

Mohammed Whittaker

97 Castledore Road

Twyford

RG10 9XT

07873254992

mohammed@whittaker.com

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John Smith

Dean of Philosophy

Nottingham Trent University

50 Shakespeare Street

Nottingham

NG1 4FQ

RE: PhD Philosophy and Public Policy Programme

As an MA Philosophy Distinction graduate from UCL with a narrow focus on the Right to Privacy and the way surveillance, crime prevention, and other governmental acts violate it, I am excited to apply to a PhD Philosophy and Public Policy programme at an institution so focused on evaluating global surveillance policy and influencing real, positive change.

I completed my MA writing on the philosophical and moral basis of modern human rights, with a focus on the right to privacy in the digital world to assert whether the Declaration of Human Rights and other conventions could be violated by national internet privacy laws such as the Investigatory Powers Act. During this time, I also worked as a Teaching Assistant, which allowed me constant feedback from the new generation of philosophers on these themes, which helped to guide the process when I was selected to assist with interdisciplinary research with Sociology and Psychology colleagues.

I am especially interested in the Evidence and Policy part of the course, as I am a firm believer that not only do certain regulations violate our human rights, they do not bring about the outcome that is touted as the justification for them. I am conscious of my need to expand my skill set and approach in the light of my ambition to advocate and advise non-governmental and governmental bodies on necessary concessions and compromises.

When dealing with issues of global technology, it seems like the law and public policy are always playing catch-up. However, an approach based on classic philosophical themes seems to suggest that these measures are misguided and harmful to all. During my PhD study, I would like to stop focusing on the past and theory, and further explore the possible practical consequences of a world without privacy which we seem to be sliding towards, drawing on the body of knowledge in behavioural sciences.

I invite you to find the publications listed in my CV and see the strong base, committed continuity, and passion I devoted to the subject so far. I would love to discuss any finer or broad points with you.

Best Regards,

Mohammed Whittaker