



Solihull College & University Centre  
and Stratford-upon-Avon College

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2025

Inspire Success for All



Solihull College  
& University Centre

Stratford-upon-Avon  
College







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# Foreword

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It gives us great pleasure to share Solihull College and University Centre's strategic plan which will guide us towards 2025. So much has changed since we last updated our strategic plan in July 2021, and now is the time to 'Inspire Success for All' of our stakeholders.

When we sadly lost our Principal and Chief Executive, John Callaghan in October 2021, after a sudden and short illness, we went through a period of organisational and personal grief. We simultaneously navigated through a full face to face enrolment and a return to in person teaching and learning, against a backdrop of steeply increasing Covid cases which lasted until Spring. Despite this, we achieved a great deal of success:

- Successful in our first Ofsted inspection as a merged college, where all provision types and key judgements were graded 'Good'.
- Retained 'Outstanding' financial health.
- Selected as one of only twelve Further Education (FE) providers across the four United Kingdom (UK) nations to be a WorldSkills Centre of Excellence.
- Achieved Chartered Institute of Further Education (CIFE) status.
- Finalist at the Association of Colleges (AoC) Beacon Awards for Mental Health support.
- Top of the FE College leaderboard for the Sustainability Development Goals education challenge.

We have managed to achieve all of this in what was arguably the most difficult and challenging year we have experienced – this is testament to our resilience, skill, team-working, commitment and ambition, all built on the excellent foundations that John set out during his time as Principal and CEO at the College.

Our 'Inspire Success for All' strategic plan 2022-2025 reflects an inclusive and discursive planning process that encompasses the collective contributions of Governors, staff, learners and employers. This work, rooted in critical dialogue, is united by a shared commitment to the mission, vision and values of the college. The plan builds on our success to date and sets out the vision and ambition for the College in its

exciting next phase, led by our new Principal and CEO, Dr Rebecca Gater. The plan, which sets out the college's key strategic ambitions for 2022 to 2025, outlines how we plan to achieve these, and the key performance indicators which will tell us whether we are being successful in achieving them. In developing our Strategy, we have taken time to consider the organisation we are now, and the organisation we aspire to be by the end of 2025.

This is an exciting time at Solihull College and University Centre; we have ambitious plans together with the passion, drive, and commitment needed to navigate the journey ahead. We look forward to working with our partners, our communities, our learners, and our staff team to realise these plans.



**Dr Rebecca Gater**  
Principal & Chief Executive



**Barbara Hughes**  
Chair of Corporation



# Key Achievements

## HIGH LEVELS OF SATISFACTION

- 98% of our students agree that their differences are celebrated, and that everyone is included and welcomed.
- 93% of employers we work with say we provide excellent training facilities.



Selected by the Department for Education, following a national competition, to lead the development of a prestigious new Institute of Technology.

## T-LEVELS

THE NEXT LEVEL QUALIFICATION

We were early adopters of T-Level and Transition programmes.



The college became a member of the Chartered Institute for Further Education.



Accredited by the Office for Students as a Higher Education provider.



Selected to become a WorldSkills Centre of Excellence



Commended by the Association of Colleges Beacon Awards for Mental Health and Wellbeing.



Retained outstanding financial health status

Judged to be consistently good across all provision types and all judgements.



We were the UK Further Education winners for the Sustainable Development Goals Teach in challenge.



Committed to invest at least £6m on our Stratford Campus re-development project.

# Our Campuses

## Blossomfield Campus



Our Blossomfield Campus has everything you would expect from a modern, well-equipped college campus located in Greater Birmingham – and much more besides.

Here you will find excellent facilities for work, study and relaxation. Blossomfield campus has a well-equipped gym, a large award-winning Animal & Land Management Centre, the 'Aspire' Media Make Up Studio, virtual reality lab, Health & Care Skills Suite, new industry-standard science labs and large theatre.

Around 67% of our learners study at the Blossomfield campus.

Faculty: Service Industries	Faculty: STEM	Faculty: Creative & Foundation
Health & Science	Built Environment	Hair, Beauty & Travel
Sport & Public Services	Computing	Foundation Learning
Animal Welfare & Veterinary Nursing		English & Maths
Business		Creative Arts
Management & Professional		
Early Years		

## Stratford-upon-Avon Campus



Our Stratford-Upon-Avon Campus is currently undergoing a £12m redevelopment, with state-of-the-art facilities including digital television and radio studios, a theatre equipped with a multi-camera digital television recording system, multiple digital audio and visual editing suites in addition to a fully equipped electrical, plumbing and motor vehicle workshop and a construction centre.

Around 15% of our learners study at the Stratford-Upon-Avon campus.

Faculty: Service Industries	Faculty: STEM	Faculty: Creative & Foundation
Sport & Public Services	Motor Vehicle	Foundation Learning
Business	Computing	English & Maths
Early Years	Construction	Creative Arts
Health		Theatrical Make-up

## Woodlands Campus



Our Woodlands Campus, based in Smith's Wood, North Solihull is an exciting, hands-on place to learn. The College's aerospace facilities have recently been

enhanced with the addition of a BAe Jetstream T Mk2 aircraft to the campus to be used as a realistic training resource for aircraft servicing, plus a full Boeing 737 flight simulator and other industry-grade equipment.

This campus boasts six workshops for cars, motorcycles, engines and MOTs, plus a number of engineering workshops and new robotics lab. It also now incorporates a state-of-the-art specialist centre for students on all our construction programmes including multi-craft, painting & decorating, plastering, bricklaying and carpentry. There is also our professional 'Aspire Hair & Beauty' salons and a well-stocked library of books, magazines and e-learning resources.

Around 18% of our learners study at the Woodlands campus.

Faculty: Service Industries	Faculty: STEM	Faculty: Creative & Foundation
Health & Science	Engineering	Foundation Learning
Early Years	(including Aerospace Engineering)	English & Maths
	Construction	Hairdressing
	Motor Vehicle	

## Greater Birmingham and Solihull Institute of Technology



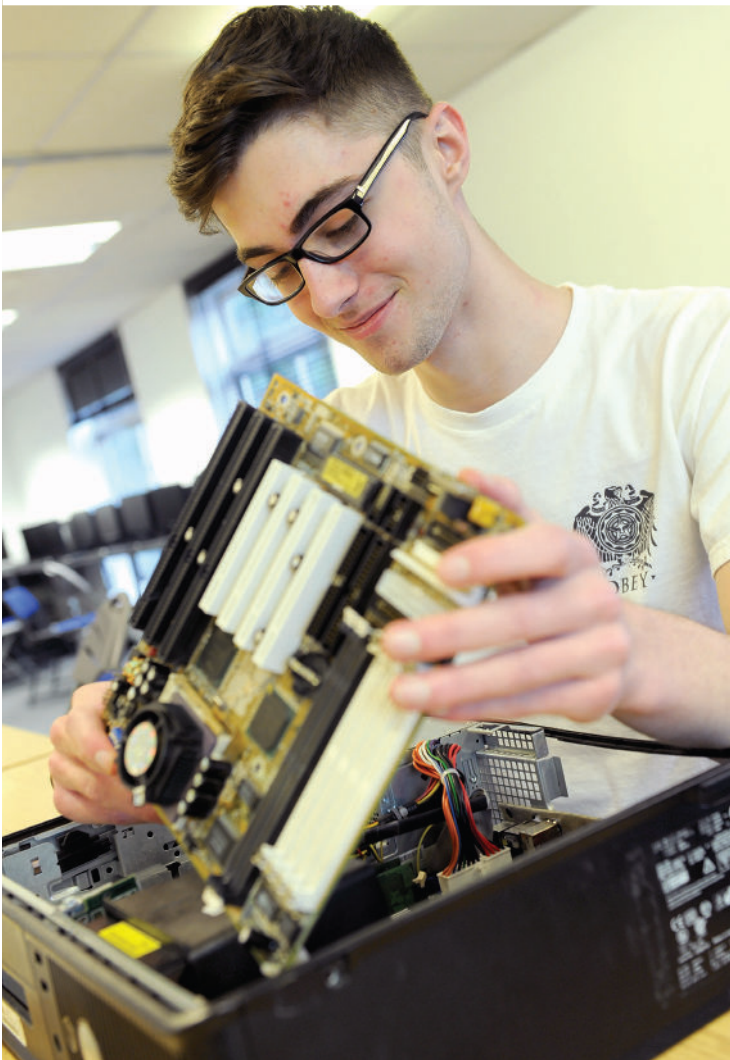
The GBSIoT is a powerhouse for advanced manufacturing and engineering. Led by Solihull College and University Centre, the IoT brings together a partnership of the leading further education colleges, universities and employers for the region.

- We discover the best new talent,
- We develop and nurture imaginative, fresh ideas and perspectives,
- We give employees the chance to learn new skills and develop existing ones, including management and mentorship skills,
- We add value to your CSR outcomes, by engaging your stakeholders and supporting young people in improving their employability and progression opportunities.











# Mission, Vision and Values

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## OUR MISSION

To be a reflective and progressive organisation which supports and inspires everyone to succeed.

## OUR VISION

To position Solihull College and University Centre as a confident, fully inclusive, forward-thinking organisation, with a strong reputation for innovation and excellence.

## OUR VALUES

Our guiding principles are a commitment to be:

**INSPIRING – INNOVATIVE – RESPONSIBLE – CARING – COLLABORATIVE – RESPECTFUL**





### **INSPIRING**

#### **Motivating others to excel**

We recognise and celebrate achievement, and empower staff and learners to exceed their perceived potential.



### **INNOVATIVE**

#### **Transforming our ideas**

We seek continuous improvement, and use innovation to adapt to change.



### **COLLABORATIVE**

#### **Working together to achieve shared goals**

We operate as one team, valuing the contribution each of us makes.



### **CARING**

#### **Making a difference**

We care about the wellbeing of our staff, learners and communities by trusting, listening to, engaging with and supporting each other.



### **RESPONSIBLE**

#### **Making things happen**

We are open, honest, and take full responsibility, individually and collectively, for our decisions, actions, performance and results.



### **RESPECTFUL**

#### **Welcoming others into our college community**

We celebrate difference and diversity. We value others and recognise that their thoughts and feelings are as important as our own.

# Strategic Ambitions

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- 1** Deliver a high-quality curriculum that enhances the life opportunities of our learners, the inclusive growth of our communities, and the productivity of the employers with which we work
- 2** Secure the future of our organisation in a fast-changing sector through careful and appropriate income diversification and growth
- 3** Create a high-performing culture that attracts and retains the best people, is fully inclusive, and has a happy and proud workforce
- 4** Deliver a considered but ambitious programme of investment underpinned by financial stability
- 5** Net zero by 2030.



# Operational Pillars

The strategic ambitions are underpinned by these operational pillars:



**Quality and Curriculum**



**Partnerships and Outreach**



**Reputation**



**People and Culture**



**Finance and Resources**

# AMBITION 1

**Deliver a high-quality curriculum that enhances the life opportunities of our learners, the inclusive growth of our communities, and the productivity of the employers with which we work.**

**We will do this through:**



## Quality & Curriculum

- Implementing a teaching, learning and assessment strategy which enables learners to flourish
- Actively engaging in pedagogical research that positively impacts on learner outcomes year-on-year, supporting staff to apply the latest pedagogy
- Enabling all learners to make a seamless transition into work.
- Supporting teaching staff to use innovative and transformational technology to enhance learner experience and outcomes
- Providing a high-quality English and maths programme which delivers progress and achievement
- Adopting a 'best practice' approach to curriculum delivery, learning from experts within and external to our College
- Elevate learners' learning and academic experience through recognition and awards.



## Partnerships and Outreach

- Making a significant contribution to the local and regional economy by enhancing the technical skills, knowledge and industry professional standards of individuals.
- Enhancing our close working relationship with new and existing employers to co-create curriculum that is highly responsive to their needs
- Supporting hard to reach adult learners to transition into education
- Conducting training needs analysis with employers to improve their engagement with training, and by helping them to know how to improve productivity through a better skilled workforce.



## Reputation

- Consolidating good practice and high performance across the organisation to further build our strong reputation in Solihull and Greater Birmingham, Stratford and Warwickshire, and beyond
- Actively engaging and collaborating in external initiatives and accreditations which demonstrate our expertise and excellent reputation.

**How will we know we are successful?**



## Quality & Curriculum

- We will be judged as 'Outstanding' by Ofsted
- 97% of our learners will progress to positive destinations
- Our overall achievement will be  $\geq 10\%$  above national rates and all curriculum areas will be above national rates
- We will be in the top quartile for progress in maths and English
- A 60% increase in participation of unemployed and unskilled adults from deprived postcodes
- We will have achieved the action plan as set out by the JISC digital elevation tool
- Our FE, HE and apprentice learner satisfaction rates will be above 95%.



## Partnerships and outreach

- We will have an active involvement in and representation on regional (and national) decision-making bodies and professional groups.
- We will have very strong links with other colleges locally, regionally and nationally, working together to develop and share best practice.
- We will be involved in pilot and trailblazing projects and initiatives, for example with ETF, AoC and other external organisations
- We will receive high satisfaction from employers through feedback and further opportunities of upskilling their workforce.
- We will work collaboratively with external agencies and employers to augment the skills agenda and positively impact the current and future workforce.





## Reputation

- We will have received awards and accolades for learner, staff and organisational achievement.

# AMBITION 2

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**Secure the future of our organisation in a fast-changing sector through careful and appropriate income diversification and growth.**

**We will do this through:**



## Quality & Curriculum

- Developing an agile and ambitious curriculum plan that keeps pace with local, regional and national needs
- Strengthening our curriculum strategy for adult provision in order to target the hardest to reach learners, delivering a rich curriculum which improves economic activity.



## Partnerships and Outreach

- Proactively identify new funding opportunities that support income diversification and growth
- Maintaining and developing partnership work which benefits learners, makes sense financially and delivers value for money
- Horizon scanning, to explore potential business opportunities and partnerships
- Taking a lead role in the delivery of local and national initiatives and projects to improve the chances of success for our students, staff and stakeholders
- Ensuring the college's marketing and promotion strategy supports delivery of the whole curriculum plan from application to destination
- Developing and implementing a 16-18 marketing strategy which purposefully targets an increase in market share.



## Finance and Resources

- Ensuring the College's management information systems support curriculum areas to achieve the curriculum plan
- Conducting and maintaining competitor analysis
- Delivering the Financial Strategy and accompanying Key Performance Indicators
- Setting ambitious targets for income diversification and growth.



## People and Culture

- Developing the confidence and capability of middle managers to understand and respond effectively to opportunities and initiatives.

**How will we know we are successful?**



## Quality & Curriculum

- Our internal progression rates will increase from 44% to 70% for learners progressing from Entry, Level 1 and Level 2 programmes. Progression rates will increase from 68% to 85% for learners progressing into the second year of a Level 3 programme.
- We will have achieved our implementation plan for technical education (Transition programmes T-levels and HTQs).



## Finance and Resources

- Apprenticeship income will increase by 20%,
- Increase our success rate at winning bids by 10%
- We will have increased our 16-18 student numbers by 10%
- Adult income will increase by 10%.



# AMBITION 3

**Create a high-performing culture that attracts and retains the best people, is fully inclusive, and produces a happy and proud workforce.**

**We will do this through:**



## People and Culture

- Being an employer of choice by offering competitive pay, terms and conditions
- Embedding a values-based culture of high expectations and continuous improvement
- Providing a stimulating and inclusive working environment which encourages innovation without fear, recognises, praises and rewards staff success
- Seeking staff views, opinions and feedback regularly and acting on it
- Championing diversity and inclusion throughout the organisation and its operations so that all staff and students feel a sense of community
- Developing leaders and leadership at all levels and encouraging staff to broaden their expertise and knowledge, taking on relevant external roles where appropriate
- Developing and delivering on our communication objectives and goals
- SLT being accessible, visible and contributing to staff and leadership development
- Developing and delivering a wellbeing strategy
- Providing outstanding academic and pastoral support which effectively delivers specialist, individualised and targeted support for all students
- Developing a culture where people take responsibility for their compliance, and the quality of their own work / performance
- Developing clearly defined processes for talent management and succession planning
- Recognising and acknowledging where we need to improve, and acting on it.



## Reputation

- Promoting and celebrating the achievements of our learners, staff and the institution locally, regionally and nationally
- Consolidating good practice and high performance across the organisation to further build our strong reputation in Solihull, Stratford, Greater Birmingham and beyond
- Actively engaging in external initiatives and accreditations which demonstrate our expertise and excellent reputation.

**How will we know we are successful?**



## People and Culture

- We will have achieved the Leaders in Diversity accreditation
- Our Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) action plan will have been achieved with measurable impact
- Minimal turnover and recruitment concerns
- Our staff will be involved in wider sector organisations such as Ofsted inspectors, external quality assurance, ETF ambassadors
- We will have consistently high levels of staff satisfaction from employee surveys.



## Reputation

- We will have very strong links with other colleges locally, regionally and nationally, working together to develop and share best practice.
- We will be involved in pilot and trailblazing projects and initiatives, for example with ETF, AoC and other external organisations
- We will have received awards and accolades for learner, staff and organisational achievement
- We will have an active involvement in and representation on regional (and national) decision-making bodies and professional groups.

# AMBITION 4

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**Deliver a considered but ambitious programme of investment underpinned by financial stability.**

**We will do this through:**



## Finance and Resources

- Investing in our campuses so that they have the 'wow' factor and offer a vibrant, state of the art learning environment
- Investing in systems which support the effective delivery of our business plans
- Investing in our learning technologies to deliver an innovative and digitally transformational curriculum
- Being alert to capital and revenue opportunities which support our estates, facilities and investment plans
- Investing in our staff through high quality, impactful, staff development
- Regular and robust scenario planning and sensitivity analysis.

**How will we know we are successful?**



## Finance and Resources

- Achieve our financial Key Performance Indicators
- Our capital spend from both grants and reserves ensures our estate, facilities and equipment provide the best possible learner experience.
- We will have won bids for capital grants which enable us to bring all our estate and resources up to the quality of the best.
- All our facilities will be used efficiently and effectively, ensuring that investment can be directed where it is needed.
- All of our college estate will be in ESFA condition category B as a minimum.



## People and Culture

- High levels of learner, staff and visitor satisfaction regarding the quality of learning resources and environments
- We will have received awards and accolades for our innovative use of learning and digital technologies
- We will attract additional staff and students as a result of our high-class facilities.



# AMBITION 5

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**Be net zero by 2030.**

**We will do this through:**



## Finance and Resources

- Investing time, resource and commitment into becoming a sustainable organisation, starting by recruiting a Head of Sustainability to lead us on our journey
- Adopting the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which underpin the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015
- Embedding sustainability into the curriculum and learner life and to empower students to contribute and drive the climate change agenda
- Establishing our carbon footprint and monitoring and reporting on our progress to becoming carbon neutral by 2030
- Developing a Climate Change Strategy and delivery plan to reduce our carbon footprint, taking steps to become a carbon neutral organisation: including energy, water, waste, buildings, vehicles & travel, natural environment and purchasing.
- Taking positive steps to mitigate against and adapt to the effects of climate change
- Reviewing the Travel Plan to ensure it is up-to-date, relevant and supports the ambition to becoming carbon neutral
- Providing the necessary resources to deliver on our carbon reduction commitment.



## People and Culture

- Leading by example and encourage further action, by others, through information, education and influence.
- Positively encouraging learners, staff, visitors, our suppliers and contractors to help us explore ways that the community can make a difference and contribute towards a more sustainable, low energy, environmentally responsible lifestyle.
- Giving our learners a voice in the strategic direction that we take, including college-based projects and competitions and through the Eco Council.



## Partnerships and Outreach

- Seeking involvement for our learners in global, national and local sustainability initiatives and projects
- Engaging with other FE establishments to share best practice and identify opportunities for improved sustainability.
- Promoting progression into the expanding green skills employment sector through the curriculum, career fairs and other opportunities

**How will we know we are successful?**



## Finance and Resources

- We will have developed a climate change strategy and delivery plan
- We will have reduced our annual carbon footprint by 25% from a 2022/23 baseline
- We will have completed condition surveys, energy audits and feasibility studies to identify energy efficiency and decarbonisation solutions for all three campuses.



## People and Culture

- Our Green Champions forum will be relaunched, actively engaged and will have made a demonstrable impact
- We will have surveyed staff and learners to establish and measure effectiveness of interventions and actions taken
- All curriculum areas will have embedded the delivery of sustainability into their curriculum, based on the UN sustainable development goals
- Active engagement in 'Students organising for Sustainability' events and initiatives.

# Strategic Plan 2022-2025

January 2023

**Solihull College & University Centre**

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