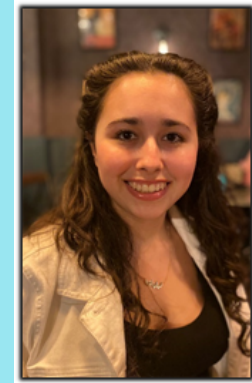


Case Study:

HE Student View -

Lily's Success Story

Throughout Lily's time at school she received a range of support from the Shaping Futures team, including subject specific campus visits, 1-2-1 support and was a participant in the Through the Eyes of Girls project. Through the Eyes of Girls was a sustained outreach project which targeted Y9-Y11 girls from local schools with the ability to progress to university. The programme, which was co-created with students following focus groups, aimed to increase their knowledge on the whole university experience, improve their study skills and ensure they were fully aware of their options in relation to progressing into and through higher education.



After 1-2-1 support around her post-16 options, Lily did fantastically in her exams and progressed to university, where she was able to access the Liverpool John Moores Opportunity Scholarship, a criteria of which is to engage with a sustained outreach activities. As Liverpool John Moores was closely involved with the Through the Eyes of Girls project, Lily qualified for this funding. Below, Lily shares her experience in her own words:

"Your Dyslexia means you are unlikely to ever sit GCSEs". When I first heard those words at primary school, it was a total shock and I felt like my teachers had completely written me off. I decided I would try to prove them wrong.

At secondary school, the teachers helped me to find methods of learning which were better suited to my needs. As a result of those learning methods, and my very strong work ethic, my grades slowly started to improve. However, as my GCSE years approached, I was still unsure whether my Dyslexia and Dyscalculia would prevent me getting the grades I needed to get into my school's sixth form. I wanted to stay on for sixth form, but at this point my predicted grades were still a little too low.

At the start of year 10, my head of year (who I affectionately called my 'school mum', and who encouraged me to believe that with lots of hard work I could pass my GCSEs) put my name forwards as one of six girls from my school to take part in the 'Through the eyes of Girls' project. It was an honour to be chosen to participate in this project, a sustained outreach programme delivered by Shaping Futures, which aimed to encourage girls like me to consider university as an option.

When I started the project, I was not sure if university would be the right choice for me. I thought university was only an option for the 'smart' kids, and I really didn't think I would 'fit in' due to my special education needs and mixed BAME background. I took an active part in the various events of the project; we had lots of guest speakers, toured universities and did skill building workshops. The project gave me a real taste of university life and helped me to decide that, if I did well enough in my exams, I'd eventually like to apply to attend university.

I went on to pass eight GCSEs and one BTEC, which increased my confidence. This was good enough to stay on for sixth form and, although the project had ended, the team at Shaping Futures helped me to choose which A levels and BTECs to study. I also decided to do an extended project (worth half an A level) in a subject I was interested in.

I went on to obtain 164 UCAS points (including two A* grades and a Distinction*). I am currently in my first year of a BA (hons) Human Resource Management degree at Liverpool John Moores University. With the support of the Shaping Futures team, I successfully applied for a scholarship, based partly on my participation in the project. I hope to pursue a career in HR with a focus on equality and diversity. Taking part in the 'Through the Eyes of Girls' project proved to be a truly life changing opportunity and I am so glad I took part in it!

The Shaping Futures team would like to thank Lily-Mae for sharing her story