throughout my entire school career with reports commending my resilience, conscientious hard work, organisational skills and ability to cope under pressure. D of E helped me develop determination, team working and problem solving skills.

Opportunities to attend a breastfeeding support group and a postnatal group provided first-hand experience of communicating with women experiencing the amazing, but for some, a difficult time of life. Using compassion and empathy, I saw how it provided women with kind and sensitively delivered support. It gave the opportunity for social time with other women having similar experiences, which the mothers assured me, was beneficial for their wellbeing, and subsequently their ability to care for their baby. My interpersonal and teamwork skills have developed through volunteering at my church with a children’s group since 2015 and a mid-week crèche during sixth form. This involves communicating with the children, and ensuring the environment is a safe and enjoyable one for them. I love seeing them progress as individuals and this has helped me learn how to remain calm when spontaneous events occur. My part time job as a Sales Advisor in womenswear, means I assist a variety of women, providing a non-judgemental and individualised service. I treat them sensitively and respect their dignity, especially when assisting in the changing rooms. I believe the interactions skills I have developed through this will be vital for midwifery to communicate to support women of many demographics appropriately and to be a good listener.

My hobbies include running and playing the flute to grade 6 standard. I would continue these at university, to provide a balance and a support system to help with the inevitable challenges of studying a midwifery degree.

Midwives are the lead professional that care for, and promote the holistic wellbeing of women in pregnancy, labour, birth and the postnatal period. I am excited about both the academic learning and practical placements in the midwifery course. In the future, I would be interested in working with women who are homeless or in prison; I would love to help women who, on a day-to-day basis, do not often feel empowered or respected, to feel this during pregnancy, childbirth and early parenthood.

Exemplar 6

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Exemplar 7

I have always been keen to pursue a career within healthcare and, specifically, Adult Nursing. There are two main things that have reinforced this. I had a lot of inspiration and guidance from my dad who works with the NHS as a domiciliary healthcare professional. I have seen the satisfaction and reward he gets from his job despite the long hours and frustrations that can come with the role. It has become particularly clear during the pandemic where he has been an inspiration with his dedication to supporting the patients and his work colleagues. Secondly, assisting in caring for an elderly relative, not only helped me to expand my first-hand experience of working with vulnerable individuals, but implementing appropriate aspects of my course aided me building a stronger connection with them; I was able to empathise and use knowledge gained from my H&S Care lessons and relate this to how I assisted with their with dementia care.

Studying BTEC Health and Social Care, has greatly developed my knowledge of the sector, carrying the subject on from GCSE, due to my deep interest in the subject and future professional choices. Throughout the course I greatly enjoyed studying the principles of health and social care, namely the 6C’s and care values that I am fully able to demonstrate and implement in different appropriate circumstances. I am able to work independently to complete the coursework sections and can manage my time to meet the deadlines, which will be important for my degree course.

My Biology course, has increased my knowledge of anatomy and physiology and I particularly enjoyed the immunity topic. I have also been fascinated by the heart, the control of heart rate and the links to the nervous system. I look forward to learning this in more detail as part of the degree and also the treatments for when things go wrong. Biology has also developed my practical skills, especially the accurate and precise recording of data when carrying out experiments; an essential skill for nursing when delivering medication and keeping patient notes up together. I needed to work both independently and use teamwork and communication skills to complete practical and group work efficiently and with high standards of understanding in applying knowledge.

Geography has developed my practical skills, problem solving and critical thinking, in particular, when doing my investigative geography coursework, as I was completing my fieldwork requiring me to carry out investigations through questionnaires and observational fieldwork around my local area.

Work experience at a primary school and volunteering within a charity shop, developed communication and teamwork skills. I gained great satisfaction working with one boy who struggled with his work. Being able to explain things slightly differently meant that he was able to complete the task and his confidence increased as a result. Another girl was very shy but wanted to be included so I would make sure I gently encouraged her to contribute to the session and she would then come and chat to me at other times. Working closely with staff and customers of different ages has helped me develop confidence in communicating with a wide range of people.

I also had to show leadership skills when working as a prefect and completing my DofE Award particularly when needing to keep the group calm and make quick but informed decisions when having to change route due to footpath closures during our expedition.

Adult Nursing will enable me to make a difference to people’s lives when they are struggling. I know it will be hard work and not all cases have a happy outcome, but to be able to calm and reassure individuals and their relatives, whilst providing care to improve the quality of the life they have no matter how short, will be a privilege. I am looking forward to taking the first steps towards this by starting an Adult Nursing degree.

Exemplar 8

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