Question 1: The Leadership Programme

Prove the timing: the specific gap you have hit, and why the Leadership Programme, not the scholarship generally, closes it.

200	2	2	Free
WORD LIMIT	NAMED ELEMENTS NEEDED	WORKED EXAMPLES	TO READ & DOWNLOAD

ABOUT THE EXAMPLES.
All names, organisations and figures below are invented, to show technique. Yours must be real and defensible at interview.

01 SECTION 1

What this question actually asks

The question. "What is it that attracts you to the WHT Leadership Programme at this particular point in your career?" In no more than 200 words.

Read it literally. It is not "why do you want to study at Oxford" and it is not "why do you want a master's". It asks about the **Leadership Programme specifically**, and it asks **why now**. Two different applicants with identical CVs should be able to give two genuinely different answers here, because the honest answer depends on where you already are, not on a template of what scholarship panels like to hear.

The two halves

HALF	WHAT IT IS TESTING
What attracts you to the Programme	Have you actually looked at what the Leadership Programme does, ethical leadership, an enterprise challenge, communication training, a cohort, rather than treating it as a formality attached to the money?

HALF	WHAT IT IS TESTING
At this point in your career	Can you name the specific gap you have reached right now, the kind that two more years in the same job will not close on its own?

Word plan at 200 words. The stage you have reached, around 70 words. What the Programme specifically offers that closes the gap, around 90 words. The link to what you do next, around 40 words.

02 SECTION 2

Writing it, beat by beat

The stage you have reached, around 70 words

Open with where you actually are, not with an abstract claim about leadership. Name the specific limitation: a skill you keep running into, a decision you were not yet senior enough to make, a moment you noticed you were managing a team but had never been taught to.

> ***Weak:*** *"I have always wanted to develop my leadership skills and believe this programme would be a perfect fit for my ambitions."*
> ***Strong:*** *"Three years into running a twelve-person field team, I can plan a project, but I have never had to persuade a board to fund one it did not already believe in. That is the gap I have hit."*

What the Programme specifically offers, around 90 words

Name at least two concrete elements of the Leadership Programme, not the scholarship generally, and say what each gives you that your career so far has not. The Programme includes ethical leadership discussions, an enterprise or business challenge, and communication training, delivered alongside a cohort of scholars from other countries and sectors.

Be specific about which parts and why. If your gap is persuading funders, the enterprise challenge and communication training are the relevant elements, not the whole Programme in general terms. If your gap is navigating competing ethical claims in your field, say so and name the ethical leadership strand directly.

The link to what comes next, around 40 words

Close by saying, briefly, what closing this specific gap lets you do when you go home. This sentence should connect forward to your answers on challenge and career progression elsewhere in the Statement, not repeat them.

03 SECTION 3

Two worked examples

All names, organisations and figures are invented, to show technique.

Example A: public health

> *Three years into running district vaccination outreach for a ministry programme, I can plan a campaign, but I have never had to make the case for one to a sceptical provincial budget committee holding competing demands. That is the gap I have hit, and it will only get wider as I take on larger programmes.*
> *The Leadership Programme's enterprise challenge and communication training speak directly to it: building a case for resources under real constraint, and presenting it persuasively to people who do not share my assumptions. The ethical leadership strand matters too, since every outreach decision now trades off coverage against cost, and I have had no formal grounding for making that trade-off defensibly.*
> *What I need is not more technical public health training. It is the ability to argue for it. That is precisely where I am now, and precisely what the Programme is built to close.*

Example B: enterprise and informal markets

> *Two years into co-founding a small recycling enterprise that now works with 40 informal waste collectors, I have learned to run the operation, but never to defend it to people who control the regulation we depend on. That is the point I have reached: technically capable, institutionally outmatched.*
> *The Programme's enterprise challenge and its community of scholars from other regulatory environments are what I am missing, alongside the communication training to make our case to policymakers who assume informal work is a problem to eliminate rather than a system to include. A cohort who have faced comparable regulatory walls elsewhere would sharpen that argument faster than I can alone.*

> *I am not looking for a credential. I am looking for the specific skills that turn a working enterprise into one that can survive contact with the people who regulate it.*

04 SECTION 4

Dos and don'ts

Do

- Name the specific gap you have hit, not a general wish to grow
- Name at least two specific elements of the Leadership Programme by name
- Explain why those elements, not the scholarship generally, close your gap
- Keep "at this point in your career" literal: say what stage you are actually at
- Close with a brief, forward link to what you do when you return

Don't

- Write an answer that could apply to any leadership programme anywhere
- List your achievements again; they are already on the Statement
- Claim the scholarship will make you a leader, rather than close a specific gap
- Ignore "the Programme" and write only about wanting to study at Oxford
- Repeat your five-year career plan in full here

05 SECTION 5

Common mistakes, and the fix

MISTAKE	WHY IT COSTS MARKS	THE FIX
Answer is really about Oxford, not the Programme	Does not answer the question asked	Name specific Programme elements: ethical leadership, the enterprise challenge, communication training

MISTAKE	WHY IT COSTS MARKS	THE FIX
"I have always wanted to be a leader"	Generic, unfalsifiable	Open with the specific limitation you hit recently
No sense of timing	Ignores "at this point in your career"	Name the stage you are at and why it matters now, not five years ago
Repeats the CV	Wastes the 200 words on what the panel already has	Use the space to explain the gap, not list the achievements

06 SECTION 6

Checklist

- The specific gap you have hit is named in the opening sentences
- At least two named elements of the Leadership Programme appear
- Each named element is tied to the gap, not listed generically
- "At this point in your career" is answered literally
- Nothing here simply repeats your CV or your five-year plan
- Under 200 words