

My journey through the first year of college.

I was extremely nervous about starting college due to my really negative experience in school, due to personal medical problems.

I was given the opportunity to go into college a few days before the summer break. I went in twice when college students were still there and then went when the summer break first started. College made sure that they were aware of all my needs and sat down with me and my parents to note everything down and make a plan so I was safe and comfortable with actually starting college full-time.

Even though a plan was in place I was still really nervous but once I started college I realised it wasn't going to be the school experience all over again. Right from the first day I felt well supported, safe and secure in my learning environment. That's not to say there weren't little hiccups along the way but when they did happen, college staff listened, understood and helped to sort problems as soon as they could.

When we first started college we did the first two days as activity fun days to get to know other people on our level and get to see some of the team skills from others. We did tower building with pasta sticks, marshmallows and tape, we also did an activity sheet that was asking questions like who has brown eyes then we would have to find someone in the room with brown eyes and many more activities getting to know others.

When you first start there are a lot of people there to show you where to go because starting a new place can be really scary. They completely understand how we, as new students, would feel and the college as a whole is filled with really nice and helpful staff and students. When starting the first full week it can feel strange because you don't always get a break at the same time and you don't always get the same length breaks, so transitioning from school it is different.

However, it's nothing to be scared of and there are plenty of places you can go. A lot of the classrooms you would attend are quite close together, unless you are re-taking your English or maths, then you can sometimes be spread out slightly but again there are people to help you understand where you are going and at the bottom of every stair case are signs to say what's on each level.

The facilities at college are amazing. For example, in hair and beauty they have amazing salons in the student areas and a paying customer area so you can have the best true experience possible. The student salons are upstairs and the paying client salon is downstairs all in the same area.

The tutors look at your ability and evenly spread you out and sometimes can choose you to help out downstairs. Don't be scared by that because it's an amazing experience and the tutors obviously believe you are a confident person. The tutors are amazing, they have really

engaging lesson such as sometimes a kahoot quiz which is carried out on your phones (only tolerated when necessary) and the practical sessions start with a demonstration then go to your turn to give it a go. The tutors also arrange things, so at Christmas we got to go and have a Christmas dinner at the college's Relish restaurant. You have so many activities available and these opportunities are all handed to you through tutorial.

The salon has a lot of fundraiser days and they are amazing, so fun and so nice to see people actually getting involved.

To say how nervous I was to start college I have now applied for my second year because college has helped me to know that this is definitely what I would like to choose as my career.

They help you in so many ways with guest speakers coming to see you in the salon or guest speakers in tutorial periods to try and help you choose your next path in life they are never offended if you want to choose a different course because it's the welfare of you that matters to them. There are also regular one to one's in tutorial where you will sit down with your tutor and answer some questions just to see how everything is going on as a whole on the course and also with your maths and English if applicable.

So overall my first year has been more than what I could ever have expected and I am so grateful that I have been able to have this positive experience. Believe in yourself, your abilities and the future and college will more than help you along the way to get the best out of you.