

OUR VISION

OUR VALUES



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Wigan & Leigh College has been on a transformative journey and the next phase of our development and progress is outlined in our three year strategic vision.

Working in partnership with internal and external stakeholders we have revised our strategic ambitions and believe that our vision will ensure that we are continuing to support learners to create outstanding futures. Pushing forward and being even more ambitious for our learners and the communities of Wigan and Leigh are central to our strategic direction and we welcome our role in responding to a changed education and skills agenda at a local, regional and national level.

We recognise that a strong college community, combining the voice and engagement of our students and workforce will be central to providing the very best education, training and learning experience. Along with a commitment to further extending highly productive, collaborative external relationships with local employers and stakeholders, we will focus on playing our part in responding to the COVID pandemic and contributing to creating a future proofed local economy.

With stakeholders, we will engage, discuss, listen and review our progress over the lifetime of this plan, setting us on track to meet the ambitious vision we have set.

Anna Dawe
Principal & CEO



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS DURING 2017-2021 STRATEGIC PLAN



Maintained Good and Outstanding Financial Health



Over the last four years 19,597 learners have successfully achieved their qualifications



92% of full-time learners progress to positive destinations



TOP 8% NATIONALLY for student satisfaction and happiest students in Greater Manchester for the fourth consecutive year



Achieved an impressive set of results in the annual Best Companies to Work For awards



100% achievement of all 8 of

THE GATSBY BENCHMARKS GOOD CAREER GUIDANCE



As one of the largest College apprenticeship providers in GM we have supported over 4,900 apprenticeships



Accredited to deliver T Levels from 2021



Highest Student Achievement Rates in Wigan and among the **TOP 7% NATIONALLY**



Accreditation by the GM Good Employment Charter



Two Engineering degrees (awarded by UCLan) are accredited by the IET on behalf of the Engineering Council for the purposes of fully meeting the academic requirement for registration as an Incorporated Engineer, and partly meeting the academic requirement for registration as a Chartered Engineer.



Pearson Silver Teaching Award for FE Team of the Year

BTEC AWARDS

Gold Award for Art & Design Student of the Year Aaron Wilson and Bronze Award for Sport Student of the Year Nathan Dodgson

STRATEGY TO MEET AND SHAPE LOCAL NEED – THE WIGAN CONTEXT

OUR PLACE

Wigan & Leigh College is situated in Wigan, a town and metropolitan borough in the northwest of Greater Manchester, bordering Merseyside, Lancashire and Cheshire. As a border college Wigan and Leigh serves a wide and varied community and combines a local and regional focus.

The impact of de-industrialisation has created a range of socio-economic challenges for the Wigan Borough:

- High employment in areas that provide low paid work
- Low levels of productivity, below the average in the UK and that in Greater Manchester
- Below national average educational attainment at level 4 and above
- Low levels of social mobility

The role of the College as a provider of skills and education is pivotal in responding to these challenges. Further in a post-COVID environment and an increased policy focus

on the importance of skills, it is essential that the College goes further and plays its part in shaping a local economy for the future defined by increased productivity and inclusivity. Delivering the strategic priorities set out in Wigan's Employment & Skills Strategy will be a key part in fulfilling this ambition. Along with local partners the College is actively engaged in delivering the vision and strategic imperatives within the framework and developing a co-ordinated and collaborative approach for skills across the borough.

Through its rich history and as an anchor institution within Wigan there is an imperative for the College to nurture social cohesion and connect communities, promote positive physical and mental health and engage those facing the largest barriers in learning and personal development. Helping shape and drive the 'build back better' opportunity is a central theme to the College's strategic direction.

OUR PARTNERS

Collaboration and partnership was central to the College's last strategic plan and our commitment to build and extend on this will prove to be critical to the success of this strategic vision over the next three years.

We are now operating within the changed landscape of devolution with Greater Manchester Combined Authority having control over aspects of funding, but more importantly being placed to influence and shape the skills landscape within GM. There is a real opportunity to develop a co-ordinated approach to skills and training and we are ready, alongside our partner GM further education colleges, to work with the GMCA to further define the devolved skills system and realise the benefits both across GM and within our borough. A key component to developing skills solutions across Greater Manchester is the Greater Manchester Colleges' Group and in this strategic plan we are once again committed to working with other further education colleges. Building on co-ordinated projects such as T level delivery, careers education, mental health support and the digitalisation of teaching and learning, Wigan & Leigh College is fully invested in promoting the strength of joint working, speaking with a united voice and extending the role of further education in enhancing life chances.

Within Wigan we will continue to work in close partnership with Wigan Council, partner schools and 6th form colleges. We are invested in the Wigan Education Strategy and will champion the role of technical education in offering opportunity and raising aspiration

and achievement. In this strategic plan our relationship with employers however will be re-defined.

The Skills for Jobs white paper has provided us with the opportunity to play a bigger role in supporting local businesses and to work collaboratively with industry. Throughout this strategic plan we will actively engage in partnerships that focus on developing place based solutions such as The Wigan Skills Partnership. This newly formed collaboration with Wigan Council, Edge Hill University, Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust will aim to improve opportunities for Wigan residents by boosting education, health and economic prospects. Targeted collaborative curriculum solutions will be developed over the lifetime of this strategic plan delivering unique opportunities to Wigan residents and combining the strength of the partner institutions.

OUR PEOPLE

Our College Community is central to the quality of the service we provide, the learner experience and our student achievements. Investment in our workforce development and wellbeing is prioritised in this strategic vision. The way in which our college community works, develops and socialises has undergone the most significant change due to the COVID pandemic. Where, when and how we work will not return to how it was and during the life of this strategic plan there will be seismic changes to our work spaces, resources, work life balance and roles. Feedback and shared experiences during the pandemic will shape our responses and investment will be made to establish our workforce of the future.

Building on the well established staff engagement approaches within the college we will aim to increase the influence of all colleagues on the direction of the college and increase investment in the development of our workforce with a specific focus on digital and leadership initiatives. We will continue to meet and adopt external frameworks such as the Ofsted Education and Staff Wellbeing Charter but will navigate our own path

driven and defined through engagement activity and in keeping with our positive culture.

Our learners will co-create refreshed and renewed models of engagement, giving them more influence in the ways in which they are taught and supported and increased leadership roles within the direction of the College. Learner influence and ownership on agendas such as equality, the environment, community wealth building and social justice will be promoted, underpinning a culture of raised aspiration.

Perceptions of further education and technical education are changing and we will commit to using our voice at a national level to champion the needs of the further education workforce and further education learners.

This Strategic Plan comes at a time of a great need for change in our national approach to skills, lifelong learning and the role that further education can play. We have challenged ourselves in the development of our strategic ambitions and will continue to challenge ourselves throughout the implementation of the plan.

OUR VISION & VALUES

VISION

To be a centre of educational excellence which, through a commitment to lifelong learning, transforms the lives of the individuals and the communities we serve.

VALUES

1. **We are learner centred** - our learners, their lifelong learning experience and their safety is our first priority.
2. **We are ambitious** - we strive for excellence through creativity and innovation and believe we can always improve.
3. **We are partners in the success of the organisation** - supporting each other to develop and to always be individually and collectively responsible for our results.
4. **We believe in honest and open communication** - we treat each other with respect, trust and consideration. We listen to learners and colleagues and celebrate their success.
5. **We are collaborative and inclusive** - we work in partnership so we can positively contribute to local, regional and national economic development and we value equality and celebrate the diversity of our community.

OUR CENTRES



PARSONS WALK CENTRE AND SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS

Parsons Walk is based in the centre of town and home to many of our vocational courses, as well as A Levels and the University Centre. Professional learning facilities include the Wheel Restaurant, the Image Centre hair and beauty salon, a Clinical Skills Ward, Dog Grooming Suite and Animal Management space for reptiles and other species.

A sustained capital investment programme is currently underway and completed projects include a stunning new learning resource centre, combining the very best digital learning facilities and multi-purpose learning environments, and upgraded digital suites with virtual desktop technologies.



CENTRE FOR ADVANCED TECHNICAL STUDIES

Opened in 2021 - the Centre for Advanced Technical Studies is the home of our flagship courses, including T Levels and higher education provision. The facility was planned with our partners, Edge Hill University, Warrington, Wigan & Leigh NHS Foundation Trust, and Wigan Council to provide the very best advanced technical training for students and employers. With significant capital investment in transformation, the building is home to the Centre of Excellence in Health and Social Care, a Digital Academy and is the base for the study of higher technical qualifications in Engineering from Level 4 and beyond.

Our programme of investment and curriculum development has been planned in response to the Wigan Employment & Skills Strategy and focused on priority skill sectors required within the region. The Digital Academy is responding to the increased digitalisation within the health/social care and engineering sectors.

OUR CENTRES



PAGEFIELD CENTRE

Home to the Centre for Excellence in Engineering and Construction, Pagefield offers a multimillion pound purpose built facility. Contemporary workshops and laboratories are complete with the latest industry standard equipment in robotics, mechatronics and algorithm engineering, alongside an additive manufacturing lab for 3D printing, to fully prepare students for their industries of choice.



LEIGH COLLEGE

Located on the multimillion pound Leigh Sports Village, Leigh College is also home to a number of vocational courses and A Levels.

The Centre for Excellence in Sport and our first Digital Skills Academy are both based at Leigh College, as well as brand new Image Centre hair and beauty salons. Other facilities include a Clinical Skills Ward, animal management centre and creative arts workshop.

STRATEGIC AMBITIONS

1. QUALITY

Quality: providing an exceptional learning experience enabling all learners to fulfil their potential through:

- Inspirational and innovative teaching, learning and training, which removes barriers to learning and raises aspiration and attainment.
- An inclusive curriculum offer that is committed to citizenship and wellbeing, and through the development of knowledge and skills supports our learners to progress in their chosen career.
- Highly personalised, proactive careers guidance inspiring learners to take advantage of opportunities, make informed choices and secure positive and sustained outcomes for their future.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY ACTIONS:

- Innovate our teaching practice and programme design through dual professionalism, ensuring that we develop the very best teachers and vocational practitioners, working in a culture of support and challenge that enables an outstanding student experience and exceptional outcomes.
- Progress and embed digitalisation into programme design and delivery, maximising creative and highly engaging teaching strategies and increasing flexible programme design and modes of delivery that remove barriers to educational access.
- Design and offer a curriculum, which provides progression to further learning or employment and delivers qualifications which are fit for purpose to meet local and national economic need, placing equal emphasis on the development of employability skills and behaviours.
- Equip learners for transition into the world of work through sector focused employer interactions, promoting the development of core competencies and real life experiences through work placements and work experience opportunities.
- Promote individual career management skills through the FAB Futures programme of careers advice, placing employers at the heart of careers education, contributing to a local 'build back better' agenda and empowering learners to make informed choices for sustainable outcomes.



2. PLACE & PRODUCTIVITY

Place and Productivity: as an anchor institution in our community, increase local productivity, innovation and social inclusion by:

- Collaborating with employers to co-create a training offer that supports innovation, responds to the needs of the future workforce and encourages skill escalation.
- Maximising participation rates in education and training creating a line of sight to work and increased personal independence.
- Creating a stronger, safer and healthier local community through partnership working with Wigan Council, partner schools, employers, health partners and the voluntary sector so engagement and attainment gaps are eliminated.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY ACTIONS:

- Work collaboratively with Wigan Council, GM Combined Authority, GM Colleges Group and partner HE providers, to plan and develop curriculum priorities for technical training, lifelong learning and skills, and higher level technical training that accelerates economic, welfare and health benefits locally and regionally. Key projects will include:
 - Opening the Centre for Advanced Technical Studies, to increase high level technical skills availability for employment in high growth, high value sectors such as digital, professional, engineering and health.
 - Establish a local employer hub focused on Wigan Borough's labour market priorities providing a responsive training offer that builds on the assets of the borough's business, residents and raises awareness of and access to retraining.
 - The launch of and positioning of T Levels within the GM curriculum landscape, the development of a local Adult Education Budget curriculum and an increase in engagement with Level 4 and above training.
- Engage with partner schools and the wider education and skills system to raise the profile of technical education, maximising participation rates in education and training and ensuring a smooth transition from key stage 4 into a sustainable education destination.
- Extend our College commitment to wider community action through:
 - Participation with Wigan Council's community wealth building initiative, maximising the power of the Wigan Pound and helping to ensure that there are good jobs for all in the borough.
 - Working with the Healthier Wigan Partnership and Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust to reduce health inequality and improved life chances.
 - An increased institutional leadership role contributing to local economic and social decision-making.

3. INVESTMENT FOR THE FUTURE

Investment for the Future: invest in the workforce, learning environment and curriculum of the future by:

- Investing in the development and wellbeing of our workforce, leading to increased levels of engagement and influence on the direction of our College.
- Reshaping the College estate to meet the demands of future work and learning practices, responding to the climate crisis and preparing for the net-zero economy.
- Prioritising the digitalisation of learning and College business operations to enhance the experience for our students and workforce.
- Create learning environments that inspire and equip students for the seamless transition into the world of work and future skills needs.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY ACTIONS:

- Developing a clear workforce strategy that establishes the College as an employer of choice and maintains and extends beyond the employment requirements of the GM Good Employer Charter.
- Invest in leadership development throughout the College, securing a pipeline of leadership talent and diverse and strong governance.
- Implement our College Estates Strategy with a specific focus on space rationalisation, condition upgrades, responding to the green agenda with a significant reduction in our carbon footprint.
- Responding to the impact of C19 on business practice by re-balancing resource allocation, extending flexible working for our College community and re-shaping and rationalising traditional work space.
- Invest in enhanced digitalisation across the College, upgrading digital resources for learning, increasing digital access to off-site learning, and working and realising greater efficiency from the digitalisation of business operations.



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