

**Strategy description:**

This strategy is the overview of HE in relation to the College's Strategic Goals and Enablers and Key Performance Indicators 2015 – 18. The supporting document HE Development Plan details the actions required for 2015 -16 and is reviewed and revised for each academic year as part of this strategy.

**Supporting documentation:**

- HE Curriculum Development Plan
- HE Scheme document 2015/16
- HE Growth Plan
- HE Staff Development Plan (*to follow*)
- HE Marketing Plan (*to follow*)

**Links to other strategies and policies:**

- Strategic Plan 2015-18
- Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy
- Human Resources and Quality Strategy
- Observation of Learning and Teaching and Support Policy
- Public Sector Equality Duty and Single Equality Scheme
- Accommodation and Estates Strategy
- Marketing Strategy 2014-16

# Contents

## 1. Executive Summary

The HE Strategy has been developed through an analysis of the local circumstances and the wider education policy context which will impact on the College's Strategic and Operational Planning for the future. The most important factor driving the strategic direction of the College's higher education relates to the deficit reduction plans of the government, which are impacting on the funding available from the funding council. The government's aim is to make the beneficiaries of education, employers and students pay through fees, which are set by individual providers within the framework set by HEFCE. In addition the College is seeking to expand the curriculum, achieve continuous quality improvement and contribute to the long term sustainability of the organisation and ensure it continues to effectively meet the needs of the community and its students now and in the future.

## 2 Context

The whole College curriculum is broad and offers a wide range of subject areas, modes of attendance and work based training opportunities throughout the Craven and travel to Craven area. Higher education provision is mainly developed by building on the expertise established within further education. The College is the only provider of higher education in the local area, the nearest HE provision by colleges and universities in West and North Yorkshire and East Lancashire are more than 20 miles away. The College has a major role to play in building the capacity of its students, staff and local communities to effectively participate in higher education, which will contribute to the pool of higher level technicians and qualified people in the regional economy. Of particular significance is the sector's role in facilitating social inclusion and sustainable regional development. Higher education is currently delivered on the College's main Aireville and linked Auction Mart campuses in Skipton and at The Aviation Academy at Leeds Bradford International Airport.

The majority of the courses in the College's higher education portfolio do not compete directly with those universities and colleges located relatively close to Craven. The previous strategy focussed on an expanding portfolio, however most courses were available on a part-time basis only, due to funding restrictions. Therefore, in the past, growth was limited. Despite these restrictions development focussed on mainly vocational, niche programmes.

Strengths of the College's higher education provision:

- QAA Review – full confidence in Higher Education provision (July 2012)
- Innovative, well qualified, vocationally experienced and enthusiastic staff
- Student support and guidance arrangements
- Very good teaching
- Range and depth of the curriculum
- Reputation – welcoming and effective
- Recruitment of non-traditional students (widening participation)
- HE Scheme
- Partnership and collaborative working
- Strong relationship with employers in some sectors

- Community partnerships
- Governance, leadership and management
- Attractive locations and campuses
- Connections to West Yorkshire and the Leeds City Region

Areas for further improvement/scope for development:

- Further development of accommodation, information technology, equipment and student social space, including creation of University Zones (Uni Zones)
- Increased number of full-time courses/students
- Develop stronger and more relationships with employers and sector bodies across all sectors
- Expand formal mechanisms for involving students as partners in their learning

### **3 Strategic Goals**

#### **3.1.0 Quality Excellence and Innovation**

To deliver good value, high quality learning for all students leading to successful outcomes and progression.

**3.1.1 Enhance the student experience** Expansion of higher education student numbers and the number of qualifications is leading to a more diverse student population. The student profile was predominantly mature, part-time evening students and is becoming younger, full-time with day-time delivery. This makes different demands on the College's accommodation and facilities. The College will continually enhance and improve accommodation, IT, equipment and student social space. Varying methods of establishing an HE Identity within the FE environment will be explored and established to maintain the rich variation of vocational delivery while responding to the needs of students on higher level courses. The College will continue to widen participation and recruit with integrity. The College will develop a range of opportunities for students to become partners in their own learning. Student Voice will continue to be routinely sought and acted upon, and enhanced by extending formal student engagement mechanisms, including: encouraging students to take an active part in the NUS; representation onto the Academic Board; formal involvement in course design and in quality assurance and enhancement; student feedback regarding EE reports; regular meetings with senior leaders.

**3.1.2 Raise teaching standards** Higher education teaching staff aspire to deliver high standards of teaching, design challenging, interesting assessments and support students to develop their learning skills, particularly as independent learners. Well structured and populated Course VLEs are crucial in this process. Teaching groups are relatively small for the higher education sector which provides a more personalised learning experience. Staff new to teaching higher education are inducted by the HE Development Manager and closely supported through their first semester by the relevant HE Sector Tutor (HEST). Staff are observed as part of the College's lesson observation policy, further and/or specific support is put in place when needed. The annual HE Staff Development Plan is supplemented during the year with further improvement plans as development needs arise, and delivered alongside individual CPD plans. Staff are encouraged and supported to maintain currency

with their sector and undertake external examining roles to deepen their expertise. The Scholarly Activity Group encourages and supports relevant activities and is open to all staff and will become involved in the Higher Education Academy's (HEA) National Teaching Fellowship Scheme.

**Key performance Indicators**

- Student retention, achievement and success
- Increased formal student engagement
- High quality teaching
- Internal audit findings, including Course VLEs
- HEA Fellowships
- Effectiveness of performance reviews
- QAA HE Review outcome

**3.2.0 Skills and Employability**

To ensure students develop the necessary knowledge, skills, aptitudes and abilities to:

- Secure, retain and develop career and employment opportunities to support economic growth and development in the region
- Contribute as a good and effective citizen within the Community

**3.2.1 Develop curriculum according to capacity, demand and need** The HE Scheme and college internal processes support curriculum developments that respond to demand, changes in the economy and/or build on the strengths and expertise of staff. Developments during the next planning period include revalidations to update and expand existing provision; exploring the franchise of an Honours degree in Coaching, Counselling and Mentoring; the continued re/introduction of Higher Nationals; and expansion of top up degrees as internal progression for existing students. In specific industry/sectors where higher level skills are in short supply and the College does not have established higher education expertise, such as mental health or engineering, building capacity will be investigated and a realistic timescale for introduction considered. Courses will be reviewed and renewed as they go forward for validation or approval. All courses previously only offered part-time will also be offered full-time due to the removal of the Student Number Control (SNC) by HEFCE in 2015 on full-time student numbers.

**3.2.2 Improve achievement and progression** Students will continue to be encouraged and supported to achieve to their best capability, the distance travelled being monitored by the College. Students will be able to access advice and guidance regarding progression, whether into employment or/and higher study. The College will continue to develop a '2+1' approach, offering honours degrees (top up) and full-time 3 year/part-time equivalent full honours degree programmes, where capacity and demand can be developed or already exists.

Foundation Degree (or equivalent) 2 years full-time or 3 years part-time	<b>progress to</b>	BA or BSc (Hons) 1 year full-time or 2 years part-time
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BA or BSc (Hons) degree 3 years full-time or 5 years part-time		

It is widely recognised that engagement with SMEs and micro businesses in formal education is challenging, however the College has excellent relationships across many sectors. As the College's higher education provision is vocational, employer (and employer organisation) involvement is crucial and existing engagement will continue to be expanded and developed, including work placement opportunities and internships. The College will deploy the knowledge of both vocational and qualified careers advisors to support students to investigate their progression options.

**Key Performance Indicators**

- Student progression into sector related employment or higher study (DLHE)
- Increased employer and sector body engagement
- Structured support for progression

**4 Strategic Enablers**

**4.1.0 Partnerships and Collaboration**

To partner and collaborate with educational providers, public and private bodies and employers to support the local and national economic development priorities.

**4.1.1 Effective HE Partnerships** The College has developed a number of enduring and positive relationships with validating universities and HE networks and continues to seek stability in all relationships. The College will continue to work positively to develop long-term, sustainable and productive relationships with universities, networks, community organisations and employers to enable provision of student learning opportunities in a range of subject, sector and professional areas. The College will seek to develop productive relationships with other FE colleges that offer HE to share ideas, expertise and provide external quality assurance.

**4.1.2 Positive relationships with Secondary Schools** The College is in an excellent position to build on existing good relationships with schools and to offer expertise regarding progression to higher education. With the focus on student debt and whether academic degrees lead to real jobs, plus the raising of the participation rate, the College is well placed to be involved in advice and guidance to sixth form staff, students in sixth forms (and their parents) regarding the value employers place on vocational higher education and the College's track record of employability.

**Key Performance Indicators**

- Quality of partnerships and range of collaborations with key stakeholders
- Compliance with Awarding Organisation requirements
- Activities with schools within the College's current network
- Increasing the number of schools within the College's network

## 4.2.0 Finance and Facilities

To implement the College's Accommodation and Estates Strategy to:

- Support the delivery of high quality learning and teaching and student outcomes and progression
- Develop up-to-date and modern learning and teaching facilities to enable the delivery of learning and skills which support the local and national economic priorities
- Promote sustainability and respect for the environment

To contribute to a financial strategy that secures longer term financial sustainability of the College and the achievement of the College's strategic aims

**4.2.1 Increase in Student Numbers/Funding** Removal of the SNC is the College's opportunity to move to more full-time provision, therefore courses which previously could only be offered part-time will be developed as full-time courses. The College will seek to maximise funding allocations and increase HE numbers year on year including recruitment of students who already hold a level 5 or above qualification.

**4.2.2 Facilitate Financial Viability** Higher education income provides a further income stream to the College and contributes to overall financial stability. HE is delivered within specialist areas, so duplication of resources is not necessary. Resources provided initially for higher education enrich the further education environment. Teaching groups are relatively small for the HE sector as a whole, however small class sizes are not uncommon in college-based HE. Scheduling and timetabling is effective in ensuring the most efficient delivery possible while maintaining educational standards. As programmes are revalidated and/or new programmes introduced they will be designed and structured to provide further common modules wherever possible and relevant. This will enable combined teaching to larger groups.

**4.2.3 Increase Tuition Fees** The Office of Fair Access (OFFA) approves OFFA Agreements which enable higher education providers to charge a fee higher than £6,000 per year to full-time students (pro rata for part-time students). The College will submit an application to increase fees to £6,600 in 2016/17 for those enrolling onto the first year, or a one year course. This will increase the income to the College, some of which will be allocated as specified in the proposed OFFA Agreement, to support bursaries and scholarships where needed.

### Key performance Indicators

- Contribution to the College's annual operating surplus
- Growth in full-time enrolments
- Annual growth in income
- OFFA Agreement Approved
- Successful implementation of the College Accommodation and Estates Strategy

## 4.3.0 Equalities and Inclusion

To promote equality of opportunity for all students and staff, and advance social inclusion by removing barriers to learning, progression and employment.

**4.3.1 Widen access to increase opportunities for participation** The College aims to minimise barriers to applicants, pursue positive recruitment policies to ensure maximum open access as embedded in the College's Public sector Equality Duty and Single Equality Scheme, whilst ensuring that applicants are well suited to the courses. Entry requirements in terms of UCAS points will be held relatively low. Prospective students will be able to make informed decisions. Public information is presented clearly and consistently and is accurate both externally and internally, key communication channels being the website (including Key Information Sets and other relevant statistics), the HE Directory and entries in UCAS. The College will seek to further develop relationships with schools sixth forms to enable smooth progression.

**4.3.2 Effective Marketing** The HE Sector has become more of a competitive environment due to the removal of the SNC cap. Promotion of HE will focus on the College's unique aspects: degree with a vocational focus, strong relationships with employers/sectors and enterprise to lead to real jobs; safe and attractive campuses; personal contact and support; competitive tuition fees and a bursary for those who already hold a degree/equivalent and are seeking a career change (with further bursaries and support available, subject to the approval of the OFFA Agreement).

Activities will focus on the expansion of internal and external marketing activities regarding higher education, externally building links with school sixth forms, to include their students and tutors, to provide full and accurate information regarding vocational degrees and the advantages of local higher education. Involvement in projects to support dedicated staff will facilitate this. Additionally, current students may be asked to take part in these activities to provide the Craven College student perspective. Local secondary school sixth form heads will receive information regarding the degree achievements of their past pupils. The website and UCAS entries will be developed to be attractive to school leavers and include videos and other animation wherever possible.

The student perspective will be gained through student engagement and involvement in marketing activities and materials. The HE Sector Tutors will be involved in creating marketing campaigns directly relevant to their sectors, making good use of existing employer relationships, networks and existing events. The profile of higher education within College will be raised through a range of internal progression activities and promotions supported by the HE Sector Tutors.

#### **Key Performance Indicators**

- Proportion of students progressing to higher education from the College
- Staff and student origins representative of College's service area
- Recorded instances of grievances, incidents and complaints of discrimination
- Enrolments and success of students from disadvantaged and hard to reach groups and areas
- Numbers of students from disadvantaged groups accessing the curriculum

- Allocation of Disabled Student Allowance
- Internal promotion and marketing events for higher education
- Relationship with secondary schools, particularly staff and students in sixth forms
- Student engagement in marketing

## **5. Supporting documents**

- 5.1 HE Curriculum Development Plan 2015/16 – 2017/18
- 5.2 HE Growth Plan
- 5.3 HE Scheme 2015/16
- 5.4 HE Staff Development Plan 2015/16
- 5.4 HE Marketing Plan 2015/16



5.1 HE Curriculum Development Plan (Offer) 2015 – 2018

School	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Digital and Creative Industries	BA (Hons) Fine Art FD Make-up & Prosthetics for Performance  HNC Performing Arts HNC Media Production HNC Computing	BA (Hons) Fine Art FD Prosthetics for Performance FD Make-up & Fashion BA (Hons) Media Make-up??  FD Photography & Graphics BA (Hons) Photography & Graphics  HNC Performing Arts HND Performing Arts HNC Media Production HND Media Production HNC Computing HNC Computing	FD Prosthetics for Performance FD Make-up & Fashion BA (Hons) Media Make-up??  FD Photography & Graphics BA (Hons) Photography & Graphics  HNC Performing Arts HND Performing Arts HNC Media Production HND Media Production HNC Computing HNC Computing
Service and Construction Industries	C&G Beauty Therapy	C&G Beauty Therapy	C&G Beauty Therapy
Community and Public Service	FD Young Children’s Learning and Development BA (Hons) Young Children’s Learning and Development HNC Public Services Management	FD Young Children’s Learning and Development BA (Hons) Young Children’s Learning and Development HNC Public Services Management  BA (Hons) Coaching, Counselling and Mentoring	FD Young Children’s Learning and Development BA (Hons) Young Children’s Learning and Development HNC Public Services Management HND Public Services Management  BA (Hons) Coaching, Counselling and Mentoring
Land-based Studies and Engineering	FD Animal Science and Management FD Equine Science and Husbandry FD Countryside and Conservation Management BSc (Hons) Countryside and Conservation FD Garden Design	FD Animal Science and Management FD Equine Science and Husbandry FD Countryside and Conservation Management BSc (Hons) Countryside and Conservation FD Garden Design	FD Animal Science and Management FD Equine Science and Husbandry FD Countryside and Conservation Management BSc (Hons) Countryside and Conservation FD Garden Design BA (Hons) Garden Design
Professional and Leisure Industries	AAT Technician FD Business Management FD Venue & Events Management FD Hospitality Business Management FD Travel Operations Management BA (Hons) Service Sector Management (Top-up)	AAT Technician FD Business Management FD Venue & Events Management FD Hospitality Business Management FD Travel Operations Management BA (Hons) Service Sector Management (Top-up)	AAT Technician FD Business Management FD Venue & Events Management FD Hospitality Business Management FD Travel Operations Management BA (Hons) Service Sector Management (Top-up)

	FD Aviation Management and Operations  FD Aviation Management and Operations –Pilot Studies BSc (Hons) Air Transport Management (Top-up)  FD Sports Coaching & Physical Education	FD Aviation Management and Operations  FD Aviation Management and Operations –Pilot Studies BSc (Hons) Air Transport Management (Top-up)  FD Sports Coaching & Physical Education BSc (Hons) Sports Coaching & Physical Education	FD Aviation Management and Operations  FD Aviation Management and Operations –Pilot Studies BSc (Hons) Air Transport Management (Top-up)  FD Sports Coaching & Physical Education
Learning & Development	Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training	Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training	Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training
HE and Access to HE	BA (Hons) English and Creative Writing	BA (Hons) English and Creative Writing	BA (Hons) English and Creative Writing

## 5.2 Higher Education Growth Plan

### Forecasted growth in student numbers

	Part-time	Full-time	Total	FTEs	Including hons/top ups
<b>2012/13</b>	228	147	375	300	20
<b>2013/14 targets</b>	134	198	332	288	34
<b>Actual</b>	173	184	357	289	25
<b>2014/15 targets</b>	152	215	367	317	60
<b>actual</b>	116	193	309	266	40
<b>2015/16 targets</b>	100	210	310	280	45
<b>actual</b>					
<b>2016/17 targets</b>	80	250	330	300	50
<b>2017/18 targets</b>	80	260	340	310	60