DILLA ACADEMY



JANUARY 2027 INTAKE

THE 16-WEEK BARBERING COURSE GUIDE

VTCT Level 2 Barbering Qualification. Everything you need to know about how to be a barber in 2027, what you will learn, what it costs, and how to take your career further.

MASTERING SKILLS. CRAFTING CAREERS.

Dilla Academy, 216 Church Road, Urmston, Manchester, M41 9DX
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dillaacademy.co.uk

WELCOME

WELCOME TO THE COURSE

This guide walks you through the VTCT accredited NVQ / VRQ Level 2 Barbering Qualification at Dilla Academy: how the 16 weeks work, what you learn, what it costs, and how to keep building your career once you are qualified. It is written for anyone thinking about starting in January 2027, whether you are brand new to barbering or want a formal qualification to go with the experience you already have.

COURSE LENGTH	WHERE	COST	WHO IT IS FOR	NEXT INTAKE
16 weeks	**Dilla Academy, Urmston**	**£3,000, flexible finance available**	**Ages 16+, no experience needed**	**January 2027**

WHY BARBERING IN 2027

THE TRADE IS GROWING

Barbering is one of the few parts of the high street that has kept growing. The latest industry figures we could verify, from the National Hair & Beauty Federation (NHBF), show why.

5,791
more barbershops on the UK high street over five years, making barbers the fastest-growing retail category.

1%
growth for hairdressers over the same five years, the slowest in the hair and beauty sector.

58%
of people working in hair and beauty are self-employed, so working for yourself is a normal career path.

£5.8bn
turnover generated by the UK hair and beauty industry in 2023-24, back to pre-Covid levels.

Sources: NHBF industry bulletin (Local Data Company data, H1 2024) and NHBF industry statistics 2024. nhbf.co.uk

Demand is growing in barbering. While the wider hairdressing market has been flat, barbershops have kept opening and vacancy rates have stayed steady.

There is a shortage of experienced people. The hair and beauty workforce shrank by around 16,500 people (7.5%) in 2023, and the NHBF has repeatedly flagged a lack of experienced staff. If you are properly trained, that works in your favour.

Independence is built in. With more than half the industry self-employed, renting a chair, going mobile or opening your own shop are standard routes rather than exceptions.

HOW IT WORKS

YOUR 16 WEEKS AT DILLA

The course runs **two sessions a week across 16 weeks**, split into two clear phases. You learn the essentials first, then spend the rest of the course building speed, consistency and confidence on real clients.



WEEKS 1-4

BUILDING THE FOUNDATIONS

One practical session and one theory session each week, covering the essentials before you are working on real clients.

1 practical + 1 theory session each week

WEEKS 5-16

FULL PRACTICAL TRAINING

Both weekly sessions are practical from here, building speed, consistency and confidence on real cutting and client work.

2 practical sessions each week

CHOOSING YOUR ROUTE

ROUTES INTO BARBERING

There is no statutory requirement to hold a qualification to work as a barber in the UK. A recognised qualification strengthens your credibility with clients and employers, and most people choose one of four routes.

Apprenticeship	Earn while you learn with an employer. You need a shop willing to take you on, and it generally takes longer than a short intensive course.
College course	A structured timetable that usually runs over a longer period. A good fit if you want a traditional education setting.
Accredited academy course	An intensive, practice-led course such as our 16-week VTCT Level 2, with real clients and a nationally recognised qualification at the end.
Self-taught	The cheapest way to begin, but bad habits are easy to pick up and hard to unlearn, and you have no qualification to show employers.

THE CURRICULUM

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

The VTCT accredited NVQ / VRQ Level 2 Barbering Qualification is designed to build practical skills in cutting men's hair, shaping facial hair and delivering consultations for a professional service. Alongside the technical training, you learn health and safety regulations, industry standards and the foundations needed to launch a career in barbering.

THE EIGHT CORE TRAINING AREAS

01 Foundational cuts

The core structure of men's haircutting, working with different head shapes and hair types so every other technique has a solid base.

02 Scissor work

Controlled scissor cutting for length, shape and texture, giving you the skill to work beyond the clippers.

03 Clipper work

Clipper control and technique, the engine of most modern barbering and the foundation for fading.

04 Fading

Blending lengths smoothly and cleanly, one of the most in-demand skills in any barbershop.

05 Shaving

Shaving and facial hair shaping, carried out safely and hygienically to professional standards.

06 Detailing

The finishing touches that separate a good cut from a great one: clean lines, edges and outlines.

07 Business skills

How to grow a career, whether through social media, business development or self-employment.

08 Consultation

Listening to the client, advising on what suits them, and agreeing the result before you pick up the clippers.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND STANDARDS

You learn the health and safety regulations and industry standards that keep you, your clients and your workspace safe, so you can step into any professional barbershop with confidence.

BEYOND THE CLIPPERS

The course goes beyond technical training. We support you to grow your career, whether through social media, business development or self-employment, giving you professional skills to match the technical ones.

YOUR EDUCATOR

LEARN FROM THE BEST

JORDAN 'DILLA' DERBY

FOUNDER & LEAD EDUCATOR, DILLA ACADEMY & BARBERSHOP

With 8 years of experience, Dilla is a respected barber and educator known for his precision, sharp detailing and high standards. As the founder of Dilla Barbershop, he has built a loyal following and a brand recognised for excellence.

Specialising in skin fades, he combines technical skill with a passion for mentoring. At Dilla Academy he leads with a hands-on, supportive approach, helping learners build confidence, master technique and understand the mindset needed to thrive in the industry.

WHAT STUDENTS SAY

DON'T JUST TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT

★★★★★

"I started the course having barely picked up any clippers and left feeling skilled enough to start working in a shop due to the hands on approach."

LEAH A., DILLA ACADEMY GRADUATE

★★★★★

"The tutors are highly skilled, patient, and genuinely passionate about helping every student succeed."

CALLUM B., DILLA ACADEMY GRADUATE

★★★★★

"I travelled up from York to Manchester every week for it and it was so so worth the journey."

NIAMH F., DILLA ACADEMY GRADUATE

★★★★★

"Every practical session helped me grow in confidence."

ABI W., DILLA ACADEMY GRADUATE

IDEAL FOR

- New barbers starting their journey
- Experienced barbers looking to gain a formal qualification
- Individuals with no prior experience wanting to break into the industry
- Makeup artists and hairdressers

INVESTMENT

COST AND HOW TO PAY

COURSE FEE

£3,000

VTCT Level 2 Barbering Qualification

16 weeks, two sessions a week, at Dilla Academy in Urmston. You do not need to find it all upfront, with three ways to spread the cost.

OPTION 1

PAY IN FULL

£300 deposit to book

Balance paid in cash a few days before your course starts

Total: £3,000

OPTION 2

PAY MONTHLY WITH DILLA ACADEMY

£300 deposit at booking

4 instalments of £675, interest-free

First instalment due 2 days before your course starts, then monthly

Total: £3,000

OPTION 3

FINANCE THROUGH OUR PARTNER

£450 deposit to book

Total course cost £3,150

£2,700 split over 12 months, interest-free, at £225 a month

Total: £3,150

> Klarna is available on our shorter workshops, but not on barbering courses.

See the full details on our **flexible finance page** at dillaacademy.co.uk/flexible-finance, or call us on 07817 959 077 and we will talk you through the options.

WHAT YOU GET FOR YOUR INVESTMENT

- **A VTCT accredited NVQ / VRQ Level 2 Barbering Qualification**
- **16 weeks of training, with real client work from the second phase of the course**
- **Teaching from Jordan 'Dilla' Derby and the Dilla Academy educators**
- **Training in cutting, fading, shaving, detailing, consultation and business skills**
- **Support to grow your career through social media, business development or self-employment**

NEXT STEPS

FURTHERING YOUR BARBERING CAREER

Qualifying is the start, not the finish. Most barbers progress in stages. The more specialist skills you add, the more you can offer and the more you can charge.

1
QUALIFY
Complete your VTCT Level 2 Barbering Qualification and leave with a nationally recognised qualification.

2
BUILD
Get your first chair in a busy shop. Speed and consistency come from volume, so build your client base and portfolio.

3
SPECIALISE
Add skills clients pay more for: skin fades, cut throat shaving, pattern and design.

4
GROW
Rent a chair, go mobile or open your own shop. More than half of the hair and beauty industry is self-employed.

KEEP LEARNING AT DILLA

Skin Fade Masterclass	A 2-day course focused on perfecting the skin fade.
Cut Throat Shaving Masterclass	Traditional cut throat shaving, a specialist skill that sets you apart.
Advanced Pattern & Design	Take your clipper work further with creative patterns and designs.
Watch & Learn Classes	Observe real client services delivered by our educators.
Hourly Workshops	Pay-as-you-go sessions for working barbers, at £50 per hour.

BEFORE YOU START WORKING FOR YOURSELF

- Register as self-employed with HMRC and complete a Self Assessment tax return each year.
- Get public liability insurance.
- Employers' liability insurance is a legal requirement if you employ anyone.
- If you run premises, check with your local council about registration, as requirements vary.

How much can barbers earn at each stage? Read **Is Being a Barber Worth It in 2026?** on the Dilla Academy blog.

QUICK ANSWERS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do I need experience to start?
No. The course is open to anyone aged 16 and over, with no experience needed. It also suits experienced barbers who want a formal qualification, and makeup artists and hairdressers adding barbering to their skills.

How long does it take?
16 weeks, with two sessions a week. The first four weeks combine one practical and one theory session each week, then both sessions are practical from week 5.

How much does it cost?
The course costs £3,000, with three payment options including interest-free monthly instalments. See page 6 for the full breakdown.

Do I need a qualification to work as a barber in the UK?
There is no legal requirement to hold one, but a recognised qualification strengthens your credibility with clients and employers.

Can I keep learning after I qualify?
Yes. Dilla Academy runs a Skin Fade Masterclass, a Cut Throat Shaving Masterclass, Advanced Pattern & Design, Watch & Learn classes and hourly workshops for working barbers.

Where does the course take place?
At Dilla Academy, 216 Church Road, Urmston, Manchester, M41 9DX.

When does the next course start?
Spaces are open for our January 2027 intake.

JANUARY 2027 INTAKE

SPACES AVAILABLE. BOOK NOW.

Start the new year with a qualification, real client experience and a clear path into barbering.

SCAN TO ENQUIRE

ENQUIRE ONLINE

Call 07817 959 077
Visit Dilla Academy, 216 Church Road, Urmston, Manchester, M41 9DX
Online dillaacademy.co.uk

Course details, prices and dates are correct at the time of publication and may change. Please confirm with Dilla Academy when you enquire.