Better Careers Begin Here

Strategic Plan 2017 - 2020
WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

This three-year strategic overview lays down the thinking which drives the Corporation’s aims for the next strategic period. It follows a period in which Colchester Institute improved its student successes in gaining qualifications and relevant jobs; this was evidenced by an improved Ofsted rating in 2016. The challenges now are to strengthen student performance in line with improving national trends, and to establish greater financial resilience in what remain challenging circumstances for the sector.

Colchester Institute, since before its incorporation as an independently managed body in 1993, has a record of providing education and training for people of all ages through a range of high-quality alternatives to the purely academic route. The College remains passionate about providing opportunities to learners of all abilities to maximise their acquisition of knowledge and skills, from entry level to postgraduate level.
The common theme of our work is to help people into the best job or career possible for them. That remains our ambition which is why the phrase that sums up our ambitions for the next strategic period is “Better careers begin here”.

Our work is against a national background where government policy is emphasising the need for improved skills development and technical training. The Sainsbury Report identifies the way that such training has equal value to academic routes; something the College has advocated for many years. Local employment requirements and the significant opportunities presented by the recent apprenticeship reforms, also highlight the way forward. And so during the next three years we expect to see a bringing to fruition of ambitions to place work-related learning, both in the workplace and in Colchester Institute’s more modern and fit-for-purpose buildings, as the focal point of Further and Higher Education.

On this latter point, growth in Higher Education provision will feature as a key focus for the College over the period of this plan.

We have therefore articulated five clear priorities which will underpin all our strategies in the future. These are stated in this document and supported by practical plans that will be updated and adjusted as circumstances demand.

We will be successful in this competitive and changing world of work and training. There will be a continuing need for collaboration to achieve these priorities and objectives, both for Colchester Institute’s staff and students, and employers in the private and public sectors. We believe that, together, we can and will continue to meet these ends for the benefit of individuals and to support local economic success.

Alison Andreas  
Principal and Chief Executive

Christopher Bridge  
Chairman of the Corporation Board

Better Careers Begin Here
MISSION
To deliver first-class education, professional development and technical skills training to develop careers and strengthen the local economy.

VISION
To be an outstanding college, highly acclaimed by students and employers as central to their future success.

VALUES
• We place the success and wellbeing of students and an outstanding student experience at the heart of our choices, decisions and priorities.
• We have high expectations of ourselves, our students and our partners and aim for excellence in all aspects of our work.
• We value and recognise the skills and significant contribution made by all our staff, in achieving our goals.
• We respect each other, promote equality, celebrate diversity and break down barriers to success.
• We are responsive, and adapt our provision to meet the needs of our students, the local economy, and local and national priorities for skills development.
• We act responsibly, with honesty, integrity and openness, safeguarding the future health and success of our organisation.

Better Careers Begin Here
Colchester Institute will be known for its excellence in teaching, learning and assessment. This will be evidenced by exceptional rates of student progress, achievement and progression with outstanding destinations a known characteristic of the College.

This will be achieved by:
- Providing a dynamic contemporary, employer-focussed curriculum informed by student destination data.
- Supporting and developing excellent and innovative teaching and learning.
- Working with employers to broker positive work experience and employment opportunities.
- Providing robust careers advice in line with local labour market intelligence.
- Placing a relentless focus on retention and achievement to ensure that every individual student and apprentice excels.

Colchester Institute will play a greater role in driving local and regional economic growth.

This will be achieved by:
- Working in close partnership with a growing body of large and smaller employers to inform curriculum plans and content, which support business development and economic growth.
- Supporting the Local Enterprise Partnership and local authority Economic Development teams to deliver technical education and training to meet identified local skills priorities.
- Expanding the breadth of apprenticeships offered, with rapid growth at higher levels, in order to meet growing demand, particularly among larger employers.
- Establishing outstanding customer service, exceeding expectations; underpinned by a dedicated key account service.

Colchester Institute will be valued as a great place to work by staff and recognised as a good employer within the community.

This will be achieved by:
- Listening to employees and communicating well.
- Focussing on the essential and productive, and working smarter.
- Placing importance on supporting staff, their wellbeing and staff engagement.
- A staff resourcing and reward approach that is fit for today – and tomorrow.
- Adopting a ‘One CI’ culture to achieve individual, team and organisational goals.
Colchester Institute will build further financial resilience. This will allow for greater capital and capacity development, safeguard provision for the future and enable fair reward for staff.

This will be achieved by:

- Meeting or exceeding recruitment targets for all provision types while further reducing the cost of delivery.
- Conducting a review of College systems and processes, to cut down on costly and time-consuming administration and indirect pay costs.
- Utilising course and area costing data, alongside quality and local priority information, to inform an effective curriculum plan which meets financial and quality targets.
- Continuing to deliver on strategic campus improvements to support curriculum development, improve the student and employer experience and reduce operating costs.

Colchester Institute will be a brand that is recognised locally and regionally. The brand will be synonymous with academic and commercial success.

This will be achieved by:

- Using this Strategic Plan and the associated Marketing Strategy to clarify the value propositions and positioning of our three key brands (Colchester Institute, University Centre Colchester and CI Business Solutions).
- Simplifying and communicating brands and brand guidelines.
- Targeting marketing resource and activity in line with income priorities.
- Generating marketing collateral (including online) which is clear, easy to use, and appropriate to the target market.
- Developing a whole College approach to promoting Colchester Institute.
A detailed internal action plan will be produced annually. Milestone targets will be set for the measures listed below and these will be used by the Corporation Board to monitor progress towards the five priorities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Targets to be set for:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colchester Institute will be known for its excellence in teaching,</td>
<td>All main provision types:</td>
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<tr>
<td>learning and assessment. This will be evidenced by exceptional rates</td>
<td>• Retention / Continuation</td>
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<td>of student progress, achievement and progression with outstanding</td>
<td>• Achievement</td>
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<td>destinations a known characteristic of the College.</td>
<td>• Progress (where measurable)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Destinations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Ofsted / HEFCE / QAA judgements</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Student satisfaction</td>
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<td>Colchester Institute will play a greater role in driving economic</td>
<td>• Apprenticeship enrolments in line with Financial Plan</td>
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<td>growth within North Essex.</td>
<td>• Numbers of employers actively engaged</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Financial volumes of bespoke employer provision delivered</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Employer satisfaction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colchester Institute will be valued as a great place to work by</td>
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<td>staff and recognised as a good employer within the community.</td>
<td>• Staff turnover</td>
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<td>• Staff absence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colchester Institute will have built further financial resilience.</td>
<td>• Enrolments on all main provision types in line with targets in Financial Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>This will allow for greater capital and capacity development,</td>
<td>• Staff costs as a percentage of income</td>
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<td>safeguarding provision for the future and enabling fair reward for</td>
<td>• Financial Health points and rating</td>
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<td>staff.</td>
<td>• Course Costing – overall contribution percentage at college and area level</td>
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CURRICULUM PRIORITIES FOR 16-19 FURTHER EDUCATION AND APPRENTICESHIP PROVISION

Colchester Institute will be the destination of first choice for those seeking education and training opportunities which relate to the world of work. For some students, work will be their next destination, and for others, their programme will take them first to Higher Education.

Our curriculum will provide the opportunity for young people to gain a wide range of skills and knowledge, including the skills and knowledge required for specific areas of work and the more generic skills which are of value in all areas of education and employment such as enterprise, creativity, team-working and development of English and maths.

During the period of this Strategic Plan, we will:

- Ensure that there are clear progression pathways from entry or foundation level to level four, in work-based and college-based study programmes.
- Deliver study programmes at all levels which are suitably individualised and prepare students for employment in local, regional and national skills priority sectors.
- Provide a highly respected alternative to A Levels, including by preparing to deliver ‘Tech Level’ qualifications in line with the recommendations of the Sainsbury Report.
• Deliver English and maths to support students’ development of these crucial employability skills and ensure we meet conditions of funding.

• To establish and extend work experience opportunities for Further Education learners to develop the skills required to secure and succeed in work.

• Increase the volume of work delivered online or through blended learning and review delivery patterns, including class sizes, to improve efficiency and reflect the world of work.

• Continue to develop flexible approaches to post-16 education which enable students to transfer between college-based and work-based programmes of study.

• Maintain our position as one of the largest college providers of apprenticeships regionally, through further expansion of apprenticeships with particular emphasis on growth at higher levels.

• Extend the range of apprenticeship programmes offered in accordance with local need.

• Provide high-quality apprenticeships to meet the skills needs of local levy-paying organisations as well as small and medium-sized enterprises.

• Improve the collection of 16–19 destination data and use this, alongside local market intelligence, to shape curriculum plans and marketing.

• Work with schools to help them to develop in their students an equality of regard for technical and professional education opportunities post-16, and to support application and transition to college.
CURRICULUM PRIORITIES FOR ADULT FURTHER EDUCATION
FULL COST AND APPRENTICESHIP PROVISION

Colchester Institute aims to deliver a range of vocational and professional education and training opportunities that are responsive to the needs of students, employers, communities and the economy. Our aim is to offer flexible modes of delivery with entry points during the year, where this is practicable. The main focus of our offer will be around programmes to enable adults to progress in their careers, to change careers or to gain or regain work following unemployment or a break to fulfil family or caring responsibilities.

Additionally, we will respond to the needs of local employers by ensuring a curriculum which meets their current and future skills needs, providing training for current employees as well as more generally ensuring a supply of work-ready individuals in their business sector.

We aim to ensure that we offer the most accessible and cost-effective route to training and education, advising on the availability of loans, fee waivers or co-funded opportunities where they exist.

**During the period of this Strategic Plan, we will:**

- Keep under review our adult curriculum to deliver a framework of high quality learning opportunities, in order to support employability, social inclusion and lifelong learning.
- Work with employers to identify training needs and develop a Further Education, Higher Education and apprenticeship curriculum offer that meets these needs.
- Extend our provision of ‘workplace learning’ to new sector areas and provide training at the best location, college or work-based, to meet employer needs.
- Extend the breadth and volume of apprenticeships and identify areas where higher and degree-level apprenticeships would be a welcome addition, or alternative to, our current degree/Higher Education programme offer.

- Continue to develop The Learning Shop provision, ensuring it is responsive to the changing needs of adult learners, local employment and skills needs.
- Improve the collection of adult destination data and use this to support curriculum planning and inform marketing plans.
- Develop a focussed and sustainable leisure offer based on demand and profitability.
- Seek innovative ways to market our offer, reaching employers, employees and the wider community.

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CURRICULUM PRIORITIES FOR
HIGHER EDUCATION PROVISION

The University Centre Colchester (UCC) brand will become recognised for its excellence in providing undergraduate and postgraduate-level study which leads directly to career enhancement alongside academic achievement. It will be known for its flexible and responsive curriculum that is research-informed and shaped by a combination of employability criteria and academic credibility.

During the period of this Strategic Plan, we will:

- Enhance teaching with subject-specific scholarly activities, research and industry links, to further enhance the student experience and student employability.
- Develop an innovative, responsive and sustainable curriculum offer, including higher and degree apprenticeships, that takes account of the changing needs of learners, employers and the market place.
- Build on UCC’s ethos and unique selling points to promote an institutional identity and increase recruitment through strategically-focussed marketing.
- Establish an institutional reputation for Master’s-level provision, that connects market-driven demand for higher-level qualifications for industry with UCC’s academic expertise.
- Work with employers, through subject advisory boards, and through CI Business Solutions (CIBS), to identify training needs and develop a Higher Education curriculum offer that meets those needs.
- Offer an increasing number of ‘cutting-edge’ degree titles, while rationalising programmes that no longer reflect market demand.
- Further develop high-quality systems and support mechanisms to provide effective and appropriate support for all learners.
- Continue to develop a UCC research community which extends and celebrates research-informed teaching and learning.
- Develop our strategic relationship with our partner Higher Education Institution (HEI) and with other Higher Education providers and Awarding Bodies of standing.
- Refine institutional processes to ensure that the quality of learning continues to exceed the QAA Quality Code.
- Monitor and respond to governmental policy developments that shape the UK’s provision of Higher Education.

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