



**THE OPEN
SCHOOL**

A student story

Paul

Paul completed his GCSEs but did not meet his full potential. He found maths difficult and achieved a grade 3. His attendance was lower than average and he did not love school. Due to a lack of options in the area at the end of his GCSEs Paul decided to stay on at his Sixth Form but was not really sure what to study. Paul has a supportive family who want the best for him. Paul doesn't really know what he wants to do in the future and has become quite bored with the subjects he studied for GCSE. Paul's Sixth Form is very small so subject choices are limited. He was accepted to access his Sixth Form for post-16 study and resit maths GCSE.

Paul has been provided with access to an additional set of A Level subjects through the Open School. It is not available in his Sixth Form currently. Paul liked the sound of criminology because it interested him, is an applied course and is delivered remotely. All lessons are accessed asynchronously, supplemented with live Teams seminars weekly. Paul is provided with the resources for each week at the start of the week and his subject time is timetabled and supervised in his own Sixth Form by a learning mentor. This is a supportive measure to help Paul to achieve well. Paul lacks the confidence to approach his criminology teacher by email but his Head of Sixth Form and Learning Mentor ask questions and liaise with the teacher to support him. Paul is quiet and lacks confidence but is learning to be more independent and is facing more opportunities to develop his independence and resilience than through a traditional Sixth Form learning offer.



Paul has achieved C grade in his criminology assessments and feels this more flexible way of working is helping him to learn and work through the online resources at his own pace. Paul's criminology grade is the highest of his three A Levels currently. He has benefitted from attending a half-termly face to face meeting with his criminology teacher which has helped him to build trust and get to know his teacher. This has reassured him and made him more willing to ask for help and assistance from his teacher directly. Paul is well supported by his Head of Sixth Form and Learning Mentor at his own Sixth Form. Paul has needed access to technology to access his Open School A Level and this has been provided through the Head of Sixth Form. Paul has been able to maintain his C grade and strong attendance throughout the course. He is really enjoying his criminology course but still finds the personal organisation and independence required quite a challenge. Studying through Open Schools is supporting him to feel more confident even though it has put him outside his comfort zone. He knows this has been a good option for him even though it has been difficult.

Due to Open School Paul feels unsure about his future. His options are broader than he thought before he started. Paul's Head of Sixth Form, Learning Mentor and criminology teacher are all working hard to support Paul and engage him in planning for his future.