

# Vocational education



## Have your say!

Teachers all over South Yorkshire are involved in vocational education. Here's what just a few of them have got to say about it.

“The students at the beginning are very hesitant and they're reliant upon the teacher as they have been all the way through school. By the end of the two years they're quite confident in taking a project, running with it, taking the work away and doing what they need to do in their own time and bringing it back into lessons and handing it in on time.

If they go on to apprenticeships, or work, or further education, the skills that they have used will undoubtedly benefit them in the future.”

**John Naylor, Applied Science, Brinsworth Comprehensive, Rotherham**

“It's much more vocational than ‘let's just talk about what businesses do’. They actually go and see what the businesses do, and the businesses come to them to show them how to do the skills.

They do work really well as a team and they are producing a high-level amount of work. Some of them haven't done business studies before, so it is a steep learning curve, but again because they are a fairly small group you get the interactivity between them. It's working very well and we're really pleased with the way the kids are performing.”

**Nicola Anderson, OCR National Diploma in Business, Kirk Balk, Barnsley**

“They will come out with a lot of life skills and things that are relevant to today's working life and construction-orientated skills too.

Hopefully, when they do eventually achieve their qualification they'll go on to work either in the construction industry, or working for a smaller business within the construction industry, and then go on to work for themselves maybe.”

**N Hudson, Construction, Kier Sheffield, Sheffield**

“I’d like to obviously give the students the best possible experience in a working environment and learn exactly what we do and use the programs, use the computers, and at the end of the two or three weeks’ placement they actually go away with applied knowledge and experience. If they’re willing to actually take part, get involved and want to do the job and learn, then I’m quite happy to put in that effort and to make sure they get a really good experience.”

**Adrian Harvey, Applied Art, Planera, Rotherham**

“From the onset I’ve stressed to them that I’m not a teacher. I’ve explained my background, and hopefully what I’m trying to do is, basically, let them come to work. That’s the difference. Basically what they are realising in engineering, on the whole, it’s just massive. There are so many different directions to go into and everything, so that’s what they’ll be learning about as well – the different types of engineering that are available.

It’s not an easy course, as such, there are a lot of things to learn – the practical side of it – some of the lads struggle with that, but we’ve got to cater for both. The ones that want to leave school, we may be able to push them in the direction of a firm or something like that, and hopefully get them an apprenticeship with that company.”

**Neil Hughes, The Engineering Centre, AVEC Building, Sheffield**

“The overall theme would be to get the students to enjoy travel and tourism – to become familiar with the different aspects of the industry – just learning simple things about transport and accommodation. So it’s to get that experience of the different parts of the industry, to help prepare them for, hopefully, employment or higher education.

Before this I was a travel agent. I spent upwards of 13 or 14 years learning the trade. Selling holidays, selling the beaches and the blue sky.

The students that come here are a combination of students. Some are keen to roll their sleeves up and get into the industry as quickly as possible with the qualifications and experiences that they learn. Others successfully apply to higher education.”

**Phil O’Neill, Travel and Tourism, Barnsley College, Barnsley**

“I’ve done retailing for many, many years so a lot of what I teach I can actually relate to experience and bring experience in to it as well. The really good thing about these courses, as well as getting your qualification, is it helps them with the communication. They are actually working with students not from their school so they learn to work with other people and work as a team. We do loads of presentations, so by the end of it they’re all confident enough to present, which at 16 is fantastic. These people, I know for a fact, will actually work their way up because they’ll have the knowledge to be able to do it.”

**Brenda England, Retail and Distribution, The Source, Meadowhall, Sheffield**