

Newcastle college adopt Vistamatic® lifestyle

Award-winning Newcastle College is set to open the doors, which incorporate VISTAMATIC Vision Panels, to its stylish new £16 million Lifestyle Academy when the term begins in September. The world-class facility will undoubtedly add to the establishment's many accolades, with a record-breaking number of student applications already received for courses on offer in the Beauty, Sports and Tourism Department.

Set in the heart of the cosmopolitan city, the state of the art three-storey academy will triple as a stimulating learning environment for students, vocational training facility for employers and a commercial well-being centre for local residents to indulge in spa treatments, train in the fitness studio or dine in the two restaurants. This carefully constructed, multi-purpose complex catering for a diverse range of activities includes the Retreat – a commercial hairdressing, beauty and holistic therapies and spa area offering the opportunity for clients to escape the hustle and bustle of city life and be pampered. Providing an experience to match any high street salons, the Retreat can accommodate up to 20 clients in the hair salon at any one time. The spa has 14 individual treatment rooms each with electric couch, music and light controls and VISTAMATIC Vision Panels incorporated in the doors to give patients their right to privacy and help create a relaxing ambience.

Ideal in an environment where opening of doors should be kept to a minimum and the needs of clientele to feel safe and calm are key issues, VISTAMATIC Vision Panels provide a tranquil solution. The unique panels operate on a simple mechanical principle: comprising three sheets of glass sealed in a metal 'U' shaped channel section, a single glass sheet suspended between two fixed outer panes is made to move up or down by a built-in cam mechanism, operated in this case by a lever handle. When the panel is in the closed position, vision is obscured - allowing staff and trainees to see that a room is occupied without the need for knocking and causing disturbance to customers undergoing beauty or holistic therapies.

Contractor Sir Robert McAlpine, already renowned for its successful delivery of the Arsenal Emirates stadium, installed the 18 VS2 panels in the new campus building. Regional director Anthony Barratt says: "For a college, this project is one of a kind as it abandons traditional methods of construction in favour of more innovative materials and products."



Voted company of the year in the North East Business Awards 2005 for its outstanding performance and ambitious investment, Newcastle College boasts an intake of over 40,000 students. As a learning and Skills Beacon, the college is regarded across the education sector as a model of excellence, and the building of this dynamic academy is testament to this, with every detail from design to safety carefully considered throughout the prestigious project.

Susan West, Director of the School of Beauty, Sport and Tourism at Newcastle College said: “We wanted to create a facility that was like no other ever seen before at a college in the UK. Revolutionising the learning experience for our students will enable them to immerse themselves into their chosen vocation.” She adds: “In an active department with a lot of traffic commuting in and out of the large building as people go about their daily business, safety becomes a heightened issue and we have an increased duty of care to all our students, employees and customers. Attention to detail, such as the insertion of vision panels in treatment rooms, helps improve on the high standards we already set ourselves when taking into account the concerns of all our stakeholders. We look forward to welcoming new students to this innovative academy this autumn with an added assurance for their well-being.”

Designed to blend in with their surroundings, the high quality VISTAMATIC Vision Panels complement the interior perfectly. Slimline yet robust, they help to prevent sound transmission without blocking light, and the wood surrounds add to the atmosphere of warmth and comfort that has been carefully fostered throughout the well-being centre. Entry to the spa and treatment rooms is controlled using standard 404 x 404 x 21mm VISTAMATIC Vision Panels with elbow/hand operated lever handles.

Offering the ultimate in relaxation, the spa (as well featuring industry standard training salons and treatment rooms) is complete with flotation tank, steam room, sauna and heated relaxation loungers. Added to this, the training gym and the Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) status Chef’s Academy, form an unrivalled facility all under one roof.

VISTAMATIC products are designed and manufactured in the UK and distributed worldwide. The vision panels meet the British Standard BS EN ISO 9002: 1994, as well as BS 6206 for Tempered Safety Glass Class ‘A’. VISTAMATIC can also work with architects and designers to create bespoke sizes and specifications.