

Durham Business Club gains prestigious accountancy training status

DURHAM Business Club (DBC) has been approved by the Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) to deliver their Education and Training Scheme which consists of NVQs in Accounting.

The AAT is the world's leading professional body for accounting technicians with more than 100,000 members worldwide and its qualifications are recognised by employers across all sectors and all industries.

The Chester le Street based training provider, which last month (August) moved into spacious new offices at the town's landmark Mile House, already offers NVQs in everything from beauty therapy to business administration and currently has 80 trainees.

As its name suggests, Durham Business Club is also a business networking group with over 250 members drawn from a wide variety of businesses; some of whom also provide work placement for the club's apprentices.

One such company is solicitors Gordon Brown Associates, which now has one current – 17-year old Jamie Clarke - and several former DBC apprentices.

The company's Eileen Wignall said: "Jamie has become a very valuable member of the Accounts Department who can now work under his own steam extremely well. His supervisor, Vicky Richardson, did an NVQ through Durham Business Club and we have several others including ICT Manager Michael Wheatley who are all real assets to the team.

"The NVQs provide an excellent route into employment and apprentices can also combine working with learning, which is what attracts many young people."

Once a student has completed the Accounting Technician stage, they can apply for full AAT membership, which allows them to use the designatory letters MAAT or Member of the Association of Accounting Technicians after their name.

Susan Matthews, the club's Work Based Learning Director, said: "We are delighted to have gained AAT training status. The respect that employers have for the AAT qualification can be a massive boost to trainees' career prospects, whether they have already started out in their career or are taking their first steps.

"We have just taken on a new tutor to offer the course and have had many local youngsters signing up. It's a really exciting development for us, particularly after moving into our brilliant new offices."

The club's impressive facilities include two computer suites with a dozen PCs, a spacious professional hair salon and a fully-equipped beauty therapy room - both of which are open to members of the public.