



WESTON  
COLLEGE



# ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

CREATING BRIGHTER FUTURES



Weston College Group





Animal Management  
Education Centre

South West  
Skills Campus

Construction  
Training Centre

West of England  
Institute of Technology  
(WEIoT)

WEIoT Bristol base  
at GKN's Global  
Technology Centre

Knightstone  
Campus

University  
Centre  
Weston

Winter  
Gardens

Lauriston  
Hotel

Loxton  
Campus

Weston  
Bay

Health and  
Active Living  
Skills Centre





# CONTENTS

## Section 1 - Welcome and Overview

> Welcome	3
> Governing Body Response	5
> Overview of the Weston College Group	6
> A catalyst for regeneration	8
> Strategic partnership	10

## Section 2 - Education Provision

> 16-18 curriculum	15
> T Levels	17
> Adult and part-time provision	18
> Apprenticeships	19
> Special educational needs and disabilities	20
> Law and Professional Services Academy	21
> University Centre Weston	22
> West of England Institute of Technology	23
> Prison Education	24
> International	25
> Forward Futures Limited	26

## Section 3 - Commercial Provision

> Inspirational Events and Investments	29
> Winter Gardens Community Board	31

## Section 4 - Leading the Way - Value Added

> Digital Education	33
> Mental Health	34
> Career Excellence Hubs	35
> WorldSkills UK Innovation Network	36

## Section 5 - Intent, Implementation and Impact

> Impact on students	39
> Impact on employers	40
> Awards	44
> The year in headlines	46
> The year in numbers	48



# Section 1

## WELCOME AND OVERVIEW

- WELCOME
- GOVERNING BODY RESPONSE
- OVERVIEW OF THE WESTON COLLEGE GROUP
- A CATALYST FOR REGENERATION
- STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

# WELCOME

**This past academic year has proved to be one of the most challenging in our history with the impact of COVID-19 upon our organisation. Despite these quite catastrophic changes to the environment our college continued to thrive through digital transformation and the sheer ingenuity of a brilliant workforce. The strategies we employed were based on achieving excellence and outcomes despite evidence of a ‘cancellation’ culture in many organisations.**

Whether curriculum or business support, there has been evidence of creativity and agility in how we have responded to the needs of learners, employers, staff and the funding bodies. Our uniqueness was recognised by the Department for Education featuring us in a best practice guide alongside the exciting launch of T Levels. The launch of ‘Momentum’ as a communication vehicle alongside ‘My Virtual College’ ensured connectivity between students and staff across our many campuses.

Whilst the opportunities for face-to-face delivery were somewhat limited, we refused to let COVID-19 frustrate our strategic imperatives. Our Institute of Technology continued to thrive, we grew our apprenticeship delivery and we challenged irresponsible funding decisions and won! Our focus on wellbeing and mental health in general continued to develop through the ground-breaking ‘Let’s Chat’ initiatives and powerful solutions to curriculum delivery were advanced.

Recognition of success has continued with Beacon Awards, a Pearson Gold Lifetime Achievement Award, alongside national apprenticeship success. This with our Investors in People Platinum status and the capital works in Engineering plus Care and Early Years has

proven our philosophy of maintaining delivery with excellence. I am particularly proud of our new ventures, our inclusive support to the College community and my dedicated and professional staff. Our Lead Governors during the time also met with my team on a weekly or fortnightly basis to ensure robust governance and communication occurred – exemplary in every way.

At the end of the day, we are here for our students and it has been an incredibly successful year in terms of academic success and financial performance, but complacency has never been part of our culture and we have again driven advancement through partnerships. Our new and latest resources with GKN in Bristol and a new skills partnership with UWE Bristol is testament to this!

We have without doubt experienced a unique year, but the ethos and culture has been maintained. Our partners which are in the hundreds have supported us significantly throughout and we look forward to a new year no doubt still with COVID and other challenges but also with a vitality and dedication that is unique. Our multi-faceted imperatives – academic, social, cultural, transformational and economic, will provide the catalysts

to once again – ‘Create Brighter Futures’ for all who engage with us. Our strategic plan for the year is entitled ‘Beyond the Impossible’ – the journey has begun!

**Dr Paul Phillips, CBE; PhD; DLit; EdD**

Principal and Chief Executive  
TES and FREDIE Principal of the Year







## GOVERNING BODY RESPONSE

**This report once again sets an agenda for the Weston College Group that is both dynamic and responsive to the needs of the learners, business and community. A year that has seen incredible results within the confines of COVID 19, and its many variants. Despite the obvious challenges the College has continued to achieve and grow. The Corporation fully endorses and recommends this report.**

The report sets out how the College has adapted and innovated to produce an exceptional set of results. Many of the processes that have been developed by this College are now seen as exemplars of practice and are being used throughout the FE and wider education sector. The results speak for themselves, the Corporation who together act as the critical friend and scrutineer of strategy, finances, curriculum and ethos of the organisation. Once again, this year we have been involved in all the new initiatives, this has further strengthened our partnership across the governing body and with other key organisations that the College works with.

The FE sector continually faces unique challenges and through the leadership of our Principal and Chief Executive, Dr Paul Phillips, we have navigated a course that has enabled us to be a leading college in our delivery and associated quality. Being adaptable, agile and most importantly financially prudent, has ensured that this College is still the master of its own destiny, unique within the sector. This year has seen once again growth of our new capital facilities, one of which is to act as the lead college for the West of England Institute of Technology (WEIoT), a Government

initiative, Institutes of Technology will provide first class education that is desperately needed to narrow the skills gap so necessary for our business partners. Once again, the WEIoT lead by Weston College is seen as an exemplar of best practice and is trailblazing in this sector.

This means that there are even more opportunities available for our learner population and, simultaneously, this College continues to win national, regional and International awards, at the same time continuing to maintain outstanding quality.

The 2020-21 year however called on the College to show all its adaptability and ingenuity. The College continues to adapt to all challenges, ensuring it can deliver the full range of provision which is now predominantly face to face but where needed using technology and online provision. The resilience and tenacity at both leadership and delivery levels was exemplary and despite everything the College met and, in many cases, exceeded its targets.

For the year ahead, the College will continue to advance with the learner at the heart of all it achieves.

The Institute of Technology with its purpose-built learning hub within GKN Bristol is already widening horizons. Our students and businesses are enhancing the local and wider economy. With our reputation for quality embedded with our partners, we are now a key driver in the future of our town and region leading skills and the entrepreneurship for the wider economy.

I look forward to working and continuing this amazing and exciting journey in 2021-22.

**Andrew Leighton-Price**  
Chair of Governing Body





# OVERVIEW OF THE WESTON COLLEGE GROUP



Weston College is a general college of further and higher education in Weston-super-Mare, delivering education and vocational training to students aged 16 and above. It is regarded as one of the top further education colleges in the UK and is the only college in the West of England to be rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted.



University Centre Weston (UCW) offers more than 35 courses across a number of vocational and academic subject areas. UCW delivers the courses in partnership with Bath Spa University, UWE Bristol and Hartpury University. UCW was awarded University Centre status in 2016 and continues to build upon its identity bucking the national trend of HE in FE offering high quality learning opportunities to increasing number of students.



Forward Futures Limited is the Weston College Group's inhouse recruitment agency. It provides high calibre associates to the Group and its key services, such as Prison Education. Forward Futures is often the first step for applicants interested in beginning a career with the College, either on a cover/supply or longer assignment basis.



The West of England Institute of Technology was licenced by the Department for Education in April 2020, as one of twelve IoTs nationally, to support local employers to develop higher level technical skills and train employees for the jobs of tomorrow.



Inspirational Events and Investments Limited is a subsidiary company of the Weston College Group. It runs the Winter Gardens Pavilion, Lasseter's restaurant, the Green House eatery, and the Lauriston Hotel. The company was incorporated in March 2017 and has already made a significant contribution to the regeneration of Weston-super-Mare.



Weston College's Prison Education provision is a top performing provider of offender and detainee learning. The service is recognised for its excellent teaching, learning and assessment; the positive outcomes it achieves for learners; and its partnership approach to business planning, which ensures that the curriculum meets learners' and employers' needs.



The Somax arm of the business is a logistics training centre based at the College's Construction Training Centre in Weston-super-Mare, near Junction 21. It offers over 30 training courses and qualifications, both practical and classroom training designed to meet the needs of employers in the sector.

Weston College is leading a regional partnership of education providers and key employers to collaborate, design and deliver flexible, higher-level technical learning to equip people with the skills to fully participate in, and contribute to, economic growth driven by digital innovation and emerging technologies.



# A CATALYST FOR REGENERATION

**Weston College is a large £70,000,000 provider of training and skills. It makes a major contribution to regeneration in North Somerset as well as part of the West of England. Our extensive provision encompasses delivery to over 35,000 learners and key businesses – locally, regionally and nationally.**

North Somerset is a diverse area, with coastal, urban and market towns and rural villages. Generally, it is prosperous, with an increasing population, but has eight LSOAs (Lower-layer Super Output Areas) within the most deprived 10% in England, all within Weston-super-Mare. By providing high-quality education, training and support, the College encourages learners to stretch and achieve their academic, career and life aspirations. By mapping our training offering to regional employer needs and employment opportunities, we deliver the skilled workforce to support employers and local economic growth now and in the future.

**OUR INVESTMENT STRATEGIES HAVE CONTINUED DESPITE THE CHALLENGES OF COVID-19 AND INCLUDE:**

- West of England Institute of Technology
- New centre for Early Years Education and Training
- Centres of Excellence in Mathematics and SEND
- New workshops in Construction and Engineering.

**SUPPORTING ADULTS TO RESKILL AND UPSKILL FOR EMPLOYMENT**

COVID-19 has impacted employment sectors disproportionately leaving many adults needing to re-train, upskill or apply existing skills in new occupational roles. The adult curriculum at Weston College is designed to be responsive and agile to the changing

skills need of the region alongside supporting those impacted by COVID-19 to get back into work.

We have been working closely with key partners such as the LEP, WECA, North Somerset Council, employers and Job Centre Plus to design and develop an adult curriculum that can act as a catalyst for change for adults requiring new skills and support to find and sustain employment. Sector-based work academies and bespoke training pathways for the unemployed are broadening the range of learning options for adults looking to secure employment.

Employers such as Alliance Care, Bristol Airport, and EDF have worked with the College to devise sector specific programmes that include both a recognised industry qualification and a guaranteed interview at the end of the programme. 85% of learners who attended a sector-based work academy received a suitable job offer.

The West of England Works project funded by the Big Lottery has enabled Weston College to build and strengthen its partnerships and develop its adult community provision in the West of England area. Weston College leads the partnership that aims to engage adults and young people who are furthest away from education and employment. It has supported many young people and adults from disadvantaged backgrounds to gain employment through a community-based support programme. Flexible and blended learning packages have been expanded to

better enable adult learners to study, re-train and learn around life and work. Blended programmes in areas such as accounting, health and learning support are enabling adults who work in these to upskill through a delivery model that better fits around their job roles.

**CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE**

Our Centres of Excellence in Maths and SEND have developed regional and national reputation for their work. The centres engage in bespoke and national training with the Principal often speaking on the embedding of SEND in colleges and other training organisations.

**WEST OF ENGLAND INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY**

The West of England Institute of Technology was licenced by the Department for Education in April 2020, as one of twelve IoTs nationally, to support local employers to develop higher level technical skills and train employees for the jobs of tomorrow.

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# STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Partnership working is a key focus of the Weston College Group. We work with businesses and organisations across the region and beyond to provide the skills that employers need for their future workforce.

“ The partnerships we share with Weston College, and our involvement with University Centre Weston, are highlights to us at Bath Spa University. The outstanding work of the College, and its national recognition as an education provider of excellence, make it a privilege to work with them. The combination of business acumen and profound care for the student experience are unique in the region and a beacon for others to emulate. ”

**Sue Rigby**  
*Professor of Higher Education and Vice-Chancellor, Bath Spa University*

BATH SPA  
UNIVERSITY

“ The UWE and Weston College partnership is of critical strategic importance to both organisations, to regional employers with whom we partner and most importantly for our region and the communities we serve. Together we provide the go to talent solution for the West of England and our partnership is flourishing. We continue to enhance and innovate our provision to meet the skills needs of our region and most recently to developing the future workforce so important to our economic recovery. It is a genuine privilege to work with a College leading the way in quality, innovation and entrepreneurship. ”

**Jo Midgley**  
*Pro Vice-Chancellor,  
University of the West of England, Bristol*



“ We continue to work closely with Weston College to ensure that our residents get access to good quality education and jobs and our young people are able to pursue their aspirations. The College's status as a Centre for Excellence for SEND practice recognises the vital work they undertake in supporting young people with additional needs to achieve both educationally and socially. This year we worked with the College to deliver the 'We Work For Everyone' project that is supporting adults with special education needs and disabilities into employment. ”

**Jo Walker**  
*Chief Executive, North Somerset Council*



“ Great local skills are – by far – the most important factor in attracting jobs and investment to regenerate any town's economy, and Weston is no exception. Weston College's continued growth and success means local employers and investors can find capable, qualified staff in almost any sector you care to name. They are a vital cornerstone of our town's future. ”

**John Penrose MP**  
*Weston-super-Mare*



“ The pandemic has presented enormous challenges for the partners, employers and many thousands of students in North Somerset. Weston College has worked tirelessly to support the community and students through this difficult period; they have developed and implemented new ways of working and through their creativity and passion for innovation, have ensured students receive the support and resources to develop, progress and achieve the success they deserve. Through the leadership of Dr Paul Phillips and his team, the College continues to play a leading role both regionally and nationally; through sharing best practice and demonstrating why FE Colleges are such a critical partner to the UK government growth plans; they have proved how investment in skills and training will achieve economic recovery through sustainable employment and achieve a stable economy. ”

**Ian Munro**  
*Area Director (South West),  
Association of Colleges*



“ Skills and training are an exciting part of my role as Metro Mayor. I'm proud that the West of England Combined Authority which I lead works closely with Weston College, funding projects to develop training and to improve career opportunities. The team at Weston College secures excellent opportunities with some of the West of England's top businesses. And the young people I meet at Weston College are really enthusiastic and motivated. They are very clear about exactly what skills they need, and they tell me all about the full-time jobs they know they will be able to get at the end of their studies. I look forward to working with Weston College in the future to create even more opportunities for people ready to gain new skills. ”

**Dan Norris**  
*Metro Mayor, WECA*





# STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

“ Weston College has continued on its growth trajectory this year, playing an important role in the regeneration of Weston and beyond. It delivers a range of excellent training solutions to local businesses, has modern state-of-the-art facilities across all its campuses and demonstrates a strong tradition of innovation. We are pleased to work alongside Weston College on a range of business support initiatives helping to make sure that North Somerset is a place where ideas can flourish, and businesses can grow. ”

**Angela Hicks**  
*Chief Executive, North Somerset Enterprise Agency*



“ Being a business partner of Weston College has proven valuable to not only our numerous business initiatives but also to our employees. We have collaborated on several successful projects across various departments and many of our staff members have furthered their educational ambitions and have received exceptional training at the College. Our on-site Animal Management Countryside Classroom is truly a cutting-edge facility and an asset to both Weston College and Puxton Park. We take great pride in providing our future animal keepers, farmers, veterinarians and veterinary technicians an environment that feeds their desire to learn and develop the skills necessary to follow their career dreams. It is a genuine privilege to work with such a forward thinking, pioneering and innovative organisation that brings so much talent and value to the South West. ”

**Alistair Mead**  
*Managing Director, Puxton Park*



“ We are incredibly proud to be working so closely with Weston College and to have them based within our own Global Technology Centre. Having a learning space on our shop floor and giving Weston’s students access to our equipment and resources is a fantastic opportunity to merge learning with doing. It is this kind of close collaboration between the Institute of Technology, Weston College and GKN Aerospace that will inspire and train the engineering workforce of the future, we couldn’t be more thrilled to be working in this partnership. ”

**Kostas Soumilas**  
*Senior Vice President Engineering and Technology, Civil Airframe*



“ ADLIB is proud to be a part of the Weston College Digital Industry Advisory Board. The tech industry is evolving at pace and with the demand for talent at an all-time high, the Digital Industry Advisory Board allows us to directly input into the College curriculum and access future ready talent. ”

**Nick Dean**  
*Managing Director, AdLib*



“ Working with Weston College, not only on specific skills programmes in Composites and Digital but in their role as West of England IoT lead has been exceptional. They engage and inspire the region to drive for change in the provision of technical skills. ”

**Katy Riddlington**  
*Director, National Composite Centre*



“ SIMIAN’s partnership with Weston College at the SOMAX Construction Training Centre has enabled the delivery of specialist scaffolding and work at height training in a high quality facility. In a relatively short period of time and despite the unprecedented difficulties presented by the global pandemic, our successful collaboration has established a first-class provision that is meeting the skills and employment needs of businesses and learners, not only in North Somerset, but the wider Southwest region.

As a private training provider, we have enjoyed a close professional relationship with the Weston College team and benefited greatly from the sharing of outstanding practices through this collaboration, that we hope will continue for many more years and together celebrate continued success. Through strong leadership, uncompromising quality and forward thinking strategies Weston College sets an example for the whole FE Sector for collaborative working focused on meeting the needs of industry. ”

**Simon Hughes**  
*Managing Director, Simian*



“ The 2020/21 academic year was a challenge for us all. On behalf of Rolls Royce, we wish to acknowledge and extend our thanks to the Weston College team for the significant effort and commitment to minimise disruption for our apprentices at this extremely difficult time. The College kept us informed of a changing priority list of requirements dictated by an evolving COVID-19 landscape, and at all times placed the health and safety, and wellbeing of our learners as a key priority. Despite these challenges, the quality of delivery remained very high. Congratulations and thanks everyone. ”

**Andy Davies**  
*Learning Delivery Manager - Apprenticeships, Rolls Royce*





# Section 2

## EDUCATION PROVISION

- 16-18 CURRICULUM
- T LEVELS
- ADULT AND PART TIME PROVISION
- APPRENTICESHIPS
- SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS AND DISABILITIES
- LAW AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES ACADEMY
- UNIVERSITY CENTRE WESTON
- WEST OF ENGLAND INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
- PRISON EDUCATION
- INTERNATIONAL
- FORWARD FUTURES LIMITED

## 16-18 CURRICULUM

**Despite the continued challenge presented by COVID-19 it has been another successful year for our full-time, 16-18 curriculum. Learners and staff have once again shown significant adaptability, resilience, and perseverance to produce work of the highest standard.**

Curriculum teams have lengthened the diagnostic assessment period, re-sequenced delivery, and modified assessment activity to help ensure learners excelled both in and out of lockdown. Face to face teaching was prioritised and a comprehensive support programme that included well-being packages, digital literacy, device access and catch-up classes helped make sure no one fell behind. Opportunities to showcase and celebrate learners' achievements were grasped including the return of the first face-to-face Summer Creative Arts show for two years. Wherever you look across the College, irrespective of whether it was pre or post lockdown, young people have been engaged in learning and enrichment opportunities that are helping to make them become some of the most employable young people in the country.

The College continues to be the first choice for young people looking to study academic and technical programmes. The College focus on 'careers not courses' has shaped a curriculum that is providing learners with extended work and industry placements. Industry Advisory Boards and employer involvement in assessment and curriculum design is helping learners gain the knowledge and skills needed for work or higher-level technical study. Differentiated personal development based on the attributes most demanded within a particular employment sector is supporting young people to develop the behaviours business want as well as enabling them to prepare for life as an independent adult. Skills maps, a revised careers programme and dedicated sessions on building a

professional profile are helping increasing numbers of learners to progress into employment or jobs with higher level training. The curriculum has provided a platform for the 'Careers Excellence Hub' to emerge!

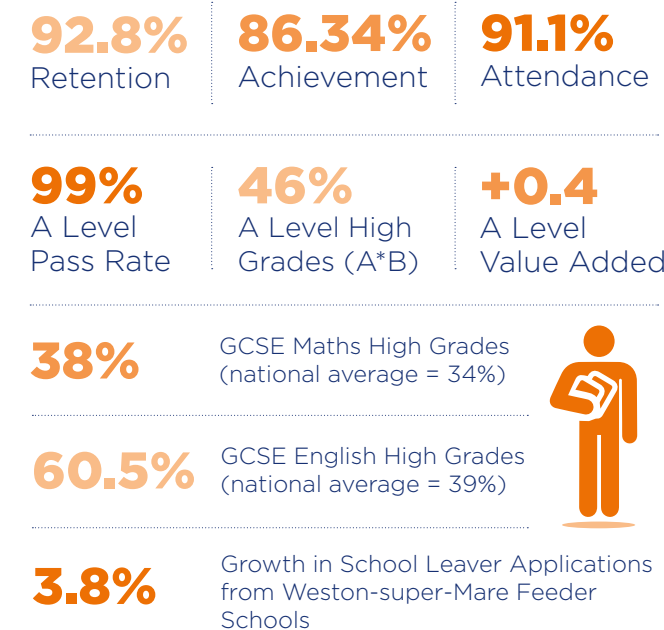
Applications and enrolments to the College continue to rise from our local feeder schools. COVID-19 has not discouraged school leavers from making the College their first-choice destination. Applications from our Weston-super-Mare feeder schools rose by 3.8% with increasing numbers of learners applying for programmes in the regional skills priority areas of engineering, construction, health, and professional services. The College has seen engagement with IAG events and activities increase despite repeated national lockdowns. New initiatives such as virtual parent information evenings, industry insight events and access to a virtual bridging programme designed to support students to get ready to learn and effectively transition to the College has seen engagement increase significantly. The return to face-to-face open events has seen record numbers attend – there was more than a 600% increase in numbers attending campus tours following the lockdown.

Learner outcomes, a broadening range of options at Level 4 and above and expert careers support are encouraging more learners to aim high. EMSI data is widely used in curriculum design and events such as Careers Fest are helping learners decide on their next steps. 88% of learners felt the careers support at the College was good or better. The proportion of

students progressing to Russell Group Universities is rising alongside an increasing proportion of learners progressing to higher or degree apprenticeships.

### KEY STATISTICS

The following infographic highlights the key statistics and performance outcomes for young people on Study Programmes in 2020/21.







## T LEVELS

**The College is leading the way on technical reforms as one of the first colleges nationally to deliver the new T Level and Transition to T Level qualifications.**

T Levels are the next generation of College based technical qualifications at Level 3 – academically as challenging as A Levels but with the more than 45 days of industry placement they provide learners with defined pathways into higher level technical careers. Digital Design and Development was launched in September 2020 and is joined by further pathway routes in Health, Construction and Early Years Education from September 2021.

The College has gained national recognition for the development of its Transition to T Level programme that utilises new flexibilities in curriculum design to better prepare learners for Level 3 learning. Our innovative approach includes extra time, contextualisation, and development on core skills such as English and maths that are crucial to learner's progression and success on the T Level.

The College has successfully applied for capital funding to support the introduction of new facilities and resources to support T Level learning. New state-of-the-art, industry informed facilities for Early Years Education opened in September and this will be followed by further investment in physical resources for Business Management, Finance, and Legal pathways from September 2022.

The College is a regional T Level CPD delivery hub for the Education Training Foundation (ETF) delivering courses in pedagogy for new and experienced teachers. New specialist equipment and technology has been

rolled out with teachers being supported in its use and application. Aspects such as this along with the growing number of employers who are endorsing the T Level programmes means that learners are getting access to state-of-the-art training resources and the opportunity to showcase their talent.

The College continues to innovate and work with employers to help ensure learners get industry placements that expose them to technical work at Level 3 and above. For example, in Digital the College has worked in partnership with the Business Improvement District, Natwest and North Somerset Council to launch the 'Spacebar', a business start-up based in the Sovereign Centre that provides digital support to small employers and voluntary organisations. Learners develop their knowledge, skills and behaviours through a placement that supports organisations improve their digital footprint through websites and dedicated social media platforms.

*"Our organisation needed an updated website to help promote our services and for people to discover the support we offer. So, we worked with Weston College T Level learners through the Spacebar, and we were thoroughly impressed! From the get-go the learners were so enthusiastic about the project and they were able to deliver a website that surpassed all our expectations. They took my vision on board and made it a reality."*

**'F.r.i.e.n.D.S Together'** a non-profit community group supporting people that live with invisible illnesses or disabilities, which includes mental health, loneliness and isolation.

If you are an employer and interested in hearing more about how the T Level can be part of the workforce development plan in your business, please email [workplacementteam@weston.ac.uk](mailto:workplacementteam@weston.ac.uk) or call **01934 411641**





# ADULT AND PART-TIME PROVISION

**The core focus of Weston College’s adult provision concentrates on being the catalyst for adults in the West of England to access lifelong learning, whether this is supporting them into employment, providing access to higher level qualifications, re-training or re-entering the labour market.**

The programmes of study provide adults with the necessary skills, knowledge, and behaviours to operate effectively in life and work. We support adults to develop and achieve the next stage of their unique pathway, be that re-skilling to support a new career, up-skilling to support a promotion, or developing employability skills to successfully transition into a sustainable career.

Proudly standing at the heart of the community, we understand that some adults’ circumstances and past experiences may have previously inhibited their participation and achievement in education and training. This is fundamentally why we adapt our adult provision and modes of delivery to meet all our learners’ needs. As part of our continued drive to make education more accessible, we widened our community outreach programmes and successfully launched a number of blended learning programmes to support individual learners’ needs.

The curriculum considers and reflects the skills demanded by employers and industry, both regionally and locally. Working directly with our employer partners our adult provision provides opportunities for lifelong learning to support the aspirations of our adult learners.

In the world that will exist post-COVID-19 we will continue to be at the heart of the community both locally and regionally offering opportunities for adults to re-train, upskill or dual skill in support of employment opportunities, promotions, or pathways to Higher

Education. The provisions offered are agile, flexible, adaptable, developed in collaboration with employers (including LMI data) and Higher Education colleagues to optimise accessibility and career opportunities for adult learners.

### INVESTMENT IN CURRICULUM AND RESOURCES

The College Group continues to invest in its curriculum and resources to train adults in sectors that will support the regional economy requirements for the future. Changing demographics in the labour market and the abilities and barriers of the unemployed has meant a real change in the needs of the community. Our Business Growth Team consistently engage with employers and seek new opportunities for our adult learners both with employment opportunities and valuable insights to support effective curriculum design and delivery. In adapting to these changes, the College has developed new courses that focus on the needs of employers and the community.

Re-training courses and blended/online learning are part of the innovation that Weston College is undertaking in the transformation of provision offered to meet the needs of the local community - now and for the future. This year, we engaged with even more job centres, employers, referral partners and industry specific training providers. Our courses for the long-term unemployed and people with specific barriers have helped learners progress through a structured programme of learning and development. This has enabled our adult learners to find appropriate

employment including, for instance, employers that have found vacancies difficult to fill.

Provision for the unemployed continued to provide support to those suffering from the effects of the pandemic with successful outcomes including achievement rates above 91%, retention of learners on programme at 94% and 98% attendance. Positive destinations for unemployed adults in 20/21 was 79% with 38% of those progressing directly into employment.



# APPRENTICESHIPS

**Despite the significant operational and strategic challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic, Weston College has bucked the national trend and has continued to grow its apprenticeship provision. Our enrolments were driven by larger employers utilising their apprenticeship levy funds.**

These employers now account for 80% of all apprenticeship enrolments. This growth and development saw us crowned Training Provider of the Year at Bristol and Bath Apprenticeship Awards for the third year running, plus winning the Apprenticeship Recruitment Campaign of the Year from the Association of Employment and Learning Providers and FE Week.

The transition from Frameworks to Standards has improved employer responsiveness, giving us greater flexibility and enabling us to create bespoke apprenticeship programmes tailored to the needs of individual employers. We are seeing the development of our apprentices’ knowledge, skills and behaviours culminate in outstanding end point assessment grades. Partnerships with companies such as Ministry of Defence, Rolls Royce, North Somerset Council, Wessex Water and The Bristol Port Company have enabled the College to offer apprenticeships in technical and vocational occupations, such as the Nursing Associate for University Hospital Bristol and Weston NHS Trust and the Aerospace Engineer for Airbus. Plus, we work in partnership with The Women’s Football Association to increase the participation of underrepresented groups in football through apprenticeships.

Our strategic partnership with UWE Bristol has led to delivery of degree apprenticeships in engineering, digital, environmental health and healthcare, utilising both organisations’ expertise in apprenticeship and degree level delivery, respectively. The increase in our degree apprenticeship portfolio has seen

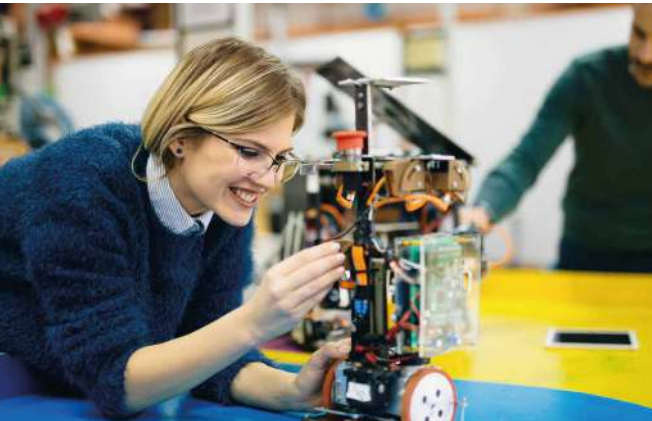
starts increase by 47%, since 2018/19 and with an increasing portfolio and employer interest in higher and degree apprenticeships we are focused on this market. Conversely the national phasing out of Level 2 apprenticeships in 2020/21 has brought an abrupt stop to creating apprenticeships at entry levels with Traineeships now providing a progression route to a Level 3 apprenticeship Standard for many young people who prefer a work-based learning route.

New provision has been tailored to meet the needs of employers, and includes new apprenticeships in health, digital, engineering, and professional services. The ongoing reforms for apprenticeships since 2017 and the challenges of the pandemic have continued to shape the landscape for the College, leading to a strategic review of our offer, both financially and quality focussed, by streamlining processes and the creation of our Apprenticeship Hub to strengthen the quality of delivery in each faculty.

The COVID-19 communication and management strategies for our apprentices effectively enabled them to continue their learning and reduced the financial impact on the College which affected many other providers. The digital infrastructure already in place at the College allowed us to rapidly move our apprenticeship learning and assessment online. This was so successful it resulted in most apprentices being able to continue their learning whilst on furlough and to achieve their apprenticeship in time, meaning our timely success rates for this past year are on track to exceed

national average. We were also able to successfully implement the End Point Assessment flexibilities to ensure apprentices achieved their apprenticeship despite the restrictions of the pandemic.

The challenges created by COVID-19 on our apprenticeship provision with both apprentices and employers has been significant. In 2020/21 the national picture displayed a 40% reduction in overall apprenticeship enrolments; however, Weston College bucked this trend with a reduction of 16%. Working closely with our employer partners, apprenticeships have become one of the solutions for a successful COVID-19 recovery for many of the businesses we partner with.





# SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

**Weston College has been recognised for its outstanding provision which continues to lead nationally through the Centre for Excellence in SEND. Proactively informing the sector, sharing good practice, and developing highly innovative and successful provision for learners. The College places enablement and personalisation at the heart of its strategic plans, creating a highly inclusive ethos and culture.**

Learners are central to the planning and delivery process and are empowered to contribute to the strategic initiatives which has provided learners with SEND with high-quality accessible and sustainable ‘in-county’ provision, including Weston Bay, the residential training facility for learners with autism and the Sensory Learning Base for learners with profound and complex learning difficulties – both highly specialist and innovative provision.

The SEND provision continues to expand and diversify, developing new innovative practice, providing exceptional specialised support in world-class facilities to over 1,500 learners. The overall outcomes for learners with SEND continue to be outstanding with exceptional results:

- Attendance for learners with SEND meets the 90% college target
- Retaining 94% of learners with SEND and 98% with High Needs
- 88% achievement for learners with SEND on main programmes with 90% for High Needs and 98% with an EHCP
- 95% with High Needs progressed onto positive destinations.

## LEADERSHIP HUB: INFLUENCING FROM THE TOP

The Principal and Chief Executive has been recognised nationally and internationally for his integral support for other colleges and training providers becoming inclusive organisations.

Despite the lockdown periods and subsequent restrictions, our Centre for Excellence in SEND continued to support significant numbers of college leaders and SEND Practitioners to create truly inclusive FE cultures to:

- Develop a Whole College Inclusive approach
- Create a sustainable Specialist Model that incorporates a motivational SEND carers structure
- Ensure the Mental Health, Social and Emotional Well-being of staff and learners remains priority
- Diversify provision to engage the furthest away from education and training
- Improve digital inclusion for learners with SEND.

## ESSENTIAL TRANSITION PROGRAMMES

As COVID-19 restrictions slowly reduced, the transition activities for new Post-16 learners with SEND gained significant momentum. These transition programmes were crucial and allowed for meaningful participation through positive activities enabling invaluable insight to support the diverse needs of learners who had experienced large gaps in their education during the last two academic years. This equipped learners to reconnect and rebuild their confidence through the support, structure and routine of our innovative provision which is integral to learners with complex needs. This strategy effectively reduced anxiety and encouraged positive wellbeing strategies, essential to providing a platform for learners with SEND to flourish on their Weston College journey.

## SEND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT HUB

Our newly branded initiative has encapsulated all employment pathways for learners with SEND within a Hub, sharing best practice across the College and supporting employers to understand and support a step-change in becoming inclusive organisations. Despite the lockdown restrictions 100% of learners with SEND on an employment pathway undertook a work experience placement. Learners leaving the College have secured paid employment in a range of industries including Hospitality, Health and Social Care, Education and Retail.

# LAW AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES ACADEMY

**The Law and Professional Services Academy is the regional centre of excellence for professional services education. The academy provides learners with professionally accredited training in law, business, human resources, administration, management, finance, accounting, computing, IT and other professional services.**

The academy offers classroom and work- based learning options and nationally recognised qualifications so employers can train new staff and upskill existing employees.

The College supports employers throughout the process, providing expert guidance on how to fund the programmes through either the Government’s apprenticeship levy or through Government apprenticeship funding for small employers.

The Law and Professional Services Academy has enjoyed a number of notable successes this year including:

- The first Level 6 Chartered Legal Executive Apprentices completed their apprenticeships in July 2021, becoming fully qualified Chartered Legal Executive Lawyers
- Learners on CILEx courses significantly outperforming national result averages. At Level 3, 89% of exam results at Weston College were passes or above, relative to 77% nationally for the same units. At Level 6, 96% of exam results at Weston College were passes or above relative to 64% nationally for the same units
- The CILEx courses offered grew to include the Level 3 Diploma in Law and Practice, the Level 6 Diploma in Law and Practice, the Paralegal Apprenticeship and the Chartered Legal Executive Apprenticeship

- The virtual learning environment for the CILEX provision allowed learners access to over 250 online recorded lessons and other online resources. Facilitating a more flexible blended learning approach for professionals, as an alternative when work or family commitments prevent them from being able to attend classes
- The academy started to offer Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) courses including the Level 3 and 5 HR Apprenticeships
- The five Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) courses offered by the academy were equally popular and learners studying the AAT qualifications achieved well with rates significantly above national benchmarks
- The expansion of the provision to meet learner and employer needs with the introduction of new high quality media rich online/in class blended learning provision in Accountancy, Law and Management.

This year also saw the Law and Professional Services Academy provide outstanding ILM Management Training and Apprenticeships from Level 2 to 5 with bespoke training, responsive to employer’s needs. In response to COVID-19 a number of new online and blended learning fast track management courses have been developed and delivered to adapt and respond agilely to the changing needs from employers to rapidly upskill their managers in relation to effectively managing remote teams and their performance.





**University Centre Weston (UCW) is the Higher Education (HE) division of the Weston College Group. It was awarded University Centre status in 2016 and continues to build upon its identity bucking the national trend of HE in FE offering high quality learning opportunities to increasing numbers of students.**

Over 1,000 students are now enrolled on its 35+ courses, with a broad range of subjects and degree-level qualifications on offer. The number of students undertaking Higher, and Degree Apprenticeship continues to grow with UCW partnering with the NHS, public sector organisations such as the Ministry of Defence and companies such as Rolls-Royce and GKN Aerospace to deliver training for their staff.

Despite the challenges of COVID-19 and lockdown learning UCW's continued to ensure student support, learning, teaching and assessment was accessible and high quality. Student outcomes evidence the impact of all that was put in place with over 42% of Honours students achieving First Class Honours, well above the national average, and 77% obtaining "Good Degrees". In Art, Dance, Digital and Technology Solutions and Public and Environmental Health all students obtained a First or 2:1 Classification. Continuation levels were over 90%, above previous years and most recent benchmarks.

Increasingly the Higher and Degree Apprenticeship agenda is driving growth of higher technical skills for the regional and national economy. The West of England Institute of Technology (WEIoT) continues to meet growth targets and bring significant capital investment in resources for UCW students in digital, health and advanced engineering. The first students graduated from the WEIoT in July 2021 from the BSc (Hons) Applied Computing. The programme has 100% pass rates with an outstanding 55% obtaining First Class Honours.

New full honours degrees in Art & Design, Film and Media Arts Production, Photography and Visual Cultures and Business Management and Sustainability were developed for delivery from September 2021. Programmes have also been accredited by professional, statutory and regulatory bodies including the Trainee Nursing Associate (TNA) Higher Apprenticeship programme being approved by Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), and the Environmental Health Practitioner Degree Apprenticeship and BSc (Hons) Public and Environmental Health degree accredited by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH).

UCW's National Student Survey (NSS) results were excellent, especially considering the circumstances in which the students completed the survey. Overall satisfaction is at 81%, which is well above the national average sector-wide figure of 75%. In all areas UCW is above the national average, with Assessment and Feedback, Academic Support, Learning Community and Student Voice being within the top quartile figures. Of the seven courses that received results, four courses have 100% student satisfaction rates - Biological Laboratory Sciences, Early Years, Musical Theatre and Sport. Film and Media Arts Production is also rated above the top quartile satisfaction rate.

There are some outstanding individual performances including a BSc (Hons) Applied Computing student obtaining a place in the final of the WorldSkills Competition and a BA (Hons) Hair, Make-up and Prosthetics for Production student being a finalist in the

Return to Learning Award at the Festival of Learning Awards. In addition, a BA (Hons) Lens Based Media student obtained a place on an MA at Royal Holloway University and was invited to live in Her Majesty's Postgraduate Community of Excellence.

UCW continues to focus on offering a high quality, diverse curriculum delivered in outstanding facilities to meet the needs of its strategic partners and employers whilst also offering outstanding support to enable all students from diverse backgrounds to progress and succeed within Higher Education.



**During this academic year the West of England Institute of Technology (WEIoT), led by Weston College was formally opened and launched by the then Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills, Gillian Keegan MP.**

The WEIoT is part of the Government's network of Institutes of Technology – collaborations between leading employers, Further Education colleges and universities – specialising in delivering high-quality Higher Technical Education and training in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects, such as digital, advanced manufacturing and engineering, providing employers with the skilled workforce they need.

The WEIoT is a consortium of education providers and key employers across the West of England. It has been led by Weston College and includes the University of the West of England, Bath College, Gloucestershire College, and Yeovil College as well as a network of key local employers, including; GKN Aerospace, Airbus, GE Aviation, Renishaw, University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Trust, St Monica Trust, Jisc, io Academy, National Composites Centre (NCC), North Somerset Council, Leonardo, Rolls Royce and Bamboo Technology.

Collaborations between employers and industries have shaped the high-level skills courses available. From apprenticeships to degree level course the WEIoT is armed to develop skills and drive ambition for students, who are preparing for their first step into a career, already in employment or those wishing to retrain.

During the year, Weston College completed its building works for the Institute creating new learning spaces at the South West Skills Campus and building a new Welding Centre of Excellence at the same site. The WEIoT is regarded as one of the top performing

institutes across the country and has delivered its commitments to the Department for Education this year.

Also, the planned development with the Global Technology Centre at GKN was started and completed. This investment provides access for the Degree Apprentices in Aerospace Engineering to be taught within a cutting-edge research and development facility in North Bristol. This supports the WEIoT commitment to deliver Technical Education within Bristol.

The strength of the IoT can be demonstrated with the WEIoT securing funding from the Department for Education to pilot and test several of the initiatives outlined in the White Paper with our partners within the IoT, and a wider pilot working with additional colleges. These pilots show the confidence the Department for Education have in both Weston College as the lead, and the IoT concept.

The WEIoT is receiving recognition nationally with the national Press Moment in July 21 featuring WEIoT and the facilities at Weston College in great detail, with the Secretary of State for Education using this as his case study to launch the IoT Press moment. The WEIoT was also shortlisted for a Festival of Learning Award for its employer engagement during the academic year.

A strong start to a leading Government initiative that will have a positive impact on many lives within the West of England region.





**Weston College is a top performing Prison Education provider and is one of four organisations delivering the Prison Education Framework (PEF) contract throughout the UK. A highly experienced team provides purposeful education to nine prisons across the South West and ten establishments in the South East of the country.**

The estate comprises a variety of prisons including Local Remand, Training, Resettlement, Open and Female, all of which have their own specific requirements but are ultimately focused on employment or progression opportunities for learners.

The third year of the PEF contract commenced in a “Cost Plus” model due to PEF funding methodology not being feasible during COVID-19 restrictions. There were, however, many significant achievements during this most challenging and unusual of years, for example:

- In excess of 25,000 learning resources provided to learners when face-to-face delivery was not possible
- 300 in-cell learning resources covering a wider variety of subjects created to support learning through COVID-19 restrictions
- Continual weekly liaison with Senior HMPPS/MOJ key contacts and other PEF providers to ensure a joint and consultative approach to new ways of working throughout COVID-19 period
- Effective partnership working with trade unions to agree procedures as lecturers returned to the classroom as COVID-19 restrictions began to ease
- Regular review and robust monitoring of Health and Safety procedures and risk assessments as COVID-19 restrictions changed

- Large scale IT refresh roll out across South East and South West prisons to update infrastructure whilst meeting stringent HMPPS security requirements
- On-going large scale CPD program to support staff development and promote wellbeing during the pandemic
- Robust Mentoring Qualification introduced to staff to support new starters into Prison Education
- Annual PEF Conference took place online involving speakers covering key themes and relevant CPD workshops
- Successful Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) contract renewal for Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) services at HMP Bristol, Eastwood Park and Portland
- Initiatives developed to promote learner engagement and wellbeing during a difficult time when face-to-face delivery has not been possible. This included “Hope in the Yards” Art exhibition at HMP Bristol which received positive recognition via social media
- 241 Koestler national art awards won by learners across South West and South East prisons, facilitated by Weston College staff
- Increased social media presence to share and celebrate successes. Followers have increased by 66% in last year, plus engagement with posts increased by almost 865% on average

- Weston College was awarded the high profile contract to deliver education services at G4S’s new flagship “super prison” HMP Five Wells in Wellingborough, Northamptonshire.



**Whilst in the midst of a global pandemic it would be reasonable to assume that overseas partnerships would stall or cease entirely. Contrary to this, Weston College’s initial foray into the international arena has seen significant progress.**

Utilising technology to overcome vast geographical distances, our work with Jingjiang Jiangsu School, in developing a bespoke aerospace manufacturing training centre, has continued to progress on schedule.

The project involves the development, implementation and ongoing quality assurance of aerospace manufacturing training, onsite at Jiangsu School. Jiangsu School will provide the highly skilled workforce required to operate an aerospace manufacturing facility for a joint venture (JV) partnership involving GKN Aerospace, AVIC International and Shanghai Aircraft Manufacturing Co. Ltd (SAMC – subsidiary of COMAC).

The training of the employees for the JV facility involves the development of a range of specific skills and

capabilities in manufacturing and assembling metallic and composites aircraft structure, e.g., aircraft fuselage, wings, and empennage. This is the first of its kind in the Jingjiang Jiangsu Province.

The state-of-the-art, 80,000m2 facility in Jingjiang will offer COMAC, AVIC and Western customers the opportunity to access an important local supply of advanced aerostructures in the country. The JV builds on COMAC, AVIC and GKN Aerospace’s proven track record in the global commercial aviation industry. Production is scheduled to begin in Q4 2023, and the workforce is expected to grow to 1,000 employees.

Our partner education organisation Jingjiang Jiangsu School are a large specialized vocational school that

caters primarily to students of a similar age range to UK Further Education colleges. Jiangsu School, similar to Weston College, has an outstanding reputation through delivery of excellent outcomes for learners with employment rates, pass rates and student satisfaction rates in the high 90s year-on-year. The School boasts a national level engineering training centre with 85 practical laboratories and workshops specialising in electrical and electronical, hydraulics and pneumatics, numerical control machining, computer networking technologies, and automobile maintenance. Aerospace manufacturing will be a new strand of activity for the school, drawing on the expertise and established educational systems currently delivered at Weston College.





**As the primary onsite temporary recruitment service provider to Weston College, Forward Futures Ltd has continued to provide academic, business support and service sectors cover associates at its Weston-super-Mare campuses and more widely throughout the South West and South East under the Prison Education Framework contracts in Kent, Surrey and Sussex.**

Despite the continuing exceptional circumstances around the pandemic, the 2020/21 academic year continued to create opportunities for those wishing to begin or further develop their careers in the FE and HE sector.

The global events have changed the landscape of learning and in turn, the job market. As the academic year began, we saw an influx of learners coming to the College that were inspired to either up-skill or retrain in a new field entirely. This brought more opportunities to further increase the Forward Futures work force, particularly in recruiting for areas of national skills shortages that the pandemic created.

The Forward Futures recruitment company is often the first step for applicants interested in a career with Weston College. The development of teaching, learning and assessment practice in agency staff is a continual focus in maintaining the College's high outcomes and improving the learner experience. A bespoke Forward Futures induction programme is developing to provide more extensive and flexible support with the onboarding of Associates.

## KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- Improved website and wider use of social media platforms
- Blended approach to interviewing candidates with face-to face and online
- Creation of customer focused communications via iTrent
- Bespoke Induction Programme for Associate Lecturers and Learning Support positions to maintain Outstanding standards of delivery
- Collaborations with HR to automate learning events for an easy on-boarding process
- Creation of an Associate SharePoint page with central location 'quick links' for an easy on-boarding process
- Partnerships with Opportunities North Somerset and Job Centre Plus to fill vacancies and lower unemployment in the local community
- Partnerships with The Jobs Fair to target South East vacancies
- Bi-monthly Recruitment Hubs in the local community
- Partnership with UCW to support the successful recruitment of Student Ambassadors
- A continued effective, responsive service to associates and in-College clients providing a "business as usual" approach transitioning out of the pandemic.

The organisation has continued to recruit industry-based associates, especially within the digital sector, construction, and engineering sectors. This has benefited the departments and students by imparting first-hand and current knowledge of the requirements and standards expected by employers in their chosen industries. There is also a continued supply of learning support assistants to the College's exemplar Faculty of Inclusive Practice.

As the number of Forward Futures associates has increased, so has the number of high calibre associates securing permanent roles with the College.





# Section 3

## COMMERCIAL PROVISION

- INSPIRATIONAL EVENTS AND INVESTMENTS
- WINTER GARDENS COMMUNITY BOARD



## INSPIRATIONAL EVENTS AND INVESTMENTS

**While all sectors of the world's economy are affected by the coronavirus outbreak, the hotel, leisure, retail and travel industries have been hit particularly hard. Following a continued increase in the number of positive cases and the signalling of an imminent national lockdown, the Winter Gardens and the Lauriston Hotel temporarily closed in March 2020.**

Throughout the period of lockdown both facilities were used by the College and partners to support wider community requirements including being used as a lateral flow test site, vaccination clinics, and teaching and training facilities.

Since reopening the Lauriston, the facility has taken advantage of the 'staycation' boom and numbers of bookings are at a high since the College took over ownership. That said the ability to attract new staff is particularly difficult both in terms of long-term appointments and short-term cover due to exits from the industry as a result of the pandemic.







## WINTER GARDENS COMMUNITY BOARD

**The Board AGM and meeting were held on 13th October 2020, and subsequently the Board has met only twice this year on 21st April 2021 virtually and 1st September 2021, in person, due to the underlying pandemic issues.**

The Board understand the College's aim is to return the Pavilion to further community use as soon as it is safe and viable. Board members support the gradual and cautious transition back to such usage. Meanwhile members continue supporting and reviewing, as necessary, purpose, governance, and strategy with the focus on ensuring the community will have access to the Winter Gardens post COVID.

Board members appreciated the vital use of the Winter Gardens during lockdown when the building was able to be used to support socially distanced curriculum delivery at Weston College, and as a centre for community vaccinations and lateral flow testing, ensuring the building continued to have a purpose and a community focus despite the challenging times we all faced.

The Board received a detailed presentation from Fosters at its April meeting and look forward to supporting and working with the College and Fosters going forward to achieve a sustainable future for all concerned. The ability to access funding to support community events is something that will be a priority for the Community Board in this next year, together with how the overall plans for the town established by North Somerset Council, Weston Town Council and interested parties, can include and contribute to the strategic direction and use of the iconic Winter Gardens.





# Section 4

## LEADING THE WAY - VALUE ADDED

- **DIGITAL EDUCATION**
- **MENTAL HEALTH**
- **CAREER EXCELLENCE HUBS**
- **WORLDSKILLS UK INNOVATION NETWORK**

## DIGITAL EDUCATION

**Technology continues to reshape the way we live, learn and work. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, Weston College's forward-thinking approach emphasises more accessible and agile modes of education and training.**

Our ambitious curriculum aims to integrate real-world technologies, engaging resources, and meaningful activities where our learners can develop the 21st century skills necessary for the future of work and lifelong learning.

As a Microsoft Showcase College, our learners' daily experience with technology is designed to create proficient users of real-world digital tools for productivity and collaborative working. Our Careers Excellence Hubs integrate opportunities for digital collaboration and networking, introducing the concept of developing a 'self-brand' through individual portfolios and growing a professional network with employers and industry specialists.

Digital credentials including industry recognised certification and a growing range of digital badges enable learners and staff to showcase their individual achievements including digital capability, higher level digital skills and participation in wider skills development opportunities. Underpinned by a rich collection of bespoke learning content and video-based training from LinkedIn Learning and ClickView, learners and staff have the resources to rapidly upskill at any time and in any place.

Weston College's dedicated development team for digital education has continued to grow to deliver bespoke solutions for the College's Individual Development (ID) programme, online wellbeing, engineering, and new online provision for flexible adult learning. Weston College's Virtual Classroom developed in partnership with Jisc in 2020 complements high-quality digital content with a real-time online teaching experience that promotes active learning and participation, featuring within new training contracts and remote education activities for 2021/22.

Within an increasingly connected world where technology is transforming all areas of industry, Weston College's digital strategy aims to create brighter futures by preparing our learners for exciting new skills and careers. Our ambition for blended learning continues to focus on building employability and lifelong learning skills through empowerment and independence. Expert instruction is combined with outstanding facilities, online resources, new technologies and employer interaction. This digital vision relies upon co-creation with our employer partners to deliver the real-world challenges, leading edge skills and immersive learning experiences to create the employees of the future.





# MENTAL HEALTH



**Weston College continued to pioneer its holistic approach to mental health and wellbeing during an incredibly challenging year. COVID-19 tested the mental strength and wellbeing of both staff and learners, however, the College ensured targeted and universal support for its community through many innovative initiatives, spearhead by Dr Phillip’s visionary and transformational approach.**

Let’s Chat was launched in collaboration with Gateshead College and Somerset Counselling Centre providing a unique and different opportunity to support learners and staff with their emotional health and wellbeing. Let’s Chat provided learners with a timetable of awareness-raising sessions for those who want to learn more about themselves or about others’ emotions during COVID-19 times. There were also workshops to better support learners in areas such as sleep, eat, move and relax.

This initiative brought together the expertise of education practitioners, mental health practitioners and GPs and was designed to holistically support the well-being of staff, learners and their parents and carers. Wellbeing activities were tailored to an educational environment, and the products and toolkits are easily transferable across educational settings. As a product of Let’s Chat, films and toolkits were made available as a best practice resource via the website [letschatwellbeing.co.uk](https://letschatwellbeing.co.uk)

Let’s Chat also included four GP led workshops for staff and students to address the four pillars of Lifestyle Medicine (Relax, Eat, Move and Sleep). These workshops were accessed in group sessions e.g., via tutor groups and timetabled sessions, or pre-recorded sessions to gain a better understanding of the chosen theme and implement coping and improvement strategies to improve understanding, health and wellbeing.

It also recognised the fundamental importance of emotional wellbeing and trained college staff in the art of emotional literacy and emotion recognition, which was vital for learners to be able to problem-solve effectively for their mental health during COVID.

In addition to the above, the College continues to work with national partners such as the Anna Freud Centre and the Association for Colleges to ensure collaboration and community in our approach to mental health and wellbeing. We presented at the AOC mental health conference on the importance of our mental health language during COVID and

additionally held our organisational conference with speakers such as Nigel Owens who addressed many important issues affecting mental health and wellbeing. The SEND Centre for Excellence also spearheaded mental health focus groups which provided vital support to other colleges during a challenging time.

Learners remain able to access many forms of support within the College, including welfare, counselling and specialist mental health support and this took place within a hybrid framework. Mental health first aid training continued and remains an integral part of the College approach to mental health. As we move forward into face-to-face education again, we take our reflections of the past year with us and are focusing on new initiatives such as Suicide First Aid- the UK’s first national qualification and the launch of wellbeing@weston- providing pivotal and vital strategies for positive collegewide wellbeing. The College also aims to widen participation with staff and student focus groups.

# CAREER EXCELLENCE HUBS

**The College once again showed real innovation in response to the FE White Paper Skills for Jobs, with the launch of its Career Excellence Hubs as a mechanism to address the requirements of the paper which challenges FE providers to be responsive to local labour market needs and to provide industry led teaching in order to bridge the skills gaps for the UK.**

With the UK poised for high career growth as it emerges from the pandemic and employers looking to recruit the best talent to succeed, the Career Excellence Hubs are designed to bring employers closer to the classroom to provide industry insights, whilst at the same time enable learners to explore all career options open to them in a much more practical and immersive way. The methodology is designed to bring dynamism into the career journey - allowing students in the region to fully explore, test and immerse themselves in a hands-on approach to learn about all possibilities and pathway.

Within the model every vocational faculty (fourteen in total) has become their own Career Excellence Hub uniquely identified under the main CEH brand with a distinct colour identity.

Collective aspiration has been achieved through the creation of an innovative Career Excellence Hub Charter – securing a ‘whole college approach’. Through signing it - each faculty is committed to aligning its curriculum to the needs of employers, the Gatsby Benchmarks and the Career Development Framework, thereby creating sustainable, accessible and aspirational careers. The charter encompasses all our values, in particular our desire to build an inclusive talent pipeline and it is underpinned through a commitment to offer the very best support in well-being and inclusive practice (as a National Centre for Excellence in SEND) to raise

confidence and aspirations of learners regardless of their starting point in life.

Equally it champions our vision for equipping learners with impressive progressive digital skills as a Microsoft Showcase College, with an ambitious vision for technical skills as the West of England Institute of Technology lead; a TEF Gold University Centre and a member of the WorldSkills UK Innovation Network.

Feedback from our employers who are supporting the initiative as ‘Future Talent Business Partners’ is that they are excited to be playing such a key role in promoting real careers, showcasing modern workplace cultures and providing career exploration for learners through providing talks, tasters, work experience, live briefs as well as championing diversity.



**“** *It has been inspiring to work with the team at Weston College – they are at the forefront of innovation in career education, advice and guidance. The development of their Careers Excellence Hubs is just one shining example of how they are supporting their students to take their best next step out of education and into the wider world.*

*The team at Weston College don’t just work on one off projects about careers and the world of work, they work strategically, embedding information and examples about careers into so much of what they do. All of this means their young people are as well prepared as possible to take on the future.* **”**

**Andrew Webster**  
Education Sector Manager - Further Education & Skills at The Careers & Enterprise Company



# WORLD SKILLS UK INNOVATION NETWORK

**Weston College became part of the WorldSkills UK Innovation Network a world-class skills boost after being selected to join an elite training programme.**

Building on its work with WorldSkills competitions, in 2020/21 the College was successful in its application to become part of the WorldSkills Innovation Network. This allows the College to have the benefits outlined in the infographic on this page in order to share best practice to benefit its students.

The network aims to supercharge the quality and delivery of technical and vocational training by transferring world-class expertise and knowledge to help develop educators and learners.

Weston College was one of twelve institutions which entered the network this year to join the first wave of 20 colleges selected last September, when the three-year pilot project was launched. Educators will receive exclusive train the trainer sessions and 60 hours of intensive continual professional development.

The work forms part of the College's ambition to embed the WorldSkills ethos of teaching 'beyond the qualification' and taking learners from 'competence to excellence', increasing both their ambition and earning potential.



## Areas of Work



Tools and insights to enable colleges to see how their performance through competition activity compares with other colleges.



Resources and exchange of good practice to support greater use of competition practice, across the curriculum.



Insights into good practice from TVET activities in other WorldSkills nations to support the introduction of new techniques in curriculum practice. Exchanges and sessions with organisations/colleges, both nationally and internationally.



Input from WorldSkills UK employers who are training to top of their game to support practices that raise standards and help meet employer needs.





# Section 5

## INTENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT

- IMPACT ON STUDENTS
- IMPACT ON EMPLOYERS
- AWARDS
- THE YEAR IN HEADLINES
- THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

## IMPACT ON STUDENTS



“ College is a time to aspire and dream and what makes Weston College different is that they help you every step of the way to reach those dreams. ”

A Level student **Rosie** went on to study Human and Social Sciences at Cardiff University.



“ I have enjoyed the hands-on learning and classroom studying which has created a fun and engaging course that has had a great impact on my life and future career. ”

Animal Management student **Kam** progressed to study Veterinary Nursing and Companion Animal Behaviour at the University of Bristol.



“ Weston College has honestly changed my life for the better in nearly every way possible, when I first started, I was at my lowest point, but the College has given me, confidence, happiness, friends and a direction. I honestly cannot thank the staff at Weston enough for changing my life for the better. ”

**Toby** studied *Into Work* and has now moved into paid employment and progressed to the Level 2 Media course.



“ I enjoyed being able to fully immerse myself as a student-athlete, combining my academic studies and sporting participation. I'm so proud to have achieved a grade profile of d\*d\*d\*, alongside captaining county rugby and gaining entry to Bristol Bear's Centre of Excellence. ”

**Cassidy** was a sport student at the College and has now progressed to Loughborough University to study a degree in Sport Science, Coaching and Physical Education.



“ The course allowed me to continue working the job that I love while studying for a degree that gave me the opportunity to develop my career further. ”

**Patrick** studied Health and Social Care Practice at UCW alongside his role as a radiography trainee assistant practitioner.



“ The quality of teaching has been really positive, the staff are really understanding about us having lives outside of the course. The teachers are accommodating to the fact, that we need to have a bit more time and understanding, as some of us haven't studied in years, they understand this and support us where we need it. ”

On completion of the Level 3 Management course **Vernetta** aims to study at University so she can compliment what she's learnt on the job with a qualification that has enabled her to gain more skills.



# IMPACT ON EMPLOYERS

**Partnership working is a key focus of the Weston College Group. We work with businesses and organisations across the region and beyond to provide the skills that employers need for their future workforce.**

“ Weston College is an important partner for Visit Somerset, supporting businesses across Somerset and beyond. 2020/21 has been a challenging period for the visitor economy but the College has been visible and supportive, which is the exactly the spirit of our partnership – collaboration. In the past few years, we have successfully worked together to deliver projects including digital media and hosting events regarding the skills agenda, inclusivity and the importance of health and well-being. Going forward, we will collaborate to support businesses with the digital agenda. The value of this partnership is unrivalled, and the relationship is built on a foundation of partnership working and communication, with a shared agenda. ”

**John Turner**  
Chief Executive Office,  
Visit Somerset



“ We enjoy an excellent working relationship with Weston College. The pandemic has been a hugely challenging time for many businesses and it’s clear that the team are proactively supporting employers with options regarding both skills’ development and talent retention in a tightening labour market. Natwest are proactively engaging with future talent at Weston College through our Accelerator Hubs and Entrepreneurs. The Bank is a Careers Excellence Hub partner, supporting the future workforce, and our digital team are mentoring students in the Spacebar tech hub in Weston. We look forward to developing this rewarding relationship over the next 12 months, inspiring future talent, and helping businesses across the region invest in their people so they can embrace the opportunities the new economy is presenting. ”

**Matt Hatcher**  
Director, Natwest Bank



“ Weston College has been actively supporting businesses during a challenges time for employers. The College places a key focus on supporting SMEs, evidenced by its participation in the Workforce for the Future project funded by the West of England Combined Authority. Their online COVID-19 Recovery Hub provides clear guidance in one place, helpful for employers to understand the various government incentives available. We enjoy an excellent working relationship with the College, and we look forward to further collaboration in 2022 and beyond. ”

**Sam Holliday**  
Development Manager,  
Federation of Small Businesses



“ With many people being affected by the pandemic, Seetec Pluss continues to work with partners including Weston College to offer employment support to those seeking a new job or career. Weston College are a key partner for Seetec, a responsive training provider with excellent training facilities. The team understand partnership working and we look forward to further joint working in 2022 and beyond, ensuring many people across the region receive employability training and support, transitioning into careers with local employers. ”

**Stewart Holdsworth**  
Strategic Partnerships Director,  
Seetec Pluss



“ Skills and recruitment continue to be a key issue for Lloyds business customers and Weston College offers courses and apprenticeships relevant for employers, providing industry-standard training facilities. By working with the team at Weston College, we have successfully delivered business events and they make it easy to work in collaboration in addressing the South West skills gaps. ”

**Chris Loach**  
Area Director, Bristol & Bath,  
Lloyds Bank





# IMPACT ON EMPLOYERS

“ Weston College is an important and valued member of the West of England Initiative at Business West. 2020/21 has presented many challenges, but the College have responded by being visible and supportive to businesses and stakeholders in the region. The College also continues to invest in high-quality training facilities supported by the West of England Institute of Technology. Through the Government agenda to align industry with skills provision, we look forward to working with Weston College to develop our Local Skills Improvement Plan, ensuring skills provision continues to meet the needs of regional employers. ”

**James Durie**  
Chief Executive,  
Bristol Chamber & West of England Initiative,  
Business West



“ Weston College is an important and valued partner of Somerset Chamber of Commerce. 2020/21 has presented many challenges, but the College has responded by being visible and supportive to both the Chamber and our business membership throughout the pandemic. Skills and recruitment remain an important theme for our region to prosper in 2022 and beyond, and I'm confident that our excellent relationship with the College, which is built on a foundation of strong communication and a shared agenda, will continue to evolve for the benefit of the region. ”

**Alistair Tudor**  
Commercial Operations Manager,  
Somerset Chamber of Commerce



“ Wessex Water now have over 100 apprentices training with Weston College. Apprenticeships are an important part of our workforce development strategy and we have accessed a range of provision and trained construction civil engineers, to engineering maintenance and water process technicians, and we have maximised our apprenticeships levy to upskill managers. The College understands our business and vision for developing our staff, and through strong account management, we work collaboratively based on a spirit of partnership and collaboration. We look forward to developing our relationship with Weston College in 2022 and beyond. ”

**Becca Thurston**  
Early Careers Manager, Wessex Water



“ Weston College is a key local partner for Weston Chamber of Commerce, supporting businesses in the town to access skills advice and training programmes. We have joined forces on various initiatives during the pandemic through a spirit of communication and collaboration. The College is working with the Chamber to support a new vision for Weston through the Weston Place Agency, ensuring our local businesses thrive following the pandemic. ”

**Sue Shillabeer**  
President, Weston Chamber of Commerce



“ As a large regional employer offering a wide range of exciting career opportunities it is fantastic to collaborate with Weston College across a number of initiatives. Weston College delivers excellent training solutions for local businesses using innovative and leading edge facilities, with strong community outreach and skills programmes. We look forward to continuing to developing our partnership further in the future. ”

**Dave Lees**  
CEO, Bristol Airport





# AWARDS

**In 20/21 the College was recognised regionally and nationally for both its leadership and its impact within Apprenticeships, and as a leader of Wellbeing (even beyond the sector at the UK National Business Awards).**

It was a stellar year for the amount of national GOLD Awards won - with the Principal recognised at the highest level in receiving a GOLD National Pearson Teaching Award (Lifetime Achievement) combined with a GOLD at the UK Business Awards as well as being crowned Principal of the Year at the National Centre for Diversity (FREDIE) Awards.

The College was also recognised on the world stage at the World Federation of Colleges and Polytechnics Global Excellence Awards winning SILVER for its Student Support Model and the College's use of technology receiving national recognition as a finalist at both the TES and Beacon Awards.

The College's wider work as a champion of diversity saw it highly commended at the WorldSkills UK National Diversity and Inclusion Hero's Awards for both its leadership and its significant work for widening participation within its Advanced Engineering provision. Finally, the College's tremendous progress throughout COVID-19, saw all its staff recognised at the South West Business Leader Awards as a finalist in the COVID-19 Hero category.



Promoting Apprenticeships  
Campaign of the Year



Principal of the Year



Inclusive Leading  
Leadership Award



National Teaching Award for  
Lifetime Achievement



Wellbeing at Work



Leader of the Future



Platinum



Leadership - Student  
Support Services





# THIS YEAR IN HEADLINES



## A LEVEL STUDENTS EXCEL AGAIN!

For the sixth year running the College achieved a 99% pass rate; this year it has been demonstrated across the twenty-three subjects delivered with sixteen of those subjects enjoying 100% pass rates. The highest grades were achieved by 80% of learners.



## SMASHED APPRENTICESHIP TARGET!

The College successfully managed to attract 323 apprenticeship opportunities in just 80 days from its campaign 300 in 100.



## RESIDENTS GET A GLIMPSE OF FUTURE

The College and the WEIoT held a 3-day 'Future Tech Weston' event showcasing technology, from drones to electrical cars, with the aim of demonstrating how future technology will impact our region.



## APPRENTICES WINNERS AT E.ON

Apprentices Darren and Jake, announced as winners at E.ON awards ceremony, winning Apprentice Ambassador of the Year, and ACE Apprentice of the Year, respectively.



## OUTSTANDING APPRENTICE AWARD

Commis Chef Apprentice, Daniel, wins Outstanding Apprentice of the Year in Hospitality, Travel and Customer Service at Bristol and Bath Live Awards.



## UCW STUDENT NATIONAL FINALIST FOR THE RETURN TO LEARNING AWARD

University Centre Weston graduate Anna was a finalist for the Return to Learning Award at national Festival of Learning Awards.



## INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR ACADEMY ATHLETES

Three students achieved international success – Bailey selected for England U19s colleges football team plus Lottie and Katie picked for England U18s TGD Rugby Squad.



## FOUR WORLDSKILLS FINALISTS

Beauty, Motor Vehicle and two Computing students (Amelia, Luke, Oran and Jack) make it to national WorldSkills finals.



## HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE ACCOLADE

Health and Social Care learner Ellie wins prestigious Health and Social Care accolade at 2021 BTEC Awards.



## GLASTONBURY CREATOR, MICHAEL EAVIS, OPENS COLLEGE'S CREATIVE ARTS FESTIVAL

Celebrating the College's annual festival which brings together creative talents by showcasing the learner's exceptional work.



## CURRICULUM LEAD NAMED AS TES FE HEROES

Weston College's Curriculum Lead for Hair and Beauty, Jenna Ratcliffe features as a TES FE Hero.



## COLLEGE LAUNCHES UK'S FIRST VIRTUAL CLASSROOM AS PART OF WEIoT

Weston College has partnered with Jisc and Barco to build trailblazing 'virtual classroom' to support West of England Institute of Technology.



# THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

## Finance

### Income

<b>£33,122,000</b>
Funding Body Grants
<b>£8,247,000</b>
Tuition fees & contracts
<b>£11,458,000</b>
Other Grants and contracts
<b>£16,521,000</b>
Other Income
<b>£23,000</b>
Investment Income
<b>£69,371,000</b>
Total Income

### Surplus

<b>£129,000</b>
Surplus before other gains and losses
<b>£356,000</b>
Surplus after disposals and tax (Gains)
<b>£2,705,000</b>
Surplus before pension adjustments (ESFA Specific)

### Expenditure

<b>£40,717,000</b>
Staff Costs
<b>£218,000</b>
Restructuring Costs
<b>£25,083</b>
Other operating expenses
<b>£2,350,000</b>
Depreciation
<b>£874,000</b>
Interest & other finance costs
<b>£69,242,000</b>
Total Expenditure

## Demographics

### Students by Gender

<b>47.9%</b>
Male
<b>52.1%</b>
Female

### Students by Age

<b>44.1%</b>
Under 21
<b>21.2%</b>
21-30
<b>34.7%</b>
Over 30

### ADULTS

more than 7,197 people aged 19 or over are enrolled at the College; 1,324 on an apprenticeship and 1,045 studying higher education courses at University Centre Weston.

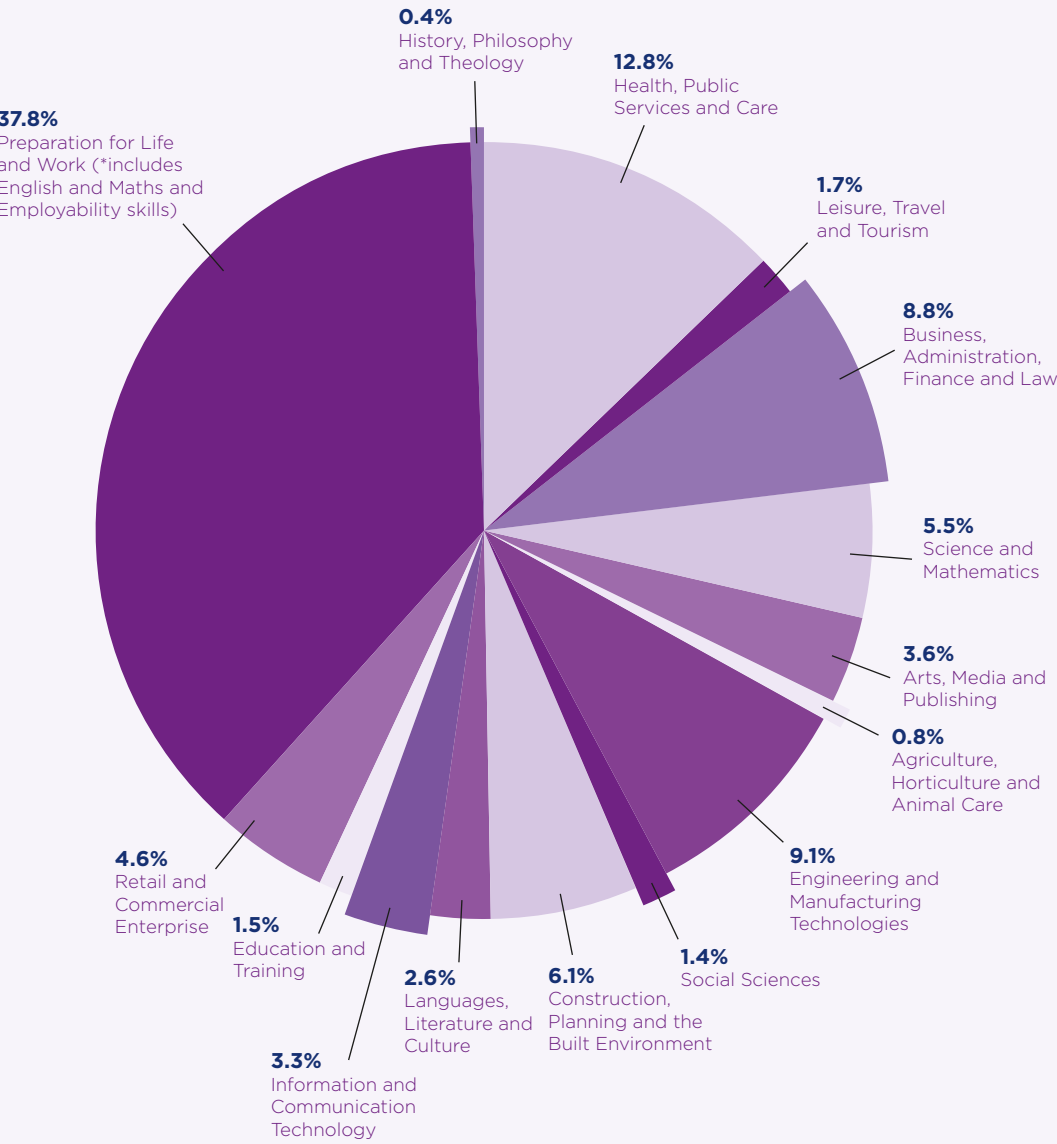
### Number of enrolments (UCW)

<b>734</b>
Full-time
<b>311</b>
Part-time

### Number of enrolments

<b>24</b>
Under 16
<b>8,913</b>
16 to 18
<b>15,358</b>
19 and over
<b>24,295</b>
Total

### Enrolments by Area



All numbers presented subject to external audit inspection.



# CORPORATION DURING THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2020/21

Governor	Role	Background
Dr Paul Phillips	Principal and Chief Executive	Education, Business and Finance
Andrew Leighton-Price	Chair of Corporation, Chair of Remuneration Committee, Chair of PEF, Contracts and Commercial and Subsidiary Boards	Audit and Finance
Chris Carter	Vice Chair of Corporation Chair of Finance Committee	Legal
Jo Midgley	Vice Chair of Corporation Chair of CQC Governance Committee Chair of Curriculum Committee	Higher Education
Ian Porter	Lead Governor for Health and Safety	Industry
Grahame Payne	Lead for Safeguarding from March 2021	
Paul Ashbee	Governor	Industry
Gemma Day	Governor	Commercial and HR

Governor	Role	Background
Ann Driver	Governor	Education and Governance
Simon Earles	Governor (until Feb 2021)	Industry
Alex Nestor	Governor	HR and Commercial
Mark Canniford	Chair of Audit Committee and Lead Governor for Safeguarding	Commercial
Fiona Waters	Staff Governor (non-academic)	Education
Maxine Park	Staff Governor (Academic)	Education
John Penrose	Corporation Associate	Education
George Reah	Associate Governor	Industry
David Jacobs	External Advisor Audit Committee	Audit



# CONTACT US

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**[enquiries@weston.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@weston.ac.uk)**

**Knightstone Campus**

Knightstone Road, Weston-super-Mare,  
BS23 2AL

**Loxton Campus**

Loxton Road, Weston-super-Mare,  
BS23 4QU

**South West Skills Campus**

Locking Road, Weston-super-Mare,  
BS22 8NL

**Construction Training Centre**

Locking Head Drove, Weston-super-Mare,  
BS24 7NA

**Winter Gardens**

South Parade, Weston-super-Mare,  
BS23 1AJ



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