**Personal Statement for Samuel Gilbert**

My passion for computers comes from a work experience placement at Thomson Reuters when I was in year 11. Whilst performing simple data management tasks as part of a team, I was introduced to several different members of staff, each giving me an insight into their roles in the company. The large number of different career paths available, as well as the strong community atmosphere of the development teams, inspired me to begin to pursue studying computing at college.

Last summer I took part in the world challenge, a charity based event, which operates in many different countries. As part of a team of sixteen, I went to Venezuela for a month in order to help repair a school in a remote village within the jungle. This unique experience has allowed me to hone several skills, such as team working, leadership and time management whilst under stressful, unfamiliar circumstances and living away from home.

This year, I have taken part in a web development course on the website Udemy.com during my summer break. This course has allowed me to learn several key programming languages, such as HTML, CSS, JavaScript, SQL and PHP. This has not only improved my technical abilities but has also shown my dedication to computer science as a subject. I believe that completing this course will prepare me well for university, as it demonstrates an ability to learn and research outside of the classroom.

Using the knowledge I gained in my web development course, I have set up an account on freelancer.com, which I use to test my programming skills in real world situations by taking small jobs to fix various issues with websites, as well as creating scripts and web-based applications. In doing this I have become much more comfortable with programming and problem solving.

Attending many university open days and also taking part in a Physics taster session at Royal Holloway has given me a great insight as to the teaching process at university, allowing me to be better equipped for the change in environment next year.

I have also demonstrated vital skills during several part time jobs. Firstly, working at WH Smiths for three months over the Christmas period in 2012. Not only did I work as part of a team during my time there, but also demonstrated trustworthiness and customer service skills. More recently I have taken a part time role at Croydon Metropolitan College teaching a Saturday class of students preparing for their 11+ entrance exams, giving me valuable experience in leadership and communication. These skills will transfer well in to university life, enriching my role in clubs and societies, as well as helping in team-based assignments.

Recently I have also been elected as the A Level Course representative within my college. This requires me to attend regular meetings with the school principal and other course representatives at a weekly Student Partnership Council Meeting, as well as help to organize A-Level and College-wide events. I believe that my participation in the college in such a way shows that I am eager and willing to get involved in the wider life of university, and believe that I can bring new ideas to the student body.

The AS / A Level subjects I am studying at college give me a solid foundation from which to build upon in a computing course at university. My Computing, Mathematics and Physics give me a strong grounding in science and technology, further enhanced by my AS Level in Electronics.

In conclusion, I believe that I have a strong set of AS level results and a wide range of relevant skills and attributes that will allow me to quickly and efficiently settle into my chosen subject area, as well as life on campus.