

After enrolling on an Advanced Barbering Apprenticeship, Lee entered the National Student Barber of the Year Award and was placed 3rd out of 200 students. Read our interview here with Lee and discover how he found the support and knowledge needed on his training programme, which was delivered by Mike Taylor Education in partnership with Skills & Learning. Could you be our next inspirational story?

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Interviewer: Hi Lee, welcome back to Skills & Learning!

Lee: Hi, Thanks for inviting me back.



Interviewer: Let's start from the beginning! How did you find out about Skills & Learning?

Lee: When I was at school I never really knew what I wanted to do. I had a few full time jobs when I left but they never really interested me. Barbering always stuck out, I never really saw myself doing anything else so one day I found a Job in my Local barbers, Flash Harrys Barbershop in Poole, and I was introduced to Mike Taylor. After completing a Level 2 Barbering qualification with Mike he introduced me to Skills & Learning where I was able to move on and progress onto my Advanced Barbering Apprenticeship programme.

Interviewer: How fantastic! What was the title of the programme you enrolled on?

Lee: The Level 3 NVQ Diploma in Barbering as part of my Advanced Apprenticeship taught by Mike Taylor Education.

Interviewer: Do you feel as though Skills & Learning were able to provide you with the support you required during your programme?

Lee: Yes, definitely. Emily and Mike, the tutors, were great. I am employed as a full time apprentice and they enabled me to fit my apprenticeship study flexibly around my work. If I needed to leave early to go to work I was able to and Emily and Mike were great at facilitating this. The level 3 qualification consisted of a large amount of theory; however, they managed to teach it very well. Due to working in a barber shop I had a rough idea of what I needed and wanted to learn. Anything I wanted to know, that wasn't necessarily covered by the qualification, I would just ask Mike and he would happily help me go above and beyond to learn more than what was expected of me. I think it's amazing that the tutors were so happy to help me excel.

Interviewer: It's great to see so much passion in what you want to do and achieve. What would you say was the best part of the programme?

Lee: The way the whole training programme was taught was brilliant. Shaving and fading were my most favorite things to learn, if there was an opportunity to go over it, practise more or even help in a demonstration I was happy to put myself forward. Being surrounded by other people with the same interests as me was great, I loved being able to talk about barbering with people who shared the same interests.

Interviewer: It sounds as though you had a great time on the training programme! Was there anything you didn't enjoy?

Lee: I can't really say I disliked anything! The whole programme was just brilliant. There was a lot of theory and even though at times it felt too much the tutors and the support I received was just amazing! There was lots of practical work involved too, which broke up some of the theory work, so I didn't really feel as though I was bombarded with lots of work.

Interviewer: We heard that you entered a competition? Could you tell us a little bit more about it?



Lee: Yes! I entered the National Student Barber of the Year 2017 competition which is part of the British Barber Association, where over 200 Students attended. I had to complete a level 3 precision, creative cut and finish hairstyle and then have a professional photoshoot of my finished piece. Due to it being professional photos the quality of the cut, to the very last detail, had to be high quality due to the photo! There was a lot of pressure and good competition and I came in third place!

Interviewer: Wow that's great, what an achievement, Did you expect to do so well?

Lee: No, not at all. I entered the competition to support my coursework. I didn't have any expectations as so many other students had entered and their work was of such a high quality. However I still tried my best and was overwhelmed when I came third. I couldn't believe it, especially due to how many other talented students entered.

Interviewer: Third place! What an achievement. Did you have to attend a special event to collect your award?

Lee: Yes, we went to Barber UK in Birmingham. It was a really good event. There were lots of well known barbers there displaying their work and taking part in head to head competitions. Seeing all these well known talented barbers showing off their talents really inspired you to keep going and to keep moving forward with your career. It was truly inspirational.

Interviewer: Would you say that this was your biggest achievement?

Lee: Yes, well apart from achieving my qualification of course! However to have even been placed in such a big national completion was incredible so this is definitely one of my biggest achievements!

Here are Lee's 3rd place competition photos:



Skills & Learning, Bournemouth Dorset and Poole, work with carefully selected, high quality training providers such as Mike Taylor Education, to extend the breadth and reach of provision to the residents of Dorset. At Skills & Learning we are dedicated to helping our learners achieve and succeed in all that they do. Lee is one of many learners that have been on an incredible journey with us. If you want to join a course and chase after your dream career why not contact us on 01202 262300 or to see a list of all our courses [click here](#).