

## ROBERT BARCLAY ACADEMY & REYNOLDS FOOD

Hertfordshire Enterprise Adviser Network case study

Robert Barclay Academy, Hoddesdon, has partnered with local employer Reynolds Foods to boost careers education for students by providing opportunities to interact with employers and gain experience of the workplace.



The Academy has worked with the family-run food distribution business throughout the 2018/19 academic year, as part of the Enterprise Adviser Network run locally by Hertfordshire LEP, on behalf of the Careers & Enterprise Company.

Reynolds Food employs over 1,200 people across the UK and is headquartered in Waltham Cross.

As Enterprise Adviser for Robert Barclay Academy, the company's Learning and Development Manager, Meeta Khatani, worked with Careers Leader Mark Rome to create a timetable of activities to improve the school's careers provision and help meet Gatsby Benchmarks.

**Meeta said:** "As a local family-run business, we have an intrinsic need to work with our local community. Our business needs are changing and we have been keen to explore how we can better engage with school students to identify a future workforce.

"Our apprenticeship programme is growing but we have found it challenging to recruit school leavers, so the opportunity to partner with a local school was a timely one.

"The role of Enterprise Adviser aligns nicely with my job title and I have begun to see the benefits of the relationship with RBA."

In September 2018, a Compass assessment identified that Robert Barclay Academy needed support meeting Gatsby Benchmarks 5 (encounters with employers) and 6 (experiences of the workplace).

As a result, a plan was put in place for students to meet with employees from Reynolds Food and visit the company's offices and facilities, located less than five miles from the school.

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Reynolds Food's Operations Director and Sales Manager delivered inspirational talks about their jobs and careers at Year 10 assemblies, to help students learn about the roles available with local employers.

In March 2019, a Year 12 Finance Diploma group spent the afternoon at the company's offices with members of its Finance Department, to see first-hand how their course relates to the skills required for a finance role.

In the summer term, Year 10 GCSE Food Technology and Nutrition groups visited the Reynolds Food Development Kitchen, giving students a taste of a work environment relevant to their course.

Gatsby Benchmark 6 can also be achieved through work shadowing or work experience, with the goal to help students explore career opportunities and expand their networks.

**Mark Rome, Careers Leader at Robert Barclay Academy, said:** "The visits to Reynolds Food provided our students with an invaluable opportunity to see how their studies relate to jobs and careers available locally.

"The days were well planned and teaching staff have remarked how closely linked the visits were to areas of the curriculum.

"As a school we value the opportunity to take students to see real working environments and the relationship with Reynolds Food has been instrumental in sparking our students' thoughts into the world of work."

Having achieved so many positives within the first year, Robert Barclay Academy and Reynolds Food plan to sustain and grow their working relationship over the coming years.

Enterprise Adviser Meeta looks to host a bespoke maths-based challenge for Year 7 students around a logistics theme, as well as an employability-themed activity day led by the company's recruitment team.



## About the Careers & Enterprise Company programme

Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) works with YC Hertfordshire to deliver the national Careers & Enterprise Company programme within the county, with the aim of bridging the gap between education and employment.

Its Enterprise Adviser Network, made up of local business leaders, works closely with schools to enhance careers education and help prepare young people for the future. [Learn more.](#)