



I began my Forge journey in 2015, when I started in year 7. I stayed at the Academy for 7 years; progressing to the sixth form in 2020.

I finished year 11 early due to the pandemic, which had caused the nation to go into lockdown. Unable to sit my GCSEs, I could only hope that my grades were where they needed to be, and to my satisfaction, they were. Applying for sixth form was an easy decision. I had no plans to apply for other colleges in the area as, due to the circumstances we were facing, I wanted to stay in a familiar environment and with staff and peers that I knew I could trust.

I was accepted into the sixth form and began studying Law, Sociology, and Performing Arts. These subjects would become the foundation of what I would go on to do after college.

At the end of year 12, I applied to become Head Boy and was awarded the role for academic year 2021-22. During year 13 I led the Student Council, which helped me to develop leadership qualities, as well as key interpersonal skills.

By the end of year 12 I had already made the decision to progress to university and study law. Weekly application workshops were built into my timetable in Year 13 and these gave me the support I needed to find suitable degree courses and put a UCAS application together. With assistance from staff, the process of applying to university was easy and before my final mock exams were even sat, I had already received five offers from four different universities. Originally, my heart had been set on going to Brighton University. Visiting Brighton on the applicant day allowed me to get a feel for the university campus and the city. It was breath-taking. The experience, even only for a day, would be one I would not forget. However, I soon visited Aberystwyth not long after, and my entire thought process had shifted. I no longer wanted to live in a city, but instead wanted to move to and study in a more rural area.

When my A level results came out in August 2022, I was over the moon to learn that I had achieved the grades required in order to start a degree in Criminal Law at Aberystwyth University. I moved to Wales shortly after and I'm really enjoying the degree and university life. I still look back at my time at Forge and think of all the fond memories I hold. The Academy had a huge impact on my life and on me as person; it helped mould me into the man I am today. There is no doubt that if I hadn't had studied at the sixth form and had the support I had from the staff, I would not be where I am now. The staff at Forge truly care about the students and will do anything they can to help them realise their full potential. Without them, I would not have been able to achieve my goals.

## Michael Evans Ormiston Forge Academy student 2015-2022