PERSONAL STATEMENT
JOSEPH HALLETT

I didn't start university studying computer science. But two years into my studies I found I was reading computer science textbooks for fun. I was teaching myself to program Haskell with pen and paper and a textbook over the summer in a flat with no internet and no computer. It was painfully obvious to me that I was doing the wrong degree and eventually I sucked up the courage to switch and I haven't looked back.

For the past three years I have studied as an undergraduate computer-scientist at the University of Bristol. I enjoyed my studies but I found anything involving cryptography and security particularly stimulating. I find the blend of mathematics with psychology, code and disassembly, attack and defence entirely fascinating. I spend my evenings reading books on and around the field and now I am finishing my undergraduate studies I want to spend my time not just studying it but contributing to it as well. The best way to achieve this is to start working for a post graduate degree.

In my spare time, for the last three years, I have worked as a teaching assistant for the *Procedural Programming* and *Principles of Programming* units here at Bristol University helping the first year students take their first steps into programming. It has been extremely rewarding work and I enjoy the responsibility and the pressures of helping get the students past their coursework. For the last two years I have also helped run the Shorinji Kempo society at Bristol's student union, as the secretary, web-master and vice-president. I created the society's website, some of their marketing materials and have helped organise a national seminar for the club in Bristol as well as helping with the City Shorinji Kempo Club.

Before transferring to computer science I spent a year in industry working for *GE Oil & Gas* working on developing their test software. Previously I spent a summer working for the metrology firm *Renishaw* in their research and development department. I gained a great experience of the software engineering industry from my work: but it also convinced me that a career in research, working at the cutting edge in computer science, is what I want to do. Bristol has a strong tradition of meshing together both the mathematical theory and engineering practice of leading cryptographic research that I want to become part of.

I have spent the last six years living and working in Bristol I am keen to stay in the South-West—I have a house with my partner who also lives and works here. The University of Bristol has a fantastic

Cryptography department: I want to join it to continue my studies.