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Rushden Learning Centre awards



The Achievers Evening at Rushden Learning Centre on 15 December celebrated the success of more than 200 students who have achieved IT qualifications, boosting their CVs, career opportunities and confidence.

Ian Pryce, CEO of Bedford College, said:

"Rushden Learning Centre is an important part of Bedford College's success. This has been an outstanding year for Bedford College. In January we achieved outstanding Ofsted, in June Beacon status, and in August Shuttleworth College became part of Bedford College. That means we can now offer a wide range of programmes to the communities we serve.

"Talking to students and staff here tonight I know that you have enjoyed the courses and many of you have enrolled for further study. I am delighted to join you in celebrating your success."

As part of Bedford College, the [Learning Centres](#) are fully equipped IT centres set up on the doorsteps of local people in Bedford, Luton and Rushden. They offer people from all cultural backgrounds, abilities and ages the chance to tap into IT courses to improve their skills and life or career opportunities.

With over 550 people currently studying across all three Learning Centres, a variety of courses are on offer, including Literacy and Numeracy, Introduction to Computers ITQ (Level 2 qualification) and short courses including Web Design and Photo Editing.

Students who achieved success, pictured above, included:

John Flint who explained that although he was a retired computer programmer with over 30 years experience of main frame computers, he had no PC experience when arriving at the Learning Centre.

He said:

"This was the ideal way of learning for me with the flexibility to come and go when you like. I struggled at first with the concepts but with the help and support of tutors I achieved success in ITQ2.

"I have enrolled tonight for Windows 7 and ITQ3 and have recommended the Rushden Learning Centre to others. I like the fact that students are aged from 18-80 and we have a good working environment."

Sonia Freeman had just a little previous knowledge of IT but has now successfully completed Word 2003, spreadsheets and email.

She added:

"The tutors were really helpful and I now know how to format and produce professional work. I was able to use the flexibility of the Learning Centre to study here during the evenings and at weekends.

"I was made redundant last week but by adding this qualification to my CV I am hoping that it will open the door to more job opportunities.

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"I have recommended the centre to friends who have also been made redundant and they are now studying here to upskill."

Jane Willmott returned to study after a brain tumour left her partially sighted and hearing. Previously a medical PA, Jane wanted to re-learn IT skills after she lost her long-term memory and the skills she had known in her career.

"I received fantastic support from the teaching assistant and tutors and have enjoyed learning skills such as presentation, Excel and Word again," added Jane.

"This has really helped me – to know I can get back the skills I had lost and go on to learn more. I will be enrolling for ITQ3 in the new year as well as a photo workshop."

Sheila Parker achieved OCR Level 2 NVQ for IT Users and was delighted to win a laptop in a prize draw for students, sponsored by Bright Learning Solutions who assist Bedford College in running the Learning Centres.