

Introduction

Burton and South Derbyshire College aspires to be a vibrant and outstanding education, skills and training provider. We aim to support individuals from school age to retirement to be highly skilled, effective and motivated contributors to industry, the economy, the community and their families; as well as supporting the organisations that employ them both now and in the future.

Our mission is about fulfilling potential and, as part of that approach, we are dedicated to providing high quality HE provision to all. The College has an excellent reputation for widening access to higher education. This document outlines the College's approach to access and participation in higher education and how the College has performed against the following widening access and participation priorities:

What this means in practice is that we aim to:

- Provide opportunities for seamless progression for students who might otherwise not be able to successfully access higher education due to a range of barriers including social and emotional, cost and financial implications or lack of support.
- Raise aspirations by providing opportunities for students to study higher education in a learning environment that is supportive and inclusive.
- Provide students with a range of educational opportunities which enables them to develop the knowledge, behaviour and skills required to progress to higher level skilled employment.
- Provide students with an opportunity to study from Level 3 to Level 6.
- Develop relationships with local and regional businesses with the purpose of introducing Higher Apprenticeship pathways in order to support skills shortages.

Whether;

- preparing the work force of tomorrow so that young people become economically and socially independent as well as effective contributors to their employers and to the community
- enabling existing members of the workforce to develop in a way which furthers their careers and positively impacts the organisations that they work for now and those they will work for and lead in the future
- supporting adults who require new direction for many reasons to overcome their personal challenges and re-enter or retire from the workforce in a way which is relevant, satisfying and impactful for their lives as well as those around them.
- including individuals who have never had educational or social opportunities to take their first steps to participation and achievement

We are committed to working collaboratively with other local stakeholders for the benefit of the town and its surrounding areas, as well as the wider East and West Midlands regions.

Working together with our colleagues in organisations across the area allows us to make the biggest impact in the most efficient and effective way. We believe that collaboration drives positive change – through shared vision and collective responsibility.

The College works very closely with a number of organisations to ensure learning strategies align to the benefit of its catchment area.

Widening participation priorities 2016-19

Key widening participation priorities for 2016-19 are:

- Simple and affordable fee structure.
- Effective and targeted marketing, meeting customer and stakeholder needs.
- Fair & effective admissions policy.
- Tutorial and additional support to improve retention.
- Flexibility of provision to enable growth.
- Targeted aspiration building for potential students.
- Ensuring young people's mental health and well-being.
- Increasing participation in sport and active recreation.
- Increasing community participation and voluntary action.
- Improving accessibility for all education, training and related support.

Aims

Our strategy therefore has three key aims:

a) Build on structures and successes already in place

We will work collaboratively to address immediate local needs and priorities already identified by stakeholders through the Local Strategic Partnership and individual Strategies in East Staffordshire and South Derbyshire and offer provision which supports, enhances and/or extends the impact of existing stakeholder actions or responses to generate outcomes more quickly, in greater volume and more cost effectively.

Simple and affordable fee structure:

The college aims to provide the best possible service for its learners while maintaining the tuition fees at an affordable level. The college is keen to maintain this value for money approach in order not to deter potential students, particularly those from non-traditional backgrounds as tuition fees grow in other HEIs. However, we also need to ensure that we can cover the cost of teaching these students, who typically need more support particularly during the first year of the course.

b) Be receptive, responsive and pragmatic to changing and emergent needs

We will consult and engage on a continual basis with new and existing partners to ensure we sustain a broad range of approaches for community learning aligned to emergent borough and

district priorities as well as timely and practical responses to local issues and challenges specific to individual wards, or social groups.

Effective & targeted marketing

The college has carried out a great deal of targeted marketing to make sure that potential students are fully aware of the Higher Education offer. The HE section of the college has a presence at all the college open days, which is particularly important since often potential students turn up unsure what the next step is and whether they are capable of a HE course. HE specific open days and evenings are extending as student numbers grow to ensure there is a distinct HE experience in college.

When attracting students from non-traditional backgrounds it is crucial that the college can identify that the students have the appropriate skills required and that they are fully aware of the requirements of the course. In order to facilitate this all HE students have an interview with the admissions tutor for the appropriate course and they also complete an initial assessment for literacy and numeracy if this is not supported by their qualifications on entry.

Applicants with nonstandard qualifications will also be considered where they have significant professional experience within their chosen subject area. This is particularly important since the region not only has a lower rate of level 4 qualifications but also a lower rate of level 3 qualifications compared with national figures. If we have potential students for whom a HE qualification is not appropriate when they apply, advice is available on how they can gain the appropriate skills, knowledge or qualifications to enable them to make a successful application in the future. As an example, we have developed a bespoke bridging course for prospective engineering students who do not meet the standard entry requirements.

c) Recognise that small solutions and changes often create biggest long term impact

We will act to generate sustainable impact through cost effective, early intervention with individuals most at risk from social exclusion, unemployment and ill health thereby mitigating increased costs of future support and welfare dependence.

Tutorial & additional support to improve retention

For those students that need additional support for study skills and Dyslexia we have a dedicated area of the college called the “Hub” where students can go for support. This has proved particularly useful in the past for HE students from non-traditional backgrounds when they are completing their first few assignments as they can have guidance in terms of presenting the information. We have also referred a number of students that have exhibited signs of dyslexia and they have had additional support. Another key part of our strategy is in the provision of tutorial support. With full-time learners this can be achieved in traditional ways using a timetabled session. However, for part-time learners who often work long hours and wish to maximise their time at college studying, tutorials are conducted via email and through the Virtual Learning Environment, although staff are available when required for face to face tutorials. We employ a mobile phone texting system when students miss classes that notifies them they have missed a class and to contact their tutor.

Strategy (How)

BSDC will deliver on its strategic aims for HE by focusing on a number of cross cutting themes relevant to our local area. These in turn align to a number of key target groups and the partners and pathways by which we connect the most appropriate educational provision and learning activity as part of a wider multi-agency framework of joined up solutions and intervention.

Collaborative Provision – BSDC and Staffordshire University

Staffordshire University is committed to working with partner organisations to raise aspirations and improve progression into Higher Education. Collaborative partnerships enable the university to extend its provision locally, nationally and internationally.

The university recognises that collaborative activity poses particular challenges for the assurance and maintenance of academic standards and the management and enhancement of the student experience. The university seeks to address these issues by providing clear guidance to both university and partner staff. Wherever possible the quality assurance and enhancement policies set out elsewhere on this website clarify how they should be applied within the context of collaborative provision.

Social inclusion and participation

We will develop provision which helps to develop the skills within communities to better support both older people and children to prevent future exclusion and disengagement.

We will also provide activity aimed directly at the target groups as a means to maintain health and fitness including mental health; re-engage young people in education and help to raise aspirations for achievement and employment, preventing and breaking patterns of anti-social behaviour. We will identify and utilise key recreational drivers, incentives and hooks in unique ways to engage potentially excluded groups.

Key partners in developing and targeting this activity will include South Derbyshire District Council, East Staffordshire Borough Council, St.Modwen, Higher Horizons, Trent and Dove Housing, Primary Care Trust, Burton Albion Community Education Trust, East Staffordshire and South Derbyshire schools and Staffordshire and Derbyshire LEAs.

Barriers to employment

BSDC will seek to work in partnership with agencies to provide access to appropriate HE learning in a community setting delivered collaboratively through relevant agencies.

Informal community learning activity in this context would include, clubs, development of employability and financial literacy skills; confidence building, self-awareness and personal presentation.

Examples of how this strategy is being implemented at Burton and South Derbyshire College include the following:

- The College maintains low cost entry points to higher education so that the local community and employers have access to affordable higher education.
- The College provides opportunities for students to enter higher education with lower tariff point scores than would normally gain them access to university.
- The College provides information and promotes its Higher Education opportunities to potential students in the workplace, through open events, through progression talks to its internal student population, in adult learning publications, on the College website and in other forms of social media – aiming to reach the widest audience by the use of many different media.
- The College offers students structured study skills support, tutorial support and smaller group sizes in order to create a more personalised approach to learning.
- The College has developed its work with employers to actively engage with their workforce in Burton and South Derbyshire area and beyond and promote its Higher Education provision. This has enabled employees to have access routes to Higher Education and develop skills to enable career progression within the company.
- The College delivers progression and higher education talks to its Level 3 learners – both 16-18 and adults and actively provides support for UCAS applications and accessing financial information through its Careers Team.
- The College participates in activities with the NCOP Higher Horizons programme to encourage learners to become more aspirational regarding progression to higher education, whether internally or externally.
- Applications are welcomed from all students irrespective of background. The College aims to place applicants on appropriate courses and provides appropriate support to enable students to succeed.
- The College operates a fair admissions policy with clear entry criteria for its programmes/ courses.
- The College ensures that students are not discriminated against during the admissions process or during their time at the College. Where students do not meet the entry criteria, the College supports the learner in identifying a suitable alternative programme of study that will enable access to Higher Education in the future.
- The College has invested in the infrastructure to support higher education including learning environments, resources, teaching, learning and assessment processes. Including social enterprise, realistic working environments, state of the art print facilities and exposure to HE learning environments.
- To aid retention, and ensure students have a smooth transition into Higher Education, the College operates a dedicated HE induction programme which introduces students to aspects such as academic regulations, college and university resources (some available at Staffordshire University), welfare support, and gives the opportunity to identify support required.

Example event:

'Find Your Future' inspiring young people with the ability, but not currently the inclination, to realise their potential and consider the opportunities offered by higher education pathways.

Find Your Future connects young people with relevant role models who will share their experiences to illustrate the positive outcomes higher education makes to longer term career progression. These business volunteers will work alongside teachers in the classroom to deliver a series of interventions exploring career opportunities, the labour market and skills for career success. This authentic, independent support enables young people to make decisions about higher education choices, including degree courses at college and university as well as higher or degree level apprenticeships, within the context of a broad career plan.

How Find Your Future Works

A Business in the Community Education Manager will work with you and the Higher Horizons team to identify the students that will take part, agree the delivery plan and timetable of events, brief business volunteers and evaluate the impact of the interventions. Up to 200 students can take part in the activities within the coming academic year which will cover:

Tailored intervention for post-16 students covering:-

- About Me – reflect upon and develop their self-awareness, motivations, values, skills and qualities. Highlighting what employability skills and aptitudes they will need to develop as they progress through 6th form/college and how this relates to careers choices.
- Career Pathways with LMI information – building understanding of the local labour market and what they should consider when making career decisions and what different routes there are, into the world of work.
- Effective Communication and Networking - utilising social media and look at how businesses recruit
- Speed Networking - an opportunity with key employers from the local area

Working together with business, staff and the HH team, we are confident we will inspire and encourage your students to Find 'their' Future and explore higher education pathways that will help them to build successful careers and realise their potential.

COLLEGE ADAPTIVE FRAMEWORK

VISION STATEMENT (our aspiration)

Vibrant and Outstanding – A dynamic global College

MISSION STATEMENT (what we will deliver)

Inspiring and motivating all to achieve their maximum potential

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE (what we will achieve)

Creating the skills of tomorrow.

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS (key target metrics)

Element of Plan	Cost to Serve	Our People	Achieving Vibrant & Outstanding	Responsiveness to Market
Growth in Apprenticeships	Invest to meet growth industry need	Develop the skills of our people to meet this growth	Deliver high levels of timely achievement	Be highly responsive to employer need
Higher Level Technical and Professional Curriculum				
Employability	Continue to develop our employment hub	Ensure Employability is enshrined in our recruitment and employee development strategies	Continue to deliver upon our Skills Promise	Ensure Employability develops in line with employer expectations
Growth of the BSDC Education Trust	Further develop cost effective 'back office' proposition	Build our secondary and primary capabilities	Rapidly improve school progress and attainment performance for schools in the trust	Provide highly effective support to schools in the trust
Globalisation	Invest in international market opportunities that will bring an enhanced return	Develop our people's understanding of a global world	Embed a globalised understanding for all learners	Respond to take advantage of international opportunities

CORE VALUES (the values & behaviours we have adopted to achieve the above)

VALUE 1

THE CUSTOMER IS OUR FOCUS

We place our customers at the heart of everything we do

Learners will

- ▶ Support each other
- ▶ Feel proud to be a Burton and South Derbyshire College learner
- ▶ Work hard and take responsibility for their own learning journey

Staff will

- ▶ Recognise and reward good performance
- ▶ Support colleagues in their efforts to focus on the learner
- ▶ Offer consistent support, ensuring high standards are maintained across all departments

Leaders will

- ▶ Acknowledge and reward good performance
- ▶ Establish and communicate standards and expectations
- ▶ Strive to create a safe environment, where everyone is treated fairly

VALUE 2

CONSISTENTLY ACHIEVING

We strive to help everyone to achieve their maximum potential

Learners will

- ▶ Feel valued and supported by staff and peers alike
- ▶ Aim high and strive to do their best
- ▶ Feel able to ask for help and support

Staff will

- ▶ Do their utmost to help learners achieve their maximum potential
- ▶ Set good examples, behaving professionally at all times
- ▶ Focus on the individual's needs, giving support and guidance

Leaders will

- ▶ Continuously review systems to ensure the best support is in place, allowing everyone to achieve their potential
- ▶ Lead by example, setting high standards
- ▶ Listen to feedback and take appropriate action to meet the changing needs of the College

VALUE 3

VALUED & RESPECTED

Our culture is one where every individual is valued and shown respect

Learners will

- ▶ Abide by and endorse College rules
- ▶ Be courteous to others
- ▶ Take care of their environment

Staff will

- ▶ Treat learners as individuals, with individual needs
- ▶ Demonstrate good behaviour, being punctual and courteous
- ▶ Be supportive and loyal to colleagues

Leaders will

- ▶ Spend time with learners and staff
- ▶ Share information when appropriate, in a timely and consistent manner
- ▶ Encourage transparency, honesty and integrity, leading by example