

# MEET GABRIEL STIRLING

## GCSE Programme

Having been home educated and disillusioned with main stream school, Gabriel Stirling came to Newbury College as a pre-16 student to study his GCSEs. Gabriel was much better suited to the College environment and soon excelled; winning the Best GCSE student at our FE awards in December 2016, doing extremely well in his exams and going on to study A-levels at Queen Mary's College in Basingstoke.

We asked Gabriel why he wanted to study here and what it was about Newbury College that helped him achieve his goals.

### Why did you choose to study at Newbury College?

After being home educated for three years, I realised that I needed to receive accredited qualifications, but since school hadn't worked out for me, my options were limited. Newbury College offered the qualifications I needed to progress academically, but in an environment which was better suited to me after my past negative experiences of school.

### What interested you most about the subjects you took?

I studied GCSE Maths, Humanities, Science, Law and Citizenship. My main interests are the humanity subjects, especially history and politics, which I chose to study at A-level. This is because I believe our lives are most affected by these subjects, especially politics, so it's important to understand how they impact our everyday lives.

### What were the highlights for you during your course?

The main highlight was the high level of support offered by the staff, not only in helping me select the right course, but also in building the somewhat lacking self-



Picture: Gabriel receives Best GCSE Award from BBC Breakfast's Mike Bushell.

confidence I had at the start of my time at Newbury College. This allowed me to move forward whenever I was struggling with work instead of giving up, and moving on to where I am today.

### Would you recommend the College to others in a similar position?

I would definitely recommend Newbury College. Not only did they deliver a well-planned programme, which allowed me to gain the qualifications I needed, but they also allowed me to grow as person and gain the skills I needed to boost my confidence.

### How did the qualifications you gained here at Newbury College help you further your education?

Because I wanted to pursue a path which involved doing A Levels and going on to university, I needed a good set of GCSEs to enable to onto further study.

### What are your future career plans?

I would potentially like to work in town or transport planning, but I'm still quite open minded!

### Please summarise your experience at Newbury College and how it has had an impact on your life.

With Newbury College being the only place where I could achieve the qualifications I did, the opportunity my time there gave me was huge. Like many young people who fall out of the mainstream education system, Newbury College offered a lifeline which helped put me back on a path to success. Although it feels like ages ago now, the extremely positive legacy will remain with me forever.

# MEET GABRIEL STIRLING (CONTINUED)

## Hard work rewarded with Heart

Gabriel had a sneak peek behind the scenes of the Thames Valley Heart Breakfast Show with Matt and Michelle during the February half term after winning Best GCSE Student at the Newbury College FE Awards in December 2016.

As part of his award, which was sponsored by Heart Thames Valley, Gabriel got to tour the Reading-based radio facilities with a breakfast show producer before joining Matt and Michelle in the studio as they broadcasted live across the region.

# heart



Picture: Gabriel with Heart Breakfast presenters Matt and Michelle.



The Academy at Newbury College offers a Pre-GCSE and GCSE Programme, plus a two-year A Level Programme\* as an alternative provision to Sixth Form. The subjects offered are designed to give students the widest possible range of literacy, numeracy and transferable skills, with the nationally recognised qualifications required by universities and employers.

The curriculum offers a range of subjects, with English, Maths and Science being mandatory for Pre-GCSE and GCSE students. The programme builds a strong foundation for further study on either a vocational or an academic programme.

\*Please note that the College is not enrolling any new students onto its A Level Programme for September 2017. This gives the College an opportunity to align its new provision, due to open in September 2018, with new government proposals.

Could you be our next high flyer? Newbury College has a wide range of full-time academic and vocational courses that will enable you to reach your goals. Whatever career route you want to take, come along to one of our open day events and discuss your options. We look forward to writing about your journey soon.



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