

Chevening Essay Questions

In this section you are asked to complete a series of short essay questions on the following areas:

Leadership and influence, networking, studying in the UK and your long-term career goals.

As you are aware, Chevening is the UK government's International Awards Scheme aimed at developing global leaders and this section allows you to provide examples of your leadership skills and potential, and to speak to how you would use your time in the UK to develop professionally and academically, build professional network and build lasting positive relationships with the UK.

As part of your answers, please use illustrative examples to support your statements. All answers must be a minimum of 100 words and a maximum of 500.

Leadership and Influence

Chevening is looking for individuals who will be future leaders or influencers in their home countries.

Explain how you meet this requirement, using clear examples of your own leadership and influencing skills to support your answer.

There is this expression in Farsi, in which we say "something is in somebody's blood"! And for me leadership must be one of a kind.

Starting this part, the very first thing that came in to my mind was my first day of school. My parents were newly divorced and life was such a mess. When sharing duties, buying my schools' uniform became my father's task and yes I didn't have it by then.

Here in Iran first graders of primary school go to school one day before everyone else, to become familiar with the atmosphere. Anyway, I was flashing amongst all because of ~~that~~those dark jeans and yellow T-shirt which is not a normal outfit in Iran's schools especially for girls. I remember everyone asking "why don't you have your uniform?" and the same answer over and over again: "Daddy will buy me one today."

Later on when my teacher was talking about that day with my parents she mentioned that I could have become ashamed or stayed away from others because of the difference which was not a usual thing, whereas I did something no one expected.

It was parents and coaches' meeting, so we were in the yard trying to find ourselves a friend. My mom remembers: "We heard a voice! A very loud one from the yard! You were singing all together! How is that possible?" And I myself remember gathering all in a big circle to play a classic social game. There was not a single first grader who wasn't in the team. When the headmaster and some parents appeared on the balcony, I was in the center of the circle, leading the crowd to continue singing and playing.

That little girl is still the same. She studied theater directing and expanded her leadership skills through the spirit of theater which is team working, and the spirit of directing which is guiding a whole team to achieve the result all together. She is now a Human Rights student and is using all those she experienced and learnt in being an activist.

I can see people follow my lead; no matter younger or elder. Now that I am the leader of our university's team for Oxford's Media Moot Court international rounds, 2019, I see myself mighty of motivating the group to fight for our goal through long days and nights of hard work, struggling through and

overcoming the obstacles. Every now and then, a team member becomes tired or depressed; I know I must be positive and creative to influence all for standing till the end, no matter what the result might be.

This is what I want to do as a peace activist; to go for spreading positive peace all around the world starting with my own country. It would be an overwhelming and onerous job to do but I am preparing myself for all those hardships. I know we can fight through it, and that's how a leader should think.

Networking

Chevening is looking for individuals with strong professional relationship building skills, who will engage with the chevening community and influence and lead others in their chosen profession. Please explain how you build and maintain relationships in a professional capacity, using clear examples of how you currently do this, and outline how you hope to use these skills in the future.

For me in this area, being positive is the first rule! To find out about people's value and excellence is not enough, I always mention that I have seen their abilities. This brings mutual understanding and makes people trust me. And trust, I think, is the foundation of every good relationship. When somebody trusts you, she or he can be open to share more and this is what brings synergy, creativity and cooperation; all of which are important to build an invulnerable professional atmosphere and maintain a relationship. But there is this subset for this action and that is being real. To mention a person's ability, I always consider what he or she is really good at. Faking these kinds of attention never works, because people are aware of what they can and what they can't do.

Knowing that every opinion has its own worth and value, I take time to hear different points of view and think about them. There is this simple fact that even if you are a professional, there still might be some new things that you don't know or some points which you have not considered!

Reciprocal respect is another pillar to sustain your empire. You have to take responsibility for your words and actions. No one else is responsible for those. I try to be on time and do exactly what I have promised to do, hence, my credit.

As Author John Maxwell says your network is your net worth. Our network is our success and our power to achieve it. They are our learning experience. Remembering all these is remembering the value of people around us. I keep reminding myself this value to be careful in every aspect of it.

For me it is important where to build a network and also setting boundaries for it. These boundaries are always related to the targets which we have in a network.

Considering all these, I still know that networking is not just about me. I try to connect people to each other when needed. This helps all of us to have bigger and stronger relationships.

To become build and stands beyond every difficulty, a relationship needs constant care and attention, so, BE LOYAL; this is my slogan when it comes to relationships – professional or personal, no difference – this is the only way to maintain one, otherwise you can build one but there won't be a chance to protect~~ing~~ it any further.

Building and thereafter nurturing your relationship is a “Must”. No relationship will last just by building it; you have to devote time to ~~take-taking~~ care of what you have built. To have a garden full of flowers you can’t just plant the seeds and leave the whole process ~~by its own~~ to its own devices. I know how to understand my garden by heart and not only ~~taking take~~ care of it to be nurtured completely but also give its plants suitable space and room to breathe and grow.

Studying in the UK

Outline why you have selected your chosen 3 university courses, and explain how this relates to your previous academic or professional experiences and also your plan for future.

Please do not duplicate the information you have entered on the work experience and education section of this form.

The hardest part of applying to Chevening is this one; choosing only 3 in between all these great universities, most of which are amongst high rankings of the world.

For me “MSc Human Rights”, London School of Economics and Political Science, “MA Refugee Care” in University of Essex and “MA Applied Human Rights”, University of York were the last three ones which I finally decided to choose, all of which took me a long time searching for.

I am now studying “LLM-International Human Rights Law” in Shahid Beheshti University, Iran's leading law school. Despite the fact that Beheshti is a very good-prestigious university with a great reputation, ~~yet~~ according to Iran’s policies, the curriculum designed by the ministry of science does not sufficiently covers all modules of this major. Some courses like “Women”, “Children” and “Refugees” Rights have been defined as optional modules and they don’t get the chance to be presented, all of which, I believe, are important parts of human rights for a student to know about.

As I mentioned in my career plan, I want to make movies and documentaries to teach peace and human rights and for that I need to learn and then try to teach them through an easy-to-understand-way by art. A very important part of it is the acceptance of pluralism and differences, for which working on refugees’ situation is a must. All these are reasons which-why I chose “Refugee Care” in Essex, which is a very well-known university for teaching human rights all around the world. The more I learn, the better I can teach.

Choosing the other two, was at first, based on being applied and practical - which is a deficiency in my studies - afterwards, the ranking and the reputation of the universities.

A major like human rights, which is still facing a lot of obstacles in different parts of the world, needs to be taught practically and in action. The spirit of such programmes is to be active and just sitting back there studying some courses will not change anything. To be able to use other activists’ experiences, for a person like me will be a great support.

For me, with an artistic background - theater – to expand my skills by practically exercise-exercising all I have learnt can help to find a way through which I can transfer the concept, even to those who know nothing about them.

I hope I can reach these goals by the generous help of Chevening and also proving myself, being eligible for one of these great universities.

Career Plan

Chevening is looking for individuals who have a clear post-study career plan. Please outline your immediate plans upon returning home and your longer term career goals. You may wish to consider how these relate to what the UK government is doing in your country.

I believe every person comes to this world with a mission to approach, which the childhood dreams knows about it the best!

I remember ~~me~~myself, being 7; walking to school every day, I used to see a homeless man sleeping in the sidewalk. One freezing morning, I saw him under his thin blanket, covered with snow; my point of view got changed that day! It wasn't just being sad for him anymore; I started to think as a person who acts. That little girl thought: "I will grow up and ~~make~~build a huge warm building in which I can take these homeless men, not only ~~to having~~have a roof above their heads but also learn to make a living and change their lives".

Now here I am, 27 years later, not an architect to build that building but a woman concerned about every ~~people's~~individual's life, thinking about people not having a home, even forced to flee the ones they had! Actually I'm not thinking about ~~making~~constructing buildings anymore, I'm trying to make people feel at home wherever they are! And that is going to come true, through universal peace! I am thinking of a world, not asleep under a shredded blanket, but awake and alive, breathing calm and tranquil in the warm hands of Peace.

I also believe that there is not a single road in every person's past, not related to him/her future. They all are going to lead us towards the mission we were born for.

Restarting my studies after a long gap, in a completely new field, I know exactly where I want to go and how I should ~~↓~~ use my previous paths to get there.

Studying a multidisciplinary major which - except for law - relates also to sociology and psychology, I have learnt that to spread peace and human rights, I need to raise awareness which will lead to the rectification of culture; and that is going to occur through teaching. To teach a universal concept, you need a universal language and that is what art is.

To outline my career plan, As much as I want to continue being a peace activist personally, I also am eager to make movies and documentaries to teach peace and human rights in an easy-to-understand-way, which can travel the world and knock every door of every house.

As a longer term career goal, after a PhD in Peace Studies, I want to broaden a curriculum based on Iranian cultural roots and the terminology of positive peace for elementary schools; starting with my own country. I want to help the next generation omit the negativity and grow up with a culture of peace, through knowing their own human rights and respecting others. As I read somewhere, children learn many of their attitudes to life, from hidden curriculums of school and society. To be able to do so, I myself need to learn ~~7~~ to carry it over thereafter.