Higher Education Strategy

A Strategy for Growth and Improvement
2014-2016

February 2014
**College Mission, Vision, Core Values, Strategic Objectives and Key Priorities**

**Our mission**

*Helping the people of Coventry and its region get the knowledge and skills to succeed*

**Our vision**

*Achieving excellence*

**Our core values**

- Inspiring high aspirations and celebrating success
- Passionate about high quality learning
- First choice for students and employers
- Respect and equal opportunities for all with students at the heart of everything we do

**Our strategic objectives**

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning
- Improve success rates
- Ensure accountability at all levels and develop a culture of high expectation
- Ensure effective information services which are understood and used by all staff
- Ensure managers at every level have access to the financial information necessary to manage efficient and effectively
- Explore strategic options which can deliver the most effective outcomes for students

**Our strategic priorities**

- Get the basics right and build a reputation for excellence
- Develop high quality provision in engineering, construction and public and financial services
- Rebuild our relationships with employers and other partners
- Transform the college to ensure it has the capacity and capability to become excellent
- Strength relations with the community with partners and with employers
Vision

The vision of the College is ‘to achieve excellence’, and this will underpin the strategic objectives for Higher Education provision. The vision is to develop a range of higher education programmes which reflect the higher level skills priorities of the region; to provide a high quality higher education experience which meets the needs and aspirations of the local, regional, national and international community; to maintain provision in certain key subject areas able to recruit successfully at national and international level; and to develop a well-founded, cohesive and self-critical academic community.

Objectives

1. Increase the number of HE students through planned and structured growth of high quality sustainable programmes that:
   - Support the transformational sector skill gaps
   - Address the skills gap locally and regionally at levels 4 and 5
   - Increase the number of HE learners entering employment or next level of Higher Education
   - Increase the number and relevance of the HE Access programmes that support progression onto the College’s own HE programmes
   - Increase the opportunity for progression from level 3 programmes already delivered at the College including Advanced Apprenticeships

2. Develop and grow full cost provision through the establishment of a Graduate School and a Centre for Professional Studies and be responsive to the changing expectations of national and local stakeholders including the government and employers

3. Clarify the function and responsibility of all post holders and students in relation to governance, structures and systems for managing Higher Education

4. Maintain and improve the quality and standards of the HE provision at City College Coventry including outstanding teaching and learning

5. Enhance the scholarly and pedagogical effectiveness of staff

6. Demonstrate the capacity to manage academic quality and standards independently of partner validating institutions

7. Enable students to contribute to the shaping of their learning experience

8. Provide an appropriate resourced environment for a high quality student experience

9. Enhance students’ learning opportunities by embracing new learning technologies and managed learning environments

10. Further develop effective external partnerships that provide tangible benefits to HE students

National and Local Agenda

5.1 National Agenda

In developing this strategy, the following Government concerns ie funding and quality assurance have been given due consideration:

- Funding:
  - The constraints of Government ‘capping’ during 2014-15 and the subsequent lifting of the cap from 2015 onwards
  - Student number controls continue as planned for alternative providers at least in 2014-15 and thereafter only for high risk providers
  - Future fees policy
• Introduction of the bidding process for student numbers ie Institutions are free to recruit an unlimited number of the most able students (those with AAB at A level)
• The strive to widen participation in Higher Education, coupled with the ambition to be cost effective
• The demand for HE offered by colleges from those who are employed is high
• The government will provide an additional contribution of £40 million to deliver an additional 20000 higher apprenticeships starting in 2013-14 and 2014-15 academic years
• Student Loans transformation programme

• Quality:
  • Regulation and whether a stronger, legislative framework is needed
  • A consumer driven model with institutions being held to account through greater transparency on teaching, time, graduate destinations and student satisfaction
  • A new Chief Executive takes over at HEFCE with two acronyms high up the agenda: REF and MOOC
  • The simplified regime for obtaining degree-awarding powers as detailed in the HE White Paper

• On the horizon:
  • The Government’s response to the Witty Review of universities and growth
  • The launch of a further wave of online courses under FutureLearn
  • The Governments Grant Letter for Teaching and Learning in 2014-15
  • The Commencement of the panels reviewing submissions under the Research Excellence Framework
  • The publication of the National strategy for access and student success

5.2 Local agenda

5.2.1 Coventry education

During 2012, 56,500 working age residents in Coventry held a higher level qualification. This equates to 27% of the population, significantly lower than the England average of 34% and marginally lower than the 28% identified in the West Midlands region.

At universities and other HE institutions, there was a 6% increase in first degree graduates between 2010-11 and 2011-12. In the latter year, undergraduate enrolments in Science subject areas comprised 45% of the total and postgraduate enrolments 40% of the total.

5.2.2 Skills priorities in Coventry and Warwickshire

The Coventry and Warwickshire labour market is forecast to require a net increase of 52000 workers qualified to level 4 and above (Higher Education level to Doctorate), creating a total requirement of 103000 new workers qualified to level 4 and above between 2010-2020.

Professional services, Education and Health and social work industries are projected to see the highest increase in demand for higher level qualifications between 2010 and 2020, requiring an additional 17000, 16000 and 13000 new staff qualified to level 4 and above respectively.

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1 Extract from CWLEP Skills Strategy (January 2014)
2 Working Futures 2010-2020 – http://www.ukces.org.uk/ourwork/working-futures
Overarching Government, Regional and Local Priorities

6.1 Regional and local priorities

- The Coventry and Warwickshire Local Employer Partnership (CWLEP) has 3 strategic priorities for the area:
  - To use skills to drive growth and create jobs
  - To develop skills to tackle unemployment
  - To get a better fit between education and employment and working with local communities and business sectors through initiatives such as the City Deals agenda

In context, the CWLEP priority actions include increasing the provision of high quality work placement for FE and HE students.

- Coventry City Council - A Jobs Strategy for Coventry 2011 -2014 objectives are consistent with the CWLEP priorities and are as follows:
  - To secure job opportunities through investment – businesses and investors need to continue to recognise Coventry as the right place for them to invest and grow
  - To help people get jobs – pursuing prosperity so that in Coventry everyone who wants a job will have the opportunity to secure one that matches their skills
  - To help people improve their skills – our universities, colleges and businesses will equip people with skills that investors want and will locate in Coventry to secure

Partnership working

The College works with the University of Warwick as a key partner. The College delivers 2+2 provision in BA Social Studies and BA Childhood, Education and Society on a franchised arrangement and the Diploma in Education and Training on a validated arrangement.

The agreed objectives between the College and the University are:
- To provide, through rational use of College and University resources, a high quality educational experience in an appropriate environment for participating students
- To promote opportunities for lifelong learning throughout the region and to encourage progression opportunities for students wishing to gain access to high quality Higher Education

There are clearly set out responsibilities for both parties and a strong working relationship is in place. Quality assurance and contractual arrangements are documented and monitored.
The Strategy 2014-16

The College will:

- Maintain and further develop a range of higher education programmes which reflect the higher level skills priorities of the region
- Provide an high quality higher education experience which meets the needs and aspirations of the local, regional, national and international community
- Maintain provision in certain key subject areas able to recruit successfully at national and international level
- Develop a well-founded, cohesive and self-critical academic community
- Develop and grow full cost provision through the establishment of a Graduate School and a Centre for Professional Studies and be responsive to the changing expectations of national and local stakeholders including the government and employers

Key priorities

Key priorities for 2014-15 will be:

1. To provide a coherent range of Higher Education and Higher Levels Skills which is efficient, effective and offers appropriate progression routes, to widen participation
2. To be responsive and flexible in response to employer demands and higher level skills gaps to support the skills priority of the CWLEP, with employer satisfaction and employment outcomes high on the criteria for success
3. To engage in partnerships that adds value to the experience of the students and improves their ability to become economically active
4. To 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
5. To provide high quality teaching and learning which effectively utilises ILT
6. To develop the VLE to support “blended learning” and distance learning strategies
7. To be judged with Confidence and Reliance at the next QAA Review
8. To strive continuously to improve student satisfaction, retention, pass and overall completion rates