

STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2021

Our Vision

That all our learners will secure employment and progress in their careers as a result of the knowledge, skills and the work ethic they have developed at the Group. Businesses will recognise the Trafford College Group as the leading provider of a skilled workforce, meeting Greater Manchester's skills priorities and supporting the economic growth of the region.

Our Mission and Purpose

Our mission is to provide our learners with an outstanding educational experience with excellent qualification outcomes, the acquisition of industry standard skills and the development of the personal attributes and resilience to enable them to achieve their potential and fulfil their career aims.

Our purpose is 'Unlocking Potential, Fostering Success'. Progression is one of our key measures of success. The outstanding learning experience we will provide will aim to advance equality of opportunity

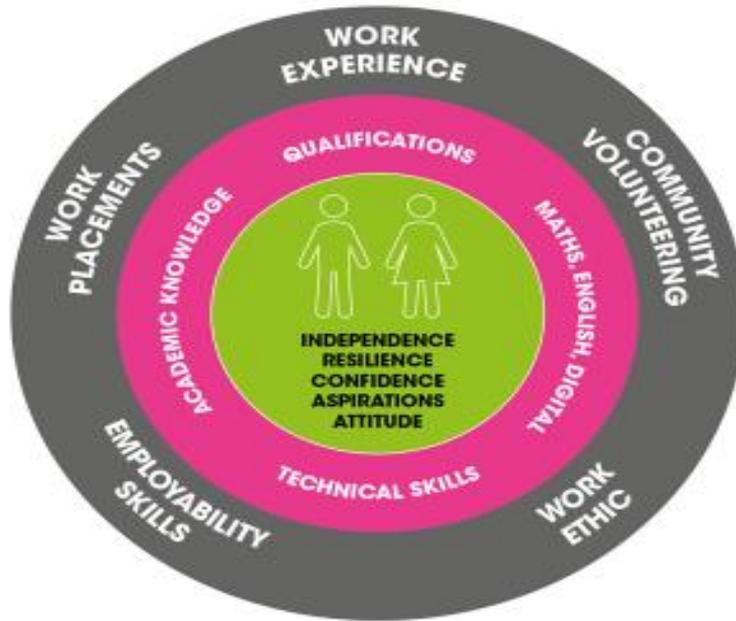
The Trafford College Group provides academic, technical and professional further and higher education. We will ensure that all our learners gain the education, skills and personal development they need in order to meet the local and regional skills challenge, putting them ahead of the competition in terms of securing meaningful employment and progression to higher level study.

We place the development of employability and professional skills at the core of our programmes. These we underpin practically with: a digital entitlement; a values-driven curriculum; an emphasis on professional behaviours; the setting of a high level for both our aspirations and the actual standards that our students can achieve.

Our holistic approach to putting successful progression as a key outcome is shown below.

Unlocking potential, fostering success

Bold | Ambitious | Respect | Collaborate & Teamwork | Professional



Our Strategic Priorities

- Delivering Excellence
- Ensuring Student Success
- Achieving Sustainable Growth
- Establishing great Staff and Great Place to Work
- Delivering Digitalised Transformation
- Creating transformational Employer and Stakeholder Engagement

Welcome

Welcome to the Corporate Plan for the Trafford College Group, which sets out our ambitions to deliver outstanding training and education to all learners by 2021.

This Plan follows a momentous past 12 months. The merger of Trafford College with Stockport College, completed in April 2018, has created a new organisation with the resource, capacity and partnerships to better meet the needs of learners, employers and the local community. It creates a once-in-a-generation opportunity in order to accelerate improvements in quality, enable more learners to progress into careers and further learning and support more businesses to access the skills they need to grow.

In the meantime, we find ourselves at a critical moment for the further education sector. Changes to the economy and society will continue to challenge us to deliver the relevant, high quality learning and training that enables young people and adults to progress in life. Implementation of Government's Post-16 Skills Plan will bring about new opportunities to improve outcomes for our residents and communities, but it also requires TCG to revise how it works with learners, employers and key partners such as schools and local authorities.

This plan builds on a strong track record of success. Our Group's reputation is good, we have excellent partnerships and the capacity to extend the scale and scope of our improvement in all parts of our organisation. We will continue to invest so that we can offer the best quality learning experience, delivering an innovative, high quality curriculum from inspirational facilities at a time of public funding austerity.

But becoming an outstanding college group by 2021 does not just require cash investment. It needs everyone at the group to work often in better, different ways, to deliver excellence. This cannot be achieved without the active support and participation of staff, learners and partner organisations in all areas of the Group's activities. That is why we have engaged widely in developing this plan and why we regard the implementation of its priorities and objectives as part of everyone's day job at the Group.

We are excited about what our new Group can achieve. We are proud of our existing achievements but recognise there is much to be done to maintain and improve our performance further. This plan sets out how we plan to ensure that our colleges become the very best that they can be, delivering the brightest future for learners, employers and communities in Stockport and Trafford.

Graham Luccock, Chair

Lesley Davies, Principal and CEO

Key facts

The Trafford College Group...

- delivers to 14,000 learners across three college sites in two local authority districts.
- works within excess of 450 large, medium and small businesses, delivering apprenticeships, work based learning and commercial skills delivery.
- is the second largest college group in Greater Manchester and fifth largest in the North West, with an annual turnover of £37m.
- overall achievement rates for the group are now at 87% for all ages, 84% for young people and 90% for adults and these are all above national.
- significant improvement has been made at Stockport College with achievement rates improving to 80% compared with 70% the year previous.
- joined the prestigious Chartered Institute of FE in 2018, putting the group amongst the elite of FE organisations.
- delivers over 40 Higher Education courses, securing a Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) Silver award in 2018.

Trafford and Stockport...

- sit at the heart of the UK's largest city-based economy outside of London, a devolved city-region with a strategy focused on making Greater Manchester 'one of the best places in the world'.
- are home to 525,000 people combined: almost as many as the City of Manchester.
- residents have the highest average wages of anywhere in Greater Manchester and are the best qualified: over half of Trafford residents and 43% of Stockport residents are qualified to NVQ level 4 or above, well above the national average of 38%.
- are set to see economic growth that outstrips the Greater Manchester average, driven by professional/scientific activities, financial and insurance and admin/support services roles.
- also feature neighbourhoods that are amongst the most deprived in England.
- are reliant on Manchester for labour market opportunities. Over 50,000 Trafford and Stockport residents commute to Manchester – the North's fastest-growing labour market - daily.
- have a plethora of huge new housing and employment locations such as at Carrington in Trafford, Stockport Exchange, Trafford Waters, and Aurora Industrial Park in Stockport.

Key Developments

Delivery our strategic priorities cannot be achieved by business-as-usual approaches. The merger of Stockport and Trafford colleges creates a fantastic opportunity to share best practice, leverage our combined resources and deliver excellence across the Group.

To support this transformation, the Group is pursuing a handful of exciting developments that will play a pivotal role in enabling our priorities to be delivered. These include:

- Our £24m investment in the Stockport Campus, unlocked by the merger between Trafford and Stockport Colleges. By 2020/21, a regenerated Stockport campus provide an inspirational learning environment that becomes the college of choice for local people, including:
 - High quality new and refurbished teaching facilities built to match industry standards
 - A new business centre designed to extend and deepen our employer partnerships via a range of college-led service offers
 - Much-improved access via new entrances and better pedestrian routes
 - Better, more efficient accommodation that reduces running costs
 - Bringing derelict and surplus building back to life via alternative use (homes, shops etc)
- University Academy 92 (UA92) will be a new university for Greater Manchester, focused on high quality technical and professional qualifications, supported by a uniquely strong skills development programme to support learners into jobs and careers. The Group has partnered with Lancaster University and Microsoft to support the new venture, which from late 2019 will provide high quality progression opportunities to our 16-18 learners. Located adjacent to Trafford College's north campus in Stretford, the new university will be central to the regeneration of Stretford and Old Trafford, bringing around 500 new permanent jobs and numerous spin-off benefits.
- Work has already begun to review and strengthen the Group's key corporate policies following the merger of Stockport College and Trafford College earlier this year. Our ambition is to ensure that all staff and learners are supported via consistent, high quality policies and processes in areas such as health and safety, data protection, equality and diversity and learner/staff codes of conduct. As part of this review, we will seek to update and further improve our policies in relation to Safeguarding and Prevent, noting the critically important role we play in ensuring learners are kept safe and that the threat of extremism is effectively identified and tackled, working with our partners.

Developing and delivering our Corporate Plan

Work to develop our Corporate Plan started as the merger of Trafford College and Stockport College completed. The Corporate Plan gives the new Group a set of priorities, objectives and success measures that describe what the Group wants to achieve, how it plans to do it, and how the Group will measure its success.

The Corporate Plan has been developed following extensive consultation and engagement with staff, governors and key stakeholders in Spring/Summer 2018. Through this process we have developed the Group's purpose and the six priorities that set the strategy to enable the Group to achieve its goals between now and 2021.

Each priority is supported by 6-8 objectives, whose targets and KPIs will form the basis for regular and robust management, of the Group's performance in achieving its strategic objectives, by Governors, the Executive Leadership Team (ELT), managers and team leaders.

The Group's performance in delivering its priorities and objectives will inform the development of departmental business plans, refreshed annually, which in turn shape the delivery plans for teams and individuals working at the Group.

This structure ensures that the Group's key priorities are threaded throughout the organisation, shaping and aligning the development and performance management of each department, team and individual staff member.

Priority #1: Delivering Excellence

Narrative – Key Points

- This is a culture and an ethos – ensuring that TCG is delivering the very best for its learners, employers and local communities and that this should be reflected in improving standards and customer satisfaction.
- It involves everyone at the group, in all parts of the organisation, in everything they do. Everybody working at the group should be able to play their part in making TCG the best college in the North West.
- We want to embed a culture of continuous improvement that is reflected in the highest personal and professional standards across the Group, establishing TCG's colleges as destinations of choice for learners of all ages.
- Delivering excellence means getting our response to the big challenges and opportunities right, eg:-
 - The quality of our core teaching and learning delivery across all three sites
 - Ensuring financial sustainability
 - Delivering excellent student support services
 - Ensuring our learners progress to jobs, careers and further study
 - Preparing for reforms to vocational and technical education
- Delivering excellence also requires us to build the foundations for excellent delivery, eg top class enabling teams – such as HR, MIS, finance, facilities management, communications – delivering measurable improvements in efficiencies, quality and reliability to our organisation and its learners.
- Delivering excellence cannot be accounted for via KPIs alone. It applies to the way we work with our learner and employer customers; and are accountable to learners, employers, partner organisations and each other. It is about ensuring that everything we do contributes to the college's purpose: unlocking potential, fostering success.

What we will do to Deliver Excellence

Objective	Measure
All staff understand the strategic direction, purpose and their role in delivering the Group's priorities	Benchmark staff understanding of the Group's strategy by end October 2018 via the staff survey; achieve annual improvements in staff understanding over three years
Ensure all staff are clear about how they contribute to the success of the organisation	Staff survey and temperature checks, benchmark and track
All staff contribute to develop ways of working to ensure we continuously develop our practice and performance	Each team to implement at least 3 staff-led improvements in practice and process annually Measurable improvements made to achieve efficiencies, effectiveness and quality (via business plans)
Engaged, motivated staff who deliver the best possible service to learners and employers	At least 75% of staff are positive about the engagement and work of TCG (staff survey) At least 80% of students and employers are positive about staff attitudes, behaviour, service (student and employer survey)

Objective	Measure
Excellent teaching and learning in all areas of the Group's delivery	Group-wide self-assessment of Teaching, Learning and Assessment – 'Good' in 2019 TEF 'Gold' by 2021 Ofsted Teaching, Learning and Assessment judgement of 'Good' by 2021
Provide high quality, personalised student support services that best enable all learners to achieve and progress	Group-wide Matrix accreditation by 2019/20. Feedback from Student Surveys
Outstanding services delivered by all our enabling teams	Achieve the Customer Service Excellence framework for enabling teams by 2021 Develop and agree service level agreements across the Group where appropriate
Strong foundations: delivery of our new financial plan and KPIs	Delivery of Financial Health rating of 'Satisfactory' by 2019, 'Good' by 2021
Consistent high quality provision for learners across all three TCG sites	Three campus Ofsted self-assessments of 'Good' by 2019 and 'Outstanding' by 2021
Industry-standard facilities creating a professional environment for learning across all sites	Complete the redevelopment of the Stockport Campus by 2021 with all accommodation at a minimum eMandate condition grade B. Achieve BREEAM sustainability grading of "Very Good" for the redevelopment.

Priority #2: Ensuring Student Success

Narrative – Key Points

- Our core function is to provide the best possible learning experience to everyone who enrolls on a course at each of our three campuses, enabling more learners to achieve and progress into jobs, careers and further learning.
- The merger creates opportunities to share best practice, improve standards and deliver a consistent, high quality offer across all sites. Improvements in achievement rates remain a top priority, particularly at our Stockport site, where pre-merger achievement rates have been below expectations.
- Our sharp focus on quality and achievement in our further and higher education delivery will not change. We are committed to working in new and better ways to enable more learners to get the very best out of their time studying with the group.
- Our work to improve the capacity and aspirations of our staff is already reaping rewards at Stockport College, where better systems and accountability have delivered an improvement in achievement rates of 78% in 2016/17 compared to 84% in 2017/18. Particular improvement was in the achievement rate for young people; 80% in 2017/18 compared to 70% in 2016/17.
- A richer, more varied, better planned curriculum – designed with input from employers and with reference to key local labour market insight – will ensure that all learners are better prepared for their next step into a job, apprenticeship or further learning.
- And we are trialling new ways to improve the support that learners receive, both in college and at home, building the resilience, confidence and independence required to succeed.

What we will do to Ensure Student Success

Objective	Measure
Ensure all young people make excellent progress in their chosen course area and develop the skills required for success in life and work, including maths and English	16-18 achievement at 85% minimum 16-18 headline performance measures in line with national (incl E&M)
Provide a high quality curriculum offer for adult learners that enables increased career progression and contributes to social cohesion	19+ achievement at 90% minimum 19+ positive destinations at 70% minimum
Ensure high levels of achievement and career progression for Apprentices through a curriculum shaped in partnership with employers	Apprenticeship timely achievement at 75% minimum Apprenticeship sustainable positive destinations at 80% minimum
Provide a specialised local offer of HE provision that meets the needs of students and employers	TEF Silver award maintained, and Gold by 2021

Objective	Measure
Deliver a highly personalised curriculum that enables the success of different groups of students	No significant outcomes gap between different groups of students
Provide high quality CEIAG to enable students to make informed choices about progression and effectively participate in the world of work	Implementation of Gatsby benchmarks by summer 2019 16-18 positive destinations at 90% minimum

Priority #3: Achieving Sustainable Growth

Narrative – Key Points

- As one of the largest colleges in the region, our capacity and resources give us the platform to better enable us to grow.
- The whole sector has been through some challenging years, this is set to continue over the lifetime of this plan.
- Sustainable growth will be delivered via two routes. First, we have embarked on a handful of strategic investments and alliances that will help us grow both the quality and scale of our FE and HE offer to learners and employers, bringing new investment and demand.
- Second, we will grow by doing our job well – by delivering high quality learning that responds to what learners and the labour market need, enabling learners to progress and providing the training that employers want. In turn, this will improve customer satisfaction, grow our reputation and position us as the provider of choice for learners and employers across Trafford and Stockport.
- Growth will be manifested in increased market share among 16-18 learners; the progression of more learners into apprenticeship and further study within the group; increased investment by employers of apprenticeship levy and other funds into our training offer.

What we will do to Achieve Sustainable Growth

Objective	Measure
Expand 16-18 recruitment, with a focus on growing Stockport market share	16-18 recruitment/income in line with KPI targets (3364) Grow Stockport market share so that it improves to 16%
Improve student retention and progression between levels	16-18 retention at 92% minimum at Stockport College and Trafford College Internal progression at 50% minimum at Stockport College and Trafford College
Maintain Adult Education Budget (AEB) income and maximise use of AEB resource in collaboration with local /regional partners	AEB income maintained to 2020 (£6.01m) All AEB utilised in line with devolved funding rules
Increase provision of high quality apprenticeships that are responsive to the needs of employers and skills requirements of the local / regional economy	Increase apprenticeship income year-on-year in line with KPI targets (£4.02m) Grow apprenticeship market share by 5%
Increase participation in HE programmes through a local offer aligned to employer, sector and student need	Expand HE recruitment in line with KPI targets (349 FT / 486 PT) Increase internal progression from L3 to HE to 100 students
Develop a highly responsive and flexible commercial offer that meets the needs of employers and individuals with a focus on key sector growth areas	Commercial income in line with KPI targets (£6.84m) Centre of Excellence for Business and Professional Services established by 2019 Contribution rates for commercial in line with college KPIs

Priority #4: Great Staff, Great Place to Work

Narrative – Key Points

- The success of the Group depends on its staff. At a time when the sector as a whole has faced a myriad of challenges – austerity, falling demography, changing labour markets, curriculum reform - the Group can be proud of how positively staff at all sites have responded.
- We need to retain, recruit and reward a high-quality workforce if the Group is going to be able to respond effectively to the changing needs of learners and employers in a shifting policy and funding environment.
- We want to improve the way we support staff to deliver excellence – developing the skills, knowledge and behaviour required to embed a culture of continuous improvement that delivers excellence as standard.
- We want TCG to be the FE employer of choice in Greater Manchester with a reputation and brand that promotes the Group as a great place to work. This requires an environment where staff enjoy coming to work, relish the challenge that working in FE presents, and share in the success when learners (and the Group as a whole) achieve their goals.
- Feedback from staff has highlighted several areas where the Group should focus work to develop its approach. These include:-
 - Making managers and leaders more visible within the organisation
 - Developing the professional competence of our staff in all areas, so that they can deliver the highest quality teaching, learning and support services year on year
 - Ensuring that staff feel they are communicated with, listened to, and see the part they play in improving systems, processes and practice
 - Ensuring that staff success is celebrated and rewarded via a recognition and benefits programme that motivates and retains staff

What we will do to develop Great Staff and a Great Place to Work

Objective	Measure
Staff feel that their success is recognised and their contribution to the Group is appreciated	Staff survey – benchmark via temperature check / improve year-on-year
Staff are equipped with the skills and knowledge to deliver the organisation's objectives	Organisational development plan agreed 2018 with annual targets implemented 2019 97% of staff complete appraisals by 2019
To ensure that the rewards on offer to staff are competitive so we can recruit and retain the best staff	90% of staff (excluding casual/flexible staff) on Trafford College/Trafford College Group terms and conditions of employment by 2019 Benchmark the number of vacancies filled within three months by 2019 Staff turnover benchmark report by 2019
A workforce that better reflects the diversity of the communities we serve	Staff diversity measures – benchmarking exercise to be undertaken by 2019

Objective	Measure
Achieve high levels of staff satisfaction with TCG as a place to work	Benchmark survey undertaken 2018 Staff survey satisfaction measure (recommend to a friend?)

Priority #5: Delivering Digitalised Transformation

Narrative – Key Points

- The impact of technology on our lives is impossible to ignore. At home, technology is changing how we live: the way we shop, spend leisure time, communicate, travel, stay healthy and manage our homes (amongst others). Digital is transforming the way organisations operate and trade, reducing process timescales, improving service design, changing the way we work.
- Technology is also changing how people learn, enabling new routes via which information can be gathered, new methods and channels via which learning can be delivered thereby expanding access.
- Digital brings new opportunities to FE institutions: ensuring that digital technologies are harnessed appropriately to enhance learning; equipping providers with the infrastructure and skills required to get the best out of new digital technologies; all while safeguarding the organisation, its learners and staff from cybersecurity threats.
- Staff feedback highlighted an appetite for the Group to make better use of technology to improve the quality of teaching and learning; as well as the efficiency and accuracy of corporate support services.
- Our planned approach can be structured into three workstreams:
 - Systems: ensuring the Group benefits from a dependable IT infrastructure with reliable, high quality systems that enable the effective adoption and use of new technology
 - Digital for students: harnessing online resources to improve learning outcomes; making best use of new classroom technologies; developing digital competencies in all areas of the curriculum; supporting an innovative and high quality curriculum offer
 - Digital for staff: improving the efficiency and effectiveness of our combined enabling teams; ensuring that staff are skilled and confident using new digital technology; enabling staff to get the best out of open access online resources

What we will do to Deliver Digitalised Transformation

Objective	Measure
To be recognised as a college at the forefront of the use of digital in improving its further education delivery and operations	Digital strategy developed and underway in 2019
To provide excellent connectivity through the development of a fit for purpose, resilient IT infrastructure	Increased student and staff satisfaction with IT (survey) Positive staff feedback on the updated intranet (survey)
To develop a zero-vulnerability IT infrastructure	No downtime resulting from cybersecurity breaches

Objective	Measure
To design and implement a digital skills plan ensuring staff have up to date, relevant skills	Introductory Office 365 training to be delivered across all campuses by 2018
To develop and implement an effective blended learning offer which provides innovative and flexible learning	Benchmark student satisfaction
To ensure all our students leave the College with industry-relevant digital skills which provide a competitive edge for future career opportunities	All 16-19 students access a high-quality entitlement for digital learning by 2019

Priority #6: Transformational Employer and Stakeholder Engagement

Narrative – Key Points

- Meeting the needs of employers and the communities we serve is at the core of what we do. Our college sites are a key part of the fabric of the local community and the local economy – we recognise that for our organisation to thrive, the places and employers in the locality need to thrive too.
- We will support our local communities and local economy by delivering the best quality learning, raising achievement and improving outcomes. But we also have an important role to play as a key stakeholder in our communities, so that we contribute fully to the future development of Trafford, Stockport and Greater Manchester.
- We have worked with our partners to move ahead with new investments and collaborations that form an integral part of the wider regeneration of Trafford and Stockport. Beyond these strategic investments, we want to further develop our engagement with employers and other stakeholders to transform our curriculum offer.
- We are committed to ensuring that our curriculum offer responds to the current and future needs of our local labour market, securing work experience and apprenticeship opportunities for our learners and growing investment in our employer-responsive learning offer by local businesses.
- We think that employers' and key stakeholders' roles extend beyond this, putting them in a more central position within our curriculum as partners in the development and delivery of training, enabling learners to benefit from the latest industry insights.
- We want to design progression into our programmes and our offer to employers and stakeholders, so that the Group is not just seen as a source of high quality learning – we become integral to meeting the workforce and recruitment requirements of workplaces across Stockport and Trafford.

What we will do to enable Transformational Employer and Stakeholder Engagement

Objective	Measure
A curriculum offer that capitalises on the growth opportunities within the local labour market	Secure accelerated growth in learner volumes and income within identified priority sectors and/or occupations
Develop a responsive employer engagement offer from pipeline recruitment through to employment and professional progression	Clear value proposition to employers from TCG to be developed by winter 2018/19 Establish a clear baseline of conversion of employer contacts to income generation
Develop more sector-based transformational relationships with employers, employer networks and progression partners	Establish transformational partnerships in at least three sector areas by 2019

Unlocking potential, fostering success

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Secure high quality and relevant work placements from employers to ensure all learners have the opportunity for successful work engagement	100% of young people access full entitlement for WRL 80% of young people access external work experience 120 students access extended industrial placements
Objective	Measure
Ensure that programme design is reviewed, shaped and endorsed by employers in all vocational and technical subject areas	Employer Advisory Board established for each Centre of Excellence by 2019
Establish TCG as a leading voice in the sector nationally; while cementing its role as a place shaper and provider of skills for growth in the region	Stakeholder engagement plan fully established by 2019