



A student story

Amrit

Amrit is a model Year 10 student. He contributes well in class, is unfailingly polite and can be relied upon to produce work of a high quality. He does well in periodic assessments and is predicted good grades at GCSE. He is also bored.

His fascination with how things work; with making things and taking other things apart is way ahead of his course of Design and Technology lessons which happen just every two weeks. He reads high level publications about technology in his spare time and chose 'Technology and Society' as his prize for last year's awards evening. He bides his time in Maths, tolerating the time lost as the teacher revisits concepts he grasps easily first time. He does that in most lessons in most subjects except PE which he finds embarrassing, though he puts up with it.

He passes his days in school with little enthusiasm but accepts that that's how it is if you want to get good results which he knows matter later in life. He is very mature.

His Open School tutor asks him whether he would like to accompany a Year 7 visit to the Science museum. Being Amrit, of course he agrees even though it is pointed out that he would have to 'catch up' on lessons missed that day.

The visit is a joy for him. He is able to take a group of enthusiastic Year 7s and explain the inner workings of combustion engine and the principles of a ratchet pulley. He is so good at this that the Dennis, one of the museum curators, notices and invites him to spend two Saturdays a month working at the museum, unpaid of course.

After three months the Open School tutor tells Amrit that he has had such good feedback from the museum and wonders whether Amrit would like to think about joining an engineering access course at the local University. He would be mainly working with eighteen year olds but the supervisor would ensure he was supported properly.

Six months after that, Amrit is in Year 10, thoroughly enjoying the engineering course and doing it well. He is still finding time to do all that is required in his GCSE programmes and is still expected to do well. He is still bored in lessons; well, he says he is. But he has a spring in his step, especially when the Design and Technology teacher asks him how it is going at University.

