ADVICE ABOUT PERSONAL STATEMENTS TO ACCOMPANY YOUR APPLICATION

N.B. Most of this advice is generic but perspectives at other places may vary

At the beginning of your statement please indicate whether you currently see yourself as:

* A theorist
* Undecided between theory and experiment
* An experimentalist

We are looking for quite different things within each category. For people who are undecided we require that they have the necessary skills and experience that we would want to shortlist them as a theorist and as an experimentalist. That said if you are undecided then say so – some of our very best students have come to us undecided. The ability to test the waters of the other side is one of the unique features of the CDT.

Some pointers:

**Keep it short** Long essays about the story of how you love science or quantum mechanics etc aren’t useful. Nor are quotes from your favourite philosophers, scientists.

Pick out some **highlights** of your track record in case we miss them. Explain any lowlights if you think it is necessary.

Be as **quantitative** as possible. For example if you know what you were ranked in your year or in certain relevant subjects you did particularly well in, say so. It’s much better if that information comes from your referees so ask them to include it. If you did Olympiad or something similar or won certain prizes point then that out.

If you have a non-UK degree it can be very hard for us to judge your transcripts even when they are translated. Try even harder to be quantitative about where you rank and ask your referees to be quantitative also.

Don’t wax lyrically about how great the program is or how great Imperial is (It just makes us blush) If there are aspects of the program you see as particularly suited to you or your situation (e.g. you’ve been out of physics for a while) then feel free to mention it.

Don’t send us copies of your theses/published papers as we are going through far too many applications to read them. You will get a chance to talk about your past research experience at interview.

Don’t propose your own research topic – that’s not how the CDT works. Once you are in you will have a chance to seek out supervisors from across the UK to propose a topic to, but that’s a long way away!