

## Student making waves at Great Yarmouth College

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A girl from Great Yarmouth is determined to put a difficult past behind her as she takes her first steps towards becoming a marine biologist. With the support of the Learning and Skills Council's (LSC) Entry to Employment programme and Great Yarmouth College, those first steps have already become great strides.

Daytona Van Den Burg is just 17 and knows exactly what she wants to do with her life and how to go about achieving it. Having been "kicked out of school at 14 for fighting", Daytona was sent on to a pupil referral unit in Gorleston where "they just taught us the basics – English, Maths and Child Development."

After spending a year there, Daytona applied to Great Yarmouth College to do an animal care course. "I always wanted to do something with animals," she explained, "and originally I had thought I wanted to do veterinary medicine but I realised that I was most interested in marine biology. I want to specialise in studying sharks."

Initially, she talked to the College about doing a BTEC First Diploma (BFD) in Animal Care but as she didn't have any qualifications they couldn't accept her on to the course. Instead, they recommended that she enrol on their Entry to Employment (E2E) programme to do an Introductory Diploma in Land and the Environment.

E2E is aimed at 16 to 18 year-olds who aren't ready to go straight onto an Apprenticeship or into employment or higher education. As well as working on improving basic skills such as literacy and numeracy, it helps young people develop their confidence and personal effectiveness. Daytona is studying a range of subjects relating to animal care and the environment, including caring for small animals, animal husbandry, water and fish.

Daytona said: "It's going very well. You get much more support on E2E than I ever have before. It's going to help me get to where I want to be."

Talking about the future, Daytona said: “Once I’ve got the Diploma, I’ll be able to get on to the BTEC National Diploma in Animal Care which takes two years. After that I’ll apply to Swansea University which runs a degree course in marine biology.”

Steph Willis, a member of Great Yarmouth’s E2E team, said: “E2E opens doors for young people and gives them the opportunity to create a future for themselves. We give them a tremendous amount of support and if they are ready to receive it, it really takes them forward. Great Yarmouth is a centre of excellence for E2E. We are achieving 82% positive outcomes, when the national average is running at just 52%.”

“Daytona is a fantastically shining example of someone who was ready to take all the help we could give her. In her life so far she has had to deal with an awful lot, but she is totally committed to her goals and completely focused. She is an amazing young woman with a marvellous future ahead of her.”

Sarah Leith Russell, from the LSC in the East of England, added: “Daytona is clearly a remarkable person and I am delighted that E2E is helping her to achieve her goals. We hope that other young people will take heart from her success and find out what E2E can do for them.”

### **Notes for editors**

1. The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England’s young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers. <http://www.lsc.gov.uk/>
2. Entry to Employment (E2E) aims to help young people who are not yet ready or able to directly enter Modern Apprenticeship programmes, further education or employment. Young people are helped to prepare for progression to employment, employment with training, Modern Apprenticeships and further education. For more information go to: <http://e2e.lsc.gov.uk/>

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