

**Riverside
College**



STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2020


CRANTON
SIXTHFORM
COLLEGE

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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 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 The new Education Inspection Framework (EIF) starts in September 2019. The College has taken part in a pilot and it is expected that inspection will take place in 2019/2020 in the 5-year cycle for ‘GOOD’ colleges.

2.1.3 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.

2.1.4 In Autumn 2018 the College produced a Self-Assessment Report (SAR) for 2017/2018, with the following grades:

Overall judgements	SAR Grade 2015/2016	SAR Grade 2016/2017	SAR Grade 2017/2018
Overall effectiveness	Grade 2: Good	Grade 2: Good	Grade 1: Outstanding
Leadership and management	Grade 2: Good	Grade 2: Good	Grade 1: Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade 2: Good	Grade 2: Good	Grade 1: Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Grade 2: Good	Grade 2: Good	Grade 1: Outstanding
Outcomes for learners	Grade 2: Good	Grade 1: Outstanding	Grade 1: Outstanding

2.1.5 The following key strengths were identified:

1. Students make **excellent progress** whilst at College. Achievement rates and Value Added are outstanding.
2. The vast majority of students display a professional approach to developing their **skills, knowledge** and **understanding**.
3. **Professional development** and **support** processes are highly effective resulting in excellent classroom practice.
4. Outstanding **financial management** had led to economic stability and effective deployment of resources and investment in facilities.
5. Learners receive a high quality, holistic and **encompassing experience** whilst at College ensuring they are prepared for the next steps.
6. Arrangements for **safeguarding** are **highly effective**.
7. The College has a **culture** of high expectations and transparency where health and wellbeing are of the highest importance.
8. Strong and effective links with **external partners** including schools, the LEP, colleges, employers and the borough has resulted in exceptional growth.



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

1. Improve the **consistency** of the apprentice provision.
2. **Attainment** in pre-advanced mathematics.
3. The **quality of provision** in a very small minority of courses.

- 2.1.7 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.
- 2.1.8 The National Achievement Rates tables (NART) produced in March 2019 (based on results in 2017/18) demonstrate that the College performs well above the national average and places the College's performance in the top quartile nationally on most measures.

Qualification type	Cohort	Riverside %	National %	Diff %
Apprenticeships	400	74.9	68.7	+6.2
Apprenticeships timely	400	66.3	59.6	+6.7
E and T 16-18	4,790	87	82.1	+4.9
E and T 19 plus	2,830	92.8	88.3	+4.5

- 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. National government is dominated by BREXIT and the uncertainty around the political fallout. The Association of Colleges (AoC) has stated that the 2019-20 budget round will be the hardest in years. Flexibility has to be built into our planning so that we are in a position to respond to rapid changes.

Some key recent key developments include:

- i. The devolution of powers to the Liverpool City Region (LCR) including the Adult Education Budget (AEB).
- ii. The impact of the apprenticeship reforms, including the levy, spending controls and the introduction of standards.
- iii. Two local schools have closed their sixth forms and are working closely with the College on transition.
- iv. Funding rates have been fixed for 7 years with no account for inflation. There continues to be a call for an increase backed by the #LoveOurColleges campaign.
- v. The significant reforms to technical education and the introduction of T-Levels including industrial placements as part of the Skills Plan.
- vi. Rising staff and pension costs.
- vii. A strengthened approach to supporting and intervening in colleges from the FE Commissioner and EFSA set out in the document 'College Oversight: Support and Intervention Policy, April 2019'.

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:

- £25m invested in teaching and learning facilities since 2012 whilst maintaining OUTSTANDING financial health;
- Income increased from £20m in 2016/2017 to £24m in 2019/2020.

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	2019/20
2,521	2,681	2,741	3,019	3,100	3,223

2.3.2 The College has increased its 16-18 provision by 28% since 2014/15 and 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. Applications and offers for school leavers are ahead of last year and current projections indicate that our 16-18 income will increase by 4% for 2020/2021.

2.4 Apprenticeships

2.4.1 The Government has pledged to create 3 million apprenticeships by 2020 and has established the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education. 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 eg Scottish Power 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.



Riverside College's first cohort Scottish Power apprentices have completed – pictured with Mary Murphy, Principal and Andy James, Head of Engineering (Kingsway)

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 The majority of 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 2019/2020 and will ensure that the local needs are met. It has been successful in securing funding for test and learn pilots in digital and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL).
- 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 2019/2020 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. The collaborative partnership with the University of Staffordshire continues successfully. In June 2019 the College was awarded the TEF Gold Award for its higher education provision.

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, local Multi Academy Trusts (MATs), prospective students and their parents/carers, Halton Borough Council, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, employers, the LEP and key agencies including the ESFA, Ofsted and the Office for Students (OfS).

2.8 Working in Partnership

- 2.8.1 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.

2.8.2 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 work towards closing the gap in attainment between those who were in receipt of free school meals and those who were not.
5. We will increase the number of young people starting on apprenticeships and traineeships.
6. We will seek to address the needs of people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who need clear progression routes within Halton.
7. We will respond positively to the requirement for young people to stay in education or training until they are 18 and beyond.
8. 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.
9. We will engage with partners to work towards key targets for adults.
10. We will work with partners to expand higher education opportunities in Halton.
11. We will seek to deliver an inclusive curriculum for the residents of Halton notwithstanding the impact of changing funding sources and levels.
12. 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.
13. 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.



Cronton Sixth Form hosted the Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership Board meeting in the IDEA Centre - a gathering of high profile business leaders and politicians including Metro Mayor of the Liverpool City Region, Steve Rotheram



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; and
- iii. Senior Management Team (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, Office for Students, performance tables and funding bodies.