

Hertfordshire girl makes good on Painting and Decorating course

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17 year-old Rebecca Day from Hitchin has a promising future ahead of her thanks to a Learning and Skills Council programme, Entry to Employment (E2E). Rebecca (or Becki, as she likes to be known) left school at 16 with not many qualifications under her belt and is now well on her way to becoming a fully qualified painter and decorator.

Originally, she had planned to go to college to do a Public Services course but discovered that it was going to cost £200 to enrol – money she didn't have. Becki explained: "I then sat at home for a couple of months doing nothing until a Connexions adviser rang me and asked me to come in for a chat."

So Becki and a friend went along and talked through different career options. The Connexions adviser suggested Painting and Decorating and got the pair booked onto an E2E induction day at Ridgemoor Training, an independent training provider based in Stevenage.

Becki admitted: "Actually, I missed the induction day but my friend said it was really good so I went along to the next session which was a Health and Safety test. That went very well and the College said I could start the Painting and Decorating course two weeks later."

E2E is aimed at 16 to 18 year-olds who aren't ready to go straight onto an Apprenticeship or into employment or higher education. As well as working on improving basic skills such as literacy and numeracy, it also helps young people develop their confidence and personal effectiveness.

Becki said: "The course has been great. I've had help with English, Maths and ICT and done pretty well – I've done Level 2 in all three subjects. In fact, I did so well in English and Maths that I got a GCSE grade which was much better than I managed at school. And in the test we had to take to get onto the Apprenticeship I was the only one confident enough to take Level 2 at ICT."

"I found it much easier to learn on the E2E course than I did at school as the teachers were able to sit down and really explain it all. I also got a lot out of the Personal and Social Development stuff they taught us – about healthy eating, fitness, relationships, drugs and all that sort of thing."

Becki has now finished the E2E course and has embarked on a 16-month Apprenticeship, at the end of which she will have gained an NVQ level 2 and an Intermediate Construction Award.

"Doing the Entry to Employment course has given me lots of confidence. I'd recommend it to anyone who didn't get good grades at school. It's amazing what you can learn and you might as well go to college and do something with your life."

Danny Plummer, Foundation Learning Co-ordinator at Ridgemoor Training, said: "Becki is a great success story. E2E really boosted her confidence and made her realise just how capable she is. Young people often leave school not knowing what they want to do and not sure what they can achieve. E2E helps them find their feet and set them on the path that's right for them. We look forward to watching Becki go from strength to strength."

Karen Kelly, Partnership Director for the LSC in Hertfordshire, added: "E2E is a great programme that gives a start in life to young people who may not have all the qualifications they need. It helps them gain both the skills and confidence either to succeed in the workplace or to go on to higher education. I am so pleased that it has been such a help to Becki and wish her similar success in her apprenticeship programme."

Becki is determined to get the most out of the Apprenticeship and is already looking for an employer who will take her on so she can put the skills she is learning into practice.

Notes for editors

1. The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of 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. <http://www.lsc.gov.uk/>

2. Entry to Employment (E2E) aims to help young people who are not yet ready or able to directly enter Modern Apprenticeship programmes, further education or employment. Young people are helped to prepare for progression to employment, employment with training, Modern Apprenticeships and further education. For more information go to: <http://e2e.lsc.gov.uk/>
3. Connexions is an advice service for young people between the ages of 13 and 19 living in England. It helps them get where they want to be in life by providing information and confidential advice on a wide range of issues such as learning, housing and money. <http://www.connexions-direct.com/>

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