

Dear Admissions Committee,

It is my great pleasure to recommend Wojciech Mojsiejuk for admission to your undergraduate program. It has been an honor to be his Polish language and form teacher for the past four years. From the first days of school, he drew my attention by using precisely chosen words. He proved himself an ambitious, assiduous and tenacious young man.

Wojciech is an excellent and unique student. He eagerly participated in class discussions, seriously treated his duties and perpetually tried creative problem-solving. He possesses abilities of critical reasoning uncommon for his age. He always treated his classmates with respect; nevertheless, it didn't stop him from questioning their line of thought.

Wojciech is known for a wide variety of his extracurricular activities. He has been learning the Japanese language for 6 years (he is also interested in other foreign languages). Wojciech enjoys playing music instruments (classical and electric guitar), drawing, painting. I think that he puts most of his energy into programming and acquiring knowledge. For me, he has revealed himself in his interest in literature. In his freshman year, we started talking about our literary tastes, what books we read recently, what impressed us, what we recommend. Since that moment we have been sharing books with each other. He reads a variety of genres. From Agatha Christie's crime novels, through science fiction (Verne, Wells), horror fiction (Poe, Lovecraft), dystopias (Orwell, Golding) to the classical literature (Camus, Dostoyevsky, Hesse, Fitzgerald, Rilke). He also likes comics and popular science books (chiefly on religion, history or physics).

Wojciech is an open minded person, he often combines different philosophical concepts in an extraordinary (sometimes even paradoxical) way, but his reasoning is always supported by meticulous analysis.

When it comes to his technical interests, from what I know, his passion started at a very young age. His mother played a great role in his computer science education because she worked in IT-related fields and encouraged him to use computers. In primary school he picked up programming, he also took part in creating the school's website. In junior high school, he was improving his programming skills and participating in IT contests. When he attended the secondary technical school, he was already ahead of the computer science curriculum. Therefore he focused his interest on physics and quickly became one of the best in this subject. In the junior year he had an internship where he learned Python language from scratch (which he found very interesting because of its simplicity and possibilities it gives). He participated in many projects, inter alia, Technical Innovation Contest. He helped his classmate to develop his game. Unfortunately, many of Wojtek's projects ended as concepts only. Being too occupied with various projects, he did not have enough time to develop every idea. However, the projects he had finished were often awarded. He received first prize for student's projects in Techno-talents (a competition which aims to boost entrepreneurship, creativity and high technology in North-

Eastern Poland), he was also a finalist of contests organized by Bialystok University of Technology and received Prime Minister Grants for the highest average grade among his graduating class and extraordinary accomplishments.

Wojciech displays a charismatic personality. Being a gregarious person, he has a great ease of creating his social network and is very popular among pupils. He consciously chooses his company and the degree of intimacy. Wojciech incredibly quickly and easily captures others' attention when he enthusiastically talks about his interests and passions - including programming, physics or philosophy. He participates in charitable activities and helps junior colleagues with difficulties in learning by providing them with gratuitous tuition. At the same time, Wojciech is an excellent carer and great companion for his disabled brother, which again emphasizes his remarkable aptitude for helping others.

Wojciech has good manners and is very tactful but sometimes he could be quite persistent. He is a man of strong convictions, which can lead to a rebellious attitude and not giving up on his position. A long-term conflict with his teacher of mathematics, which in the end resulted in a reduction of Wojciech's final grade, may serve as an example of his strong beliefs. He has an ability to establish good relationship with teachers of the subjects that are important to him and interest him. However, he requires that teachers have an appropriate personality - charisma, competence, and above all, a passion for their profession.

Wojciech has a very wide range of interests - from science through art and culture to programming - which led him to the decision to study outside Poland because Polish educational system of higher education does not allow for facultative and individual development of the curriculum at university. Once selected, the educational path must be continued for at least 3 years or suspended in order to take a different profile of education from the beginning. Studying in the United States would offer Wojciech a wide range of courses and subjects, catering to his preference. Furthermore, studies outside Poland open up the possibility of scientific research right from the start with access to laboratories and individual advisors. To get a taste of the choice, Wojciech has followed various lectures on American campuses through MOOC, mostly computer science and physics, for the past three years.

**Additional information:**

In Poland students, once they choose a secondary school, are automatically assigned to subjects specific to the educational profile they picked. They are deprived of a possibility to choose individual subjects and participate in a personalized course of training.

A graduate receives technical school leaving certificate and then can proceed to external examinations: secondary school certificate exam (the Polish equivalent of SAT) and exams confirming qualifications in the learned profession. Secondary school certificate exam is not reliable (the same student can get different results in different years) because a greater importance is put on percentile rank and not raw scores of the exam.

In my opinion, as a teacher of Polish, written school exam in Polish language is an example of an extremely subjective student assessment. In Poland, the learning outcomes are assessed according to a scale of 1 to 6, where approx. 30-50% rate is the threshold (this is the lowest passable grade or 2), 51-75% gives a satisfactory grade or 3, 76-90% is a good rating or 4, and 91-94%, very good or 5, while an excellent (or 6) can only be received by a student who received 95-100%. As a side note, the final grades are not always determined by individual component grades, and teachers are given freedom to base their decision on other factors.

Sincerely,

Ms.Parafiniuk,