

**Riverside  
College**

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# **STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2019**





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## Chapter 1 | Vision, Values and Strategic Aims

### Our Vision

Through the excellence of the education we provide, we will enhance and transform lives.

We strive to be sector-leading in everything we do.

### Our Values

1. Teaching and learning is our priority and the needs and safety of our students always come first.
2. As members of the College we are partners in the success of the organisation and we are all accountable for our outcomes.
3. High standards are at the heart of all that we do. In our pursuit of excellence we recognise that individually and collectively we can always improve.
4. Within our college community we all treat each other with respect, trust, openness, care and consideration. We celebrate student and staff success.
5. We are an inclusive college where we promote and protect equality and diversity.
6. We work in partnership with employers and other stakeholders so that we can make a positive contribution to local, regional and national economic development.



### Our Strategic Aims

1. To achieve high **quality** outcomes for our students by prioritising teaching, learning and progression.
2. To continue to improve levels of **efficiency** and remain in outstanding financial health.
3. To maximise opportunities for **growth**.

## Strategic Aims

- 1 To achieve high **quality** outcomes for our students by prioritising teaching, learning and progression.

### We will do this by:

- 1.1 Prioritising the delivery of outstanding **quality** in terms of teaching, learning and assessment and the student experience so that all our students progress and reach their potential.
  - 1.2 Striving to create a college community with core values at its heart.
  - 1.3 Nurturing our students and staff so that we have high levels of morale and wellbeing, together with creativity, innovation and excellence.
  - 1.4 Providing exceptional levels of student care with an emphasis on good citizenship, employability skills and positive progression outcomes.
  - 1.5 Investing in our staff to sustain high quality provision.
- 2 To continue to improve levels of **efficiency** and remain in outstanding financial health.

### We will do this by:

- 2.1 Maintaining financial stability through effective cost control and creating funds to grow.
- 2.2 Investing in and modernising our centres to meet local and regional priorities.

- 3 To maximise opportunities for **growth**.

### We will do this by:

- 3.1 Promoting growth areas, particularly 16-18, Higher Education, apprenticeships and full cost recovery courses.
- 3.2 Prioritising the needs of the people of Halton and the Liverpool City Region (LCR).
- 3.3 Continuing to be the first choice for school leavers, adult learners and employers while maintaining a market-led, regionally responsive college with an exciting and engaging curriculum.
- 3.4 Working in partnership to engage those who traditionally do not participate in education and training.
- 3.5 Working with employers to develop a responsive curriculum to close the skills gap and provide a highly skilled local workforce.

## 2.1 External and Internal Assessment

2.1.1 In September 2015 the College was inspected by Ofsted. Their judgement was that the College continues to be GOOD with the capacity to be outstanding and safeguarding is effective. The inspection report highlights many positive aspects for the College including:

- “Your leadership team has maintained the good quality of education and training in the college since the last inspection. You and your team have continued to have a strong focus on sustaining the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and the large majority of students are making good or excellent progress. Lesson observations accurately identify strengths and areas for improvement, including in apprenticeships and subcontracted provision. A rigorous and accurate self-assessment process and robust action plans ensure that underperforming courses are improved rapidly.
- You, senior leaders and governors have set a clear strategic direction. You work successfully with the local authority and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to ensure that provision is responsive to local and regional priorities. This results in a high proportion of your students progressing to further study, higher education, apprenticeships and employment.”

*Ofsted: Short Inspection report, September 2015*

<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/130622>

2.1.2 Alongside Ofsted the College receives a number of external assessments throughout the year including: Department for Education (DfE) performance tables; Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF); quality monitoring reviews (QMRs); Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) audit; FE Choices; learner and employer surveys; and the Higher Education Annual Provider Review all of which acknowledge excellent performance and high levels of satisfaction.

2.1.3 In Autumn 2017 the College produced a Self-Assessment Report (SAR) for 2016/2017, with the following grades:

Overall judgements	SAR Grade 2015/2016	SAR Grade 2016/2017
Overall effectiveness	Grade 2: Good	Grade 2: Good
Leadership and management	Grade 2: Good	Grade 2: Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade 2: Good	Grade 2: Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Grade 2: Good	Grade 2: Good
Outcomes for learners	Grade 2: Good	Grade 1: Outstanding



2.1.4 The following key strengths were identified:

1. Achievement rates **are outstanding**
2. Overall **achievement** rates for apprentices are very good
3. **Valued added** on the large majority of programmes is excellent
4. **Professional development** and **support** processes are highly effective resulting in very good, and often outstanding, classroom practice
5. Outstanding **financial management** has led to economic stability and effective deployment of resources
6. Learners receive a high quality, holistic and **wholly encompassing experience** whilst at College
7. Arrangements for **safeguarding** are **highly effective**
8. Strong and effective **links** with **external partners** including LEP, schools, colleges, employers and the borough has resulted in exceptional growth in 16-18 provision.

2.1.5 The Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) identified the key areas for improvement:

1. **Attainment** in some A level subjects
2. **Retention** of High Needs Funded Learners
3. **Achievement** rates, including WBL, in Construction

2.1.6 The College aims to address these areas for improvement in addition to those parts of the College which are not yet rated as outstanding. These are detailed in the Quality, Efficiency, Growth (QEG) Plan which acts as the College's 'to do' list.

2.1.7 The College came third out of 190 colleges nationally in the Department for Education Key Stage 5 for its vocational performance and in the top 10% nationally in 8 out of 10 measures.

2.1.8 The National Achievement Rates tables (NART) produced in March 2018 (based on results in 2016/17) demonstrate that the College performs well above the national average.

	Cohort	Riverside %	National %	Diff %
Apprenticeships	353	77.6	67.7	+9.9
Apprenticeships (timely)	355	67.9	59.4	+8.5
E&T 16-18	5,771	85.1	81.5	+3.6
E&T 19+	2,605	92.1	86.9	+5.2

2.1.9 Overall, the College believes the delivery of outstanding quality is its overriding priority in the context of a volatile external environment.

## 2.2 The Policy and Funding Environment

The College continues to operate in a highly volatile policy and funding environment. Flexibility has to be built into our planning so that we are in a position to respond to rapid changes.

Some key recent developments include:

- i. The conclusion of the LCR Area Based Review (ABR) accepted the recommendation that the College should remain as a standalone institution while some local colleges should merge.
- ii. Devolution of powers to the LCR includes the Adult Education Budget (AEB) from 2019/2020 and the election of a Metro Mayor.
- iii. The impact of the apprenticeship reforms, including the levy and introduction of standards.
- iv. Uncertainty around Brexit and public spending reductions to 2020 plus current flat cash funding rates with inflation rising above 2%.
- v. The current condition of funding for GCSE resits in maths and English and the new grading 9-1 for GCSE.
- vi. The recent announcements of significant reforms to technical education and the introduction of T-Levels as part of the Skills Plan.
- vii. Increasing competition and declining demographics to 2020.

The pace of change clearly poses risks to the College however, it is in a very strong position in terms of quality and financial health, and is able to respond quickly to these changes.

## 2.3 16-18 Students

2.3.1 The College set a target of recruiting 3,000 16-18 year old students by 2020; this target was achieved in 2017 despite declining demographics and increasing competition and this has had a positive impact on the financial plan to 2020 and beyond.



#### *16-18 learner number and allocations*

2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
2,521	2,681	2,741	3,019	3,100

2.3.2 Notwithstanding this, the College believes that there is the potential to increase recruitment of 16-18 year old students. With high quality provision and the opening of the IDEA (STEM) Centre, Weldtech Futures and the Cronton Playhouse there is an opportunity to persuade more students from Halton and outside the borough to choose our College. In-borough applications and offers are ahead of last year and current projections indicate that our 16-18 income will increase by 5% by 2019/2020.

## **2.4 Apprenticeships**

2.4.1 The Government has pledged to create 3 million apprenticeships by 2020 and has established the Institute for Apprenticeships. The Principal sits on the Education and Childcare Route Panel.

2.4.2 The College has been approved as a main provider for levy and employer co-investment apprenticeships.

2.4.3 The College has built strong relationships with major employers this year and believes that the apprenticeship reforms will provide a strong platform for growth.

2.4.4 Continued investment in new facilities will enable the College to extend the range of apprenticeships available, especially to a higher level.

2.4.5 The College does not actively seek to subcontract apprenticeship provision and has seen growth in direct delivery this year against a national drop in starts.

## **2.5 19+ Adult Education**

2.5.1 The Adult Education Budget (AEB) remains challenging to deliver however, the College continues to meet the funding target.

2.5.2 This budget will be devolved to the LCR Combined Authority (CA) from 2019/2020 and the College is working with the CA and other city region colleges to implement this.

2.5.3 In light of these changes the College has maintained the same adult budget allocation in 2018/2019 and will ensure that the local needs are met.

2.5.4 Over the medium term the College is exploring the potential for more full cost delivery work with individuals and employers.



## 2.6 Higher Education

In 2018/2019 the College aims to build upon the improved curriculum offer by developing pathways at Level 4 and above and progression opportunities from Level 5 to Level 6.

## 2.7 Community Confidence

Significant progress has been made in establishing the College's reputation with key stakeholders as a high quality provider of education and training. These include partner high schools, prospective students and their parents/carers, Halton Borough Council, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, employers, the LEP and key agencies including the ESFA and Ofsted.

## 2.7 Working in Partnership

2.7.1 The College wishes to continue to work closely with partners. In the context of more diverse post-16 provision, it is important to maintain support for a successful, strong and viable college in Halton.

2.7.2 The College has made the following commitments:

1. We will consistently perform as a high quality college.
2. We will address the issue of those Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) in a collaborative and creative way.
3. We will increase the percentage of young people achieving Levels 2 and 3 by the age of 19.
4. We will reduce the number of young people leaving the Borough to further their education at age 16.
5. We will work towards closing the gap in attainment between those who were in receipt of free school meals and those who were not.
6. We will increase significantly the number of young people starting on apprenticeships and traineeships.
7. We will seek to address the needs of people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who need clear progression routes within Halton.
8. We will respond positively to the requirement for young people to stay in education or training until they are 18 and beyond.
9. We will contribute fully to addressing local needs and priorities, by implementing the priorities in Halton's Children, Young People and Families Plan 2018-2021.
10. We will engage with partners to work towards key targets for adults.
11. We will work with partners to expand higher education opportunities in Halton.
12. We will seek to deliver an inclusive curriculum for the residents of Halton notwithstanding the impact of changing funding sources and levels.
13. We will work with Halton employers and other partners to provide training for workers. We will aim to focus on dynamic local sectors such as construction, engineering, science and technology.
14. We will work with the LEP to identify how we can contribute to the Skills Strategy for the LCR, in particular: Creative and Digital Industries; Advanced Manufacturing; Financial and Professional Services; Health and Life Sciences; Low Carbon; the Visitor Economy and Health and Social Care.



### 3.1 **Monitoring of Performance**

Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs) will be produced for all curriculum and support areas. These will be monitored throughout the year by:

- i. the quality improvement cycle as part of the self-assessment process;
- ii. the QEG (Quality, Efficiency and Growth) which summarises areas for improvement; where emerging concerns are identified bespoke recovery plans will be implemented immediately;
- iii. SMT Monitoring meetings – 5 times per year.

### 3.2 **Reporting Outcomes**

Outcomes and external assurances will be reported to Governors through Committee and Board meetings by:

- i. the QEG (Quality, Efficiency and Growth) Report;
- ii. dashboards for finance and quality;
- iii. strategic update reports by the Senior Management Team; and
- iv. reports by auditors, Ofsted, performance tables, funding bodies.