This year the South East regional heat of this fabulous competition was held at Merrist Wood College, on Tuesday 2nd April.

The Young Horticulturist of the Year competition is a fantastic opportunity to test Horticulture knowledge and get the opportunity to meet with fellow horticulturalists from all over the UK and Ireland. With a prize fund of £8000, there are opportunities to win prizes across the heats, regional finals and the grand final. The ultimate winner of the competition wins a £2500 travel bursary to fund horticultural related travel anywhere in the world.

The competition could not exist without the Shropshire Horticultural Society (SHS) who organise the Shrewsbury Flower show every year. The SHS fund a large proportion of the competition including the travel bursary awarded to the winner. The funds come from a trust set up in honour of Percy Thrower. Percy was known to many as the first ever celebrity gardener and is recognised for his time on BBC Gardeners World from 1969 to 1976.

This year, the heats of the competition took place in January and February and consisted of 40 multiple choice questions, covering a wide range of horticultural topics. The heats were held at various venues across the UK. Heat winners then went through to one of eight regional finals. These finals consisted of two identification rounds and eight rounds of buzzer and directed questions on specific areas of horticulture and were held at a wide variety of locations across the UK from botanical gardens to horticultural colleges.

Anna Eyres, Head of Learning and Standards at Merrist Wood College, said "It was fantastic to host a regional final of the Young Horticulturist of the Year competition at Merrist Wood College. The standard was very high and all of the competitors did extremely well, including Josh Standing representing Merrist Wood College. Unfortunately, Josh didn’t make it through to the grand final which will take place at Kew Gardens on Saturday 11th May. We wish all of the finalists the best of luck!"

If you would like to find out more about the Horticulture courses we offer, please visit our subject area pages.