

Quote NVQ Programme student

I am currently doing the NVQ Level 3 in Sports Development with Camden's Physical Development Team in partnership with LaSWAP 6th Form. I joined the NVQ Level 2 programme in Sports Activity Leadership in September 2020 after finishing Year 11.

At the time of joining the NVQ course, things were at its most challenging for me. Being neuro-diverse, I went through my secondary years struggling with self-confidence and on more than one occasion, people like me were made to feel that there wasn't much progression available for us in the future and we just had to settle for mediocre prospects, if any. The impact of this outlook on me was quite traumatic. The career adviser at my secondary school rarely had time to advise me on pathways of my interest, one of them being sports, which I have actively engaged in since the age of 4.

At a time when my parents and I were forced by our local authority to accept a placement at our locality on a course with no progressive outcomes, we were not willing to accept mediocre and embarked on our own research where we discovered the NVQ programme offered at Talacre Community Sports Centre, home to Camden's Physical Activity Team.

The course was an absolute match to my aspirations for the future, which has always been to work with young people from a diverse range of backgrounds within a community-based setting. I was at my lowest moment when joining the NVQ course in September 2020 but the encouragement, the positive engagement, the feedback and support with self-development offered to me and my other course mates have truly been fantastic. I have learned that it's okay to make mistakes as

the best outcomes come from a learning process of self-development. I was always self-conscious about being different due to neuro-diversity. However, the system of inclusivity and support offered by the NVQ team and tutors have helped me to identify and capitalise on my strengths and identity. It has helped me feel proud of who I am and what I can become. I have felt safe in a non-judgemental environment that has helped me grow as a young person. Every young person's needs are identified individually and the NVQ team work well in communication and collaboration with families to support the growth and progress of all of us on the course.

I can truly say that after 1 year on this course, I am definitely in a positively different state of mind than I was in the summer of 2020. I have made friendships that will last through to adulthood because I was supported to build on my self-confidence and my engagements with peers. I have learned skills and gained qualifications that give me options into a career I would truly enjoy and one where I will be able to give back to the community. The NVQ team and this course are definitely one with progressive outlooks and positive outcomes. I would definitely encourage young people to join the NVQ programme as it is run by an outstanding partnership and establishment.

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