

# Student Pen Portraits

## Young women in Post 16



These 3 young women joined the UTC for their GCSEs, partly because of the specialist curriculum, and partly because a smaller institution might better cater for their considerable additional needs.

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## Student A

### Areas of Celebration

VIP support, Destinations

### Student Profile

A has juvenile-onset rheumatoid arthritis, a medical condition which has had a severe impact on her schooling, with extended periods of time spent in hospital. At the start of her level 3 studies, for example, she spent weeks at home recovering from severe pneumonia and, as somebody designated as clinically extremely vulnerable, she also had to spend longer at home shielding during the pandemic.

### How we made a difference

- The VIP team worked very closely with A throughout her time at the UTC to ensure that she was well-supported and had access to a full curriculum during the times she was able to work. She was also given personalised catch-up tuition on her return.
- A really enjoyed the professional culture at the UTC and her relationships with staff were mature and constructive.

### Academic Performance

A achieved D\*DM in her digital qualifications

### Destinations

A is now reading Computer Science at Swansea University.

## Student K

### Areas of Celebration

SEND and VIP support, Destinations

### Student Profile

K has an EHCP for her autism and medical issues which include an eating disorder and chronic fatigue. Like A, her education was severely affected by hospitalisation and she sat her GCSEs at home. K struggled to socialise when she first joined the UTC and these difficulties were compounded by frequent absence. As her confidence built, her health improved, relationships blossomed and by the end of year 13, K was a much happier, more academically engaged young woman.

### How we made a difference

- K benefitted from clear boundaries and expectations alongside the support of the SEND team. She received daily support throughout lockdown.
- Across the curriculum, a high degree of personalisation (including reduced entry requirements to post-16 study) allowed her to access a level 3 programme of study.
- She became Vice-Chair of the Student Council.

### Academic Performance

- A Level Psychology - grade B
- Extended Project Qualification - grade C
- BTEC Applied Science - Distinction

### Destinations

K had been offered a foundation course to study Medical Sciences at UWE but, in view of her final grades, this was upgraded to a full-time degree course. The fact that K felt confident enough to accept the full course offer represents an achievement in itself.

## Student L

### Areas of Celebration

PP, VIP support, Destinations

### Student Profile

L's picture is very similar to those of A and K, but her own significant physical and mental health difficulties were compounded by those of her mother, a single parent. She was also in receipt of free-school meals. At times, L felt that she could no longer cope with education but was encouraged to stick with it by an extended team that offered a friendly ear and academic support whenever it was needed.

### How we made a difference

- At the start of year 13 for example, she was adamant that she wanted to drop BTEC Engineering. Staff persuaded her that this might harm her chances of getting a university place and she was offered individualised support to help build her confidence.
- When she started an EPQ, she felt unable to read any extended passages of text but a scaffolded approach and some 1-2-1 support was put in place such that by the end of the course she could engage with government reports and other academic literature.
- She also became chair of the Rights Respecting School student committee.

### Academic Performance

- A Level Psychology - grade C
- Extended Project Qualification - grade A
- BTEC Engineering - Distinction
- BTEC Applied Science - Merit

### Destinations

An offer of a foundation course in Primary Education was upgraded to a full degree course at Swansea University on the basis of her final grades and, like K, her readiness to accept the place evidences the confidence she developed while at the UTC.