

Perfect haircut is on the blower

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'Cutting edge' technology is to help trainee hairdressers create a barnet even Jennifer Aniston would be proud of.

The system developed by The University of Manchester will beam the essentials of achieving the perfect haircut straight to eager-to-learn stylists' mobile phones - at a snip.

The training will take the form of specially formatted video clips, electronic books and text written by experienced hairdressers.

Eventually, 13 haircuts will be available on mobile phone.

Stuart Smith from the University's national data centre Mimas developed the system.

He said: "This is a first for hairdressing but could be relevant to any practical subject where it would help to have instructions by your side.

"Trainee stylists are often sixteen and seventeen-year-olds who are mad about mobiles - so this system will be especially affordable and attractive to them.

"Depending on the system, once the information has been downloaded you won't need to be online to see it.

"It could also work by using a college-based computer to transmit mobile compatible learning materials with Bluetooth.

"Although mobile phones can be a controversial part of the educational landscape, teachers and lecturers are increasingly becoming aware of their learning potential.

"Mimas is currently in discussion with further education colleges about rolling this out nationally - so it could be a regular feature of hairdressing training across the country relatively soon."

Jo Jordan and Glen Burr wrote the material two years ago which has already been used on an online training system - also developed by Mimas.

The pair are enthusiastic about the latest development which they are looking forward to trying out with their students at the Glen Burr salon in London's West End.

Glen said: "It can take two years to train as a hairdresser - often its five days a week unless you have an apprenticeship in a salon like ours.

"Now the mobile phone will put part of the training into every apprentice's hand - so they can learn on the job.

"We came up with the idea of online learning a few years ago and the University helped us make this into reality.

"But the mobile phone learning takes it a step forwards and will allow students to study at their own pace.

"It's further confirmation that the UK still leads the world in hairdressing."

Source: University of Manchester

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