



Queen Alexandra College

A National College for People with Disabilities

Pinewood Campus



Pinewood Campus is located in nearby Woodgate Valley. It provides a high quality and exciting stepping stone into the world of work and is more business-like than educational in its feel.

It was purposefully designed to not feel like 'being at College' as Pinewood supports students to move away from being in education to support them to become more confident with the working world. This supported progression into work is achieved within the ethos and values of QAC.

Pinewood is where specific QAC Employment Pathways programmes are delivered such as our **Supported Internships** and **STRIDES** courses.



For more information please contact QAC on 0121 428 5050 or email info@qac.ac.uk

www.qac.ac.uk

Kevin's Story...



Hi, my name is Kevin, I really love being at Pinewood, it is a great place to be!

Pinewood is a lovely environment, staff and students all get along really well together and we feel like a family. This has been the best year for me during my time at QAC, I have learnt so much!

The Supported Internship and STRIDES programmes are both very good at building your confidence, helping you to manage your anxiety about going out in to the world of work. They offer you the opportunity to actually experience a real work environment, which is very supportive and readies you for when you leave College and look for work yourself.

With the help of the Job Coaches I have really enjoyed my work experience placement at Extra Care, a retirement village in Birmingham. It was a real joy to be part of it and wonderful to have had the opportunity to go out to work.

As part of my Supported Internship programme I have Business Admin, Customer Services and English and

Maths sessions during the week. I also enjoy choosing different club activities to relax, socialise and participate in such as colouring, reading and board games on Wednesday afternoons and attending wellbeing sessions available every Friday.

The Travel Training and Rehab team have worked with me to learn routes to various places so that I can improve my independence and travel skills. Assistive technology and software such as VI friendly keyboards with large letters and colour contrast keys, a CCTV and ZoomText help me to be more independent and not rely on the staff so much. I also get to access Braille and touch typing sessions with qualified teachers twice a week at the main QAC campus.

My time at Pinewood has meant so much to me and I want to say a big thank you to all the staff and students, especially as we have all been through a really tough time with COVID-19 lockdown restrictions but we have not let that hold us back! ●

Amy's Story...



Hi, my name is Amy, and I am currently doing a Supported Internship based with the Albion Foundation.

The Work Placement Team at QAC secured the placement for me, I deliver coaching sessions at the Albion Foundation Sports Hall every Monday evening and I coach Powerchair Football on Thursday and Friday at the West Bromwich Leisure Centre.

This work placement has helped me to gain experience creating lesson plans for my sessions, working in collaboration with a staff member from the Albion Foundation. I have achieved my FA Level 1 in Football Coaching.

In addition to my work placement I am also undertaking English and Maths sessions with a tutor from the main College campus. During lockdown, I worked remotely from home via the internet, to continue with my Maths, English and Work Skills sessions with my Work Placement Tutor.

The Business Admin lessons are really useful to me because I am learning a range of different skills in my unit work, such as how to use different equipment safely in a work environment and working well and positively with

other staff and peers. I have been involved in a couple of Enterprise projects, where I have also learnt about customer service.

I did not enjoy being at the Pinewood Campus at first because all my friends were still on the main College campus. However, I soon got in to a routine of coming here on a regular basis and now really enjoy being at Pinewood, I have made lots of friends here.

I have been working with the Rehabilitation and Travel Training team to go to the local shop in my wheelchair. I have now been signed off by the team to go there by myself, this has further increased my independence.

Although I am based at Pinewood Campus, I am a residential student at the main College campus and still use the mentoring and counselling support services available and work with the physiotherapy team.

I have enjoyed my time at Pinewood, gaining the necessary work skills to start applying for a job. I now have a professional CV and gained some valuable work experience in football coaching working with the Albion Foundation. ●

Brad's Story...



Hello, my name is Brad, and if I were to talk about my experience on the STRIDES programme here at Pinewood, I'd say that I've had a great time!

I'm completing work which is effectively helping me prepare for and progress towards future employment, whilst being supported by friendly staff who always make you feel welcome.

During my work placement at Resources for Autism in Birmingham I had no problems understanding and following instructions given as they were specifically explained to me in detail. I felt very comfortable working there and I really enjoyed using programmes such as Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Word.

The placement was a fantastic experience for me as I would like to be employed as a support member of staff for people with Special Educational Needs in the future.

Sessions at Pinewood have also helped me to improve in Maths. I used to panic and become physically tense when I did Maths but I feel like my confidence has drastically improved. I do not participate in English sessions anymore as I passed my GCSE exam at the start of last year, so my tutor has given me admin tasks to complete to fill that period which reinforces my knowledge in English and Business Administration.

The sessions that I have had with my tutor covering Enterprise, Customer Service and Business Administration have really helped me prepare for possible future employment.

I feel like I'm fully comfortable when it comes to everything I do at the Pinewood Campus, including my mentoring and mobility sessions, having use of equipment in the kitchen at lunchtime and travelling to Pinewood via transport provided by QAC. ●

case studies

