



Strategic Plan 2010-2013

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College Vision, Values and Principles

Vision

West Thames will be a vibrant college, inspiring all our learners to fulfil their dreams and ambitions. Our outstanding education and training will contribute to a prosperous and cohesive community.

Values

Underpinning this vision are our four shared values and beliefs:

Integrity

Excellence

Equality

Respect

Principles

The following principles describe how we work together:

College Principle	In practice, YES to:	NO to:
1 Open and informative Knowledge is power; builds ownership	Enabling Empowering	Selective Secretive
2 Clear and explicit Inspires and transmits confidence	Supporting Explaining the wider context	Fudgy Confused
3 Aspiring and imaginative High standards and inventive solutions	'Raising the bar' Building a creative environment	Backward-looking Adequate
4 Exemplary and consistent Highest standards of behaviour and efficiency, and keeping it up	Behaving well Doing what you say you'll do	Inefficient Sloppy, unpredictable
5 Consultative and responsive Asking, sharing and shaping	Seeking advice and others' opinions	Directive Excluding
6 Collaborative and creative Involving, consensus-building, using diversity to harness creativity	Building consensus Sharing solutions	Competitive Separated working
7 Equal and inclusive Difference as positive; creating a level playing field	Having confidence in difference Using imaginative ideas to rectify inequality	Ignoring difference Working in stereotypes
8 Respectful and fair Treating others as you wish to be ...	Setting standards and practising them	Bullying Undermining

Section 2: the Context

The Strategic Plan 2010-2013 was written against a backdrop of significant turbulence with the new coalition government making rapid changes to the educational landscape, and a public spending freeze: college funding across the sector faces several years of potential cuts to close the national budget deficit. In this context the Strategic Plan presents a clear, defined strategy which reflects our vision and values. While it sets the course that the College will follow its detail is indicative and we will adapt our approaches and priorities as circumstances evolve.

The Coalition Agreement promises to “significantly accelerate the reduction” in the Government deficit and to do this by “reducing spending more than by increasing taxes”. This implies large spending cuts across a number of public services, targeted on areas which have not been specifically protected.

The extent to which longer-term spending reductions affect the College sector as a whole depends on many things including the degree to which the new Department for Education protects the 16-19 budget.

Like all areas of the public sector the key financial messages over the next few years are ones of contraction, belt-tightening and reductions in resources, whilst trying to protect front line services.

Changes in the educational landscape present both challenges and opportunities:

- plans for more flexibility in the 14-19 curriculum, with a focus on Technical Academies, Studio Schools and free schools
- The Academies Bill making it easier for schools to become academies
- Plans to seek ways to support the creation of apprenticeships, internships, work pairings and college and workplace training places;
- Confirmation that Colleges will be “set free from direct state control” and that ‘many’ further education quangos will be abolished;

Our strategic objectives take full account of priorities identified by key educational stakeholders and policy makers including the YPLA and SFA, the London Development Agency. At local level key priorities are set out in Hounslow’s 14-21 Education Plan and by the LBH Strategic Training and Employment Partnership which West Thames College Principal chairs.

Section 3: Three year strategic goals

The 3 year strategic goals of the College remain:

- To provide an outstanding learning experience for all our learners
- To be innovative and responsive to current and future needs
- To provide an excellent environment and resources

Goal 1: To provide an outstanding learning experience for all our learners

Our students are why we are here. It is their right to expect an outstanding learning experience which inspires them to fulfil their dreams and ambitions. Underpinning everything we do is our drive to improve the quality of teaching and learning, and increase success rates. Our targets for this are set out in our 3 year KPIs on page 7. We will continue to develop a full range of strategies to improve teaching and learning, and develop our leadership and management capacity in curriculum areas to support this drive.

Through listening to students we will focus on areas of improvement every year and ensure we respond to their needs. Over the lifespan of this plan we will further develop the methods we use to elicit student feedback and to track management responses to the range of feedback received.

We are proud of our diverse community and aim to ensure that students from all backgrounds succeed to their full potential. A major focus of this Plan is to track more closely the varying performance of different groups of students at curriculum area level to ensure that appropriate strategies are in place to narrow the achievement gap.

Support for students will continue to be a major focus: over the three year period of this plan we will embed Skills for Life in all vocational programmes, and extend the coverage of the Student Learning Advisors to all FT programmes for 16-18 year olds.

The use of data to improve quality is ongoing: through the tracking of KPIs at every level we will ensure that any issues are identified and acted upon at an early stage. The development of various modules within Centime (e.g. Markbook, Target Minimum Grades and Learning Plans) will continue. We will also explore the developments in the sector regarding MIS systems to ensure that the system we have is effective and efficient.

Our commitment to improving quality will be evidenced by our achievement of quality standards such as TQS and by a successful IQER.

Goal 2: To be innovative and responsive to current and future needs

With a buoyant provision for over 2,000 full time 16-18 year old students we have an ambition to make a major contribution to the 14-19 agenda in Hounslow and the West of London, working in partnership with the LBH, other West London Colleges, schools and training providers.

We will ensure that all young people are engaged within education and training opportunities that add value, provide them with excellence and choice, and help them become economically active, aspirational citizens.

Our curriculum offer will continue to be vocational, professional and specialist and provide clear progression routes for young people. We will work closely with the Hounslow 14-19 Strategic partnership to provide coherent progression routes for all learners through the 14-19 phase of education.

We will review our A Level provision as an offer distinct from that of school sixth forms. Our annual review of the curriculum will be based on a range of factors including quality, demand, relevance to the economy and a competitor analysis.

We will continue to promote our skills offer for young people at the Feltham Skills Centre with the first imperative being to secure its long term future, and then exploring possibilities offered by the University Technical College and Studio Schools agendas.

Our contribution to the skills agenda will be through reaching out to employers and working with agencies to support unemployed residents back into employment, and with the skills to benefit from economic recovery. We will widen the scope and depth of our apprenticeship programme through exploring different models of delivery and management working with LBH and seeking collaboration with other colleges and training providers. We will investigate the development of a High Street Hair & Beauty salon in Feltham.

Our Higher Education provision is aspirational and vocational and will continue to be responsive to changing agendas: we will explore the opportunities offered by degree-awarding powers, and continue to offer a flexible, cost effective delivery of HE in FE. This will be all the more necessary as changes in funding arrangements for HE will potentially lead to the withdrawal of franchised HE provision.

Foundation Learning and Skills for Life are a core part of our offer, providing a stepping stone for young people and adults back into training and education. With the Raising of the Participation Age we will plan to develop these programmes, including for pre 16s to ensure a coherent offer at this level.

We will seek ways of encouraging curriculum innovation by enabling curriculum teams to identify new growth areas.

Goal 3: To provide an excellent environment and resources

Over the lifespan of this plan we will build on the Creative Excellence leadership and management development programme to support our managers in reflecting the college values and principles in their behaviour. We will continue to modify our policies and procedures to reflect these values, starting with a new appraisal process in 10-11.

Our annual programme of staff development will support our key objectives of improving teaching and learning and support for students and will reflect our commitment to liP and the Skills Pledge.

Our drive to engage high quality staff at all levels will continue and we will continue to work to ensure our staff profile reflects the local community through a range of measures including succession planning.

We will continue to develop our role as a major stakeholder in the LBH, building on existing and developing new Partnerships. We will actively investigate the benefits of shared services and other forms of collaboration.

We will diversify sources of income, including a major push on apprenticeships, and HE income. We will seek to achieve greater operational efficiency and effectiveness through improved collaboration with local strategic partners and best practice management of key functional areas.

The provision of a high quality learning environment remains a key objective. With the Isleworth Project due to be completed in the summer of 2011 our focus there will be on maximising the use of our facilities. The continued refurbishment of Spring Grove House will be ongoing. At the Skills Centre our first priority is to secure a long term lease for de Brome after which we will develop a plan to enhance the facilities on an annual basis, with the first year focussing on engineering provision moving from Isleworth.

Section 4: 2009-12 Performance Indicators

(to be updated for December 10 Corporation)

GOAL 1: To provide an OUTSTANDING learning experience for all our learners

	09-10	10-11	11-12
Lesson observation grade profile			
Grade 1 & 2	82%	84%	86%
Grade 3	16%	14%	13%
Grade 4	2%	2%	1%
Attendance	81%	82%	83%
Success rates			
All College	78%	80%	82%
Level 1 long 16-18	81%	82%	83%
Level 2 Long 16-18	79%	80%	81%
Level 3 Long 16-18	74%	76%	78%
Level 1 Long 19+	70%	74%	78%
Level 2 Long 19+	83%	83%	84%
Level 3 Long 19+	79%	80%	81%
Success rates of students receiving support to be at or above college success rate	78%	80%	82%
SAR grades (/12)			
Grade 1 areas	1	2	4
Grade 2 areas	5	7	7
Grade 3 areas	6	3	1

GOAL 2: To Be INNOVATIVE and RESPONSIVE to current and future needs

	09-10	10-11	11-12
16-18 learner number targets met	As per allocation		
19+ learner number targets met	As per allocation		
Employer engagement activity on FT programmes - % of courses covered	75%	85%	90%
FFE student satisfaction	Satisfactory	Good	Good
FFE progression	Good	Good	Outstanding

GOAL 3: To Provide an EXCELLENT environment and resources

	09-10	10-11	11-12
Financial Health category	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Operating surplus	49	(69)*	244
Time lost due to staff illness	2.02%	2%	2%
Bme staff representation	34%	35%	36%

*Under review

Performance Indicators: breakdown of SSA grades

(to be updated following SAR Validation on 24th November 2010)

Subject sector areas	09	10	11	12
Health and care	2	2	2	1
Science and mathematics	2	2	1	1
Engineering & manufacturing technologies	3	3	3	3
Construction, planning & built environment	3	3	2	2
Information & communication technology	3	3	2	2
Hair, Beauty & Specialist Makeup	3	3	3	2
Visual and Performing Arts and Media	3	2	2	2
Languages, literature, culture & Humanities	2	2	2	1
Preparation for life and work (ESOL)	3	3	3	2
Preparation for life and work (Basic Skills)	3	2	2	2
Preparation for life and work (SLDD)	1	1	1	1
Business	3	3	2	2

Section 5: Development Plan Objectives for 2010-11

The College Development Plan sets out one year objectives which will move the college forward in meeting its strategic goals. Heads of Department draw up annual action plans which demonstrate how they will contribute to meeting the specific objectives in the Development Plan.

GOAL 1 To provide an OUTSTANDING learning experience for all our learners			
	What we will measure	Target	Responsibility
1. Raise the quality of learning and teaching through the development and implementation of learning and teaching strategies in each area which focus on those areas of improvement identified through the self-assessment process	Percentage of teaching which is good or better Percentage of unsatisfactory teaching	84% grades 1&2 1% grade 4	VP Curriculum & Quality
2. Improve success rates by tackling underperforming courses through a robust performance management process	Attendance Retention	82% 95% in-year retention	VP Curriculum & Quality
3. Improve achievement rates by implementing a monitoring process using Markbook to track achievements throughout the year	Achievement rate	89% achievement	VP Curriculum & Quality
4. Improve success rates of under-achieving groups and develop strategies to narrow the attainment gap in these groups	Success rates by ethnicity and gender	Reduce variation in the most significant areas	VP Curriculum & Quality
5. Increase student satisfaction through effective and timely responses to the student voice at course level	FFE rating	Rating of "Good" in FFE	VP Curriculum & Quality
6. Improve the tutorial support and provision offered to students at all levels, through embedding the SLA model across the College	Tutorial observations which are good or better	84% grades 1&2	Director of Learning and Tutorial Support

GOAL 2 To be INNOVATIVE and RESPONSIVE to current and future needs			
	What we will measure	Target	Responsibility
7. "Reinvent" the curriculum for 2011-12 to produce a high quality, imaginative and inspiring offer, taking account of quality and financial indicators, and market analysis. "Package" the offer to showcase key areas.	Application and Enrolment numbers	16-18 enrolment target achieved by 1st November 2011	VP Curriculum & Quality
8. Continue to develop the HE programme in line with the HE Strategy, working with both HEFCE and local partner universities, with a particular focus on Foundation Degrees and flexible delivery	Numbers enrolled	Maintain HE income at current levels	VP Curriculum & Quality
9. Implement the new Foundation Learning programme, ensuring the effective development of multiple entry points and robust progression pathways	Numbers progressing	Target 75% of students to progress to Level 2 programmes	VP Curriculum & Quality
10. Raise the profile of the college as a key stakeholder and influencer in shaping future strategy in the community, and as a key partner in the shared services agenda	Representation of the college on key strategic groups	More streamlined and effective delivery of adult skills programmes in Hounslow	Principal
11. Actively develop links with relevant agencies and partners to offer skills based training which respond to the London Regional Statement of Priorities including the Single Employment Programme	Increase in employment based and skills based programmes	At least one additional successful project in the current bidding round	Director of Employer Engagement
12. Develop strategic partnerships, including with an employment agency to significantly increase the volume of apprenticeship activity	Successful pilot and establishment of a model to take us forward	Agreement in place with key partner(s)	Director of Employer Engagement

GOAL 3 To provide an EXCELLENT environment and resources			
	What we will measure	Target	Responsibility
13. Further develop the budget and monitoring process, producing accessible and relevant budget reports on income and expenditure at departmental level and supporting the effective management and tighter monitoring of budgets	Achieve a budget surplus at line A, produce timely monthly reports at departmental level, and review formally throughout the year.	Operating surplus of £17k	VP Resources & Corporate Planning
14. Maximise the sustainable use of the College's resources, and ensure that our cost base positions us to respond quickly to changes in income streams, and to invest and prioritise expenditure appropriately	Deliver expenditure to budget but recognise need for flexibility to respond to changing priorities.	Successful delivery of contribution rates by Departments	VP Resources & Corporate Planning
15. Further develop strategies to motivate staff by further embedding our values through briefing, training and development; acknowledging excellence in staff; ensuring that managers motivate their teams; promoting open and consultative processes	Staff satisfaction in staff survey	New staff appraisal scheme implemented Improved rating (by 3 points) in staff survey	P & VP Students and Services
16. Further develop strategies to recruit excellent staff by actively participating in the national BLI initiative to improve recruitment, retention and progression of BME staff, by implementing the succession planning policy and by working closely with Teacher Education to recruit students from the PGCE programme	Numbers of BME staff	Maintain bme representation on staff profile at all levels	VP Students & Services
17. Complete the final phase of the Isleworth property project, ensuring a successful migration into the new building whilst maintaining the college's reputation and ensuring a safe learning and working environment for all	Milestones on programme	Plans for SGH by Jan 2011 Migration Plans by March 2011 Project completed on time and on budget	VP Resources & Corporate Planning
18. Assure the future of the Feltham Skills Centre by agreeing medium to long term plans for the location of the Centre	Achievement of a long term solution for the provision at Feltham Skills Centre	Medium to long term (25 years) solution in place by December 2010	P & VP Resources & Corporate Planning

Section 6: Summary of Self-Assessment Cycle within the Strategic Planning Cycle 2010/11

