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Portland College Get Together with the IT Crowd

On Thursday 17th April, Portland College, Nottinghamshire invited students throughout the East Midlands to take part in a series of Information Technology (IT) master classes to help raise their game and enable them to take on the rest of the world at UK skills events.

Introduction to Cable Making was one of over 60 master classes to be held across the East Midlands with the rest planned over the next three months. The aim is to inspire talented young people to improve their vocational skills and learn about opportunities in their chosen career.

The class was open to young people already demonstrating an interest in the IT world and pursuing an Apprenticeship or other forms of training in the IT arena. Each student experienced first-hand demonstrations and one-to-one support by expert tutors in IT with further classes due to be held at Portland College in Business Administration. The learners chosen to attend the master classes were able to gain an insight into working within the chosen profession.

Jayne Ball, business development manager at Portland College, said: "In the past I have had learners who have taken part in UK skills activities but it has always been difficult to access training locally. The masterclasses are for young people inspired to follow vocational routes and Apprenticeships in a wide variety of sectors. People of all abilities are encouraged to attend and experience excellent tutoring and coaching. I see this as a real opportunity for our local youngsters and hope they enjoy the challenge."

The programme of UK Skills master classes is funded by the Learning and Skills Council; Nottingham area director, Mick Brown said: "The UK participates in prestigious vocational skills competitions and it is hoped that some of these learners may have the opportunity to compete at a national level in the UK World Skills competitions or to represent our country at the next World Skills event in 2009. These master classes can be a stepping stone to global competitions and are an exciting opportunity for young people."

Dates for other Portland College masterclasses are:

Business Administration, Portland College	25 April – 10.00am – 4.00pm
Information Technology, Portland College	1 May – 10.00am – 4.00pm
Business Administration, Portland College	2 May – 10.00am – 4.00pm
Information Technology, Portland College	8 May – 10.00am – 4.00pm
Business Administration, Portland College	9 May – 10.00am – 4.00pm

Ends

Editors Notes

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Portland College is a national residential specialist college for students with physical disabilities and associated learning difficulties. It is one of the foremost colleges of its type in the UK, providing learning opportunities for up to 300 learners aged from 16 upwards. Students come from all parts of the UK to take advantage of the excellent facilities and extensive curriculum.

Learning and Skills Council (LSC) exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world-class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers. www.lsc.gov.uk

UK Skills is a not for profit organisation which champions skills and learning for work through competitions and awards. The organisation was established in 1990 with the primary purpose of raising skill levels in the UK through skills competitions and managing the UK team, which competes in the WorldSkills competition. In recent years we have widened the scope of our operations to include management of the National Training Awards and organising of skills related events. www.ukskills.org.uk

The master classes are open to a selection of trainees from across the region. There is also information on all local master classes - that range from motor engineering at Silverstone race track to beauty therapy with some of the UK's top hair stylists. www.fcte.co.uk

