



From uncertainty to clarity

Helping students find promising career paths – Shakie's story

Student: Shakie Kazi

Placement employer: Phoenix Court

Sector: Venture capital

A common challenge for Year 12 students

Many Year 12 students feel uncertain about their future because they **struggle to see how their subjects link to real careers**. Shakie faced this challenge. Although she studied Sociology, Physics and Maths, she could not picture herself in a specific career and was unfamiliar with many sectors,

including venture capital. Alongside this uncertainty, Shakie was naturally introverted and lacked confidence in new settings. Speaking to unfamiliar adults, writing formal emails, and managing her time independently all felt daunting.

A supportive placement to build skills and confidence

Shakie received **one to one support from the STEAM team** to encourage her to think about her future and apply for opportunities that matched her emerging interests. This led to a one-week, Year 12 placement at Phoenix Court, a venture capital firm investing in the most exciting technology companies.

The placement introduced her to workplace culture and professional expectations **through workshops, excursions and mentor led sessions**. With the support of a mentor, Shakie grew **more confident navigating professional settings** and **asking questions**. Following this,

Camden STEAM helped her **continue her engagement with Phoenix Court through a six-month internship in Year 13**, two hours each week. This longer-term placement

provided her with consistent exposure to professional routines and deeper insight into the sector.

The impact on Shakie

Shakie described the experience as “life-changing” and as a turning point in how she thought about her future. The placement helped her understand **how her academic subjects could translate into a meaningful career pathway** and gave her clarity about the kinds of roles and environments that interested her. As a result, she decided to pursue a degree in Economics at SOAS University of London.

The impact these experiences had on her

went beyond career direction. Over time, Shakie became **more confident speaking in professional settings** and presenting at public events organised by the Camden STEAM team. Through regular exposure to the workplace, she developed **professional communication skills** and **improved her time management**. Phoenix Court also **gifted Shakie a scholarship to support with her university living costs**, helping to reduce financial pressures and support her progression.

Support from Camden STEAM

Camden STEAM acted as the **bridge** between Shakie’s school experience and the professional world. The initiative encouraged her to step beyond familiar pathways, supported her to access an opportunity aligned with her interests, and co-ordinated between the school and

employer to facilitate ongoing conversation and opportunity. By combining preparation, mentoring and longer-term placement opportunities, **Camden STEAM created the conditions for real growth** and helped Shakie take meaningful steps towards her future.

Why these opportunities matter for young people

Shakie’s journey reflects the experience of many Year 12 students who feel unsure about their next steps. **With the right support and access to meaningful work placements, uncertainty can turn into direction and**

confidence can grow. Expanding access to these opportunities is essential if more young people are to make informed and ambitious choices about their futures.