



# HOUSE OF SKILLS IN THE EASTERN NETHERLANDS

*PUTS PROCESS TECHNOLOGY ON THE MAP*

*FOR PRE-VOCATIONAL SECONDARY EDUCATION IN TWENTE*

**S**TO Twente, in full Strong Technical Education Twente, is working hard to inspire students of pre-vocational secondary education, or in Dutch VMBO, for engineering and technology. One sector that is still somewhat underexposed is process technology. This is not justified, because in Twente we have countless companies and factories that would come to a standstill without process technology. From beer brewer Grolsch to cheese maker Heks'nkaas and much more. Because process technology is indispensable in the food sector, amongst others. That is why more than 160 students from class 2 (age 13 – 14 years) of Bonhoeffer College and Het Stedelijk Alpha from the STO subregion of Enschede participated in the 'Get to know Process Engineering and Food Technology'. Ronald: "We look back on three great days during which we were able to give the students a "look behind the scenes" of process technology in Twente." The organisation was in the hands of STO Enschede and the House of Skills Almelo, the practical centre of Process Your Future, House of Skills (PCPT).

## **A resounding success**

Ronald: "These days were a resounding success! And the great thing is: PCPT and House of Skills are opening the door wide to all other VMBO schools under the flag of STO Twente for a similar experience! We organised the 'Get to know Process Engineering and Food Technology' together with the House of Skills Almelo of Process Your Future. The latter is the partnership between ROC van Twente, Zone.college, Saxion and companies in the Twente process and food industry. This collaboration takes place under the auspices of the PraktijkCentrum Proces-, Food en Feed Technologie Oost Nederland (PCPT)."

## **House of Skills**

Gerard Nijhuis and Dirk Zuidema are both project leaders for Process Your Future/PCPT. Gerard is also a senior lecturer in Nutrition & Technology at Zone.college and Dirk is a senior lecturer in Process Engineering at ROC van Twente: "House of Skills is the place where pupils, students, workers and lateral entrants can learn everything about process engineering. In an

environment where everything revolves around learning, developing yourself, experimenting and being allowed to make mistakes. Something that, of course, is not possible in a real factory." Gerard and Dirk proudly show all the possibilities in the House of Skills: "Students get to work with specific parts of the process industry, such as parts of production lines for the food sector. And

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what's so great: in addition, via large screens, there are numerous interactive and digital facilities with VR, AR and 3D to let VMBO students experience all the possibilities in the process industry for themselves." House of Skills is located at the Kolthofsingel in Almelo.

## From primary and secondary education to secondary vocational and higher professional education

In order to inspire and enthuse young people about engineering and technology at an early age, primary and secondary school pupils are very welcome. Gerard emphasizes that House of Skills consciously focuses on the continuous learning pathway: "We want to introduce students to process engineering at several times in the House of Skills. Starting in primary education with an initial exploration, then at VMBO (pre-vocational secondary education) with, for example, the 'Get to know Process Engineering and Food Technology' and then through MBO (secondary vocational education)." All these contact moments together should make the penny drop for hopefully a study of process engineering, but Gerard emphasizes the following: "Of course, not every VMBO student has to choose process engineering, but through our House of Skills they will at least come into contact with it and get the chance for a conscious choice."

## Inspiring multi-stage rocket

Hearing-seeing-feeling and smelling were the senses that were addressed at the many students for three days during the 'Get to know Process Engineering and Food Technology'. Ronald: "We had built up a multi-stage rocket, together

with the experienced Dirk and Gerard from House of Skills. First, the students were given introductory lessons about process engineering at school. House of Skills had made a ready-to-use information booklet for their teachers. Subsequently, House of Skills brought all kinds of challenging process technology to our Technolab for active and inspiring workshops and outside the school, at House of Skills, taught by teachers from the Zone.college." To top it all off, the students visited a nice cross-section of companies in Twente that work concretely with Process Technology: Heks'nkaas and Dessertmeesters in Oldenzaal, and Twente Recycling in Hengelo.

## Highly recommended: elective course process technology

Gerard and Dirk also have another important tip: "ROC van Twente regularly does an assignment with VMBO students as part of an elective course. Not many teachers know yet that we also have everything in order for VMBO schools to have their students follow the elective course Production Technology, Food Safety through ROC van Twente. We therefore advise teachers to discuss this with us."

## Job guarantee

Dirk: "VMBO students who follow a course in process technology at MBO level are guaranteed a job in Twente." Gerard: "Think especially of positions such as process operator. In technologically advanced production processes, this key role ensures that barley, for example, becomes beer and that milk becomes cheese. Crucial jobs that the Twente business community is desperate for. These types of positions also offer great opportunities for growth." ■

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## Does your VMBO also want to get started with process engineering?

For example, with your own 'Get to know Process Engineering and Food Technology', the elective course Production Technology, Food Safety or with a different approach? Please feel free to contact Process Your Future: Dirk Zuidema, [dzuidema@pcptoost.nl](mailto:dzuidema@pcptoost.nl) or Gerard Nijhuis, [gnijhuis@pcptoost.nl](mailto:gnijhuis@pcptoost.nl).

The website also provides a lot of information: [www.processyourfuture.nl](http://www.processyourfuture.nl). On this site you can see the House of Skills in 3D!

