

Local woman named Young Learner of the Year for East of England

Natalie Hewis from Lowestoft has beaten fierce competition to be named VQ Hero Young Learner of the Year for the East of England as part of a nationwide campaign for vocational learning.

Natalie completed an NVQ Level 3 in Customer Care with Protocol Skills, certificated by recognised awarding body EDI (Education Development International), whilst simultaneously training to become a supervisor at Brantano in Lowestoft.

Colleges, learning providers and employers across the East of England nominated their high-flying vocational students for the award. Natalie was selected by the judging panel, comprising leading educational experts and organisations, for her dedication to vocational learning and huge success in her chosen field.

Natalie said: "I'm extremely proud to have received this honour. The Protocol Skills course has hugely improved my confidence and communication skills when dealing with both customers and co-workers.

"My qualifications have helped me to take on greater responsibilities at the Brantano store. Last year, I was put in charge of re-launching the store card, leading to a 25 per cent increase in card openings on the previous year and beating targets by 34 per cent.

"Taking the course has had so many benefits for me, and receiving this award is the icing on the cake!"

Dan Wright, chief executive of Protocol Skills, said: "We're thrilled to hear that Natalie has received this prestigious award.

"She is a fantastic example of the progression and opportunities that vocational qualifications can offer and living proof that there are many paths to success. We're delighted that we've been able to help her to not only achieve but exceed her goals."

Gareth Phillips, Director of Business Development at EDI, commented: "One of our roles as an awarding body is to work with training providers and employers such as Protocol Skills and Brantano to help learners gain nationally recognised qualifications.

By gaining a new skill or qualification learners can build their confidence, enhance their employment or career prospects, improve their performance at work or take a completely new career route"

Natalie has now been invited to represent the region at the national VQ Day Hero Awards ceremony, taking place on 24th June as part of VQ Day, which celebrates the achievements of the millions of people who take a vocational qualification every year.



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