



Chelmsford College

STRATEGIC PLAN

2021-2023




Ofsted

Good
Provider



PREFACE UPDATE 2021

The past couple of years have been hugely challenging for everyone and there will be many more challenges ahead.

The COVID-19 pandemic has tested the resilience and resolve of the College, but we have risen to the many challenges by adapting to ensure our doors remain safely open to our learners, staff and the community we serve.

We continue to operate in uncertain times and as the country starts to slowly emerge from the pandemic, the College and its Board of Governors have reviewed and updated our strategic plan for the next 18 months.

We believe that this updated plan will guide the College to celebrate its 60th year by continuing to place learners and our community at the heart of what we do to ensure a better future for all of us.

WELCOME

We know where we want to be in 2023. This strategic plan outlines the mission, values, goals and priorities identified by the College's Governing body. It is a statement of where we want to be and how we will get there.

We are building on the significant achievements which have been made over the past few years and are ready for the next phase in our ambition to be the best we can be.

Chelmsford College was established nearly sixty years ago. We offer a wide range of vocational and professional courses and apprenticeships at our two main campuses (Moulsham Street and Princes Road). Our training and education is delivered to learners of all ages and there are approximately 4,000 individuals in learning with us, at any one time. Our College is a great place to study, with excellent facilities and a vibrant community of staff, learners and apprentices.

We work hard to improve the lives of our learners and maximise their success. Most of our learning outcomes are above other colleges' across the country. Our College has both high results and high levels of progression to employment. We are immensely proud that at the December 2017 Ofsted Inspection the College was judged to be "good" in all areas.

Student experience is at the heart of what we do. We engage with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure the education and training we deliver meets the needs of our community. National policy has a significant influence on the work our College does with over 75% of College income derived from the Government. Our environment is dynamic and fast changing. Industry recognises that the impact of skills is the key to future prosperity. We believe our College is well placed to deliver the needs of all its learners.

The College is a key part of mid-Essex. We work hard to prepare our learners for the world of work. Throughout their time at College our learners develop both the knowledge and skills needed to achieve their goals and successfully progress onto their next step, be that further study, employment or higher education.

Andy Sparks

Principal

Amanda Montague

Chair of Governors

OUR MISSION

Chelmsford College: unlocking potential

OUR VALUES

1
Excellence
in teaching, learning
and assessment

2
Innovation
in how we work
and develop

3
Ambition
for all in the College
community to be the best
we can be

4
**Respect
and support**
for every individual

5
**Fairness
and equity**
in all our undertakings

6
Forward thinking
in our development

OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

1
To become an
outstanding
College

2
To provide **greater
access** to learning

3
To **inspire and
motivate** members
of staff

4
To prioritise
**partnership
working**

5
To be **financially,
environmentally
and socially
sustainable**

OUR DELIVERY PRIORITIES

1
Ensure high quality
teaching, learning and
assessment for all
learners

2
Meet the ever
changing/evolving
demands of learners

3
Meet the ever
changing/evolving needs
of employers, thereby
supporting economic
growth and development
in the county

4
Increase learner numbers

5
Ensure efficient and
effective ways of working
across the organisation

6
Support and prioritise
progression to higher
levels of education and
training to meet the needs
and aspirations of
individuals and businesses

ABOUT US

Chelmsford College is a small to medium sized general further education college which attracts students from across Essex, including Braintree in the north and Basildon and Brentwood in the south of the county.

We serve the learning needs of mid-Essex and the wider community.



We are in a positive socio-economic area. Chelmsford City has a population of approximately 180,000 people. An additional 220,000 people live in the wider mid-Essex area. Combined, both account for 27% of the total Essex County Council population (circa 1.47m).

Minority ethnic groups make up 9.2% of our community. The proportion of pupils in Essex schools attaining five GCSEs at grades A* to C (including English and mathematics) is above the East of England average and in line with the English average. The proportion of residents in Essex qualified at levels 1 and 2 is higher than both the regional and national averages, whilst at level 3 it is broadly in line with the national average.



"Chelmsford College is special because it's like a community and everyone is there to help."

Health and Social Care Level 3

Levels of deprivation and unemployment in Chelmsford are below those found nationally. The College attracts a high number of students from the local area or those following transport corridors such as the A12 or London to Norwich mainline railway.

Many feeder areas (outside of Chelmsford) are characterised by relatively high levels of social deprivation. We deliver to approximately 40% of the core 16 - 18s within mid-Essex. We have invested heavily so we can provide high-standard teaching and learning accommodation for students across the College.



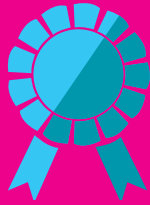
"College has changed my life by helping me be more confident and by learning new skills."

Public Services Level 2



GOAL 1

To become
an outstanding
College.



We want to be
recognised as an
outstanding provider
where every learner
achieves their full
potential.

To achieve this we will

Deliver an integrated and inspiring programme of study to all learners which prepares them for everyday life and the world of work

Ensure all learners complete their individual course and achieve their progression targets

Ensure all learners make good progress from their starting point

Ensure high levels of retention, achievement, high grades and progression are maintained

Ensure learners engage effectively with their learning by articulating high expectations of their attendance, punctuality and behaviour

Focus tutorial and learner support to ensure increased achievement and independence amongst all our learners

Ensure teaching, learning and assessment is consistently outstanding

Address areas for improvement identified within the December 2017 Ofsted inspection report

Respond swiftly and effectively to Learner Voice feedback to improve the experience of all learners

Provide high quality resources to support learning in all areas of the College

By the end of the plan we will have

Overall FE achievement rates consistently above national averages

Retention and achievement rates for the vast majority of qualifications in the top quartile of colleges

Apprenticeship achievement rates at least 10% above the national rate

Apprenticeship timely achievement rates at least 10% above the national rate

Maintained above 90% attendance at all classes

At least 75% of learners achieving a final grade on or above their learner target achievement grade

95% of learners progressing to an appropriate destination

85% of staff achieving our 5 key lesson expectations

100% of staff achieving their individual performance targets

Strengthened the provision for teaching English and mathematics to ensure more learners achieve well and gain the high grades of which they are capable

Ensured that all learners (including adults), have a good understanding of wider themes including the dangers from extremist groups and possible radicalisation

Learner satisfaction above 85% "Overall I am satisfied with my course"

A fully operational "new" Construction Centre at Princes Road

*"Being here has
strengthened my
social skills."*

Extended Learning

GOAL 2

To provide greater access to learning.



We want to ensure everyone who will benefit from our expertise can access our learning opportunities. We want individuals and businesses to have access to a responsive and flexible curriculum offer which meets their needs.

We will do this by

Promoting a culture of equal and fair access to all

Developing our curriculum in line with local and national skills shortage areas as defined by Chelmsford City Council (CCC), Essex County Council (ECC) and the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (South East LEP)

Providing flexible learning spaces which support individualised learning and promote the use of information technology

Responding to our employer engagement outcomes by providing bespoke solutions

Continuing to develop the College's expertise in working with young people and adults with learning difficulties

Ensuring our apprenticeship offer meets the needs of all stakeholders including learners, parents and employers

Promoting provision which enables learners to progress into employment

Identifying, monitoring and supporting minority groups

Prioritising information, advice and guidance (IAG) services to facilitate appropriate learning choices

By the end of the plan we will have

Developed and implemented an innovative curriculum plan which matches the local and regional priorities

Identified gaps in achievement below comparable rates

Reviewed, developed and implemented an effective apprenticeship strategy which reflects local and national skills strategies

Maintained our apprenticeship income throughout the Apprenticeship Reform process

Remained a recognised partner of choice for higher needs LDD learners (Learning Disabilities or Difficulties)

Met the needs of our employers

Achieved budgeted surpluses for all curriculum related commercial activities

Maintained MATRIX accreditation for our IAG service and achieved the Gatsby Benchmarks for effective careers education

Over
75%
of learners achieve
above their set targets

"The best part of my course so far has been overcoming barriers to reach my full potential."

Vocational Studies Level 1



75%

GOAL 3



To inspire and motivate members of staff.

We believe the success of our College depends upon the quality and levels of motivation of our people. Ensuring we all work optimally to the benefit of all learners and partners is central to the College's ability to deliver our mission.

Our College will

Prioritise the drive for excellence in teaching, learning and assessment

Ensure all staff in student-facing roles have the capacity, capability and motivation to deliver sector-leading services

Develop our managers by supporting and training them to deliver ever better standards of service

Embed and continuously develop performance management processes to match the ambition of the College to reach outstanding

Ensure capability procedures are effective, timely and have a positive impact on standards and performance

Reward high performance and robustly address poor or marginal performance

Ensure regular communication with staff is informative, detailed and fit for purpose

Ensure equity and transparency in all our dealings with colleagues

Enhance our high standards of working with people

Proactively promote and support staff wellbeing

By the end of the plan we will have

Further developed and embedded the Achieving College Excellence (ACE) programme

Delivered 10 annual professional development days, and current levels of continuing professional development (CPD) for both academic and support staff

Developed and delivered regular staff wellbeing sessions, newsletters and intranet site

At least 85% of teaching staff achieving the 5 key expectations via support from the performance management process

Maintained the level of staff who achieve their performance targets at 100%

Rewarded high performance of staff through recognition awards and incremental pay rises

Effective communication from senior leaders to all staff via at least 5 briefings per year

Maintained absence levels at better than the Association of Colleges (AoC) published sector averages

Maintained staff turnover rates to AoC published sector averages



93-95%

93-95%

of students achieve sustained, relevant employment

GOAL 4

To prioritise partnership working.



We believe working in partnership generates benefits for all concerned. The strengths in this area have been important to the College for the last decade and will become even more important in the future.

Our College will

Engage with all relevant strategic partners (i.e. CCC, ECC, South East LEP) to ensure our curriculum meets the needs of mid-Essex

Proactively work with the Chelmsford Business Board, Chelmsford, Education, Learning, Skills and Staffing Group (CELSiuS) and Job Centre Plus to meet local skill needs

Continue to partner ECC for High Needs Learners

Further develop shared services with appropriate partners for backroom business support functions

Be an active partner in the Federation of Essex Colleges (FEDEC) and with broader provider groups (Essex Provider Network, Association of Colleges East and South East LEP wide groups)

Work with partner colleges across South East LEP to facilitate 'Academy' type developments with employers, including apprenticeship End Point Assessments

Partner with other colleges on curriculum development and quality improvement

Partner with private enterprise where their expertise complements that of the College, to the benefit of learners and employers

Be responsive to partnership opportunities which benefit our learners as they arise

Continue to promote schools engagement and 14-16 partnership working where possible

By the end of the plan we will have

Explored the development of a range of collaborative arrangements and curriculum with other local providers, as guided by the FE Skills White Paper

Reviewed our current curriculum to ensure that it meets the local skills needs of mid-Essex

Introduced T Levels in Construction and Education and Childcare

Further developed the shared service arrangements with South Essex College and others through Essex Shared Services Ltd

Increased numbers of learners attending the College through partnerships by at least 10%

Remained a key partner in local business and training groups

Maintained 100% attendance at local committees, networks and board in Chelmsford and mid-Essex

Embedded partnership working as a strength within the College

"I'd heard good things from other people about the College. It's changed my life by helping me learn what I need to know to plan my next steps."

Electrical Installation Level 3

GOAL 5

To be financially, environmentally and socially sustainable.



We must maintain a financially, environmentally and socially sustainable position to ensure our College can invest in all aspects of the operations and enable the achievement of outstanding.

To achieve this we will

Ensure the College's Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) financial health score is always positive

Ensure operational efficiency to deliver EBITDA at above 5%

Ensure the efficient deployment of staffing resources to maximise value for money

Plan and deliver our curriculum efficiently (as well as effectively)

Effectively use the risk management processes to make good decisions

Further develop shared services where costs can be reduced without a negative impact on service

Reduce dependency upon Government funding streams by developing commercial income streams

Continue to invest wisely in developments which enhance the experience of learners

Develop a plan to become more environmentally friendly via the Association of Colleges Green College Commitment

Become a proactive Anchor Institution and a good neighbour

By the end of the plan we will have

Achieved an ESFA financial health score of 'good'

Ensured that staff costs reduce towards 65% (as a percentage of income)

Reduced staff turnover post pandemic

Maintained staff sickness absence at below the AoC rate of 5.4 days pa

Improved the whole College space utilisation to above 40%

Reduced ESFA dependency to below 75%

Achieve education specific EBITDA above 5%

Maintained low financial gearing (below 22%)

Increased cash reserves to at least £1,000,000 at each financial year end

In partnership with South Essex College maintained the range of shared services and associated costs

Adopted the Association of Colleges Climate Action Roadmap for FE Colleges

Signed up to the Race to Zero for Universities and Colleges

Progressed towards a position of being carbon neutral

Remained a key partner with local community groups, business and other Anchor Institutions

94%

of students said:
"I feel I'm on the
right course"



PRIORITIES

The **2021-22 priorities** for improvement are to be viewed through the filter of COVID-19 and the associated response to the pandemic, they are:

Governors, leaders and managers foster a **culture where staff, learners and apprentices can excel** through the realisation of the College's ambitious vision for high quality and inclusive education. **(L&M)**

Develop a **strong and responsive curriculum for all areas of provision** including the **wider and community curriculum**, by ensuring managers and staff have a **common understanding of the curriculum**. **(Intent)**

Ensure the **implementation of the curriculum is of high-quality teaching and training**, so that learners and apprentices have sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning and employment. **(Implementation)**

Continue to increase the **proportion of learners who are retained, achieve highly and progress** to the next level of education, training or employment by ensuring the impact of the taught curriculum is strong and learner satisfaction improves. **(Impact)**

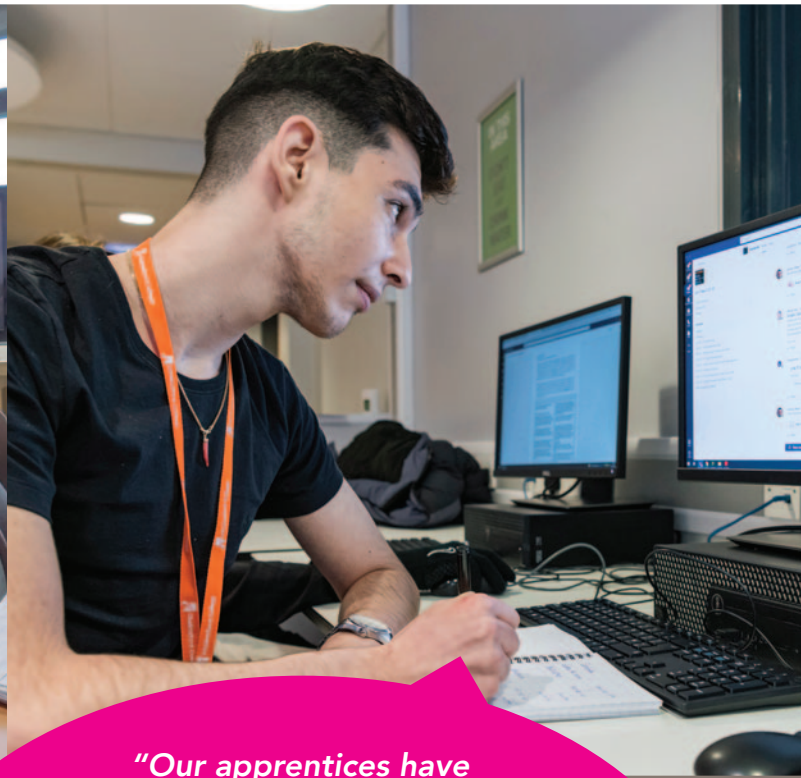
Ensure that the **subject expertise** (what they know about **what** they teach) and **pedagogical knowledge** (what they know about **how** to teach) of **teaching staff develops consistently over time** by ensuring that teaching staff engage in **highly effective professional development**. **(L&M)**

Ensure that leaders and managers **engage effectively with all stakeholders including staff to celebrate successes, overcome challenges and focus on wellbeing for all**. **(L&M)**

"This place is special because staff have helped me stay in College and stood by me every step of the way."

Hair and Beauty Level 3





"Our apprentices have progressed really well and the staff at Chelmsford College have helped them reach the next level. We started our business with 4 members of staff and the apprenticeship programme has helped us grow our business, within the last year, we now have 8 fully qualified staff"

Arron Benstead, Premier Sport



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In partnership with

