



Employer News

Chesterfield College **Putting your business first**

ISSUE
#42
SPRING
2011



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New Apprenticeship Academy already sees results

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College helps **Tesco** to return over 150 people to work

Months prior to the opening of Tesco's new store on New Bridge Street, Clay Cross, the College became involved in helping the supermarket giant to not only recruit staff but train over an intensive five-week programme.

The new store provides 296 full and part time jobs to the local area. 153 of these were guaranteed for long-term unemployed candidates and as part of the Tesco Partnership Scheme, the College played a pivotal role in their selection and training, working alongside other partners such as North East Derbyshire District Council.

For the 153 positions, there were a phenomenal 450 applicants. Throughout the entire selection process the College provided all applicants with valuable advice such as useful interview techniques and CV writing. When the final 153 were selected they then embarked on a five-week training course which was delivered in conjunction with the College.

The training programme helped to not only teach the essential skills that they needed to carry out their day to day roles but also assisted them in improving their people skills and raising their self confidence which may have been low due to the amount of time they had been out of work. This combination of not only teaching skills but addressing self confidence issues has had a massive impact on many of the candidate's lives, in numerous cases completely transforming an individual's life.

Emily Williams, Special Projects Manager, Chesterfield College, explains: "All 153 candidates were a pleasure to work with and were keen to learn new skills. Aiding the long-term unemployed in getting back to work is a key concern for the College and we are delighted to be involved in such a successful partnership scheme as this."

Key skills such as first aid, basic food hygiene, customer service and manual handling were taught by College tutors and the candidates were even given some very special community projects to help develop their team building skills. Candidates donned



overalls and armed themselves with paint brushes to redecorate two classrooms at Holmgate Primary School in Clay Cross and the following week helped to clean up Kenning Park in Clay Cross, introducing a dozen animal habitats.

Jane Weston, recruitment manager for North East Derbyshire District Council, said: "The scheme has given these individuals a real opportunity to find the skill and the confidence to return to work after long periods of time. It is fantastic that we have been able to run the team building sessions to benefit the local community as well as the candidates."





Case Study

Rob Jones

From the age of 16, Rob had been shifting from job to job, working in a variety of occupations spanning from quarry work through to working in a care home.

Recently, Rob had struggled to find work, being knocked back

for many positions he applied for. Consequently this had an adverse effect on Rob's already low self esteem and motivation. Rob explains, "I'd never really felt confident as a person throughout my working life. I was very quiet and therefore always overlooked. That is until I joined the Tesco recruitment scheme."

During the five-week recruitment course in Clay Cross, Rob acquired knowledge in subject areas such as first aid, food hygiene and customer services. "Through meeting such a diverse mix of people from different backgrounds, my people skills have improved so much and as a result so has my self confidence. Doing activities such as redecorating the local school and cleaning up the local environment brought the group close together and I've made very good friends here.

"The College tutors were fantastic; nothing was too much trouble for them. They immediately settled the group and began motivating them to succeed at work. It was an environment which was a pleasure to come in to every day."



Case Study

Charlene Dale

After leaving a previous post in Customer Services, Charlene had struggled to get back into work for two years. When the new Tesco project came to Clay Cross, she decided to go for it and hasn't looked back since.

Charlene admits she was nervous when it came to starting the five-week staff training programme, "At first I was absolutely dreading it. My confidence was low and I was out of the working routine. I needn't have worried as I loved every minute of the training. It covered such a wide variety of areas, from manual handling to first aid, right through to my forte, customer services. We even got to help the local environment when we built animal habitats in Kenning Park."

Having completed the programme, Charlene's family have noticed a marked change in her attitude. "Since finishing the programme my family keep telling me how much more self-confident I am. I am now back in the habit of a working routine and can't wait to progress my career through the ranks at Tesco", concludes Charlene, who enjoyed the course so much she even attended an extra voluntary week to finish a full first aid course.

New Apprenticeship Academy nearly doubles



amount of Apprentice placements

Given the distinct rise in government funding to support in-work training facilities for students, the College has now distinguished itself as a hub for apprenticeships in the area following the launch of its innovative Apprenticeship Academy based at Tipton.

Employing Apprentices aged between 16 and 25, all working towards Level 2 and 3 apprenticeships, the Academy trains them in a variety of roles such as Sales, Customer Services and Business Administration. Earning while they learn at the College for a minimum of six months, day-to-day the Apprentices provide important cross-College support. Their successful work has resulted in nearly doubling the amount of apprenticeship placements arranged by the College in comparison to the previous year.

Some of the first cohort of Apprentices have already gone on to full time employment. Jenny Palmer was a Business Administration Apprentice at the Academy and is now employed at Lowe Property Services, she explains, "Being part of the Academy helped me massively. I was able to gain vital experience of a real working environment whilst gaining the necessary skills needed for future work placements. The recruitment team helped to find a suitable place of employment for me in my local area, as well as preparing me for the interview in order to get the job."

Julie Richards, Executive Director of the College's Business Enterprise Unit explains, "The main objective of the Academy is to prepare these young people for the world of work and support them to secure sustainable employment beyond their time with us. In today's climate, gaining a job at the end of any training is paramount and we have already placed our first Apprentices into secure employment out in industry, receiving excellent feedback."

Attending the launch alongside the Apprentices themselves, their friends and family and proud College staff were Frank Smith,

Chesterfield College Chair of the Corporation and Karen Woodward, National Apprenticeship Service Director for the East Midlands.

Matt Barnes, Director of Spire Estates in Chesterfield has taken on Apprentice, Sam Haynes, and is hugely positive about the whole experience, believing that it has benefitted his business.

He explains that any concerns he'd had were taken away by the College's commitment to looking after the process for both parties, "I was worried about the pain of interviewing lots of young people and them not being right but the College worked with me to vet and interview candidates and linked me with Sam who was the best person for us."

Apprentice Sam, works with Matt as a trainee negotiator and doesn't regret joining up for one minute. "I just wanted to work, this way I'm learning whilst I'm working so am doing both. I'd definitely recommend it to others. Go for it. I'm loving it", explains Sam.

As well as apprenticeships being one of the government's preferred routes for 16-18 year olds, it has also just launched the New Skills Strategy, committing to fund an additional 75,000 adult apprentice places by 2014. So looking to the future the only way is up for the Academy, as numbers have shown. 240 students were part of the scheme two years ago and this year the College aims to break the 2,000 mark.



£2.5m of funding set to give region's businesses and unemployed a boost

College to deliver new National Apprenticeship Service funding across East Midlands

Both businesses and those who are unemployed can now benefit from £2.5m of new funding and grants now available for apprenticeships across the East Midlands region.

Chesterfield College has been selected as a managing partner by the National Apprenticeship Service, Skills Funding Agency and European Social Fund to work with training providers across the East Midlands in delivering the funding to support businesses and ensure the training of a new generation for economic recovery. The scheme follows on from the launch of the College's innovative Apprenticeship Academy at the beginning of December.

The funds will be delivered in two distinct ways, firstly in the form of Age Related Grants. These are available immediately until the end of March 2011 to businesses with less than 50 employees that take on a 16-18 year old apprentice who is not employed or in education. 450 grants of £2000 are available, with £750 upon initial sign up and the rest delivered when the apprentice has been there for 13 weeks.

Secondly, until the end of June 2011, businesses of all sizes can seize the ideal opportunity to access funded training, which is delivered in the workplace and has been proven to increase motivation and productivity amongst workforces. The funding will

support adults across the whole of the East Midlands to achieve a Level 2 qualification through an adult apprenticeship in subjects including: Contact Centre, Sales and Telesales, Carry and Deliver Goods, ICT Professional and Train Operations.

Recognised as the gold standard for work-based training, apprenticeships are an excellent way of gaining qualifications and workplace experience. As an employee, you can earn as you learn whilst gaining practical skills from the workplace. Already, more than 130,000 employers nationwide offer apprenticeships, returning benefits such as increased staff motivation and retention, better 'investors in people' status, employee's with nationally recognised qualifications and maximum return on the training provided as it's tailored to suit a company's requirements.

Many businesses assume that taking on an Apprentice is a time-consuming process; Chesterfield College offer a free recruitment service, to assist employers taking on an Apprentice.

Anyone interested in the new funding schemes should contact **Catherine Spavold** – spavoldc@chesterfield.ac.uk or **Claire Munden** – mundenc@chesterfield.ac.uk For more information about the Age Related Grants please contact age16-18@chesterfield.ac.uk or call **01246 500500 ext 4291**



Interested in recruiting an Apprentice?

If the idea of taking on an Apprentice appeals to you but the time-consuming process of recruiting one doesn't, take advantage of our FREE apprenticeship recruitment service by booking a one-to-one appointment with an expert advisor now.

If you are a learner looking for an Apprenticeship placement then please call to arrange an interview as soon as possible and we will endeavour to secure the ideal position for you.

To make an appointment, please contact **Natasha Arrand** on **01246 500 681** or email her at arrandn@chesterfield.ac.uk





Junction 29A

Readers of Employer News will be aware that the College is in the process of constructing a logistics training centre at the new 200-acre Business Park being developed at junction 29A, Markham Vale.

The College training centre is specifically designed to cater for the expected rise in demand for logistics training from companies setting up both on this site and in similar developments on the former Coalite site near junction 29A and at Staveley. These developments, coupled

with the large number of warehousing companies already located along side the M1 is set to establish the area as the nation's distribution hub.

Keep checking www.chesterfield.ac.uk for updates on the site's construction.

Any organisations wishing to train or employ logistics drivers are encouraged to get in touch with the College, please contact either Emily Williams on **01246 500500 ext 4294** or Cheryl Webster on **01246 500742 ext 4898**.

New Heritage Skills NVQ now available

If your day-to-day business includes the conservation, repair, maintenance or refurbishment of old and listed buildings, work for the National Trust, English Heritage sites or local authorities then this newly launched qualification is ideally suited to you.

Since English Heritage has stated that it now expects all of its craftspeople to either own or be working towards their CSCS Heritage Skills card, other organisations such as the National Trust and local authorities are expected to follow suit.

So to show that your company's craftspeople are competent in both skill and health and safety awareness when working on pre-1919 buildings, getting their CSCS Heritage Skills qualification is a must, in order to stay competitive in the market.

To help craftspeople become qualified for the CSCS Heritage Skills card, we now offer a Level 3 NVQ Diploma in Heritage Skills (Construction). A work-based qualification, all of the assessment is carried out on site, not detracting from that vital everyday workload. Site observations and technical discussions are undertaken by an expert assessor to confirm a candidate's competence.

We are delighted to offer two brand new elements to the NVQ with units now available in both Heritage Masonry and Brick Work.

So if you would like to keep your Heritage workforce competitive, please contact Eddie Read on 01246 500 500 ext 1410 or 07826 866806.

Other courses that are assessed on site include: Level 2 and 3 Diploma NVQ in Stonemasonry – Stone Fixer and both Level 2 and 3 Diploma NVQ in Trowel Occupations. Also available, through the Experienced Worker Practical Assessment Route, is a short course in Level 2 in Travel Occupations.



ENGLISH HERITAGE