

# Strategic Plan

2022/23 - 2026/27



Be You. Be Extraordinary.

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## extra'ordinary

extraordinary, you mean that they have some extremely good or special quality.

Derived forms extraordinarily (extra'ordi, narily) ADVERB extraordinariness (extra'ordi, nariness) NOUN

Synonyms: remarkable, special, wonderful, outstanding



## Be You. Be Extraordinary.

By nurturing and empowering individual students and staff to be the best they can be, we improve lives, communities and the economy through education. Together, we achieve the extraordinary.

### Our vision is to be a college where everyone achieves more than they believe possible

We are ambitious for our students, staff, community and partner organisations. We are passionate about creating a sustainable College that supports everyone to achieve their goals, whatever their starting point.

### Our students enjoy an extraordinary experience:

- Students look forward to engaging with a vibrant life at college; they are supported to be themselves and to achieve more than they believe possible
- Learning is inspiring, engaging, dynamic and transformative
- We go the extra mile to ensure students can succeed in their lives and their careers

### Our staff are empowered to achieve extraordinary things:

- We are the Oxfordshire employer of choice; our team enjoy working here and are motivated by what we achieve alongside our students
- Our shared purpose and values enable each of us to develop and • grow as individuals, within a team that inspires us

### Our community and partners benefit from our commitment to the extraordinary:

- Together, our programmes, skills development, social responsibility and citizenship enhance community cohesion and strengthen the economy
- Our partners choose to work with us because of our values; we are embedded within our community, who see us as an important part of their success

Our values drive everything that we do. We are:-

### Authentic, honest and trustworthy

Bold and ambitious for ourselves and each other

### Welcoming, warm and supportive

### Inclusive, fair and caring

### Transformative, innovative and creative



### Our students

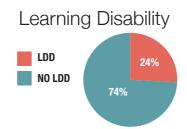
### C.11,000 Students Each Year Age group 16-18 19+

Ethnic group MINORITY ETHNIC GROUP WHITE BRITISH
28%

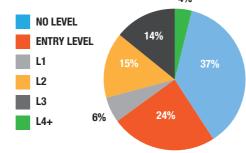




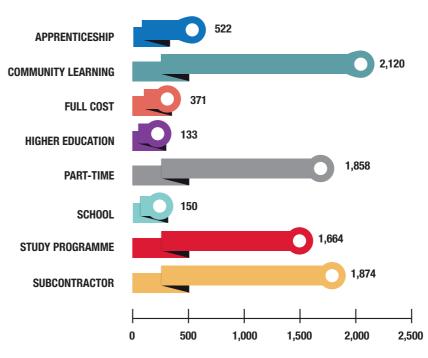






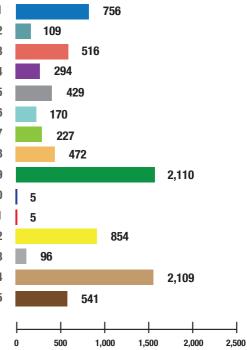


### Students by course type



### Students by Sector Subject Area

- HEALTH, PUBLIC SERVICES AND CARE SSA 1
  - SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS SSA 2
- AGRICULTURE, HORTICULTURE AND ANIMAL CARE SSA 3
- ENGINEERING AND MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGIES SSA 4
- CONSTRUCTION, PLANNING AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT SSA 5
  - INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY SSA 6
    - RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISE SSA 7
      - LEISURE, TRAVEL AND TOURISM SSA 8
      - ARTS, MEDIA AND PUBLISHING SSA 9
    - HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY SSA 10 5
      - SOCIAL SCIENCES SSA 11
    - LANGUAGES, LITERATURE AND CULTURE SSA 12
      - EDUCATION AND TRAINING SSA 13
      - PREPARATION FOR LIFE AND WORK SSA 14
    - BUSINESS, ADMINISTRATION AND LAW SSA 15



5.

### Our students

The sport course was an ideal stepping-stone for what I wanted to do next in life. I gained experience in leading and instructing a large variety of groups and activities.

> Paddy Guillois | National Diploma Sport | CLASS OF 2015 RAF Sergeant | Falcons Parachute Display Team





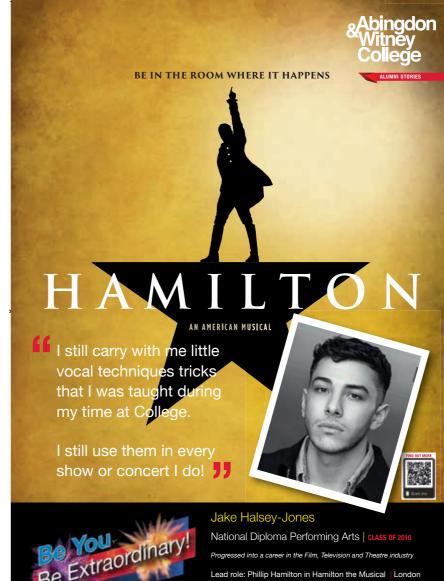




My course enabled me to develop my love of horses into a career, even though I didn't own a horse!

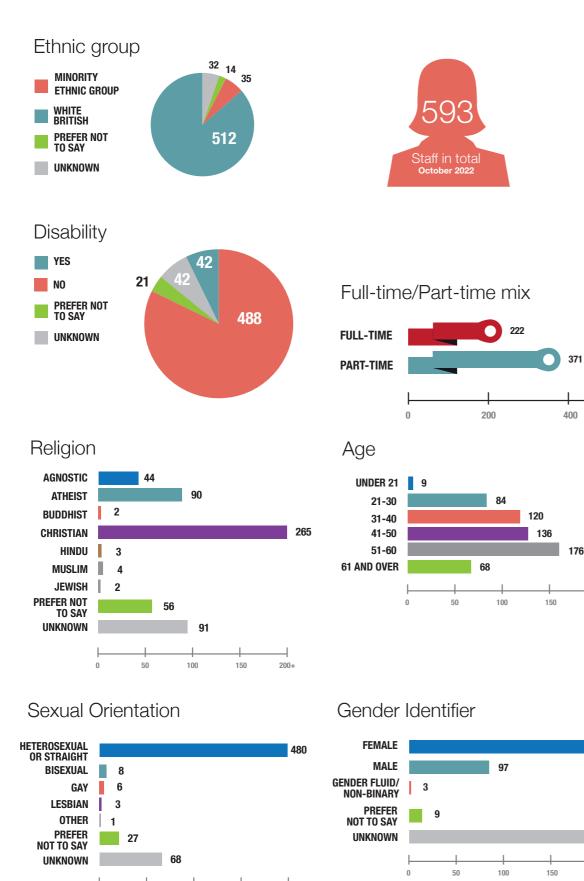
> I learnt practical skills that I didn't get on my degree course that I still use today.

Alicia Plaistow | Extended Diploma in Horse Management | CLASS OF 2017 Tweenhills Stud Farm | Hartbury | Gloucestershire





### Our staff - data



## Our staff - stories

### Rob Anderson | Gas Engineering

600

256

228

Rob started his career as an apprentice gas maintenance engineer before moving into central heating installations at British Gas. He then spent ten years working as a Safety Assurance Engineer (SAE) and lead carbon monoxide (CO) incident investigator on behalf of the Health & Safety Executive.

After 21 years he moved to Crowcon Detection Instruments, where he started in the technical support team providing global client support. He then moved into account management where his skills and experience in the HVAC (Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning) industries enabled successful management and business development of national (multi-million pound) accounts and gas training centres.

Rob continues to champion carbon monoxide awareness/safety and remains Gas Safe registered. He is recognised by IGEM (Institute of Gas Engineers and Managers) and by The Engineering Council professional organisations as an engineering technician (EngTech MIGEM).

" I have always wanted to go into teaching to give back to the industry that I have dedicated my working life to, and to positively inspire and encourage the future generation of plumbers and gas engineers.

### Pete Collins | Art & Design - Technician

Pete's academic artistic pursuits began at Stroud School of Art, where he studied his Level 2, Level 3 and Foundation Diploma, before going on to complete his degree in Illustration.

He started work at what used to be Gloscat (now Gloscol) in Gloucester as Arts and Media Technician for three years. After moving to Oxford he spent two years in two different roles: a Media Technician at OCVC and at Modern Art Oxford as a Gallery Assistant.

His move to Abingdon & Witney College as Art & Media Technician came in November 2006, where he started off teaching adults oil painting during the evenings. After successfully completing his teaching qualification, he's now an Art Technician and an Hourly Paid Lecturer at our Witney campus.

<sup>11</sup> It's a constant joy to be working with talented, inspirational, and creative people.



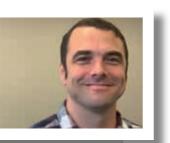




### More staff stories

### Rob Mills | Early Years

Upon leaving university, Rob started a career in hospitality and venue management, before moving into fundraising work with charities. Whilst these professions may seem far removed from teaching, he actually picked up many relevant, transferrable skills during this time.



Rob later retrained, achieving a degree in Early Years Development which lead to a second career in childcare and education; this, along with multiple roles in sports coaching, brought him into further education and joining the College as Lecturer in the Early Years department.

" Supporting learners to achieve their qualifications is great, but contributing to students' personal growth throughout the duration of a course and beyond is far more rewarding.



### Rose Scofield | Equine - Higher Education

Horses were just a hobby for Rose at first, riding out for local racehorse trainers and working in customer service.

Then at the age of 36, she decided to go back to education and ended up with a Research Masters whilst also working at Cats Protection as a Welfare Officer.

After running her own equine behaviour and training consultancy, she lectured at Bridgwater College, Truro College and Duchy College, before coming to Abingdon & Witney College to take on the position of Course Leader for the Equine BSc degrees.

<sup>44</sup> For my students, the most important benefit is the ability to study Equine Science in a university scenario, which I think is probably unique for the subject.

### Cheryl Jones | Student Voice First Coordinator

Cheryl was originally a student at Abingdon College in the 1990s, where she completed a childcare gualification. After many years of working in nurseries and schools she returned to Abingdon & Witney College to study a teaching qualification. This led to her working at Henley College as a tutor and assessor.



Alongside her role at Henley College, she secured a role here as an hourly paid lecturer and this led to her applying for the role of Student Voice First Coordinator. Shortly after this an opportunity to complete a Careers Information Advice & Guidance L6 gualification arose and now she is a Careers Advisor for Pathways and Common Leys students, alongside her role as Student Voice Coordinator.

I thoroughly enjoy being part of such a welcoming community, and am very proud to play a part in supporting and guiding our students to meet their potential.

### Nicola Pratley | Performing Arts

Nicola studied Performing Arts at Abingdon & Witney College from 2005-2007 and then progressed onto studying Musical Theatre at the Guildford School of Acting.

After graduating in 2010, Nicola moved to London and 'lived the dream', auditioning and performing onstage. Her first experience teaching at the College was when her predecessor called to ask if she could cover a lesson; shortly after, she became a full time Course Leader and hasn't looked back!

" The best part of my job is getting to direct students in a wide range of performances, seeing how well they progress within musical theatre and soar to new heights!

### Grant Waters | Oxfordshire Adult Learning

Grant was originally trained as a designer, where there was an emphasis on being able to illustrate and express one's ideas. On leaving college, Grant worked for an architectural practice for a few years. Alongside designing interiors, he took on graphic and visualisation work.

About twenty-five years ago, Grant discovered oil painting and has never looked back.

" styles and designing compositions. <sup>11</sup>

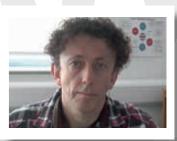
### Jackie Chatterton | Hairdressing

Jackie trained in hairdressing at City of Oxford College and earned both a Certificate in Education and a Certificate in Management Studies at Aylesbury College. Various hairdressing courses and training, including through the Lee Stafford Academy, has ensured she is up-to-date with the latest industry-related qualifications in the field.

Her career pathway has taken her through both commercial hair and beauty roles across Oxfordshire, including working as a salon manager, before turning to teaching. She has trained future professionals at Aylesbury College and City of Oxford College, before joining Abingdon & Witney College in 2016 as a Work-based Assessor.

<sup>44</sup> Working in a college setting is a big change from the retail side of working; it's a different routine, a different way of life!





With the classes that I teach, I try to bring some of my insight and enthusiasm for the discipline, from the basics of drawing and painting technique, through to developing individual



## Our facilities - data

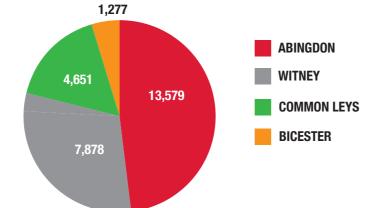




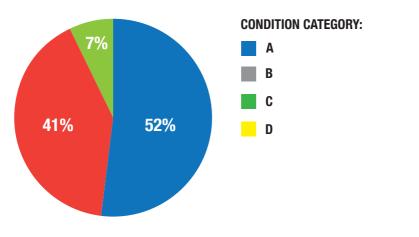




### Campus Size (Gross Internal Area) m<sup>2</sup>



### Percentage of GIA in Condition Category





Advanced Skills Centre | Abingdon | 2017

## Investing in our facilities



Queen Emma | Witney campus | 2011



Queen Emma | Witney campus | 2012



Livestock Technology Centre | Common Leys | 2019



Courthouse | Witney campus | 2012



Courthouse | Witney campus | 2019



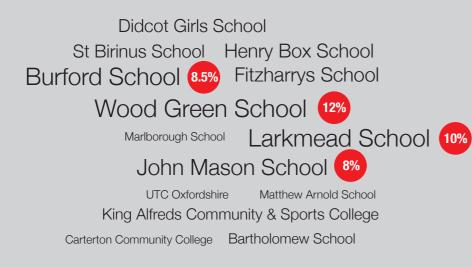
Green Construction Centre | Abingdon | 2022

## Our stakeholders

## WOLP (West Oxfordshire Learning Partnership) Careers Fair

This year will be the fourth time the college has hosted the WOLP Careers Fair which showcases a wide range of employers from across Oxfordshire, giving young people the opportunity to engage with potential employers and experts already working in those fields. The event is open to pupils from Y10 – Y13, but we also welcome those who are home-schooled or from outside the WOLP area. Typically, the event attracts in excess of 500 families.





### **Oxfordshire Learning Network (OLN)**

Abingdon & Witney College is a lead partner within the Oxfordshire Learning Network, a partnership organisation that was originally set up as a Community Learning Trust to oversee how the Community Learning grant was used by training providers to support adult learning across Oxfordshire.

Over 400 members represent organisations such as local Town and District Councils, Oxfordshire County Council, DWP, community groups, charities, adult and community learning providers and our subcontracted providers.



WEST OXFORDSHIRE

LEARNING

Informing career and life choices

PARTNERSHIP

### Nigel Tipple, Chief Executive, OxLEP

"Having had the opportunity recently to reflect upon and review our partnership working and stakeholder engagement I wanted to recognise the value and impact our joint working with the FE sector and in particular Abingdon & Witney College has had in recent years. It is easy to focus upon the investment success in infrastructure to support STEM which has been significant, but actually that only works as well as it does because of the strength of partnership working, trust and commitment of the College to the wider skills and training system.

We know the acute pressures our businesses feel in terms of recruitment and retention and the pressure the FE sector is under in respect of funding and staffing to meet employer/student expectation and need. The active engagement with our teams and in turn businesses has been pivotal in driving both change and recovery across our economy. Technical skills development, training in specific sectors such as agri-tech, engineering and the softer skills employers are looking for are critical to the counties future; the FE sector is a critical partner and leader in this area. The partnership working here in Oxfordshire, embedded as it is within our Board and Sub-Group working arrangements, reinforces that shared ambition and understanding."

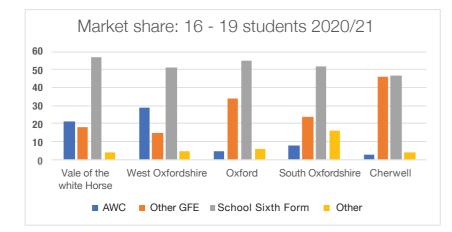
### Strategic Development Fund sees greater FE collaboration

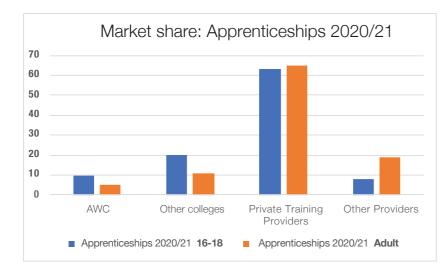
Abingdon & Witney College has joined with a number of other FE Colleges to support a new project to upskill people in key subjects areas across Oxfordshire. The new programmes are part of Government's blueprint for reshaping the technical skills system to better support the needs of the local labour markets and the wider economy, as set out in the Skills for Jobs White Paper published in January 2021. Part of this plan will see the introduction of Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) and a Strategic Development Fund (SDF) by the Department for Education (DfE).

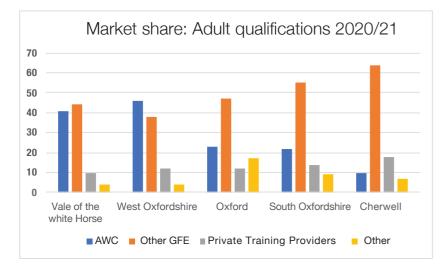
Working together, the colleges will design and deliver a range of short courses primarily aimed at those already in employment. The areas covered will included green construction, electric vehicle maintenance, advanced digital skills, and robotics. These SDF projects were endorsed by Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce, who have been designated as the employer representative body to lead the development and subsequent reviews of the LSIP for Oxfordshire. The production of the LSIP will be carried out against a set of agreed priorities placing employers at the heart of their local skills system and allowing for even greater collaboration between the college and employers.



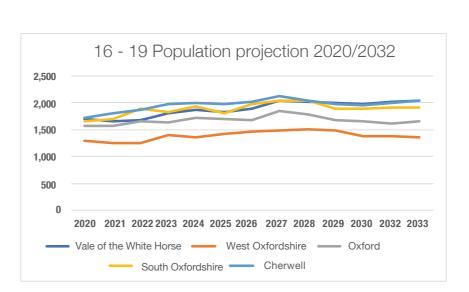
### Our competition















## Our quality

### An award-winning College

- University of Oxford Apprenticeship Awards 2022 Tutor of the Year: Amanda Franklin
- Hays Employer of the Year Award 2022
- Gold in the Stonewall Schools & Colleges Champions programme 2022
- Beacon Award A Carer's Journey: Oxfordshire Adult Learning 2021
- AAC Apprenticeship Provider of the Year Business and Administration 2021
- Pearson | BTEC College of the Year at the 2021 Awards
- Winners of the Large Training Provider of the Year Award at the 2020 AAT Training Provider Awards
- AAC Apprenticeship Provider of the Year: Engineering and Manufacturing 2020

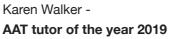
### Hays Employer of the Year











Gwyn 'Will' Williams

(Left) Paula Breakspear Lee Stafford Academy Student of the Year 2021





It's nice to be recognised!

estafford ducation



# College of the year And Student of the Year



Pearson tutor of the year 2019



**BEACON AWARD** WINNERS 2014/15 2015/16 2017/18 2018/19 2021/22

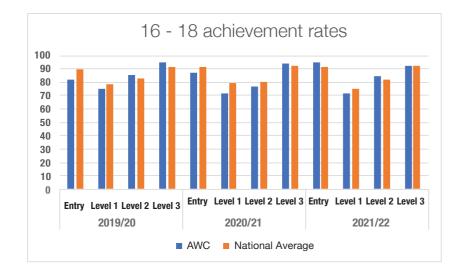
ASSOCIATION

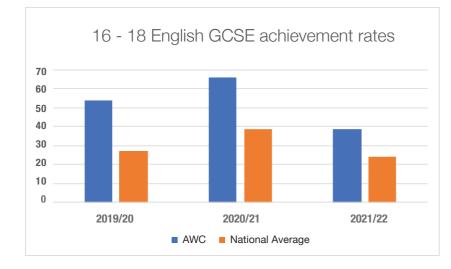
**OF COLLEGES** 

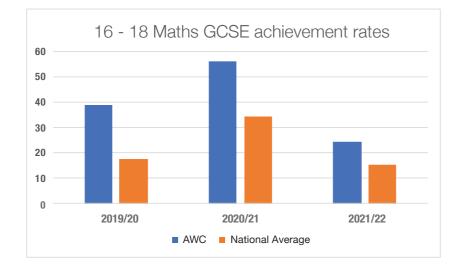


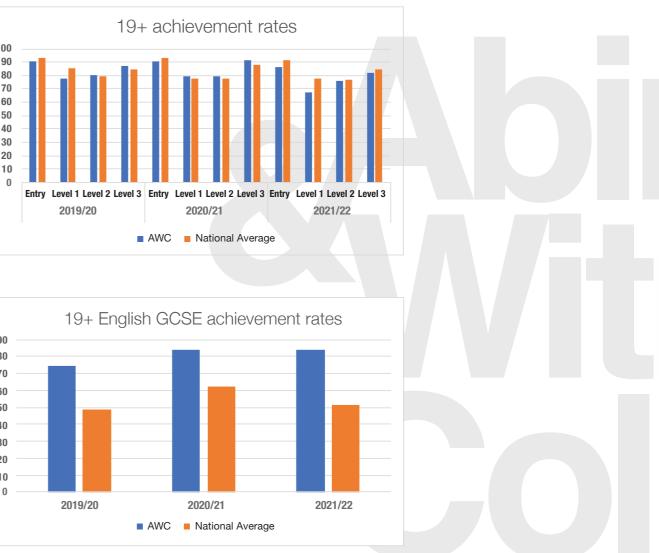
## Our quality

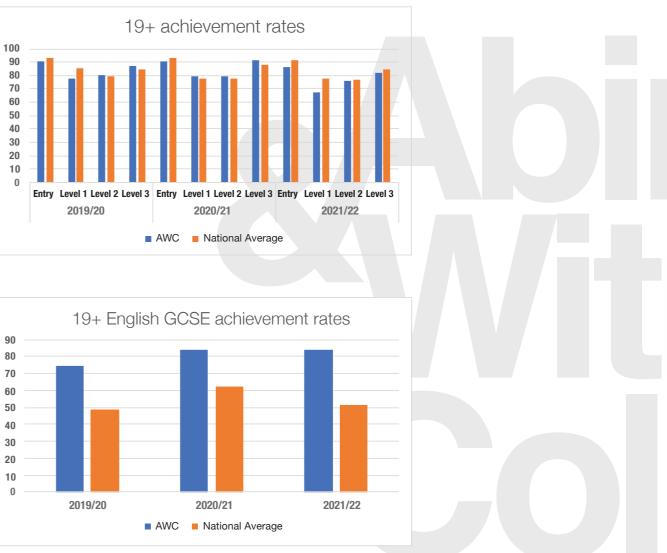
### **Data information**

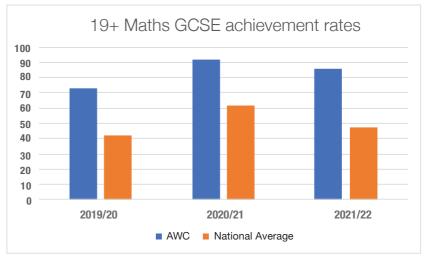






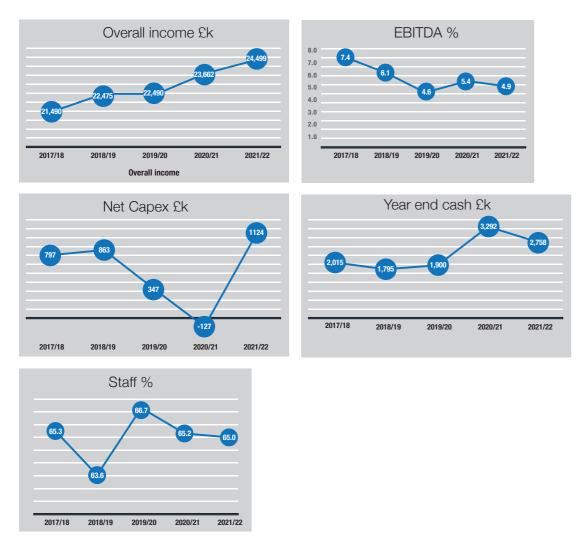








### **Our Finances**



The College financial position has been slowly deteriorating in recent years. This deterioration has taken place within a sector-wide context of reduced funding, particularly for adults, and more recently, rising inflation.

Impact from the Covid-19 pandemic on the College finances was minimal with careful controls in place to mitigate lack of growth, for example in apprenticeships, given the uncertain global economy. Income has increased by 13% over the last 5 years. However, so have pay costs, and non-pay costs have increased by 23%, reducing EBITDA from 7.4% to 4.9%. Staff costs as a percentage of income have remained stable, although because of the mix of provision we offer and types of staff we employ, this percentage is higher than sector benchmarking suggests it should be.

Analysis of average class sizes suggests that there is existing capacity within current staff volumes, and a further analysis of the cost of business support staff in comparison to other colleges indicates that we employ more support staff per student FTE than other colleges. Non-pay costs are lower than sector norms.

Over the last 5 years, £1.8m of bank debt has been repaid, and bank borrowings at the end of 2021/22 was £4.9m, down from £7.3m at the end of 2014/15. Capital expenditure has mostly only been required to fund the College's minor capital requirements.

Major capital projects relating to new provision and curriculum expansion have largely been funded by government and LEP grants. Cash holdings have remained stable, increasing in 2020/21 and 2021/22 mainly due to the timing of major capital projects.

The College's financial health grade has reduced from "Good" to "Requires Improvement" and is forecast to remain at that grade in the short-term.

### Our strengths

### Strengths

Consistently good quality of provision, with pockets of outstanding provision

Wholehearted commitment to inclusion

Financial stability

Recent investment made across the majority of the College estate

Solid and secure IT infrastructure

Strong reputation amongst the sector for staff development and innovation

Positive College culture that supports success; buy into the employer of choice ethos

Reputation for SEND work and apprenticeships

Data and information is increasingly accessible

Culture of continuous improvement exists across most areas of the College.

## Our opportunities for the future

### Opportunities

Grow core areas of strength including 16 - 19 provision and apprenticeships

Consistently deliver outstanding teaching, learning and assessment, further improving outcomes for learners

Build further on the principle of continuous improvement, identifying efficiencies and improving customer service

Increase EBITDA and cash reserves in order to provide more financial comfort and enable investment

Further develop the leadership and management capacity within the team.





# Strategic Objectives

2022/23 - 2026/27

Delivering the highest quality student experience

Developing a transformative and dynamic curriculum

Maintaining financial security

Shaping an environmentally sustainable future

Being the employer of choice







### Outcomes

### Delivering the highest quality learner experience

- All students enjoy coming to college
- Students gain the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to progress
- Classes are inclusive, inspirational, engaging and dynamic
- Students are challenged and supported to achieve at the highest possible level they can
- Customer service and student support is exceptional at all stages of the learner journey
- Business support functions are student-centred and add value to the student experience.

### Developing a transformative and dynamic curriculum

- Curriculum delivery and content is relevant, exciting and inspirational
- Our digital strategy allows all students to engage with learning in the best way for them
- The curriculum offer reflects the current and future needs of students, employers, the communities we work with, and the local economy
- Employer and community partners are involved in the development and delivery of our courses
- Subcontractors help us to work with a diverse range of students, including those accessing specialist courses.

### Maintaining financial security

- Our curriculum plan outlines ambitious, realistic and sustainable plans for growth
- Investment plans to support the curriculum plan are in place
- We achieve our financial plan, with particular focus on cash holdings, bank covenants and delivering a small surplus
- We make investments in infrastructure and our people, and in business efficiency and systems improvements
- We instill a "right first" time approach to systems and processes, and deliver exceptional customer service at all times.

### Shaping an environmentally sustainable future

- Our curriculum enables students to gain the knowledge and skills they need to contribute positively to a sustainable future
- Our working practices are designed wherever possible to minimise negative impact on the environment
- We demonstrate our commitment to a sustainable future through the choices and investments we make
- We work proactively and positively towards becoming a net-zero College before 2050.

### Being the employer of choice

- Staff enjoy working at the College we have fun!
- Salaries, the staff benefits package and terms and conditions are attractive and competitive
- All employees feel empowered and resourced to do their job well Staff are supported to achieve their personal and professional goals Everyone understands their role and how they contribute to the
- success of the College
- Our culture promotes diversity and difference, and enables all staff to succeed.

## Financial strategy and plan

Our financial strategy will deliver moderate income growth whilst effectively maintaining cash reserves and managing inflationary pressures to create an improving financial position, returning us to "good" financial health by year four of the plan.

Income will remain largely generated through public funding, and we will continue to seek opportunities for grant and revenue project funding where appropriate. In support of the strategy, we will increase debt levels to fund future growth or investment if required.

### **Financial plan**

I&E (£000s)	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	
Earned income	25,284	26,175	26,991	27,297	27,064	
Capital grants	1,400	1,450	1,450	1,450	1,450	
Overall income	26,684	27,628	28,441	28,747	29,054	
Pay	17,600	18,209	18,545	18,678	18,714	
Non pay	6,545	6,806	7,032	7,172	7,309	
EBITDA	2,539	2,614	2,864	2,896	3,031	
Depreciation	2,350	2,425	2,475	2,475	2,475	
Interest	173	253	269	223	203	
Operating surplus/deficit	16	-64	120	198	352	
ESFA 3 YEAR PLAN						

The financial plan has been produced following a careful examination of our current market share, labour market intelligence, analysis of our cost base and the relative contribution levels of each part of the College, amongst other work. Prudent assumptions about new business opportunities and growth have been made, and a significant adjustment for inflationary pressures over the first three years of the plan has been included.

Given the volatile economic climate in September 2022 whilst this strategy is being finalised, our assumptions have been further tested through a separate piece of work that details the risk of very high inflation, compounded by continuing restrictions to government funding. This paper outlines a range of contingencies available to the College, should higher than expected risks to inflation or funding rates materialise.

### **Financial objectives**

The College's key financial objectives are to ensure that:

- The College will be financially sustainable in the long term
- Financial reporting and analysis will aid decision making throughout the College
- The College's budget holders will proactively manage financial resources and assets
- A more "commercial" culture will be developed throughout the College
- The College will continue to maintain appropriate governance and internal controls

## Underpinning strategies

If we are to achieve our strategic objectives and deliver our overarching vision for the College, then it is important to ensure that all college activity contributes positively to our shared goals.

With this in mind, we have compiled a number of underpinning, or enabling, strategies to support the overall College strategic plan.

Each of these strategies include a vision and specific objectives for their area, along with an annual operational plan and 5 year KPI tracker to monitor progress.

Delivery of these underpinning strategies is overseen by a number of committees, reporting to the Senior Management Team.



## Two year operational plan

Strategic Objective	2022/2023	2023/2024
Delivering the highest quality student experience	Re-launch Student Voice Simplify quality assurance and quality improvement systems and processes to improve TLA Review training and development programme for Curriculum Managers	Re-launch enrichment for study programme learners On-line interview booking system launched Launch Job Shop
Developing a transformative and dynamic curriculum	Participate in production of the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) Review STEM and HE offer Launch Green Skills offer	Revised HE and STEM offer launched Refreshed adult offer launched in response to funding changes Re-launch Digital Learning strategy
Maintaining financial security	Launch student transport service Refresh the College brand and raise the profile of the work we do Review Common Leys Masterplan	Consider offering an additional pension scheme Proactively target new adult learning markets
Shaping an environmentally sustainable future	Develop a Sustainability strategy, including realistic measures against which we can assess our performance Agree a plan to reduce scope 1 and 2 emissions	Calculate scope 3 emissions and agree a plan to reduce them
Being the employer of choice	Review of pay scales/ benefits to remain competitive Re-launch how we recognise and celebrate good performance Create staff break rooms on campus	Inclusive Leadership project Staff Skills Audit Revise recruitment processes Refresh Leadership Development Academy

### **Risks and Assumptions**

This plan has been finalised during October 2022. To a degree, the various uncertainties experienced by the sector during the Covid-19 pandemic have now subsided, but the turbulent political and economic climate now present further uncertainties that make strategic planning a considerable challenge. This plan has been prepared assuming that there are no significant changes to the status of Further Education Colleges, or to the education landscape in Oxfordshire, and that funding levels remain broadly consistent.

We have not assumed high levels of growth and have accounted for moderate levels of pay and non-pay inflation.

Separate modelling of the financial plan has been undertaken to prepare scenarios and contingencies if we experience exceptionally high levels of inflation over a sustained period.

## **Key Performance Indicators**

A Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Road Map outlines the main measures against which the success of this strategy will be assessed. The management team will regularly review progress towards these KPIs and will report this progress to the Governing Board.

## Plan for Evaluation

On a day-to-day basis, the Senior Management Team and College Leadership Team are responsible for delivering the strategic objectives and outcomes detailed in this plan. Regular tracking and monitoring of progress towards the objectives will be undertaken, including monthly assessment against the key performance indicators. College committees will maintain oversight of the delivery of underpinning strategies.

The Corporation Board will maintain oversight of progress towards the achievement of the high level KPIs and strategic objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan. Mid-year and end of year reports on progress will be scrutinised by the Nominations, Remuneration and Governance committee, with reports subsequently submitted to the Board by the NRG committee.

Board committees will take responsibility for monitoring progress towards the achievement of KPIs and objectives outlined within each underpinning strategy relevant to the work of that committee. This committee work will be overseen by the NRG committee. The annual board away day will focus on reviewing the currency and relevance of the strategic plan. Any amendments to the plan will be tabled for discussion and approval at the July Corporation Board each year.

A rolling two-year operational plan will be approved at each July Corporation Board. A formal review of the whole Strategic Plan will take place during 2026/2027 with a new plan scheduled for approval in July 2027.



www.abingdon-witney.ac.uk