

Kihn, Vern & Alex each wanted to study business because, “We don’t know what else to study, so business is probably useful.” Kihn’s formal careers profiling suggested aeronautical engineering as a potential future career path, at which point he became very excited as he was not particularly good at English, but was strong in maths & physics and loved planes & model-making; with full parental support we organised for him to take flying lessons & he has just left for the United States. Vern’s parents visited the school to discuss their desire for him to pursue his passions & talents no matter what, & he is currently devoting a large proportion of his timetable to 1:1 computer programming lessons with two different teachers - one with a doctorate in cryptography who is exploring the theory with him, & one who has come from industry & is showing him how to write practical applications so that by the end of this year he should be programming his own games. Alex is expected to eventually return home to work in the family’s engineering business, which he is very pleased about & proud of. He was unsure, however, whether to invest his time in business or engineering, but after some taster classes with us in both, chose business and is currently working on a real-life project to produce a business plan for opening a stall at a local market selling food he has made in cookery club (it is admittedly not engineering, but he enjoys working with his hands producing tangible results, too).

James arrived with the expectation that he would pursue maths, economics & business into A-levels, university & the family’s business managing nuclear power plants. However, in coaching sessions with James directly on arrival it soon became apparent that he was very bright in many ways, but that he had no great interest in business, & in particular the mathematical elements; he did, however, demonstrate a passion for politics & international relations and so we held extensive & transparent discussions with him & his family & all agreed that he may fare well in a humanities IGCSE. Having enjoyed the unexpected opportunity to experience studying the humanities, he & his parents recognised & endorsed the merits of pursuing his passions & talents in politics & psychology, as well as continuing with economics. In his A-levels, now merrily studying subjects he truly loved with the full backing of parents & a school who all saw the worth in encouraging him towards expertise, he achieved A*, A*, A* with over 99% in politics, placing him impressively among the elite students in the country, and especially so for a non-native speaker. He was accepted by University College London & is delighted with himself & the unanticipated trajectory he was able to follow at Newbury Hall. He is currently intending to pursue a career in international diplomacy, perhaps dealing with international negotiations specifically in the nuclear energy industry which relies so heavily on it, but we will know more when he returns to visit us for a chat, coffee and cake with another alumnus next month.

Ami had been home-schooled in Japan by highly academic parents who believed in her & sought out Newbury Hall for its homely environment where she could continue to excel but experience teachers with a wider range of expertise than her own parents’ narrow specialisms. A studious young girl across all subjects but who was unsure where her true passions lay, she took a range of IGCSEs under our guidance to keep her options open, and then atypically combined maths, physics & philosophy at A-level and enjoyed all three equally. We were able to advise her, much to her surprise, that the UK university system allows her to combine these even at very high levels, & she is now currently completing her MSci in combined honours physics & philosophy at Bristol university & still regularly visits us three years later.

Srey and Machi both arrived in January. Srey had begun a two-year IGCSE programme at another school in September but was finding the language, social & cultural expectations to be too high in the unfamiliar UK culture at a larger school so far from home. Our fast-track IGCSEs gave her a chance to restart academically, while our family atmosphere & the opportunity to be honest with her teachers about her academic concerns meant that she thrived. Machi had finished school in Korea in December, but her new school didn’t start until September so she decided to join us for an introduction to UK boarding life, intensive IELTS & some pre-IGCSE taster lessons in maths & the sciences. She also took some medical English lessons in preparation for her future career choice as a surgeon.

David was academically bright & highly sociable, but had grown bored through lack of challenge at his school. His parents sent him to us for personal attention & a reformulation of his academic trajectory to improve his English, to take tasters in a variety of subjects, & to try to relight a spark of love for learning in general. When his mother visited to pick him up at the end of his stay, she cried openly to see her son such a changed man: enthusiastic about school and thinking independently, pushing himself onwards with newly acquired study skills & self-discipline, enjoying discussing academic & cultural issues with his teachers & most importantly looking fresh-facedly forward to his next academic year back in Germany. He had not intended to take an exam on arrival, but was soon inspired to set himself the challenge of an IELTS exam to focus his efforts & take concrete evidence of his progress & new attitude back home; he improved from a band 4 to a band 7 in a few short months with us & along with it his self-confidence skyrocketed.