

National Retail Competition 2026
Display Skills Challenge
Up to Entry Level 3



Timeline of Events

Retail students are invited to take part in a national competition held at Derwen College, in Shropshire, on Friday 19 June 2026.

- Applications welcome: Monday 8 December–Friday 20 February 2026.
- First round entries (planogram) to be sent by: Friday 13 March 2026.
- Successful entries will be informed by Friday 27 March 2026 and must be available for the live final at Derwen College on Friday 19 June 2026

Entry Requirements

- Competition is open to all Retail students from colleges of Further or Specialist education, and aged 16–25.
- Competition is open for learners working at Entry Level 3 and below.
- Group entries of up to 3 learners welcome.

Competition Task

Competitors will design and create a visual merchandising display on the theme of **Summer Holiday Essentials!** This could incorporate items like food, clothing, handmade items and many more! You will need to submit your planogram of your design for the first round of the competition. This will then be judged by a variety of impartial judges working in the Retail sector (judges TBC).

If you get through to the final:

Finalists will be invited to Derwen College on Friday 19 June 2026 to execute their designed plan and will be given 30 minutes to complete this.

You can bring along one free standing item to be included in your display – this could be a mannequin, or hat stand, or a basket. Display shelving in the shape of an A frame will be provided.

To be provided by the host:

- All display shelves in the shape of an A Frame
- A template of the A Frame to use as planning and to be submitted prior to the competition
- Space for the competition to take place

To be provided by the competitor:

**A place of
possibility**

- Suitable work attire
- All Visual Merchandising items to create their display
- One free standing item to dress their display such as a mannequin or small item of furniture such as a chair or hat stand

Marking and Assessment

There will be one judge on site to ensure guidelines are adhered to and further judges who will judge the end product. Judging will be marked against the criteria:

- Colour and design of overall finished display
- Creativity – how the Summer Holiday Essentials theme has been interpreted
- Choice of placed items within the display
- Feature piece choice and placement (to be securely installed)
- Technique to include planning skills ensuring creativity, innovation, practicality within the display
- A professional attitude to the work

Additional Information

- Competitors will receive a Health and Safety briefing at the start of the competition.
- Competitors must provide own uniform/PPE.
- Competitors will start and finish work as instructed by the judges.
- Competitors will have 30 minutes to complete their task in the live competition.
- Competitors who arrive late for the event will not receive additional time.
- If, during, the competition competitors must leave their work (e.g.: medical reasons, toilet break), they will have the time recorded on a 'time out' sheet by a member of staff.
- The judges' decision is final.
- Prizes will be awarded to 1st, 2nd and 3rd placed competitors, all others will be awarded a certificate of participation.
- Photographs taken during the event, may be used for marketing/publicity purposes. Students and staff attending the competition will be required to complete a form to confirm or deny consent to use their image.
- Competitors must only receive agreed support that is outlined in their support statement. Support that is deemed to be outside that declared in the support statement could result in the competitor being disqualified from the competition.

Contact Details

For any further information, please contact Katie Roberts, Retail & Enterprise Lead, at Derwen College: 01691 661234.