



Pupils see engineering's attractions

By Rebecca Fox

Robots and laser beams are being used to attract young people to science and engineering professions.

Thirty-two pupils from Otago Girls High School and John McGlashan College were taken on a tour of construction sites and factories around the city last week to show them potential careers.

Organised by the Institution of Professional Engineers New Zealand, (ipenz), the tour took in the Mt Grand reservoir, Southern water treatment plant, Fisher and Paykel factory and Farras Mechanical Engineering.

Ipenz Otago branch chairman John Block said engineers, in partic-

ular, were in demand. Many students were snapped up by employers before they finished training.

"We need to do tours like this more often. We have a very hard time recruiting."

Pupils were most impressed with Farras' flying optic laser which was able to cut shapes of any size precisely out of metal, wood and acrylic, and with Fisher and Paykel's robots.

To help them understand what they could do with the subjects they were studying at school, engineering graduates spoke to them about their career paths after the tour, he said.

"A lot of girls do science but do not know what to do with it, other than medicine, so this gave them some options."



PHOTO: JANE DAWBER

Future choices . . . Looking at examples of precision laser cutting at Farras Mechanical Engineering are (from left) John McGlashan College pupils Blake Sinclair (17) and Salil Khasnis (18) and Otago Girls High School pupils Diana Fieldwick (16) and Georgia Knowles (16).

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