



**Warrington
& Vale Royal
College**

Annual Report 2021-22

Equality & Diversity

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Annual Equality Report reviews our progress over the previous academic year in relation to equality and diversity and is one of the ways we make visible how we are meeting our obligations to recognise diversity and promote equality. The report reflects the work of the College within our diverse communities as well as reporting key equality data/information.
- 1.2. We have firm expectations of our staff and students and work with various internal and external groups to consult and develop how we can improve and maintain a coherent approach to equality and diversity, reflecting our organisational values:
- We put our students and customers first - prioritising students and their learning and progress, realising their potential, delighting our customers.
 - We recognise that people are our greatest asset – retain and recruit the most talented staff, investing in them to fulfil their potential, creating a wealth of opportunities for personal development and progression, creating a culture of co-prosperity, rewarding them for the work they do.
 - We pursue excellence in all we do – a passion for high quality education, training and skills solutions, holding ourselves to the highest possible standards, meeting (and exceeding) targets, making improvements, valuing creativity, supporting digital innovation and pedagogy.
 - We embrace change – looking forward to the future, embracing new technologies, anticipating and responding to ongoing economic and social needs and demands, maintaining a growth mind-set, exploring new routes to partnership, collaboration and growth.
 - We collaborate and work in partnership with others - actively seeking opportunities to work with others in the best interests of the college community and key stakeholders.
 - We operate sustainably, ethically and responsibly - taking action to achieve net zero carbon targets, acting with integrity, with high levels of accountability and complete transparency, treating others fairly and with respect, communicating clearly, concisely and openly.
 - We are guided by the principles of sound financial stewardship and operational efficiency. Ever-mindful of an increasingly risk-laden operational environment, the need for broader sensitivity analysis in budgeting and forecasting and the importance of mitigating risks that could affect the college's solvency.
- 1.3. Our continual aspiration is to promote equality and social inclusion in all that we do. We will achieve this through eight key objectives, as stated in our Development Plan, detailed below:
- Undertake a strategic review of Foundation Learning, Entry and Level 1 provision including SEND and the inclusion of MPLD and alternative education pathways.

- Build on the high-quality teaching, learning and assessment practices to further improve the quality of the learning experience for all learners. Ensure that gaps in learning or lost learning are swiftly addressed to enable all learners to maximise their potential.
- Further enhance the curriculum and develop the college's enrichment programme such that they support learners' confidence and personal development – addressing any personal, social and emotional skills that have been lost as a result of the pandemic – and enhances their career aspirations.
- Ensure the college's apprenticeship outcomes continue to improve to exceed Provider Group Averages and the quality of apprenticeship provision receives a positive endorsement from Ofsted, learners and employers.
- Ensure the college has the financial wherewithal to continue to invest in the rapid development of educational technology and advanced digital pedagogy.
- Further develop the college's approach to staff wellbeing and their good physical and mental health.
- Through a trauma informed approach, further develop the college's approach to learners' wellbeing and their good physical and mental health.
- Implement the college's People Plan to recruit and retain a highly skilled workforce, including governors, ensuring that the college has the right mix of staff and staff capabilities - technical, pedagogic and leadership - to support growth and the aspirations of the curriculum plan.

1.4. Arising from the College's Ofsted Inspection in October 2019, Ofsted commented:

"Students and apprentices told us that they benefit from a very caring and highly inclusive learning environment and inspectors agreed. Relationships between them and their teachers and assessors are excellent".

"Students who have high needs and/or special educational needs and/or disabilities receive early help and individual support. Teachers and assessors motivate students and apprentices to be successful in their learning. This helps them to develop their confidence and self-esteem".

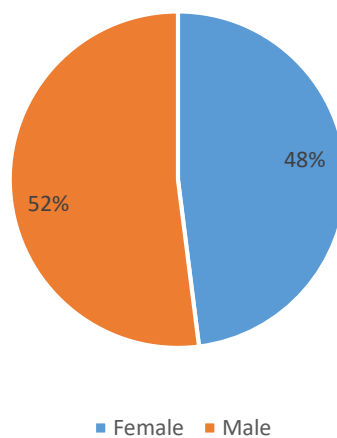
"Students who have high needs on vocational courses develop the skills they need for work and independence".

1.5. The College Management Team (CMT) are responsible for implementing, promoting, and embedding equality and diversity across the College, and monitoring and evaluating the impact. The behaviour of all members of the college community should demonstrate the principles of equality and diversity amply. The governing body leads the way in the promotion of equality and diversity and governors receive training and information on the statutory legislation and organisational / individual responsibilities.

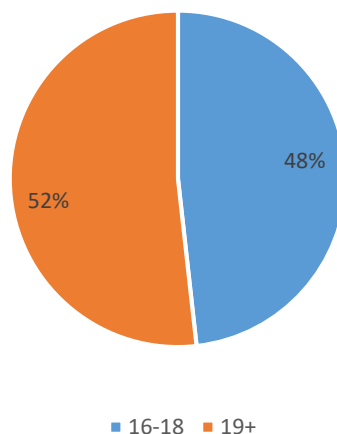
2. Student Equality and Diversity Statistics 2021 – 2022

2.1 These figures demonstrate how diverse - or otherwise - our student population is and the types of monitoring that we undertake. Equality and diversity monitoring is carried out on an annual basis, enabling us to track progression of our students and to take positive action in dealing with inequalities faced by disadvantaged groups. We identify and monitor any equality, diversity and other socio-economic factors that may impact on our students so as to inform future admissions policy and curriculum development.

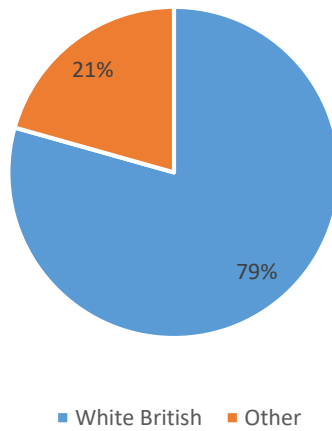
Student Gender Profile



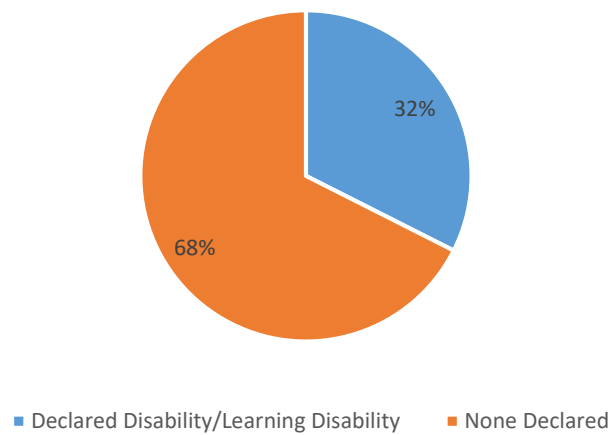
Student Age Profile



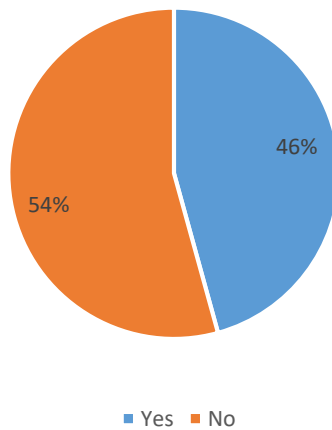
Student Ethnicity Profile



Student Disability/Learning Disability Profile



Disadvantage Postcode Profile

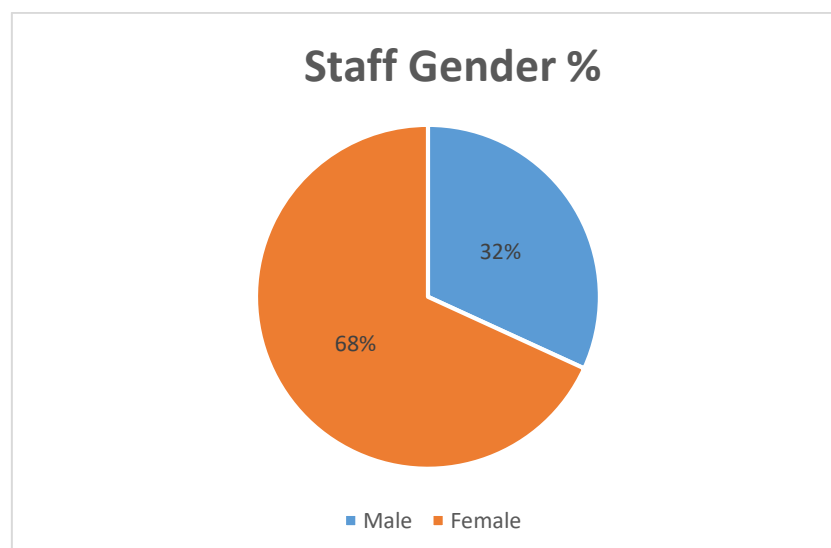


- 2.2 Within the context of improving progress and achievement and reducing achievement gaps, the achievement gap for adult male students was reversed in 2021/22 to +2.8% points, from -0.4% point gap the previous academic year. Adult male students fell short of female enrolments in 2021/22 which equated to 45% of the cohort.
- 2.3 24% of adult students declared a learning difficulty or disability. They do not achieve as well as their peers (-6.9% point gap). However, for those who declared an ALS need (8%), the achievement gap is reduced to 1.8%.
- 2.4 19% of apprentices declared a learning difficulty or disability. They are not retained as well as their peers resulting in an achievement gap of -18% points. This gap has greatly increased (12.5% points from 2020/21).
- 2.5 Female apprentices in 2021/22 equate to 33% of the cohort (-15% points from 2020/21). The achievement gap between females and males has reduced and is currently only -0.9%, versus -7.2% points in 2020/21.

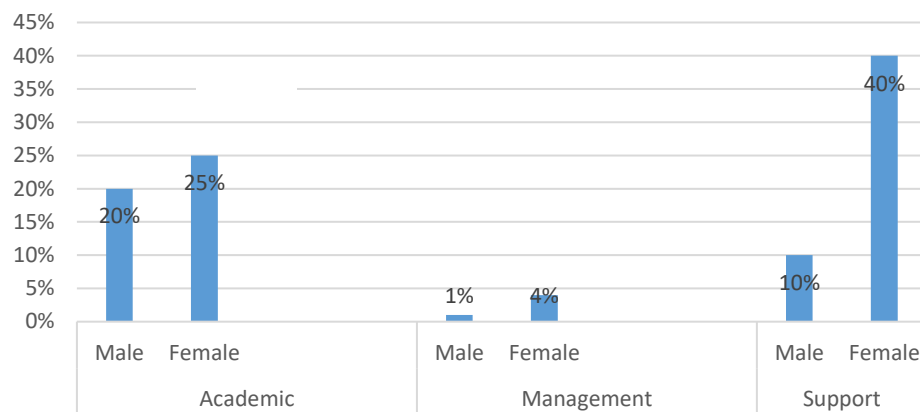
3. Staff Equality and Diversity Statistics 2021 – 2022

- 3.1 Data is obtained as part of the recruitment and selection process and current staff can check and amend their personal information to ensure its accuracy via the HR portal.

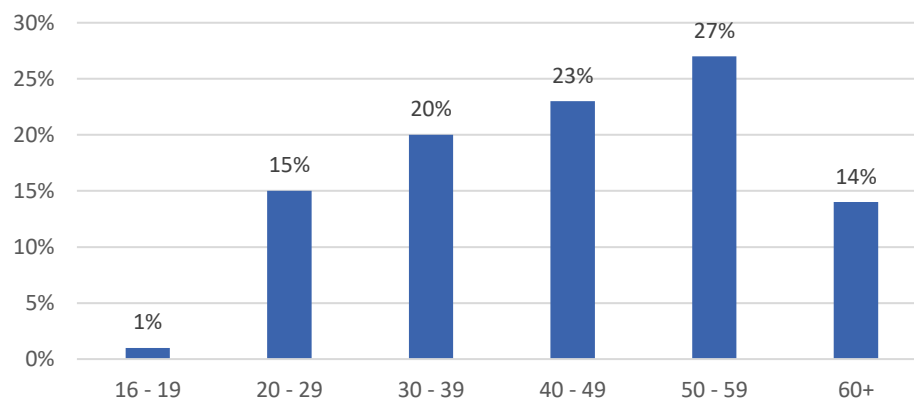
At 31 December 2022 staff statistics were as follows:



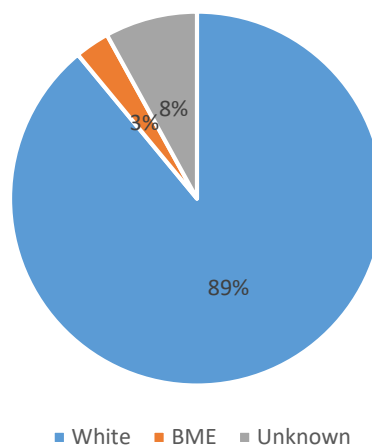
Staff Gender Profile by Job Role Type %



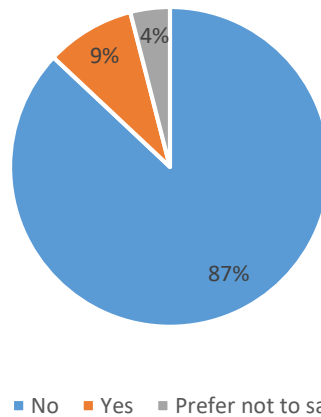
Staff Age Profile %



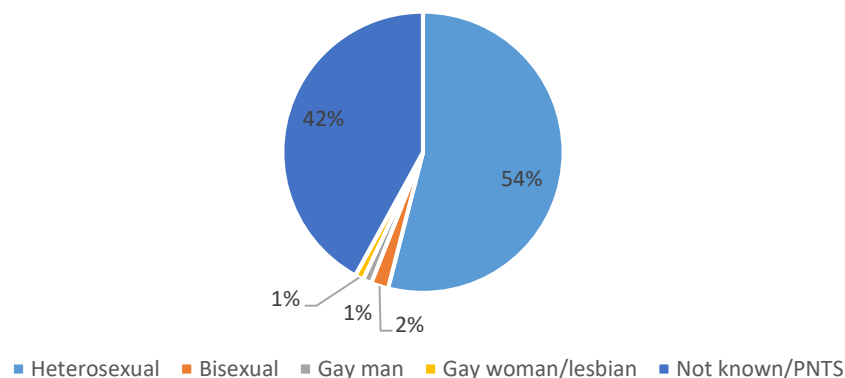
Staff Ethnicity Profile %



Staff Disability Profile %



Staff Sexual Orientation Profile %



- 3.2 The report of the Further Education Workforce Data for England (March 2020), provides the latest sector analysis of the diversity profile of the further education and skills sector workforce in England. The main diversity challenges are associated with the under-representation of race, gender and disability at various levels in the workforce, and these remain. Improving data quality by reducing the number of “unknowns” across ethnicity and disability protected characteristics also remains an issue to be addressed by FE colleges. In addition, there are further challenges associated with monitoring sensitive workforce diversity characteristics such as sexual orientation and gender reassignment.
- 3.3 The workforce diversity profile for FE Colleges, states that female staff continue to dominate numerically across the sector (61%), that the sector workforce continues to have an older profile with 55% of the workforce in Colleges being aged 45 and over and data in relation to disability showing that 5% of the workforce declare that they have a disability. (last reported by et-foundation, in their 2019 workforce data survey, published March 2020.)

- 3.4 The comparative data for the College's workforce profile is that female colleagues account for 68% of the College's workforce, with 51% of the workforce being aged 45 and over, and 9% of the workforce stating they have a disability.
- 3.5 The FE Sector is dominated numerically by women with, for example 58% of teaching positions being occupied by female colleagues, their representation in management and leadership roles remains above that of male colleagues, with 57% of female colleagues in management positions. The comparative workforce profile data for the College shows a slightly different local position with 55.49% of teaching positions being occupied by female colleagues, and 70% of college management positions being held by female colleagues.
- 3.6 The ethnic workforce profile of the FE College Sector (last reported by et-foundation, in their 2019 workforce data survey, published March 2020.) remains predominately White British at 85% of the total workforce. The comparative data for the College's work force profile is that 88.8% of the College's workforce state their ethnicity as White British/English, with 8.2% of colleagues not stating their ethnic origin. The College continually aims for the ethnic profile of its staff to reflect the ethnic profile of its students and the local community, which continues to be a challenge with 2.98% of our staff stating that they are members of the BAME community.
- 3.7 Within the FE sector, (last reported by et-foundation, in their 2019 workforce data survey, published March 2020.) 2% of employees identified as gay, lesbian or bisexual, with 81% of employees identifying as heterosexual, and 17% of employees not providing information in relation to their sexual orientation. The comparative data for the College's workforce is that 4% of employees identified as gay, lesbian or bisexual, with 54% of employees identifying as heterosexual and 42% of employees not providing information in relation to their sexual orientation.
- 3.8 An EDI review of our staff recruitment and selection

The College has a Recruitment and Selection Policy, and all recruitment and selection activity is undertaken in accordance with the procedures relating to this policy.

The College welcomes applications from individuals regardless of race, religion, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, age, caring responsibilities, religion or belief, socio-economic background or disability, and endeavours to ensure that each and every applicant receives equitable and fair treatment throughout the recruitment and selection process.

The College is a proud member of the Disability Confident Employer Scheme, progressing to level 2 status within 2021 and as such, offers an interview to any disabled candidate who meets the essential criteria of the post.

Applicants are asked to complete an Equal Opportunities Monitoring form when applying for a post. This form is voluntary, but completion of the form enables us to better understand the composition of our workforce and examine our recruitment and selection practices.

The data is then compiled and analysed in an annual report which is presented to the Equality and Diversity Committee. All applicant data is compared with starter applicant data, and an analysis is also carried out comparing applicant data to the local area census data.

The College moved to an online application form in January 2021, and analysis of the data from January 2022 to December 2022 shows:

- 62% of the applicants who completed the gender equal opps monitoring at the application stage were female (61%)
- There was a fairly even distribution of applicants from age 25 – 54:

16 – 24	16%
25 – 34	27%
35 – 44	28%
45 – 54	20%
55 – 64	8%
65+	1%
- 82% of applicants were White English/British (85%) *who completed this field
- 5.1% declared a disability (5%)
- 6% of applicants identified as gay, lesbian or bisexual (2%)

Comparative figures from the FE Workforce data are shown in the brackets above.

In comparison, new starter data (from hired staff who completed equal opps monitoring at application) for January 2022 to December 2022 shows:

- 59% of the new starters were female
- The majority of the new starters were in the age category 35 - 44:

16 – 24	12%
25 – 34	25%
35 – 44	26%
45 – 54	25%
55 – 64	12%
65+	0%
- 86% of the new starters were White British (9% did not complete this field)
- 14% declared a disability
- 9% of applicants identified as gay, lesbian or bisexual

When compared to the local census statistics for Warrington and Winsford:

- The College receives a higher proportion of female applicants than in the local area (62% vs 50.4%)
- The College receives a relatively high proportion of applications from ethnic minority groups (18.8% vs 7%)

3.9 Staff Survey data – July 2022 - Equality of opportunity is embedded into the culture of the College 92% (+6% vs benchmark) and I am treated fairly and with dignity and respect in this organisation 91% (+6% vs benchmark).

3.10 An EDI review of the Governing Body

The Corporation aims to exceed its statutory responsibility for equality and diversity through its own actions and behaviours in all aspects of its affairs. Equality and diversity are embedded in College values which are endorsed by the Governing Body. The Corporation appointed a Link Governor with a clear remit for Equality and Diversity, and the link Member attended the Equality and Diversity Committee meetings.

The Search and Governance Committee considered equality and diversity when recommending the appointment of new Governors, having full regard to the College's Equality and Diversity Policy.

The AoC Board Composition Survey 2015 reported that within the FE Sector 60% of Governors were male compared to 40% female. The comparative data for the College for 2021/22 was a composition of 64% male Governors and 36% female.

In terms of age profile, the AoC Board Composition Survey found that 21% of External Governors were aged 65 or older. In terms of the College, 35% of External Governors were aged 65 or older and 41% were within the age range of 45 to 65.

It is a clear priority for the Search and Governance Committee, looking ahead, to continue to improve diversity in the Composition of the Governing Body. Updated AoC Benchmarking data for FE Board Composition is expected imminently.

4. Key Achievements 2021-22

4.1 Every year the College reviews and sets targets within its action plans to improve the equality of opportunity across our College community. The review for 2021/22 shows that there has been significant progress in the achievement of the key targets as outlined below.

- To address gaps in learning, Initial Assessments were carried out during induction with curriculum implementation reviewed to ensure practical

delivery and a revisit of key concepts and practices took place early in the first term. The new cross college initial assessment was developed and implemented to establish learners' starting points. The process consisted of an initial skills scan called the Skills Passport, an Emotional and Wellbeing questionnaire, followed by a number of bespoke initial assessment activities. This also consisted of statements based on learning skills, English maths and digital skills with curriculum teams adding specific EMSI (employability) skills, vocational knowledge and technical skills. Nearly 800 devices were loaned to students to address the digital divide with Google Classroom utilised to enhance delivery.

- The FIKA mental fitness app was rolled out to all students and staff. An initial questionnaire determines levels of confidence and resilience and the questions are linked to the seven modules of mental fitness in FIKA. FIKA had 1300 users from WVR (compared to 31% nationally). Safeguarding and Inclusion Managers met with FIKA regularly and also other colleges as part of FIKAs on-boarding process to review progress and to share practice.
- The T&L team ran a cross-college Blended Learning CPD Day to drive forwards the next step of our digital strategy. The day started with a Keynote Presentation from the CEO of C-Learning Steven Hope to explore the digital culture of an organisational and its growth mindset in relation to the future of teaching and learning.

The T&L team also delivered 3 digitally focused TLA sessions:

- 1) Blended learning models and Essential Digital Skills
- 2) Belonging and inclusion in an online space
- 3) Designing student experiences in a "Netflix/Prime/YouTube" world

This enabled staff to be more focussed on providing opportunities for blended learning, exploring differing ways in which to engage students and make their learning journey more inclusive and dynamic. Staff are now aware of what exactly blended learning is and the various ways in which we can adapt and expand on basic tasks to achieve a more in-depth learning experience and enhance digital skills to benefit learners.

- The Transforming Lives strategy has been shared with all staff which is the college's response to the impact of mental health and other issues presented by learners, having accelerated particularly post Covid. The strategy aim will address the impact on retention, achievement, behaviour, attendance and has included a review of tutorial, enrichment, welfare and learning support offer, work experience and informed curriculum intent.
- The College Health and Wellbeing Committee continues to meet and implement a staff action plan, which has been devised from staff feedback, and provides a range of support strategies and training. Monthly resources are provided to staff along with the Employee Assistance programme and a

revised Reward and Recognition Policy. The approach aligns to the AoC Mental Health Charter and has been supported by the Charlie Waller Trust.

- The College has continued its Disability Action Plan, which has included a review of all paperwork, a Focus on Disability page on the website, training sessions for line managers, annual disability questionnaire and membership of the Manchester Ability Network. In December 2021 the College completed a Disability self- assessment and has progressed from Level 1 Disability Confident Committed to Level 2 Disability Confident Employer.
- In June 2022 the college launched a Financial Wellbeing action plan. Actions have included: an increase in travel expense rates; a cost of living bonus; the introduction of a cycle to work scheme; finance and budgeting workshops; a food bank for staff.
- The college is committed to the Armed Forces Covenant and was awarded the Bronze Award in the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme in April 2022. The college supports the employment of veterans, and works with the Career Transition Partnership to advertise suitable vacancies. A Forces Forum was introduced in November 2022 to support the employment of Armed Forces veterans and members of the Reserve Forces.

5. Next Steps

Our Equality Objectives are cross college objectives which have been set to drive forward equality and diversity meet public sector duties in this regard. The key areas for continued improvement in 2022-23 and onwards are detailed below:

- Continue to prioritise teaching, learning and assessment so that students' learning experience is consistently good or better and they develop excellent technical skills for jobs.
- Ensure the college's apprenticeship outcomes improve to exceed Provider Group Averages and the quality of apprenticeship provision is rated as good - from requiring improvement -by Ofsted.
- Work with partner local authorities undertake a strategic review of Foundation Learning, Entry and Level 1 provision including SEND, MPLD and alternative education pathways.
- Embed the college's Transforming Lives Strategy, enhancing the college's curriculum, tutorial and enrichment programmes further such that they support students' personal, social and emotional development, garnering a strong sense of their self-worth and aspiration.
- Further develop the college's approach to staff and students' wellbeing so that their physical and mental health is improved.

- Undertake a root and branch review of the college's approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, using credible external consultancy
- Support teachers to become highly proficient in the use of digital pedagogy and EdTech. Ensure this enhances excellent pedagogical practice. Ensure the college has the financial wherewithal to continue to invest in the rapid development of educational technology and advanced digital pedagogy.
- Implement the college's People Plan to recruit and retain the best staff and governors, ensure the college has the right mix of staff and staff capabilities (technical, pedagogic and leadership) and enable the college to meet income and growth targets, becoming more agile in response to opportunities as they present themselves.