



# Retail Academy Newsletter



## Heathrow wins Best Airport Shopping Award

We are delighted to announce that London Heathrow Airport has been named as winner of the Best Airport Shopping in the World Award for a second successive year, during The Sky Trax Airport Awards 2011. The award recognises the continued improvement over the last twelve months in the selection and quality of London Heathrow shopping facilities, delivering one of the most extensive ranges of world-class brands in the retail arena. In doing so, Heathrow beat off fierce competition from Singapore Changi and Dubai Airports, by proving more competitive not only in terms of choice but also in overall pricing when compared against other major airports.

The World Airport Awards was based on 11.38 million passengers surveyed across 240 airports worldwide. The survey evaluates traveller's experiences across airport products and services; from check in, arrivals and transfer, through to departure at the gate.

John Holland-Kaye Commercial Director for BAA commented: *"I am proud to accept this award on behalf of everyone at Heathrow Airport whose continued commitment and dedication to providing a world class shopping experience for our passengers has contributed to our success. It is fantastic that the continued hard work at Heathrow Airport is being recognised by passengers for a second year."*



Mr John Holland Kaye, Commercial Director of BAA receives the 2011 Best Airport Shopping Award



## Big tick award

Retail Academy has been awarded a "Big Tick" for its employability programme at the Business in the Community's annual Awards for Excellence. Big Ticks are awarded to companies whose corporate responsibility programmes are having a significant and positive impact on business and society. Retail Academy's application focused on HAL's work in helping local unemployed residents to access retail jobs at Heathrow and progress into further training.

This is the third time in four years that the Retail Academy has been awarded a Big Tick (in two different categories) and follows its 2008 success in being identified by Business in the Community as a National Example of Excellence.

Karima Sakhi, Heathrow Retail Academy's manager, said: *"It is fantastic to be awarded the Big Tick for a second year in a row. The award recognises the contribution the Retail Academy has made to local employment and raising skills levels in Heathrow's neighbouring communities by working closely with business partners and offering retail job opportunities. We couldn't do this without our retailers and of course our dedicated recruitment team."*

## Retail Academy Award Ceremony 2011 Save the date

The Retail Academy holds an annual graduation and award ceremony.

This is a prestigious event involving all the learners graduating from their programmes, their mentors and employers. We'll be celebrating those graduating from their Vocational Qualification or Apprenticeship and giving special awards for individuals, learners and mentors who have excelled. Finally there is an employer of the year award for the most proactive and supportive employer.

*Don't forget to put the date in your diary Thursday 22nd September 2011 at the Renaissance Hotel Bath Road (evening event). Invites will be sent out in July.*



Dixons Travel receiving an award at last years award ceremony for employer of the year.

## Our new Retail Academy Development Officer



Rozalyn Willocks has over fifteen years of retail and hospitality experience. More than twelve of those years were spent at Management level, while working for some of the best recognised brands on the high street. She also has a passion for helping people develop.

**What do you like about Heathrow and the Retail Academy?** Heathrow is an exciting and diverse brand offering many opportunities for growth. The company's culture is very much focused on continuous improvement, which makes it a preferred employer.

**What is the strangest job you have ever had?** When I was at high school I worked in a shoe shop as a Saturday Sales Assistant. On my first day I had to dress up as a giant hush puppy and hand out balloons at the entrance of the store. The costume was too big for me and my paws kept dropping off.

**Do you have a claim to fame?** James Morrison played live at my birthday about 6 years ago along with Afro Jamie who starred in X factor. My manager at the time was friends with them and arranged it as a surprise.

**One thing you cannot live without?** Starbucks latte first thing in the morning

**Who would you most like to have coffee with?** Karen Jones aka 'Queen of Pubs', Mary Portas, Richard Branson.

**What would be your dream travel destination?** Kayaking through mango groves in San Juan, snorkelling with turtles in Barbados, trekking through the rain forest in St Kitts, whale watching in SA, swimming with dolphins in the wild in Cuba.

**What does continuous improvement mean to you?** Constantly developing yourself by always learning, and opening your mind.

**Best mentoring advice you have had?** When working with difficult people embrace the opportunity. Treat it as a challenge to learn from them and their different management style. It will help you to develop as a person.

**What does customer service mean to you?** Under promising and over delivering. Delighting customers at every opportunity. It's the difference between no customers and repeat customers.

## Our new Team Leader and Internal Verifier



The Retail Academy would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Martine Marshall in her new role as Internal Verifier. Martine was previously an assessor with The Retail Academy.

Her dedication and commitment to supporting learners has made her a real asset to the Retail Academy.

We would also like to wish Naomi Agyemang and Laura Court all the best in their future careers. Naomi and Laura have been valuable members of the training team, assessing and supporting learners in achieving their apprenticeships at Heathrow, and will be greatly missed. If Naomi or Laura is your Vocational Assessor they will hand over to your new Vocational Assessor who will be in contact soon.

## Joined up thinking - talking to the recruitment services team

The Retail Academy continues to take on talented individuals while providing fresh opportunities for others, thanks to our expanding range of recruitment services and training schemes.

We know that teamwork and passion for a job well done is the key to the Retail Academy's continuing success, and with this in mind we're delighted to welcome Imrath Basi and Joseph Gregory. They join Recruitment Manager Antoinette Mitchell, and we're certain their shared enthusiasm and commitment to our recruitment programme will help us build on our achievements and reach even greater goals.

Meanwhile we'd also like to congratulate Alexander Joseph, who recently shone during Retail Academy's nine-day pre-employment course, designed to support prospective employees back into work and provide them with an insight into working in an airport environment.

We asked all of them to share their thoughts, and tell us a little more about their experiences.

**Antoinette Mitchell** Antoinette was in the civil service for 28 years before coming to work with the Retail Academy five years ago. In that time she has been an instrumental part of the recruitment success story.

**What do you enjoy most about your role?** I enjoy interacting with the retailers to support them with recruitment, while also helping local Heathrow residents gain sustained employment at the airport.

**Talk us through the recruitment process from routes to work to offer?** After the pre-employment training all candidates have a mock interview with a recruitment adviser. We give constructive feedback, and if the candidate is ready, and matches the employer criteria, an interview is then arranged with an employer.



From left: Antoinette Mitchell, Joseph Gregory, Imrath Basi

**Joseph Gregory** Joseph's background is in Hospitality, where he began at the age of 16. He has been a recruitment officer with the Retail Academy for six months.

**Describe a typical day?** As part of the recruitment team we don't really have a typical day. Most days I see candidates and screen them for interviews. Other days we have employers in for interviews and if we have pre-employment training courses on I could be assisting and getting to know candidates.

**Imrath Basi** Imrath joined the Retail Academy 7 months ago after starting her career in retail with Monsoon Accessorize.

**What value do you think the Retail Academy recruitment department has brought to retailers and their business?** The Recruitment team has a great understanding of what employers are looking for in candidates for their businesses. We also support employers in finding suitable candidates, which leads into future progressions.

**What do you enjoy most about your role?** Working with a range of candidates who have different experiences, qualities and skills.

The Retail Academy has been extremely successful, working with retailers at Heathrow, in placing people into employment and further training in the form of apprenticeships.

One particular retailer that has worked closely with us on both recruitment and training services is Travelex. In 2010 we placed over 200 people into jobs and retailers such as Travelex achieved 84% retention rates for candidates they recruited through the Retail Academy. One such success is Alex, who was recruited by Travelex and is now studying an Apprenticeship.



Alexander Joseph  
Travelex, Terminal 3

Alexander chose to join the Retail Academy's pre-employment course after leaving College with skills in Science and Computers. He saw that the course offered the chance to learn valuable techniques while working at the airport.

**What was your reason for joining the Retail Academy programme?** I recognised it as an ideal chance to gain another qualification, while also gaining experience in a working role.

**What are your future career plans, and how has your training helped with them?** Right now I'm working towards a Sales Manager role. Training with the programme has given me insight into the levels of advancement through a role, giving me clear targets to work towards at each stage.

For further information or if you would like to learn more about our recruitment service please contact [retail\\_academy@baa.com](mailto:retail_academy@baa.com)

## A taste of retail at Dixons Travel - learning about the new Retail Business Diploma

Giving young people an opportunity to explore the retail business sector, Retail Academy is currently working with Uxbridge High School to develop and support 15 students as they obtain a Retail Diploma. Uxbridge High School is the only school in the borough to offer this qualification, and in conjunction with the Retail Academy and its retailers, provides a unique opportunity to acquire a real life insight into the world of retail at Heathrow Airport.

This new qualification for 14 to 19 year-olds is designed to provide the skills, understanding and motivation that employers require. It places retail and its supply chain on the educational map.. Taught alongside GCSEs and A levels, it combines retail theory with practical on-the-job work experience, meaning students can join the retail sector with the skills and experience to make an immediate contribution.

Victoria Power Store Manager at Dixons Travel comments:

*"Two students, Umar and Jordan, joined us back in January and have fitted into the Dixons Travel Terminal 1 team really well.*

*It has been fantastic to see their confidence and assertiveness increase throughout the weeks, and I'm really pleased with how they have fitted into the store and our retail environment.*

*Their relationship with the team is brilliant, they are always asking questions about products and wanting to learn more all the time."*



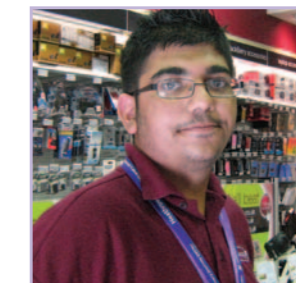
Jordan Malcolm

Retail Business Diploma student on placement in Dixons Travel, Terminal 1

**Could you describe the journey/process from starting the course to gaining a placement?** I started The Retail Diploma course at Uxbridge High School in September 2010 and it involves one day a week practical placement with Dixons Travel. The course involves different modules such as customer service, retail business, personal selling, visual merchandising, key aspects of retail stakeholders and more.

We spent time with the Retail Academy recruitment department, who prepped us with interview skills and the techniques that then helped me to secure my placement with Dixons Travel.

**Has the Retail Diploma confirmed or changed your perception of working in retail?** Yes, I thought working in retail would be easy and anyone could do it. Now I appreciate that's not the case. It is a challenging environment, but if you work hard there are so many opportunities.



Umar Chughtai

Retail Business Diploma student on placement in Dixons Travel, Terminal 1

**Do you feel this process has helped you understand the world of work?** Yes, it has been challenging, but I've enjoyed meeting and working with my colleagues here at Dixons Travel. I have a better understanding of day-to-day business, which I believe will prepare me for future employment. I'm also able to apply the theory I've learned, and have a better understanding of policy, procedures and processes.

**Would you be able to learn any of the skills if you didn't have a work placement?** No, definitely not. For example, I received visual merchandising training recently, which was really interesting. It's really important to ensure displays are attractive. In fact, even where we place the product can influence customer purchases and drive sales.

**What are your plans after completing the Retail Diploma course?** I would love the opportunity to complete an apprenticeship with Dixons Travel.

## Staff WorldPoints - The card that rewards you for airport shopping

Shopping and eating at the airport can be a great part of working at Heathrow. And with a WorldPoints card, staff get even more, including special offers from shops and restaurants that are only available to airport staff members.

We have exclusive staff pages on the website, so people with Airport ID can register and get access to exclusive perks, promotions, competitions and free prize draws, as well as the many other WorldPoints benefits.

Pick up a card and start earning points straight away and register at [www.baaworldpoints.com](http://www.baaworldpoints.com)



## Mentoring for success



As part of a successful self-development strategy, Retail Academy offers a mentor workshop to retail team leaders and supervisors nominated by line managers for demonstrating leadership skills.

Team leaders and supervisors can then go on to develop their people skills further, by supporting the development of a more junior team member during

the apprenticeship programme.

### So what is mentoring?

Mentoring is the transmission of knowledge, skills and experience within a supportive yet challenging environment. It is a learning opportunity for both parties.

### What does a great mentor look like?

A successful mentor has good communication skills and is able to challenge learners while giving honest feedback. Mentors will also encourage learner to network, a skill that can positively impact on career prospects. A mentor's responsibility is to assist the learner in reaching their career goals.

Being a mentor is the perfect way to develop your people skills while simultaneously supporting others in their own development.

Since 2009, the mentor workshops have proved popular amongst the retailers at Heathrow. The 3-hour mentor workshops give an insight into apprenticeships and the way in which they are delivered on site at Heathrow. It also gives mentors an understanding of the expectations the role brings, by exploring the necessary skills and competencies required by mentors when performing to the best of their ability.

The Retail Academy is a National Skills Academy (NSA) for retail and all mentors receive a Heathrow Retail Academy certificate and badge once they have satisfied the criteria of being a mentor. This is reviewed over a period of time and is assessed by the learner and Vocational Assessor normally 3 months after attending the workshop. There is a category for mentor of the Year at the annual awards evening and the Retail Academy Vocational Assessor will nominate for the mentor of the year category.

**If you are interested in becoming a mentor please speak to your Manager about this opportunity. The next mentor workshop will be taking place on the 14th June; please contact the Retail Academy for more details at [retail\\_academy@baa.com](mailto:retail_academy@baa.com) quoting 'mentor workshops' in your subject header.**

## Rewarding the best and the brightest

Since 2006 Retail Academy has been delivering a foundation degree, in partnership with Thames Valley University. The Retail Academy is backed by the Learning and Skills Council and provides a number of significant qualifications – including a new FDA in Retail Operations and People Management predominantly aimed at staff based in the airport's shops and restaurants.

The FDA in Retail Operations is an ideal programme, designed to equip retail practitioners working in a junior manager or senior manager role to cope with the demands of constant changes in the workplace. This enables them to deliver efficient customer services and develop effectiveness within the workplace, and when managing and supervising their team.

The curriculum addresses environmental impacts, the increasing role

of ICT and E-commerce, along with the development of customer service and management skills, as well as the development of core retail competencies in sales, merchandising, finance, suppliers and other agencies.

We have had two successful intakes since the commencement of the qualification and the second cohort and will be graduating at the awards evening later in the year.

**There will be a new intake for the September period. Please note there will be changes to the delivery and qualification. Please look out for further updates. Any enquires about the foundation degree qualification should be directed to the [retail\\_academy@baa.com](mailto:retail_academy@baa.com)**



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