

> Case Study

Darlington College



Falcon helps Darlington College kitchen rise from the flames

New equipment feeds both mind and body of Darlington students.

In October 2016, the kitchens at Darlington College caught fire. *"We initially thought the damage would be fairly limited,"* says James Butterfield, head of estates and facilities. *"Once we were able to inspect the site the following day, it became obvious that a complete refurbishment was needed."*



Getting the kitchen up and running as quickly as possible was vital. Not only were there 1500 full-time and 1500 part-time students to keep fed, but the kitchens are a vital educational resource. The catering department itself has 150 full time students with another 70 coming in as apprentices.

"The kitchen is split into two," explains James. *"One side provides food for catering outlets on the campus, while the other supports the restaurant, both of which are run by staff-supported students."*



GastroNorth was brought in to design and specify the new kitchens. *"Their reputation in the industry is second to none,"* says James. *"Plus, we knew from work they've done on smaller projects for us that they have the expertise to deliver exactly what we want."*

For the cooking equipment, GastroNorth selected a combination of the F900 and Dominator Plus ranges from Falcon. With a primary focus on open top and solid top ranges, there are also deep fat fryers and griddles. Three salamander grills from the Dominator Plus series rounds out the selection. The solid top range is ideal for multi-pot cooking, and has a removable centre section to allow the use of direct heat if required. The four-burner model has individual cast-iron pan supports and uses a one-piece pressed hob, which prevents grease build up and makes the unit simple



to clean. Both ranges have ovens capable of holding 2/1 Gastronorm trays, and have metal-to-metal door seals ensuring temperature is maintained in the oven, increasing efficiency. Fryers have advanced temperature control and automatic filtration to maintain oil quality for longer.

"We need equipment that performs well, is easy to clean and can be used by people with a wide range of abilities," says James. *"Students aren't necessarily the most gentle of users, so we also needed equipment that was really hard-wearing."*

Giving students the chance to use professional equipment is extremely important. *"Your first contact with a working kitchen can be overwhelming,"* explains James. *"It's good to have equipment that is simple to use, but still provides students with relevant experience."*

On an average day, Darlington College is serving up to 800 meals across various outlets on campus. With time being of the essence,



it's important to have equipment that can work fast. *"We're really happy with how quickly the Falcon equipment is ready to use,"* says James. *"Not only do the burners and ranges heat up quickly, but just as importantly, temperature control is accurate."*

This is important for new students. *"When you're learning you don't want to have to worry that the equipment is wrong,"* says James. *"It's good knowing that if you set a temperature, that's what you'll get."*

With any new installation, teething troubles are to be expected. *"We've been very impressed with the service Falcon provides,"* says James. *"Not only did they send a member of staff round to help with the initial training, but they've been very responsive when we've contacted them with any issues since then."*

The initial shock of losing a key part of the college's facility has faded, and James is extremely pleased with the replacement. *"Knowing that we've got the best equipment for keeping the college fed, and for providing our students with a world-class education is a nice ending to this story!"*

LIST OF EQUIPMENT

- 3 x **G9341F** fryer with filtration
- 3 x **G3532** grill
- 4 x **G9184** four burner range
- 2 x **G9181** solid top range
- G9581R** ribbed griddle
- G9581** smooth griddle
- G9541** smooth griddle





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