

## NEC students go the distance with excellent results

Friday 16 August, 2013

Students of the National Extension College (NEC) have achieved outstanding A level results today. Biology is one of the most popular A level subjects offered at NEC with around 200 learners enrolling each year to study the course by distance learning. **79.31% of Biology students have achieved grade A\* - C, compared to the UK national average of 73.7%** (as published today by the JCQ).

We are still working through the results, but it is clear that Biology is not the only success this year. NEC Student Services Manager Louise Tolhurst says 'We have seen some truly excellent results this year, and are really proud of our learners! It is not always easy to study by distance learning, but our learners have proved once again that if you put your mind to it you can achieve your goals. Of course it is not always good news for everyone, but we actively encourage learners who have not achieved what they wanted to get in touch to talk about the next steps.'

The focus on results day is quite naturally on school leavers, but at NEC we see a different side of things. Take 21 year old Miranda Stocks for example. She decided to study English Literature and Classical Civilisation A levels by distance learning because she wasn't sure which degree to take, and so took a couple of years out to develop her career at Waitrose. She received her results this morning and was overjoyed to see that she had achieved an A\* for each subject. She is now heading to Hughes Hall, Cambridge University and hopes to go on to do a masters degree and eventually to a career in Art crime, recovering stolen paintings and uncovering forgeries.

She says ' I think it is a huge credit to the NEC that I was able to score over 90% in the majority of my exams and exceed my offer by getting two A\*s - that would not have been achievable for anyone working under similar time constraints without the sort of support and guidance that the NEC gave me'. She praised her tutors, saying 'They were terrific - always prompt to reply to my emails and always gave in-depth responses to my assignments and coursework'

NEC learners might be active forces personnel on rotation in Afghanistan or at sea, or working mothers who are retraining for a career in teaching or midwifery, we really do have learners from all walks of life. Many of our learners collecting their results today are likely over 18 and have fitted in their study around jobs and family responsibilities. Alternative routes to education are essential for learners like these whose hard work and dedication is not always recognised.

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