

Lauren Saunders-Love

BTEC Higher National Diploma in Photography

BEDFORD COLLEGE



Why did you choose to study a BTEC Higher National?

I chose to study at college instead of going to university, as I did not feel ready to be fully independent and live away from home. I was not entirely sure if I wanted to study for the BA and going to college meant I could do a couple of BTEC Higher Nationals in my chosen subject and top-up to a BA if I wanted to.

Where has your BTEC Higher National taken you?

Since graduating from my HND, I have continued to develop and grow my creative practice with my own photographic projects, before starting my Masters in Art and Design at The University of Bedfordshire this September.

In 2023, I had my work featured in four exhibitions, three in Bedford and a fourth at The Broadway Gallery in Letchworth Garden City. I have recently started work on a project with The Panacea Museum in collaboration with a fellow artist. We are creating fine artwork responding to and exploring the museum's story, which will culminate in an exhibition in February 2025. I've been involved with The Panacea Museum since August 2022 as I volunteer behind the scenes. In addition to this, since November 2023, I have worked for Autism Bedfordshire as an Autistic Co-Trainer, working in a team delivering The Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training on Autism and Learning Disability to NHS staff across all roles.



When I attended an open evening, I could tell that the course was going to be very practical work driven which I felt would suit me well.”

Progression pathway

-  A level in Photography at Mark Rutherford School
-  Level 4 Higher National Certificate & Level 5 Diploma in Photography at Bedford College
-  Level 6 Bachelor of Arts top-up in Photography at Bedford College/University of Northampton
-  Level 7 Master of Arts in Art and Design at The University of Bedfordshire

What do you like about BTEC Higher Nationals?

I knew that choosing this route would be considerably less expensive than going to university, this very much appealed to me, seeing as I was not working at the time and had very limited funds. I was attracted to the comparatively small class sizes, particularly as I have Asperger's so being around a lot of people is often very overwhelming for me. This gave me the sense that there would be increased opportunity for one-to-one support. ■