

Meaningful Learning Experiences

Strategic Commitment	✓	Part of a careers initiative across Greater Manchester
Curriculum Provision	✓	Communication skills is an important part of the GCSE
Employer Partnerships	✓	Creating a new link with a high calibre local employer
Reflective Young People	✓	Practical input about an apparently academic topic
Informed Career Choices	✓	Encouraging consideration about apprenticeships

Local role models from Toni and Guy encourage communication skills in GCSE Hair and Beauty

The specification for GCSE studies in Hair and Beauty requires students to understand and develop communication skills, alongside technical skills. The brief from the subject teacher at Broad Oak Sports College in Bury sought ways of developing more confidence among the dozen year 10 students about communication, particularly connected with client consultations, promoting products in the salon and the use of open or closed questions.

Toni and Guy is a multi-award winning hairdressing brand with more than 55 years of experience in education, superior client service and haircare expertise. The salon in Bury agreed to provide guidance to the students, including practical tips about communication. Video messages recorded informally on a mobile phone in the salon with the Style Director and a trainee stylist were shown to students in the classroom. The comments not only highlighted the importance of good communication skills, but also described different career paths, qualifications and future aspirations, illustrating opportunities associated with an industry-leading employer like Toni and Guy.

Students produced a written piece of work in response to the project, answering the question, 'Why is it important to have good communication?' – covering client consultations, open/closed questions, promoting products and services and communicating with confidence. Examples of the work and student feedback were sent to the team at the local Toni and Guy salon to show how their input had motivated and guided students and had helped raise their aspirations about possible future career choices, including the value of apprenticeships.

Benefits for the Students

The thing I am most proud of as a result of this experience:

- *'I know that I can boost my confidence.'*
- *'People's stories and the confidence they have given me.'*
- *'I have learnt the opportunities for me after school.'*
- *'Understanding apprenticeships.'*
- *'Good communication.'*

Benefits for the School

- The school's careers strategy states that, 'We have close ties with local industry and our students have the opportunity to visit local employers ...' and this project provided an additional local employer contact.
- Low aspiration is a problem affecting young people in the school, but this project promoted exciting local career opportunities in a world-class employer.
- 'The students worked well and found the content interesting.'

Benefits for the Employer

- Toni and Guy's hairdressing apprenticeship training programme offers NVQ Levels 2&3, and progression to Level 4 through a unique partnership with City & Guilds.
- Presenting the students with local role models provided compelling illustrations of what exciting career paths can look like in practice.
- Initially, the manager was concerned about the of time that would be required from staff at the busy salon. But involvement in the project did not need anyone to leave the workplace.



Year 10 students studying Hair and Beauty were given the chance to hear staff from the local Toni and Guy salon talk about the importance of good communication skills, which is an important part of the course specification. The video clips complemented what had already been taught in class, but also provided stories about individual career paths and the value of apprenticeships.

