

Super-Curricular Engagement for Post-18 Applications

This is the term university admission tutors and recruiters use when talking about the wider reading and research they hope to see in the applications received. The personal statement/profile is your opportunity to illustrate a genuine interest in a subject/role/industry sector subject and what you have done to pursue this beyond the classroom.

Your subject teachers can offer many ideas for how you can enhance your subject knowledge. However, below are some more general examples of how you can further your interests during Year 12 in readiness for preparing your post-18 applications personal statement at the beginning of Year 13. It is important that you carefully and critically consider the arguments, assumptions and evidence being presented and reflect on what you have learnt. Remember, this is not an exhaustive list, more a suggestion of places to start your research:

News Sources and Periodicals

Your chosen universities/employers may expect applicants to have a current working knowledge of their subject/industry in the news, so it is vital to stay abreast of current affairs. Reading quality news sources can be a useful way to begin to practise assessing arguments and weighing evidence and listening to articulate, intelligent debate can help you to understand how to formulate your ideas, and how to discuss your subject at interview. Some suggestions include:

- Broadsheet newspapers: The Guardian, The Times, Independent, Daily Telegraph
- [BBC News online](#)
- [Al Jazeera English](#)
- [The Economist](#)
- [CNN online](#)
- [The New Statesman](#)

Digital Resources

Digital periodicals supply a steady stream of the latest topical studies and information. Many specialise in a particular area enabling you to find the latest subject specific research. Some examples of useful general sources include, but are not limited to:

National Geographic	The Economist	The Times Literary Supplement
New Scientist	The Stage	Music Week
History Today	Philosophical Society	Plus Maths Magazine

Part of Apple's iTunes store, [iTunes U](#) is a vast learning resource offering free educational content which you can download straight to your computer, iPad or iPod. Or you can visit the [Directory of Open Access Journals](#), a database with approx. 12,000 journals covering all aspects of science, technology, medicine, social science and humanities. [Bright Knowledge](#), contains articles and career profiles for most subject areas.

Videos

Videos are a great way to engage with your subject, particularly if you are a visual learner. Examples of the organisations offering short talks and presentations in video format from influential international experts include [Ted](#) [bigthink](#) [youtube](#)

Short Online Courses

Many universities offer massive open online courses (MOOCs) across a wide range of disciplines. These are available via individual university websites, and online course providers, for example:

[Future Learn](#) [Class Central](#) [edx](#) [coursera](#)
[cosmolearning](#) [openlearn](#) [openculture](#) [Alison | Free Online Learning](#)

If you are unsure which organisation is running a course you are interested in you can also search using multiple criteria at [mooc list](#).

University Reading Lists

Many university websites publish sample reading lists for first year courses which can be a useful introduction to a subject at undergraduate level. In addition, excellent resources have been developed for Sixth Form students by both the universities and individual colleges of Oxford and Cambridge - you don't have to want to study at either to take advantage of this information.

These sources include:

- [myheplus](#) HE+ from the University of Cambridge offers activities and suggestions for wider reading across 30 subject areas
- [explore](#) This website from Oxford University raises 'big questions' for students to consider which are underpinned by the latest university thinking and research
- [Discover Downing](#), [Hertford College](#) and [Staircase12 - University College Oxford](#) are just 3 examples of available digital resources banks designed to help you 'read around' a subject
- [greshamcollege](#) Lectures which are useful for subject engagement, career and study decisions, personal statements, and those planning to do an EPQ

Taster Events:

University taster events are similar to open days but with an enhanced focus on a particular course, subject or faculty. They often include sample lectures and tutorials and give you the opportunity to experience the typical undergraduate teaching at a given university. Search for virtual events on individual university websites, or use:

- [unitasterdays](#)
- [UCAS – taster courses](#)

Public Lectures

Many universities offer public lectures covering a wide range of disciplines which often tackle key contemporary issues. These are currently held online and are usually free. You can search 'university public lectures' or visit individual university websites for details of upcoming events.

For example:

[Newcastle University](#)
[Lancaster University](#)

[University of York](#)
[Durham University](#)

[Oxford University](#)

Podcasts

Podcasts come in a variety of lengths and offer a convenient, low-tech way to further your interests whilst doing something else. You can find and download top podcasts from such places as iTunes and Stitcher, as well as in apps like Downcast and Pocket Casts. You can also search for them on individual university websites, for example:

[BBC Sounds Podcasts](#)

[University of Oxford Podcasts](#)

[Radio 4 - In Our Time](#)

[Very Short Introductions Podcast](#)

Part-time Employment/Volunteering/Work experience

Many of you may have part-time jobs and already undertaken some volunteering and/or work experience. The key part of integrating these opportunities into applications is your reflection on them in the context of your chosen subject/role/industry sector. What have you learnt from them? How have they changed or reinforced your knowledge/views/choices?

Other

You don't always need to read to enhance knowledge and understanding. For some subjects it is just as relevant to consider alternative approaches - practising maths problems, adding to a portfolio, performing in front of an audience, conducting experiments and considering physical concepts and their real-world application. Online opportunities, for example [Projects — Zooniverse](#) allow students to contribute to and support a wide range of research projects.

Remember... Be selective and analytical. Consider **what you have learnt** from undertaking super-curricular activities - record key learning outcomes from each source, consider their relevance to your application to rank activities in order of importance.

Examples of Subject-Specific Resources

Your teachers will also be delighted to share their passion and enthusiasm with you. Ask for advice and their suggestions.

Architecture

[RIBA](#)
[Architecture | Downing College Cambridge](#)
[Reading List: So You Want to Study Architecture? \(rebirthofreason.com\)](#)
[DesignCurial | Blueprint Magazine](#)

Archaeology

[British Museum](#) - Podcasts, blogs and stories
[Introducing Naked Archaeology | Podcasts | Naked Scientists](#)
[Current Archaeology Magazine](#)
[Council for British Archaeology](#)

Art

[History of Art suggested reading list – Cambridge](#)
[History of Art reading list - The Courtauld](#)
Isms.... Understanding Modern Art - Sam Phillips
[British Journal of Photography | Photography Journal | 1854 Media](#)
[Portfolio Catalogue](#) – Contemporary Photography in Britain
[IGNANT - online magazine featuring art, design, photography, travel and architecture](#)
[Exhibitions & Events | Royal Academy of Arts](#)

Classics

Oxford Classics Outreach: [Reading List | Faculty of Classics | Oxford](#)
[The Roman Society](#)
[The Hellenic Journal | Study of Greek language | Hellenic Society](#)

Computing and ICT

Trigger Happy: The inner life of videogames - Stephen Poole
Accidental Empires - Robert X Cringely
[The Register](#)

Economics/Business

[Institute of Economic Affairs](#)
[National Institute of Economic and Social Research](#)
[International Monetary Fund](#)
Age of Instability by David Smith
The Ascent of Money by Niall Ferguson
New Ideas from Dead Economists by Todd G. Buchholz
Why Globalization Works by Martin Wolf
The Economic Naturalist Robert H Frank
[Business Case Studies](#) : 600 case studies that cover a wealth of business topics in real businesses
[Freakonomics Podcast](#)

English

[The Booker Prizes](#)
[Cambridge Authors](#)
[The Poetry Society](#)
[Resources and Tools in Speech, Hearing and Phonetics \(ucl.ac.uk\)](#) Very good for dialects, phonology.
Sociolinguistics: An Introduction to Language and Society, by Peter Trudgill
Language and Power, by Andrea Mayr and Paul Simpson

Geography

[National Geographic Magazine](#)
[Royal Geographical Society](#)
[Geoscientist Online Magazine](#)
[British Geological Survey](#)

[JNCC: Joint Nature Conservation Committee](#)

Imagined Communities by Benedict Anderson

Runaway World: How Globalization is Reshaping our Lives by Anthony Giddens

History

[History Extra](#) The official website for BBC History Magazine and BBC History Revealed

[Historical Association](#)

[Royal Historical Society](#)

[History Today](#)

[Reviews in History](#) Covering books and digital resources across all fields of history

In Defence of History by Richard Evans

The Reprieve by Jean-Paul Sartre

Law

[Crime Justice and the Law](#) – gov.uk

[Courts and Tribunals Judiciary](#)

[Legislation database](#) – The official home of UK legislation

[Counsel](#) – Monthly journal of the Bar of England and Wales

[BBC Radio 4 Law in Action](#)

Modern and Medieval Languages

[Le Monde](#)

[El Pais](#)

[Suddeutsche Zeitung](#)

[Corriere Della Sera](#) - Italian Daily Newspaper

[Diario de Noticias](#) - Portuguese Daily Newspaper

[Journaux Francais](#) - A site with links to all the online French national and regional newspapers

[French Radio London](#) - Listen online or via digital radio.

Music

Philosophy

The Moral Maze BBC Radio 4

Why I am not a Christian by Bertrand Russell

The Puzzle of Ethics by Peter Vardy

Politics

[Inspires magazine](#) Published by Oxford's Department of Politics and International Relations

[Political Studies Association](#)

[UK parliament](#)

[United Nations](#)

[Chatham House](#): Policy institute

[Amnesty International](#)

The Economist

[Real Clear Politics](#)

Models of Democracy by David Held

On Liberty by J S Mill

Leviathan by Thomas Hobbes

The Social Contract by Jean-Jacques Rousseau

Product Design

[Dexigner](#) online magazine with bi-weekly newsletter

[The Design Museum](#)

[Design Week magazine](#)

[I-D magazine](#)

[Design Council](#)

[Core77 Industrial Design online magazine](#)

[DesignCurial | Blueprint Magazine](#)

Figure Drawing for Fashion Design (Fashion & Textiles) by E Drudi

Psychology

[British Psychological Society](#)

[Freud Museum London](#)

[Neuropsychology Central](#)

[The Whole Brain Atlas](#)
[Positive Psychology News](#)
[All About Psychology](#)
[Psych Central](#)

Sociology

[British Sociological Association](#)
[Researching Sociology Blog](#)
[British Journal of Sociology](#)
[BBC Thinking Allowed Podcast](#)
The Communist Manifesto
The Female Eunuch by Germaine Greer

The Sciences

[New Scientist](#)
[Scientific American](#)
[The Naked Scientist Podcast](#)
[Oxford Science Podcasts MPLS](#)

Engineering

[Engineering.com](#): Online library and web forum
[Royal Academy of Engineering](#)
[Institution of Civil Engineering](#)
[Institution of Mechanical Engineers](#)
[Institution of Engineering and Technology](#)
[Institution of Structural Engineers](#)

Mathematics

[Institute of Mathematics and its Applications](#)
[Plus Magazine](#)
[National Cipher Challenge](#)
Alex through the Looking Glass: How Life reflects Numbers and Numbers reflect Life by Alex Bellos
17 Equations That Changed the World by Ian Stewart
The Great Mathematical Problems Ian Stewart
How Many Socks Make a Pair? Rob Eastaway

Medicine/Veterinary Medicine: (see also Natural Sciences)

[British Medical Association](#)
[Wellcome Trust](#)
[National Human Genome Research](#)
[Institute of Biomedical Science](#)
[Physiological Society](#)
[British Veterinary Association](#)
[Medic Mentor](#)

Biological, Biomedical and Life Sciences and Zoology: (see also Medicine/Vet Med)

[Zoological Society of London](#)
[Kew Royal Botanical Gardens](#)
[DNA Interactive](#)
[Nature](#) scientific journal
[Royal Society](#) – independent scientific academy with podcasts, research articles and journals
[Natural History Museum](#)
[About The BMJ | The BMJ](#) The website of the British Medical Journal
[Science & Environment - BBC News](#) - The BBC news page for Science and the Environment
The Blind Watch Maker by Richard Dawkins
Selfish Gene by Richard Dawkins

Chemistry

[The Royal Society of Chemistry \(rsc.org\)](#)
[Chemistry news, research and opinions | Chemistry World](#) /
[Biochemical Society \(biochemistry.org\)](#)

Biochemistry for schools: www.biochem4schools.org/

Periodic Table of Videos by Martyn Poliakoff www.youtube.com

[Institution of Chemical Engineers - IChemE](http://www.chemguide.co.uk)

www.chemguide.co.uk

Physics

[Phys.org - News and Articles on Science and Technology](http://www.phys.org) Institute of Physics (including free membership for 16-19 year olds)

[Explore more | University of Oxford Department of Physics](http://www.phys.org) British Physics Olympiad

[Galaxy Zoo Upgrade: Better Galaxies, Better Science | University of Oxford Department of Physics](http://www.phys.org) Oxford

Astronomy site

A Brief History of Time by Stephen Hawking

A Short History of Nearly Everything by Bill Bryson