



# York College

IN SEPTEMBER 2007 YORK COLLEGE OPENED ITS DOORS TO 13,000 STUDENTS WHO NOW HAVE THE BENEFIT OF SOME OF THE MOST MODERN CATERING AND FOODSERVICE TEACHING FACILITIES.



York College – costing £60m – is one of the biggest building projects of its kind in the UK. The college offers a range of academic and vocational qualifications at all levels, for all ages, as well as working with local educational providers and businesses. Courses include professional cookery, apprenticeships in catering, customer service, food & drink service and hospitality. York's Ashfield Restaurant is based on a professional training kitchen and offers full lunchtime and evening service.

The new college ([www.yorkcollege.ac.uk](http://www.yorkcollege.ac.uk)) took almost two years to build. Other facilities include a theatre, hair and beauty spa and nail bar, 3G sports pitch, travel agency, engineering and construction workshops, art and design studios and a learning centre on three floors equipped with the latest technology.

York College employed the services of Tony Galvin and Liz Rose FCSI from A&E Partnership to develop a catering strategy and facility design for the new three storey building, itself the brainchild of architects Bond Bryan.

The student facilities include a large refectory offering a variety of fast food, healthy meal options and a café bar. The Refectory is also supported on the higher floors by three student social areas plus a Grab & Go Shop near the main reception. On Level 1, this takes the form of a vended outlet and is 'home' for the Student Union Office and in-house radio station.

Levels 2 and 3 boast up-market café bars for both students and staff offering hot and cold snacks, pastries and a selection of specialist teas, coffees and cold beverages. The menu choice and tariff varies from outlet to outlet, with the most expensive and select being on the upper floor.

A&E inherited a 'partially frozen' building design which had already established area boundaries. Even though some products for the refectory service are out-sourced, the catering manager was adamant that as much as possible, particularly cakes and pastries would be produced in-house to maintain the highest quality standards. This did present some design challenges and every square inch of space had to be used wisely with each activity being interwoven like a puzzle.

In addition to the Student Refectory there are three Hotel Catering and Hospitality Faculty Training Kitchens designed to encourage diversity and best performance from the students. These incorporate the most modern professional cooking suites and one of these services the adjacent, in-house Training

Restaurant and Bar open to the public lunch time and evenings.

Each training kitchen accommodates 16 work stations surrounding a central island cooking suite incorporating boiling tops, ovens, fryers, griddles and salamanders. In addition each kitchen contains a combination oven and preparation equipment to suit the tasks required.

One of the kitchens is further equipped to produce fresh pastry and bakery products. Each kitchen incorporates local refrigeration and each group of students has access to induction cooking and blast chilling equipment. Utensils are washed and stored locally. Each kitchen also contains a fully equipped demonstration area with overhead mirror and interactive technology.

The training kitchens are supplied from a central technician's food store incorporating a walk-in coldroom, deep freeze and dry goods store. All ingredients are weighed, portioned and distributed to each kitchen prior to the lesson.

The catering areas are supported by both staff and student changing facilities and a series of lecture and meeting rooms.

Space was not the only challenge at York. Ventilation to the catering areas also proved difficult as the pre-defined risers were not large enough to accommodate the size of ductwork necessary to service the large amount of cooking equipment across all the kitchens. To assist with the solution A&E Partnership employed FCSI professional member Steve Cole of Foodservice Ventilation Consultants. By introducing ultra violet filtration to some of the ventilation canopies, extraction could exhaust directly through the rear elevation of the building instead of via the riser.

FCSI Allied Members C&C Catering won the tender to supply and install the catering equipment and were attentive to every twist and turn in the projects' long construction programme, delayed at the outset by local wildlife, namely bats; and a colony of crested newts. A licence was obtained from English Nature to remove any bats that were 'squatting' in the old drama hall designated for demolition on the Sim Balk site. The College also committed to building a new pond on nearby agricultural land and a bat house.

John Bryan, co-founder of architects Bond Bryan says: "We have designed a college that is an exciting environment in which students can learn and grow, and in which teaching staff can work to the best of their abilities, with spaces and facilities that meet the needs of everyone who will use the college because it is an adaptable and stimulating place to be."