



SOUTH & CITY COLLEGE
BIRMINGHAM

OUR JOURNEY TO OUTSTANDING

STRATEGIC
PLAN

2023
2028





FOREWORD

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Our world is changing fast. We are in a post-pandemic, post-Brexit world, which is facing climate change, technological revolution and demographic shifts. Our city has gone through massive change over recent years, and this will continue into the future. Our students and staff are facing increased pressures around wellbeing, mental health and increased costs of living. At the same time, we can look forward to a future of new and great opportunities brought about by technological advances and changes in customer expectations.

Which is why, South and City College Birmingham now, more than ever, needs to set its vision, strategic goals and ambitions for the future, to guide our direction of travel, our priorities and our contribution to the region. It's an ambitious strategy, focused on people and collaboration. We recognise that we are not alone on this journey – we work closely with stakeholders to ensure that we provide the absolute best for our students and the regional economy. Our staff and our customers are key to our strategy and our success, we must listen and support them on this journey to excellence. Our success will also lead to the success of our students, staff, the city and the region.

The new strategic plan sets out our vision, values and strategic ambitions from 2023-2028. Signed off by our board, it provides an overarching framework to support and inform the strategic ambitions and outline the clear pillars representing different areas of the college.

Mike Hopkins MBE
PRINCIPAL



'As a college we play a significant role in the lives of thousands of students, employers and the local communities. Along with the governing body, I am extremely proud and committed to supporting the college in a relentless pursuit of excellence as an interface between education, industry and our communities. This Strategic Plan is all about our aspirations, priorities, actions and values – it charts how we will build on our good foundations to become an outstanding college.'

Clive Henderson
BOARD CHAIR

This plan is set in an environment where the FE sector is going through significant curriculum reform, increased financial scrutiny and much higher profile within Government. At the same time there are ongoing funding reductions in real terms year on year and substantial efficiency requirements. The Government's Build Back Better Plan for Growth, published in March 2021, places FE colleges firmly at the centre of the levelling up agenda, leading a skills-led recovery out of the pandemic and supporting employers to increase their productivity. The more recently published FE White Paper highlights the need for growth in high level technical qualifications to fill recognised skills gaps. The proposed change of qualifications with the introduction of T Levels and the planned removal of many other vocational qualifications will impact on the sector and on the needs of students and employers.

Locally, the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) is taking a far greater role in regional planning and in the specific plans and provision of each provider. In its Strategic Economic Plan, it has set out its ambition to deliver accelerated economic growth across the region. This is focused on the issues of high levels of unemployment and poverty, persistent skills shortages and low skill levels in our region's population. The WMCA has also identified sectoral priorities – advanced manufacturing, building technologies, digital, and

business and professional services. In addition, it has prioritised levels and types of provision and has taken an increasingly employment focused approach to funding and provision.

The last two years have been extraordinary, to say the least. The COVID pandemic has had a profound impact on all aspects of life and employment. As the world looks to recover from an unprecedented period of uncertainty and change, the College needs to support students as they adapt to life with and after Covid, with the aftermath of the pandemic still playing out. In addition, the cyber-attack suffered by the College during this period has necessitated major changes to many ways of working and the accessibility that can now be afforded to students and staff.

It is in this context that we publish our strategic plan for 2023-2028, where we set out our vision to be an outstanding college, which in turn has shaped our strategic ambitions. The plan will also serve to establish a framework for the college leadership team and staff to operate within and be judged against. Given the ever-changing landscape, the college will need to remain agile and continue to grasp opportunities that arise through this next phase of development whilst maintaining its deep-rooted commitment to serving the needs of students in Birmingham and the local region.

SUCCESS STORY

17-year-old **PORCHA GAYLE** from Frankley has recently completed a Level 2 in Travel and Tourism at South & City College Birmingham's Bournville campus, Longbridge.

Since finishing, she has already secured a job to gain valuable customer service skills before making further plans for her future in the travel industry. Porcha's ambition is to spend a few years working in a travel agency, booking their holidays of a lifetime, and work up to becoming a manager.

She described her time at college, "The tutors are really friendly and treated everyone on the course like an adult and with respect. They always had time to explain everything clearly and offered any additional support needed. I'd recommend the college and the course to anyone looking to work in the travel industry."



of our students come from the top **10%** most deprived wards in England



Over **1,000 STAFF**

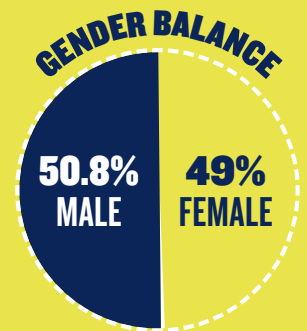


Rated 'Good' by Ofsted in **2018**

OVER **12,000 STUDENTS**



8 CAMPUSES



0.2% prefer not to say

A COLLEGE



An average student travels **4.4 miles** to college

The **AVERAGE AGE** of our students is

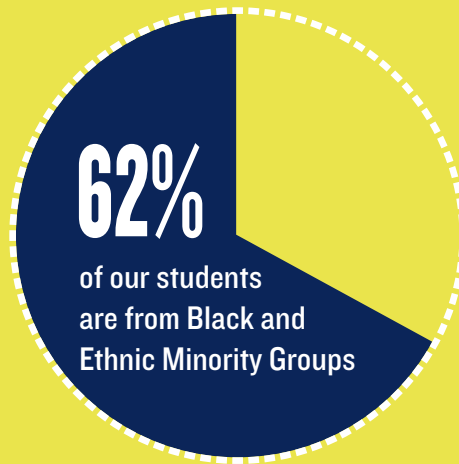




of our students speak English as a second language



of our students declare a **learning difficulty or a disability**



SNAPSHOT



**OVER
800
COURSES**

from entry level to Honours degrees

South and City College Birmingham is well known for its strong social values, its exceptional creativity and its commitment to meeting the needs of students and their communities. We advocate lifelong learning as vital for personal achievement, academic progression and career development.

The College took its present form in August 2017 following the merger with Bournville College. Both institutions had long shared the same values, with roots going back to the 19th century and a proud record of serving learners across the city and beyond. The merged college, operating from eight campuses in six locations across Birmingham as well as online, aims to meet the learning needs of a growing number of students, and to be a force for public good within the communities that we serve.

VISION:

TO BE AN
'OUTSTANDING'
COLLEGE.

MISSION:

To deliver **inspirational education and training** that not only transforms the lives of our students but shapes our city and region.

MISSION, VISION & VALUES

South & City College Birmingham is an exempt charity under the terms of the Charities Act 2006. As such, the college has a commitment to deliver a significant, measurable public benefit to its local community. In considering its vision, mission and values, South & City College Birmingham has taken into account the Charity Commission's guidance on the reporting of this public benefit.

MISSION

To provide outstanding education and training that is primarily vocational, in response to the needs of learners, employers and other key stakeholders.

recognises, values and celebrates individual differences

- is opposed to all forms of violent, abusive and discriminatory behaviour
- values its staff and will help them to develop their skills and expertise within a supportive working environment
- aims to play a key role in the local economy by supporting local people and businesses

VISION

To be recognised as an outstanding educational and economic resource by learners, employers and other key stakeholders.

The college creates public value by:

- helping local people to learn skills for employment
- promoting equality and diversity
- actively working with local businesses to:
 - a) create opportunities for apprenticeships and work placements for learners
 - b) Develop curriculum which meets the skills need.
- supporting local community-based projects and charities
- working in collaboration with key stakeholders including schools and universities
- delivering a curriculum tailored to local needs
- opening facilities to the public which are run by students
- Contributing to the economy as a major employer.

VALUES

The college:

- believes that its learners are at the heart of the College community and that they are entitled to work and study in a welcoming, safe and supportive environment
- believes that it is the responsibility of all staff to help learners to achieve their full potential
- is proud of the diversity of its community and aims to be a socially inclusive organisation that

CORE VALUES

Everything we do at the college is underpinned by our core values which are...



STUDENT VALUES

We are committed to helping our students

STRIVE:

- Developing **SKILLS** for the future
- Setting aspirational **TARGETS** in the wider community
- An attitude of **RESPECT** and feeling safe
- A willingness to become **INVOLVED**
- A sense of personal wellbeing and **VALUE**
- Developing **ENTERPRISING** qualities

PUBLIC VALUE

The college creates public value by:

- Equipping our students with skills and qualifications for employment
- Actively working with employers to fill their vacancies, promote apprenticeships, placements and more
- Supporting local community-based projects and charities
- Working in partnership with schools and universities
- Delivering a curriculum suitable for local needs
- Opening facilities to the public which are run by students
- Contributing to the economy as a major employer
- Promoting equality and diversity in everything we do
- Promoting Fundamental British values, underpinning what it is to be a citizen in a modern and diverse Britain



SOCIAL VALUE STATEMENT

Social value is threaded through our values and vision. As a college, we are proud to serve our students and communities, building skills to fit students' ambitions and local job opportunities.

OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

STRATEGIC GOALS	STRATEGIC AMBITIONS
College of choice	To be a local college of choice and a brand leader for our city and the region
Outstanding performance	To consistently deliver outstanding education and training to all students
Well prepared and enabled students	To improve every student’s life chances by ensuring their progression and positive destination
Partnerships and innovation	To continuously develop and deliver innovative curriculum that meets the needs of local and regional priorities
Safety, resources and infrastructure	To provide students with a safe and well-resourced learning environment
People and performance	To set high expectations for our staff and foster a culture of continuous improvement
Equality and diversity	To be open to all students aged 14 and over, irrespective of their background or circumstances, ensuring that everyone can achieve their full potential
Financial stability	To ensure continuing financial stability by increasing income and promoting efficient, effective service delivery

SUCCESS STORY

17-year-old **JAYDN PATEL** from Kidderminster has recently started the second year of his Level 3 Game Art and Animation. Jaydn attended an Open Day, where he saw the classrooms, previous students’ work, facilities and equipment. He also spoke directly to tutors to discuss how the course would help him achieve his career ambitions.

“When I saw what was on offer, I was impressed.” Jaydn said, “I really enjoy my course. We are allowed creative freedom to express ourselves as long as we meet the brief. Tutors are very supportive, and we learn a great deal about the gaming industry.”

Jaydn’s passion is the creative side of gaming, whether 3D modelling or animation. He spends his free time working on commissions to increase his portfolio of work for his university application.



OUR KEY PRINCIPLES

OUR OFFER

SIXTH FORM

ADULT SKILLS

UNIVERSITY &
HIGHER LEVEL

14-16 PROVISION

EMPLOYERS

OUR STAFF

HR

WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT

OUR LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

SAFEGUARDING

IT

PROPERTY

SUSTAINABILITY

MARKETING

FINANCE

Our three year college strategy has been split into three key principles representing key areas of the college.

OUR OFFER covers the five key segments of the college:

- sixth form
- adult skills
- university level provision
- employers
- and our 14-16 students

OUR STAFF, who are at the heart of the success of our college, as we believe that putting recognition and opportunities for development in place for our staff is key for us to be able to achieve the aims we have set out. Our HR and workforce development strategies sit under this dimension.

OUR LEARNING ENVIRONMENT covers property, sustainability, IT, safeguarding, marketing and finance. Each of these is underpinned by a strategy for each area, including objectives which we will continually use to assess our progress.

Curriculum intent

Within each curriculum area at South and City College Birmingham, curriculum design will ensure:

- Core skills including English, Maths, employability and essential digital skills are embedded into study programmes
- Inclusion, including ambition and challenge for all, is incorporated into all lessons
- Diversity is celebrated and injustices are challenged
- Students are challenged and motivated at all times
- Clear focus on wider skills development to support the social mobility of all our students
- Our curriculum is relevant to the local and national skills needs
- Students are given skills and knowledge to be able to progress to positive destinations

OUR OFFER:

SIXTH FORM

Objectives

- To inspire young people in our region through the provision of an inclusive and ambitious curriculum
- To deliver high quality, innovative teaching, learning and assessment, continually improving student performance
- To empower our students to make exceptional progress, by providing a nurturing environment with high expectations for all
- Improve our connectivity to employers, so that students have a higher level of career focus and access to opportunities
- Develop students' employability and personal development skills demanded by the employers of the future, so that they have every opportunity to succeed
- Embed English, Maths, employability and essential digital skills in all our programmes
- Provide good quality work experience for all 16-18 year olds
- Increase vocational relevance of our teaching, learning and assessment to better meet employers' needs
- Expand our curriculum offer to include T levels, apprenticeships and other qualifications to meet the demand of local employers
- Develop a comprehensive student engagement strategy, to ensure students are engaged and supported during their time at college
- Further engage with parents/carers to promote a supportive and cohesive learning experience.

To achieve these objectives, we will:

- Place our students at the heart of everything we do, listening to and incorporating student feedback into decision making
- Deliver high quality teaching and learning that is built on high aspirations and leads to outstanding outcomes, including destinations into careers
- Ensure all programmes have clearly signposted progression pathways for higher level study, apprenticeships or employment



SUCCESS MEASURES

- Perceived as a college of choice for young people, with a diverse and innovative curriculum offer
- An increased number of students on Level 3 and higher programmes as a proportion of total students
- An increased year-on-year percentage of students securing positive destinations they can thrive in
- Improved achievement rates, with good value added and progress measures
- Our students are happy, safe, motivated and challenged, evident by our satisfaction survey results



OUR OFFER:

ADULT SKILLS

Objectives

- To deliver exceptional education and training to enable local people to find fulfilling jobs and careers
- To anticipate and meet local skills trends and employer needs, co-creating programmes with employers (e.g. apprenticeships, pre-employment programmes etc)
- To support the government's economic recovery plan through the Lifetime Skills Guarantee
- Support local employers to improve their productivity through upskilling their workforce

To achieve these objectives, we will:

- Build on our work with employers to inform curriculum development, co-design and co-deliver new programmes, including apprenticeships and pre-employment programmes, to better meet their skills needs
- Expand our course provision to include a range of professional and higher level qualification, to support adults in employment
- Offer digital skills training at all sites and to 'hard to reach' communities
- Further develop our pre-employment training programmes linking job seekers to live vacancies



SUCCESS MEASURES

- A high percentage of students progress into jobs and succeed
- New viable courses are developed in the WMCA priority sectors
- A high percentage of students achieve a digital skills qualification alongside their vocational programme
- Employers we work with report increased productivity measures

OUR OFFER:

UNIVERSITY & HIGHER LEVEL

Objectives

- To deliver employer-led higher level curriculum that provides a pipeline of talent to shape the future skills landscape
- To provide flexible and high-quality education that enables learners from all backgrounds to progress and succeed
- To provide a distinctive higher education student ethos, environment and support
- Work with employers and their representative organisations to ensure higher education provision meets local and regional skills' requirements, both now and in the future
- Increase progression to Level 4 in all priority sectors
- Improve quality of our higher level courses
- Create a professional learning environment in areas in the College where higher education is delivered
- Offer outstanding learner support services both at the college and through the workplace
- Offer teaching staff opportunities for research and scholarly activity that directly relates to improvements in teaching and learning and the vocational relevance and currency of the curriculum offer

To achieve these objectives, we will:

- Further develop full and part-time higher level provision where the college has proven strengths in further education provision and there is evidence of demand
- Respond to government policy change and economic drivers that influence Higher Education through the development and delivery of Higher Technical Qualifications



SUCCESS MEASURES

- New viable courses are developed in the WMCA priority sectors
- An increased number of higher level students are recruited
- A high percentage of students progress into jobs and succeed
- High employer satisfaction with training that meets their needs and narrows skills gaps

OUR OFFER:

14-16 ACADEMY

Objectives

- To be recognised as an alternative provider of choice for post 14 entry
- To provide a nurturing environment with high expectations for all
- To grow our 14-16 provision across our campuses
- To improve quality of our provision, including achievement, sustained progression and high grades

To achieve these objectives, we will:

- Develop an innovative curriculum offer to 14-16 students
- Develop relationships with schools and the city council to ensure young people are offered alternative options
- Deliver high quality teaching and learning that is built on high aspirations and leads to progression to further education
- Develop students' employability and personal development skills, through a personalised learning experience, so that they have every opportunity to succeed
- Link with other college departments to expand curriculum offer
- Invest in student services to ensure students are offered appropriate support during their time at college



SUCCESS MEASURES

- All students progress to further study at 16
- Student attendance and retention is improved
- Improved achievement rates, with good value added
- Our students are happy, safe, motivated and challenged, evident by our satisfaction survey results

OUR OFFER:

EMPLOYERS

Objectives

- Deliver a unique service for local employers for training and upskilling future and current employees
- Make a positive difference in the region by becoming a hub for business connections and impactful training, creating a throughput of students into jobs or work experience
- Substantially increase our income from apprenticeships, employability and work-based training
- Ensure all our eligible students have an opportunity to undertake quality work experience
- Continue to play a key role in all aspects of GBS and IoT
- Forge positive, collaborative relationships with industry professionals to enrich students' learning experience, volunteering and work placement opportunities
- Open an Employment Hub at each main campus by June 2023
- Attract new employers with an improved sales and marketing strategy
- Develop internal procedures with curriculum areas to create one organisation approach to employer engagement

To achieve these objectives, we will:

- Further develop strategic partnerships with employers and wider stakeholders to ensure the College leads and shapes the education and skills landscape
- Work with our partner employers, LEPs and universities to support the local and regional skills agenda and productivity growth
- Review and overhaul InBusiness network
- Work with current networks, Job Centre and hard to reach communities to meet local pre-employment training needs
- Support curriculum areas in delivering innovative programmes and accessing flexibility funding
- Develop new upskilling programmes to attract those in-work



SUCCESS MEASURES

- Increased employer contacts
- Increase and expand our apprenticeship provision
- Employer feedback informs the development of our curriculum
- High employer satisfaction with training that meets their needs and narrows skills gaps
- Perceived as a provider of choice for employers and other key stakeholders, increasing repeat business
- Increased number of students with a work experience opportunity
- Consistent feedback about the positive value that our students bring to local employers

OUR STAFF



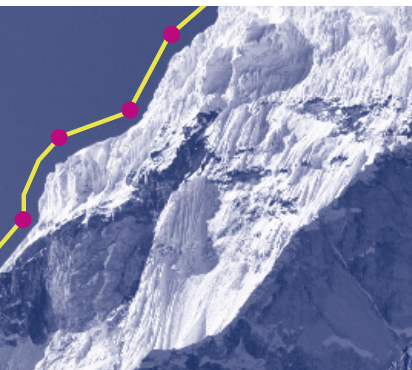
HR STRATEGY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Objectives

- Improve our reputation as an employer of choice for the region
- Retain, attract and recruit high calibre staff
- Enhance performance and career opportunities for staff through highly effective support, training and development, including succession planning at all levels
- Maintain a positive culture where ownership, accountability and involvement in decision making are promoted
- Ensure that staff enjoy and value their time at work, with equitable workload
- Our people have the opportunity to grow and develop
- Create a healthy working environment for our staff, enabling them to achieve their full potential, supporting their mental health and resilience
- Embed equality, diversity, fairness and inclusion into all that we do
- Invest in building the skills and knowledge of our people to ensure they're up to date through a dedicated programme of professional development
- Develop and strengthen our staff through open performance management, mentoring and coaching to enable each individual to have true accountability and ownership for their role within the college
- Implement our mental health strategy to support better wellbeing
- Strengthen staff voice to ensure that everyone is consulted, informed and has the ability to express opinions and put forward ideas
- Prepare a succession plan to ensure that no post is left vacant without the necessary expertise to cover it
- Provide a comprehensive onboarding programme for new staff

To achieve these objectives, we will:

- Provide meaningful work and help everyone see how they contribute to the success of the college by effective performance management
- Motivate staff through meaningful work, strong leadership, fair rewards and recognition
- Create an open culture where staff are involved, heard, empowered, happy and healthy



SUCCESS MEASURES

- We are known as an employer of choice, demonstrated by staff and stakeholder surveys
- All staff have a dedicated programme of professional development
- All staff are engaged with an open and responsive performance management process
- Improved staff satisfaction with their work environment and professional development opportunities
- Reduced sickness rates
- All staff feel connected to our culture and values



OUR

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT, SAFEGUARDING AND SUSTAINABILITY

Objectives

- Develop vibrant sustainable campuses and study locations through ongoing capital investment
- Strategically plan and invest in facilities in order to meet current and future industry needs
- Establish a high-quality digital and data infrastructure to underpin strategic and operational decision making for curriculum delivery and enhance engagement with on-line college services
- Improve efficiency through effective room utilisation and minimising running costs
- Promote a culture of organisational and environmental sustainability
- Reduce our carbon footprint and the impact on the environment
- Develop vibrant sustainable campuses and study locations through ongoing capital investment
- Delivering the maintenance programme in accordance with plan and budget
- Implementing initiatives relating to procurement, renewable energy and recycling as well as supporting the education of learners on matters of sustainability, environmentalism and climate emergency
- Continuing to invest in IT infrastructure and resources, including protection from cyber crime
- Maintaining legal compliance with health and safety and property related legislation
- Identifying opportunities to reduce energy use (e.g. by doing an energy walk-around, different heating and cooling timers, campaigning to switch-off lights).

We will achieve this by:

- Improving our facilities in line with curriculum priorities to deliver market leading curriculum provision
- rationalising the estate around the five key campus sites in Bordesley Green, Digbeth, Hall Green, Handsworth and Bournville, and the three smaller satellite centres, but selling Fusion when viable to do so
- Integrating Energy Efficiency requirements within estates decisions and ensure energy efficiency is a central KPI to all refurbishments
- Commit to reporting our Carbon Emissions through streamlined energy and carbon reporting (SECR)



SUCCESS MEASURES

- Improved room utilisation across the estate
- Estate fit for 21st century learning, in line with curriculum growth
- Reduced carbon footprint



MARKETING & FINANCE

Objectives

- Improve financial stability and resilience of the college
- Deliver student number targets for all market segments
- Maximise the curriculum offer through the effective and innovative use of resources
- Put our campuses at the heart of the local communities that they serve, creating an all-year round utilisation of college assets
- Deliver 'value for money' in all that we do and operate in line with the triple bottom principles of people, planet and profit
- Improve our reputation as a local college of choice and brand leader for our city and the region

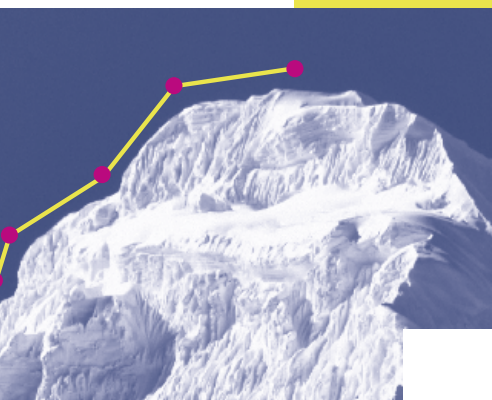
To achieve these objectives we will:

- Develop a marketing strategy focused on reputational messages and recruitment priorities
- Establish a whole-College approach to key stakeholder engagement
- Use our learner voice activity to drive improvement in all aspects of the college and exceed our students' expectations
- Promote our campuses as 'stand alone' specialist facilities to their local communities
- Invest in opportunities to diversify our income and reduce our reliance on public funding
- Generate financial surpluses by focusing on achieving targets, diversification and sound cost management
- Ensure that surpluses are reinvested in future, sustainable developments



SUCCESS MEASURES

- Good or better financial health rating
- Achieved student number targets
- Sufficient cash generated to maintain capital investment at required levels
- Financial performance that meets requirements of funding organisations and banks
- Cash balances that meet cash days in hand ratios targets
- Audit opinions that verify the workings of financial controls
- Improved reputation of the college and its individual campuses, as measured by external surveys





SUCCESS STORY

JAKE WILLETTS from Longbridge has recently turned 18 and has completed his Level 2 Brickwork course with South & City College. After just a week of work experience with D J Brunell Brickwork Ltd, a sub-contractor to Lovell's Monmouth Road housing development, Jake managed to secure some work as a bricklayer.

Jake did not enjoy school, however, has flourished at college. "College is the opposite of school." Jake explained, adding, "I liked college a lot and had fun too. I would definitely recommend the course and the college, the tutors are great and I learned more with a hands-on course."

When asked where he saw himself in five years' time, Jake said, "I'd like to be working onsite locally and have another trade under my belt."



**SOUTH & CITY COLLEGE
BIRMINGHAM**

