

Public Benefit Statement 2018/19

The Corporation was established under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 for the purposes of conducting Halesowen College which is an exempt charity under the terms of the Charities Act 1993 as amended by the Charities Acts 2006 and 2011. The College is accountable to its learners, to the wider community it serves and other stakeholders. As such this public benefit statement describes how Halesowen College seeks to add value to the social, economic and well-being of the community it serves. The College is regulated by the Secretary of State for Education as Principal Regulator for all FE Corporations in England. The members of the Corporation are disclosed in the financial statements.

Aims and Objectives

The College mission as approved by its members is “to be the leading choice for post 16 education and training”. Section 3 of the 2011 Charities Act specifies charitable purposes for the public benefit which includes the advancement of education. In setting and reviewing the College’s strategic objectives the Corporation has had due regard for the Charity Commissioner’s guidance on public benefit and particularly upon its supplementary guidance on the advancement of education. The College is currently reviewing its mission and strategic plan to ensure that it remains relevant and address the priorities to continue to deliver excellent standards of education and training, so students can progress into a higher level of study or employment. In the exercise to develop, consult on and finalise this plan due ongoing consideration will be given to public benefit.

The provision at Halesowen College meets the public benefit principles in as much as there are identifiable benefits to the public/section of the public through the advancement of education. The purpose of the College is the delivery of high quality education and skills training that maximises student opportunities, progression and success. This will be achieved through a framework to:

- design and promote services to fulfil the requirements of students and employers within the local and wider community.
- provide a wide range of high quality study programmes, apprenticeships and training accessible to students.
- ensure that the College actively seeks to improve quality, efficiency and effectiveness, and achieve best value in all its activities.

The aims of the College are defined in its Strategic Plan.

The strategic objectives are currently split between three core strategies:

- Deliver the most extensive range of high quality learning and progression opportunities.
- Lead in diverse, inclusive and innovative learning, teaching and assessment.
- Drive strong collaborative learning partnerships in meeting the needs of the economy, education and the community.

and three enabling strategies:

- A reputation and brand as the outstanding College of choice that leads local learning.

- Be an exemplary employer recognised for the most capable, committed and caring staff.
- Ensure financial strength and stability to deliver excellent facilities and resources.

within which there are two defining aims:

- Recognise the individual needs of learners and put in place support and direction through the delivery of an inclusive portfolio of provision from entry level to higher education.
- Establishing the College as a leading centre for training in education and learning within the region.

As stated above these are currently being reviewed but will maintain the ethos and educational character of an inclusive tertiary college.

The mission and strategic plan make provisions for the advancement of education and skills to the public/section of the public through:

- High quality teaching and learning which leads students to higher/further education and/or sustainable employer.
- Widening participation through an inclusion culture.
- Excellent links with employers, partners and the local community.
- Strong student support systems.
- Ethical procurement and demonstration of value for money.

The College mission and strategic priorities are and will continue to be supported by key aims.

The Annual Report provides information on the College's achievements against these objectives and outlines any projects for the future.

Higher Quality Learning and Teaching Leading to Positive Destination

Outstanding student achievement and progression to higher level courses and sustainable employment reflect the exceptional range of learning opportunities which deliver high levels of success.

The College was again judged as good by Ofsted in 2017. A rigorous system of lesson observation and developmental CPD form part of a comprehensive quality cycle to ensure areas for improvement are addressed and high standards are maintained. Achievement rates demonstrate a positive trend year on year with most courses matching or exceeding the national benchmark. The College is the second highest performing College nationally for positive progression.

Widening Participation through an Inclusive Culture

The College is committed to having a student body that is diverse in terms of background and experience, with all the educational and cultural benefits that this brings. The College is inclusive and encourages applications from all students whatever their background and prior educational attainment. There is an outstanding breadth of curriculum which offers courses in most subject sector areas and from pre-entry through to Level 4 and above on a classroom based model or via apprenticeships. Students have individual interviews and places are offered on appropriate study programmes. Further information on the open admissions policy

is available on the website. www.halesowen.ac.uk. The College has transparent systems in place to consider the admission of students with an Education Health and Care Plan and will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate learning.

The College is recognised as a Leader in Diversity. The rigorous assessment to gain this accolade encompassed a range of demonstrable actions to extend equality of opportunity and celebrate diversity. To deliver excellent facilities and resources the Estates Strategy links with the strategic plan. Despite cuts to public funding and reduction in agency income for 2017/18, an outstanding financial profile has been maintained to support the need for investment to meet the strategic objectives.

Excellent Links with Employers, Partners and the Local Community

As part of the strategy for widening participation, the College has well developed strong links and works with local schools by offering taster days and 14-16 programmes to raise aspirations and engagement. The College will continue to be a member of Stour Vale Multi Academy Trust now the King Edward and Halesowen Colleges' Trust have joined this larger trust. Joining the Stour Vale Trust presents further opportunities to engage.

The Associate College Partnership with University of Worcester is an example of curriculum diversification through partnership. The College is working closely with the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) in developing higher level apprenticeships to address local skills deficit.

Strong Student Support Systems

There are bursary and hardship funds to remove financial barriers to education. The College has a well-established programme of activities designed to raise levels of attainment, aspirations and applications among underrepresented groups.

The College is committed to ensuring that all students benefit from an excellent learning and teaching experience as well as tutorial and pastoral support, plus community volunteering programmes, that enable students to develop as individuals and enhance future employability.

The College provides a range of student services to ensure student welfare and a successful passage through College life and beyond, including counselling, specialist provision for students with disabilities, mental and physical medical conditions and/or learning difficulties, sport and exercise facilities, careers advice including HE and job fairs, and financial advice. The College has robust safeguarding arrangements which encompass responsibilities under the Prevent agenda and anti-slavery, and which include the promotion of British Values. Further information can be found in the Student Handbook available on the website.

Halesowen College works with a local charity The Halesowen Foundation which supports students to develop their talents and potential in sport, music and academia alongside removing barriers to participation including funding a Healthy Minds Coach.

Procurement and Trading Activities

The College has approved procurement, treasury management and financial policies which encompass:

- Not investing College funds or trading with bodies who may have aims contrary to the education and wider aims or objectives of the College or if their activities are illegal under the law. The College has adopted an Anti-Modern Day Slavery Statement.
- Not trading or entering banking arrangements with institutions, if the aims of the institutions concerned are contrary to the education or wider aims or objectives of the College or if, by so doing, the wider interests of the College are likely to be materially harmed.
- When procuring goods, budget holders should give due consideration to ethical, environmental and sustainability issues. Wherever possible and practical to do so, budget holders should reduce the level of procurement by cutting down on waste and repairing or re-using existing goods and use environmentally friendly goods whenever practical, taking into account best value. Budget holders must balance environmental and social factors alongside economic consideration to achieve value for money on a whole life basis.
- The College adheres to all relevant legislation regarding procurement including Public Services (Social Value Act 2012).

Overall the College serves the community in terms of provision of education, significant employer in the area and through trading activities. This statement captures the diverse nature and scope of benefits provided by the College and confirms its charitable status.

Each year the Corporation formally reviews all activities against public benefit.