

# PHD APPLICATION SERVICE

## ELEMENT SEVEN



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# ZOOM CALL NOTES

## Call Notes for first 30-minute call with client

In the first 30-minute call, the client will be asked the following questions. Below each question are sample notes from a hypothetical call with Sarah, the fictional client.

### **Tell me about your academic experiences so far. What have you enjoyed/ didn't enjoy as much?**

Having completed an MA English Literature with distinction at Goldsmiths, University of London in 2024 and a first-class BA English Literature at the University of Warwick in 2023, Sarah wants to pursue a PhD at a top UK university.

### **What are your career ambitions?**

Sarah wants to become a university Professor but is also interested in working in publishing or in media.

### **Do you have any ideas about what area you'd like to focus your PhD in? What are your research interests?**

She is interested in contemporary British fiction, postcolonial literature and feminist literary theory and wants to develop a thesis that incorporates these interests, building on her MA research.

### **Do you have any ideas about where you would like to study? Do you have any preference for a specific university, city or region? What kind of programme interests you? Do you have any ideas for potential PhD supervisors at this stage?**

Sarah wants to apply to 'top' universities, possibly Oxford or Cambridge. She is only interested in UK universities and would prefer to live in a city. She doesn't want to continue studying at Goldsmiths but would consider another university in London, such as King's College London and would be interested in Warwick, where she was an undergraduate. She doesn't have any suggestions for a PhD supervisor as she hasn't started researching any yet. She would prefer a female supervisor who researches postcolonial literature. She is keen to apply to a PhD English programme, but she would like to consider a broader programme, if relevant, that incorporates English with Postcolonial Studies.

### **When would you like to begin a PhD programme? Would you prefer a full or part-time programme?**

Ideally September 2025 but she needs to find funding so, more realistically, January 2026 or September 2026. She is looking for a full-time programme.

**Do you have funding in place for fees and living costs? Would you need to secure funding before you begin the programme? Are you a Home or International student? Do you know of any restrictions or requirements that would help or hinder you obtaining funding?**

Sarah needs funding to support herself and to pay fees. She can't start the programme without it. She is a Home student, is from a Black British background and is a first-generation university student.

**Do you have any questions? Is there anything you'd like to know more about?**

Sarah had questions about the structure of a PhD programme and needed more information about the process of writing a thesis.

### **Call Notes for second 30-minute call with client**

In the second 30-minute call, the client will be asked the following questions after they have received their University Recommendation Report. Below each question are sample notes from a hypothetical call with Sarah, the fictional client.

**When you were reading the report, which of the universities appealed to you? What drew you to them?**

Sarah favoured Oxford or Cambridge. She has been to Oxford before and likes the city.

She was drawn to both universities' excellent, high-ranking statuses and the opportunities they would offer her to reach her career ambitions. There seem to be more funding opportunities available at Oxford, which she needs to be able to undertake doctoral study.

**Would you consider any of the universities?**

Sarah felt that Warwick did not offer enough funding opportunities, SOAS was not specifically focused on literature, and King's College London did not focus only on fiction.

**Which of the supervisors did you prefer and why?**

Professor Elleke Boehmer (Oxford) is Sarah's first choice. She considered the others, but wants to start by making one application to one supervisor.

**How do you feel your research connects to their research interests?**

Elleke Boehmer is a leading figure in postcolonial studies and her research has a focus on literature with an interest in contemporary Britain. Sarah has read one of her books.

**Do any of the funding opportunities interest you?**

Sarah wants to apply for the Open-Oxford-Cambridge AHRC Doctoral Training Programme as it offers multiple awards. She also wants to apply for a Clarendon scholarship, the Ertegun

Graduate Scholarship Programme and an Oxford-Wolfson-Marriott Graduate scholarship to give herself the best chance of success.

**What would you like our next steps to be?**

Sarah would like to apply to Oxford and be supported to make her application as well as funding applications. Sarah realises that most applications are closed for 2025-2026 admission so will apply for 2026-2027 admission.