

HOW COLLEGE

COLLEGE CAREERS  
STRATEGY AND  
ACTION PLAN

2020/23



HEART OF  
WORCESTERSHIRE  
COLLEGE

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## Purpose and Aim

Heart of Worcestershire College (HoW) is fully committed to ensuring that all learners acquire the skills, knowledge and attitudes to manage their learning and career progression. This commitment is recognised by the 'whole' College being accredited to the Matrix Quality Standard which includes ensuring high quality provision for all our learners (including those on Apprenticeships and in Higher Education)

HoW College has an established range of effective careers guidance programmes which is reflected in the higher numbers of learners progressing to positive destinations such as apprenticeships, traineeships, technical routes, higher education or employment.

This strategy sets out Heart of Worcestershire Colleges key approaches internally and externally to continuously develop and improve Careers Guidance. This updated strategy is set in the context of Brexit and the uncertainty of a post COVID19 19 economy. The core aims remain the same to ensure that learners are prepared for and informed effectively about their next steps and can therefore aspire to achieve their full potential. We want to ensure that our students have both the aptitude, resilience and interpersonal skills to make the transitions through their education journey and enable them to enter the workplace or gain their independence. However, there will in addition be a specific focus on developing and promoting Adult Guidance Services internally and externally. The college will collaborate with a range of external agencies to deliver these key outcomes in partnerships, these will include The Careers Enterprise Company, Uniconnect, the LEP, Chamber of Commerce, Schools, other education providers and employers. The key priorities identified for skills development in Worcestershire will also form part of the delivery of this strategy.

High quality career guidance is a crucial part of improving social mobility. Young people make choices based on what they know and what they think is available to them. If young people are aware of the careers options available to them, they will be more able to make informed choices about which qualifications and routes to take.

The strategy includes measures to continue to meet the eight 'Gatsby Benchmarks' required and the priorities set within the Ofsted Education Inspection framework. This will involve co-ordinated external support in addition to appropriately skilled and experienced careers leadership within the college.

This strategy outlines a whole college approach to careers guidance. However, there are statutory and funding requirements which specifically apply to:

- All learners in college up to and including the age of 18 years old;
- 19 to 25 year olds with a current Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan in place under section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

## Background

All further education (FE) colleges in England are subject to a requirement to secure access to independent careers guidance. This forms part of FE College funding agreements.

Colleges also have a legal requirement to provide all college learners with guidance materials and a wide range of up-to-date reference materials relating to careers education and career opportunities.

Government reforms set out in the Post 16-Skills Plan aim to meet the needs of our growing and rapidly changing economy by raising the prestige of technical education. FE colleges will have a key role in delivering these reforms. There will be 15 high quality routes to skilled employment which will group together occupations where there are shared training requirements. New T level programmes will sit within each of these routes. Alongside apprenticeships as our high quality work-based option, T levels will form the basis of our new technical education offer.

The Government's Careers Strategy, published on 4 December 2017, set out a long term plan to build a world class careers system to help young people and adults choose the career that is right for them. It is a requirement for 16 to 18 year olds (and also 19 to 25 year-olds with a current EHC Plan) in college to have access to independent careers guidance. All 16 to 19 study programmes should be focussed on progression towards learning at the next level or progression into employment.

The Department for Education has published statutory guidance for maintained schools on their duty to provide careers guidance. All academies and free schools are subject to a duty to provide pupils with access to a range of education and training providers. In 2018, the Baker clause required schools to admit providers of technical education and apprenticeships with contact with pupils to promote their courses.

At the time of writing this strategy there are major uncertainties at play:

- The long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic
- The effects of Brexit
- The impact of the White paper for FE reform

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/953510/skills-for-jobs-lifelong-learning-for-opportunity-and-growth.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/953510/skills-for-jobs-lifelong-learning-for-opportunity-and-growth.pdf)

- The review of Post 18 Education (Augar report – interim Jan 21)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/953332/Interim Conclusion of Review of Post-18 Education and Funding.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/953332/Interim_Conclusion_of_Review_of_Post-18_Education_and_Funding.pdf)

An outcome of the pandemic is that younger people may decide to remain in education. This could shield them from the worst of the economic downturn, and conversely lead to higher productivity and a better-skilled workforce.

Evidence suggests that those under 25 were more likely to be furloughed during the pandemic than any other age group. They were also the age group most likely to lose their job, with the youth unemployment rate rising. In addition, the number of graduate jobs advertised has fallen dramatically and apprentices have stalled with fewer companies taking on new positions.

Adult skills and education are also heavily affected, with unemployment rising, and around 2.7 million workers furloughed, the risk is that the worst of Britain's jobs crisis is yet to come. Between 2011/2012 and 2018/19, adult participation in further education decreased by over one million learners, from 3.1 million to 2.1 million

In addition the technical skills required for most sectors are quickly becoming outdated owing to rapid changes in technology and the spread of automation. The World Economic Forum projects that by 2022 at least 54% of all employees will need reskilling and upskilling

to respond to changing work requirements. Young people need the skills to rapidly learn, adapt, practice resiliency and take advantage of entrepreneurial mindsets, to respond to this reality with the ingenuity to earn an income.

The manufacture of automotive, transport equipment, chemicals and chemical products and textiles, and services such as finance and communications are the most exposed sectors to Brexit. Hospitality, tourism, transport and arts and entertainment are the most exposed sectors in relation to the economic impact of Covid-19. The automotive industry is one of the sectors that has experienced a downturn due to Covid-19 and is likely to be significantly impacted by Brexit.

There are currently significant skills gaps at higher technical levels. Across a range of sectors there is growing employer demand for the skills that higher technical education provides (Technicians, Engineers, Health Care and Social Care). Investing in these skills at both a local and national level is critical to improving productivity and international competitiveness. As the rate of technological change increases, further education will be crucial to building an agile and adaptable workforce.

Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership has identified the following priorities:

- Skills and Workforce Planning – increasing apprenticeships; developing graduate level opportunities and increasing private sector investment in skills.
- Strengthening the relationship between schools and businesses – building a clear picture of skills required and increasing opportunities created under academy status.
- Increasing Employability – addressing youth unemployment; building better mechanisms to identify job opportunities and support local recruitment; and helping small businesses recruit.

The White Paper for FE Reform sets out the government's commitment to supporting high quality careers guidance with the following commitments:

- Update the National Careers Service website to become a single source of government-assured careers information for young people and adults. The revamped website will bring together all the learning and careers routes available to people, along with improved content on work experience, applying for roles, and updated labour market information.
- Introduce interactive careers maps, which will show the occupations and career options that technical or higher technical education can open the doors to.
- Appoint Independent Strategic Advisers on Careers Guidance, working closely with The Careers & Enterprise Company and the National Careers Service. “
- Extend coverage of Careers Hubs to local communities across England, supporting more schools and colleges to deliver world-class careers education in their area. Through the Enterprise Adviser Network, we will continue to connect senior business volunteers with secondary schools and colleges, including special schools and alternative provision.
- Invest in more high-quality training for Careers Leaders, who have proven to be knowledgeable and effective in leading a careers programme.
- Introduce a three-point-plan to enforce the Baker Clause: a new minimum requirement about who is to be given access to which pupils and when; tougher

formal action against non-compliance; and government-funded careers support for schools to be made conditional on Baker Clause compliance

- Lower the age range of the duty on schools to provide independent careers guidance, requiring schools to offer this support from year seven, bringing it in line with the Gatsby Benchmarks.
- Publish updated guidance setting out what we expect for secondary schools (as statutory guidance) and colleges
- Ofsted to undertake a thematic review to provide an up-to-date assessment of careers guidance in schools and colleges and provide recommendations to improve practice.
- Work with the education sector and business to develop a shared approach to careers education that will support young people to understand the modern workplace and develop the career management skills and attributes they need to compete in today's labour market.

Skills 4 Worcestershire is the careers hub website <http://www.skills4worcestershire.co.uk/> which provides online career support for students, parents and careers' advisors. It provides all the information a young person will need to map out their career pathway. Focused on Worcestershire's key growth sectors, it highlights the qualifications, work experience and the skills required for different positions.

In addition, the White Paper also sets out the government's commitment to:

- The Introduction of a Lifetime Skills Guarantee including a Lifelong Loan Entitlement
- To ensure a genuine choice between high quality technical and academic routes by creating clear progression routes for students towards the higher-level technical qualifications that employers need.
- Local Skills Improvement Plans bringing employers, colleges and other providers, and local stakeholders together to set out the key changes needed to make technical skills training more responsive to employers' skills needs

## Current position at HoW

The pandemic situation changed the way careers guidance was delivered in 2019/20. Careers Services were delivered remotely during lockdown and beyond. Additional and innovative ways were used to continue to provide support and services to students. In addition, support externally continued for schools and additional summer projects were created to ease transition for the year 11's who had not been in education. Some of these changes will be retained as they proved to be effective. Lockdown has severely affected workplace opportunities for learners.

- There is an established Careers Progression and Employment Group which includes representation from departments involved in the implementation of the Careers Strategy and subsequent career programme. Members of the group lead on the specific areas of improvement. This groups feeds into the College Management Group.

- The college prospectus has creatively used LMI data to ensure learners can access good quality information and an understanding of careers information before they join the college formally.
- The college website uses Career Coach effectively to give learners and visitors to the site high quality careers and LMI data (EMSI). The college is undertaking an ongoing project to embed a LMI API to the main website which will pull through live data at course level to relevant careers and jobs for those areas at local, regional and national levels.
- Full time students receive at least one pre-entry interview for initial guidance and enrolment onto appropriate courses. Full-time learners are assigned a Personal Tutor who implements careers work through the THRIVE Programme and individual 1:1 interviews. Specialist IAG Advisors offer impartial, individual, confidential careers guidance sessions to all full-time, part-time and non-students. Action planning is an integral part of these sessions. Group sessions and workshops offered by advisers complement the tutorial programme. Visits and conventions are arranged, and students are encouraged to attend.
- Students receive support to develop their skills and knowledge to enter the employment market and to have confidence in the journey to take their place there.
- Students receive support to find suitable work placements or work experience to help develop the skills they need to enter the workplace and secure and sustain meaningful employment.
- Before joining the college formally, learners have access to a range of pre-enrolment activities including 1:1 appointments, open days/evenings, school visits themed around careers, school taster days, interviews with curriculum staff who are vocational specialists and Welcome Days.
- Whilst on programme learners have access to a range of opportunities to raise their aspirations help them develop on their career journey (onsite/remotely). These include:
  - Volunteering Fairs
  - Higher Education Fairs
  - CV Workshops
  - External guest speakers bespoke to learning areas
  - Workshops delivered by staff who are vocational specialists
  - Educational visits
  - Personal Statement Sessions
  - University visits
  - Student Finance Workshops
  - Careers Induction Sessions
- All students have access to high quality, impartial careers information, advice and guidance from qualified staff to help clarify their aspirations for work, to understand the options available to them and to take control of and make informed decisions in terms of job and career change, training and promotion.
- There is an established Mentoring programme in place using staff and external volunteers.
- The college collects and reviews destination data and uses this for development.
- There are effective and differentiated referral processes in place for learners to access careers support
- High quality careers resources are available on the portal, in Moodle and within the THRIVE programme.

- The Careers Team developed and delivered careers triage training for Personal Tutors, Personal Learning Coaches, Wellbeing Team, Student Experience Team, Customer Services and CRQ Leaders.
- The Work Experience Team and Apprenticeship Team maximise contacts and opportunities by using shared data sources and systems.
- The Wellbeing, Support for Success and High Needs Teams organise transitional visits prior to learners starting College to support learners with additional needs and to ease their transition from school into College.
- Careers referral process, effective working links with Careers Team, all staff making appropriate and timely referrals for course advice, progression and careers guidance when required.

### **Marketing teams contribute to the delivery of careers guidance through:**

- Organisation of open events showcasing College facilities and provision offer
- Attendance at school guidance events
- Organisation of taster days within College to give young people experience of the College offer
- Organisation of College tours to offer insight into services and potential courses
- Design of literature to promote progression routes and careers for all cohorts.
- Organisation of Careers Advisor network meetings.
- Maintaining the website for course information and signposting

### **Teaching staff contribute to the delivery of careers guidance through:**

- Provide sufficient course information and advice to enable prospective students to make suitable choices during interview or enrolment activity.
- The delivery of THRIVE which includes, College values, Equality & Diversity, study skills, progression routes, employability skills.
- Support for learners in preparing Individual Learning Plans (ILP) and ensuring that learners are aware of, monitor and review their individual targets and target setting
- Conduct regular 1:1 reviews with learners.
- Employability skills are identified, embedded and demonstrated in all learners' main vocational qualifications.
- Maths and English is taught and embedded throughout the duration of the learners' vocational qualification.
- Ensure that learners participate in careers events and organised trips.
- Providing support and guidance for adult's learners and signposting to specific specialist provision internally and externally.
- Supporting and promoting careers and aspirations with learners and encouraging participation at cross college events and with specific vocational opportunities.

### **IAG Advisors contribute to the delivery of careers guidance through providing:**

- Accessible, professional, impartial 1:1 careers guidance interviews across all campuses.
- Independent external careers advice offered to learners via the National Careers Service if felt more appropriate.
- Support provided to curriculum teams by developing and providing tutorials on UCAS, HE, Student Finance and Progression alternatives to HE,
- National Careers Week - an employability event across the college.

- IAG Advisors who work collaboratively with curriculum staff, external agencies, employers, universities and volunteering organisations for the benefits of learners.
- Managing mentoring scheme.
- Parents information evenings.
- Delivery of Aim Higher activities.

### **Employability and Work Experience teams contribute to the delivery of careers guidance through:**

- Organising industry specific talks for curriculum areas.
- Work placement co-ordinators work within curriculum areas to liaise and work with employers to provide opportunities for learners to access meaningful work experience.
- Organise industry specific site tours for curriculum areas.
- Organise workshops led by employers.
- WEJC work with curriculum areas and employers to produce virtual employer-based projects when circumstances require it.
- Provide information and support to learners on virtual work experience opportunities organised by leading employers.
- Provide presentations and information sources on the tile for workplace preparation.

### **Objectives for the 2020 – 2023 Strategy:**

Whilst the pandemic has seen a seismic shift forwards fully online learning the College has a long history and has continued to build upon its many years of practice in this area and is developing a remodel of existing independent online learning sessions. Done well, blended learning can hugely impact many of the skill development areas that learners of today require for the workplace. These so called 21<sup>st</sup> century skills include collaboration, resilience, independence, teamwork, problem solving and communication.

This is where we have a huge opportunity – and challenge – to fundamentally shift our focus via blended learning to reinforce taught vocational skills content and provide continuous application of these skills via a project-based learning (PBL) approach delivered via blended and independent learning resources.

#### **1. Development of innovative work experience and work encounter opportunities with employers**

- Remote or Physical
- Project based activity
- Visiting/ virtual Speakers
- Develop entrepreneurial skills for self-employment

#### **2. Further develop the use of LMI data**

- Use of information available from EMSI/marketing internally within the curriculum
- Embedding LMI into the website with links to courses/career coach

### **3. Develop effective and sustainable parent engagement**

- Develop a planned approach
- Regular communication
- Include LMI
- Promotion of support / wider college offer
- Keeping Students Warm strategy

### **4. Establish an Adult Careers Service**

- Explore New funding streams - Lifetime Skills Guarantee
- Review our offer, considering programmes to support back to work, identify programmes for adults in key areas of growth locally and nationally
- Launch a High-quality Adult guidance service and promotion
- Digital skills for adults (to enable access to support and work)
- Ensure Staff awareness of skills shortages / funding
- External agencies - DWP links / projects

### **5. Destination data and tracking development**

- Streamline data collection
- Use data internally and externally
- Further develop tracking systems to monitor engagement in careers activity

### **6. Further develop blended learning and wider careers resources to support curriculum delivery and the THRIVE programme.**

- National links, live events, careers open days etc
- Employability development (survey - RARPA)
- Preparation for work experience and Job search skills
- Capture thoughts and advice from local CEOs and other key staff to develop a bank of clips and resources that can be shared.
- Develop interventions to tackle gender stereotypes, for example, by arranging for learners to talk to men and women who work in stereotypical jobs and raising awareness of the range of careers that STEM qualifications offer
- To explore using existing learners as guest speakers to discuss progression in to HE and apprenticeship opportunities and to share their experiences in the workplace.
- Explore additional resources such as Unifrog and Fika to enhance the programme
- Generate curiosity, creativity, risk taking and exploration.
- Develop learners problem solving, entrepreneurial skills, teamwork and imagination to ensure greater success for learners progressing confidently into the world, equipped not just with vocational and hard skills, but also the skills they will need to ensure the impact of their learning at the College is lifelong

### **7. Continue to offer and develop outreach activity**

- Virtual offer for schools
- Virtual UniConnect
- Virtual mock interviews
- Careers advisors network development
- Employers links

## 8. Support the development of T levels

- Promotion internally and externally
- Website, working with Marketing, developing tiles for learners, schools, employers, students
- Work placement and engagement with employers exploring opportunities for virtual placements to enable learners to have the opportunity to participate in “meaningful encounters” with an employer per year whilst they are on their study programme with at least one encounter being delivered through their curriculum area
- Develop marketing material for employers that will enable them to easily understand the impact of their involvement, the breadth of the options available to them and the ways in which they can show that they meet their corporate social responsibility.

## 9. Enhance SEN careers guidance

- To ensure that careers guidance for learners with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is differentiated, where appropriate, and based on high aspirations and a personalised approach
- Promote aspirational progression routes for all SEND learners. This includes further study up to Higher Education. Also, positive activities for those unable to move into employment such as supporting students into with their preparation for adulthood in line with the PFA Strategy [www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk](http://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk)
- Supported internships, volunteering and social care placements.

## 10. Linking curriculum learning to careers

- To ensure subject teachers support the college’s approach to careers education and guidance and are able to link the content of study programmes with careers, even on courses which are not specifically occupation led. The study programme model offers excellent opportunities for developing the broader skills that employers need, such as team working and problem solving
- Subject specialist staff can be powerful role models to attract learners towards their field and the careers that flow from it
- Ensuring in addition we take account of learners’ own part time work and its influence on their development
- To ensure learners with vulnerabilities and those who are at risk are appropriately supported and identified through close working relationships with the full range of educational and support agencies

## 11. Develop effective support for learners progressing to HE and those on HE programmes.

- Maximise UniConnect opportunities
- Engage UniConnect target group with current HE UniConnect Ambassadors
- Enhance the learner’s experience and to showcase the benefits of studying at Higher Education level
- Develop intra curriculum progression opportunities where applicable and promote to internal students including a study mentor system
- Market the benefits of ‘studying at home’
- Develop and launch a HE equivalent THRIVE programme

## Appendix 1



GATSBY

**There are 8 Gatsby benchmarks which constitute 'good practice' in career guidance.**

- 1 A STABLE CAREERS PROGRAMME
- 2 LEARNING FROM CAREER AND LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION
- 3 ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF EACH STUDENT
- 4 LINKING CURRICULUM LEARNING TO CAREERS
- 5 ENCOUNTERS WITH EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES
- 6 EXPERIENCES OF WORKPLACES
- 7 ENCOUNTERS WITH FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION
- 8 PERSONAL GUIDANCE

## Appendix 2 - Skills

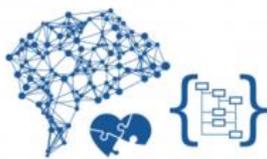
# Top 10 skills

### in 2020

1. Complex Problem Solving
2. Critical Thinking
3. Creativity
4. People Management
5. Coordinating with Others
6. Emotional Intelligence
7. Judgment and Decision Making
8. Service Orientation
9. Negotiation
10. Cognitive Flexibility

### in 2015

1. Complex Problem Solving
2. Coordinating with Others
3. People Management
4. Critical Thinking
5. Negotiation
6. Quality Control
7. Service Orientation
8. Judgment and Decision Making
9. Active Listening
10. Creativity



Source: Future of Jobs Report, World Economic Forum

## Appendix 3 - OFSTED - Personal Development

Inspectors will make a judgement on the personal development of learners by evaluating the extent to which:

- the curriculum extends beyond the academic, technical or vocational. It provides for learners' broader development, enabling them to develop and discover their interests and talents
- the curriculum and the provider's wider work support learners to develop their character – including their resilience, confidence and independence – and help them know how to keep physically and mentally healthy
- at each stage of education, the provider prepares learners for future success in their next steps
- the provider prepares learners for life in modern Britain by: equipping them to be responsible, respectful, active citizens who contribute positively to society; developing their understanding of fundamental British values; developing their understanding and appreciation of diversity; celebrating what we have in common and promoting respect for the different protected characteristics as defined in law,

