

# Edinburgh College students prove their skills on a national stage



One of Scotland's largest colleges has received a string of accolades at a national competition recognising the most talented students from across a variety of subjects, from beauty therapy to building crafts and carpentry.

A group of Edinburgh College's top performing students was invited to compete in World Skills 2013, the UK's largest skills and careers competition. The event allows students to build on their skills, test their knowledge against their peers and showcase their potential to current and future employers.

The two-day competition, which was held at the NEC in Birmingham, saw four Edinburgh College students take to the stage to compete in skills performances and live competitions under the watchful eyes of the judges.

After two days of intense competition, Maria-Dolores Lopez-Fernandez from the Hairdressing, Beauty and Complementary Therapies Team was awarded a Highly Commended Award in the Aromatherapy Open Competition for her outstanding skills.

Maria-Dolores Lopez-Fernandez said: "After winning first place in the Scottish heats, I was excited to have the opportunity to experience the Birmingham finals. My love for aromatherapy and the fabulous teaching I experienced at Edinburgh College has given me the determination and passion to do this for the rest of my life."

In a closely fought competition, Edinburgh College carpentry

student Oliver Beatson and electrical student Alexander Gardiner managed to claim the Highly Commended Award in their categories. Both Oliver and Alexander managed to achieve second place in the Scottish World Skills competitions held earlier in the year.

The computing team at Edinburgh College, which has won gold at the awards for the last two years, gained another accolade thanks to former student Lorenz de Wilde who was selected for the Microsoft Network Administrator Advanced category.

Lorenz studied HND Computer Networking and Internet Technology and now studies at Edinburgh Napier University. He said: "My lecturer encouraged me to go for the competition and I'm pleased to have been given the opportunity to take part in such a huge event."

"We were given a scenario on a virtual machine at the competition and we had four to six hours each day to compete the task. The judges then examine the machines to assess how you have tackled the issue. It's very hands-on and it was a great experience to compete."

Mandy Exley, principal at Edinburgh College, said: "We are delighted to have been given the honour to compete in such a high profile event. World Skills really showcases the brilliant work of students across the UK and highlights the next generation of talented and skilled employees. We're incredibly proud of all of our students who have taken part in the competition."