

ACCOUNTABILITY AGREEMENT 2023-24 MAY 2023



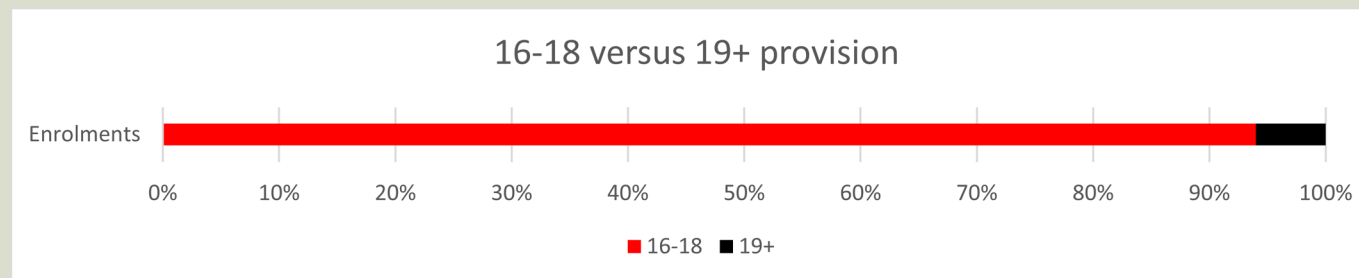
**PETER
SYMONDS
COLLEGE**
WINCHESTER

Approved by the Board of Governors 15 May 2023

PURPOSE

Peter Symonds College is an incorporated sixth form college situated in Winchester, Hampshire. The College currently has 4,394 16-18 year-old students who are almost exclusively full time. The vast majority of provision is A level, with around 90% of students following a 'pure' A level programme, and the majority of the remaining 10% following a mixed programme involving A levels and vocational courses. The vocational offer includes T levels (currently Education and Childcare), level 2 (OCR , Cambridge Technical Qualifications and GCSEs), level 3 courses from the BTEC and Cambridge Technical families, criminology and medical science (WJEC), and courses in beauty therapy and childcare. While the College is best known as a centre of excellence for A level provision for young people, it also has substantial provision for adult learners ranging from ESOL courses at E1 and E3, GCSE and level 2 vocational courses through to Access to HE and higher education courses. In the year 2020-21, 688 enrolments were recorded in the college's Adult and Higher Education Division. In 2020-21, there were 155 students on higher education courses, delivered in conjunction with the Universities of Middlesex and Chichester. The College also runs a substantial programme of leisure courses. The primary purpose of the College is to produce university-ready students who have an excellent grounding in their subjects and are skilled at navigating the independent learning strategies used at university. Alongside this, the College offers a range of 'second-chance' courses aimed at providing opportunities for both 16-18 and 19+ learners who have struggled to achieve high grades at GCSE and wish to enhance their employability in later life.

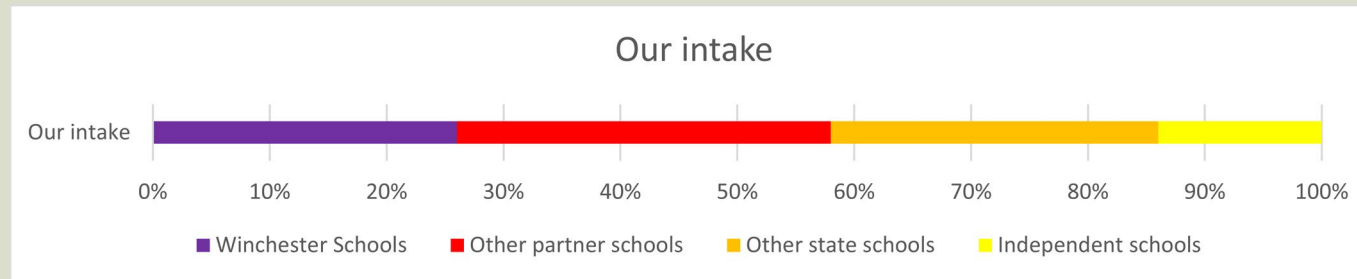
1: Curriculum offer: 16-18 versus 19+



As well as the 16-18 work for which the College is renowned, the College has an Adult and Higher Education Division offering 'second chance' courses (Access to HE, GCSEs) and vocational courses in a tightly focused range of curriculum routes (Counselling, Childcare, Hair and Beauty). In 2020-21, 19+ enrolments made up 5.7% of the College's offer.

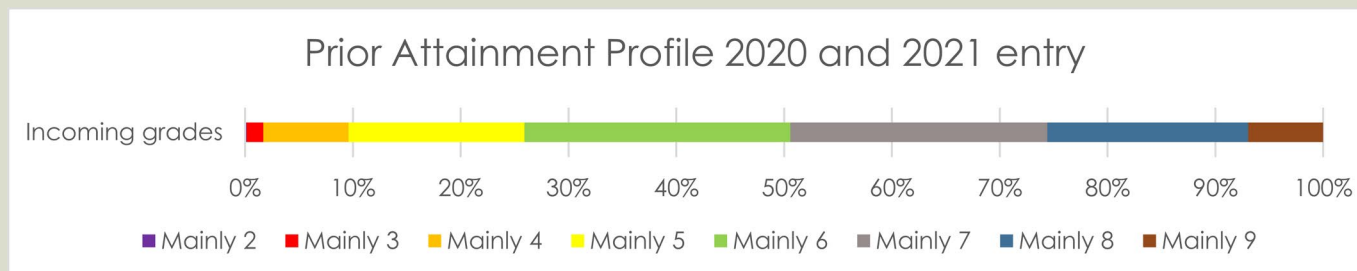
PURPOSE

2: College intake: 16-18 year olds



Just a quarter of the College's intake comes from Winchester, and in all the college engages with over 150 feeder schools. The College is also home to around 70 boarding students.

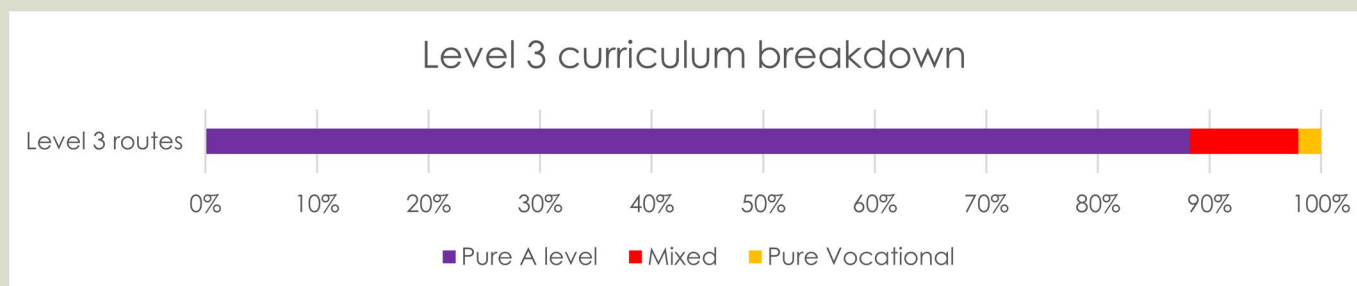
3: Prior attainment profile: 16-18 year olds: level 3



While the College is best known as one that attracts highly qualified learners, the College has an inclusive entry policy and a significant chunk of learners (around 10%) are averaging around the pass grade (grade four). It should be noted that the grades reported here are inflated grades from 2020 and 2021 GCSEs, and will fall going forward.

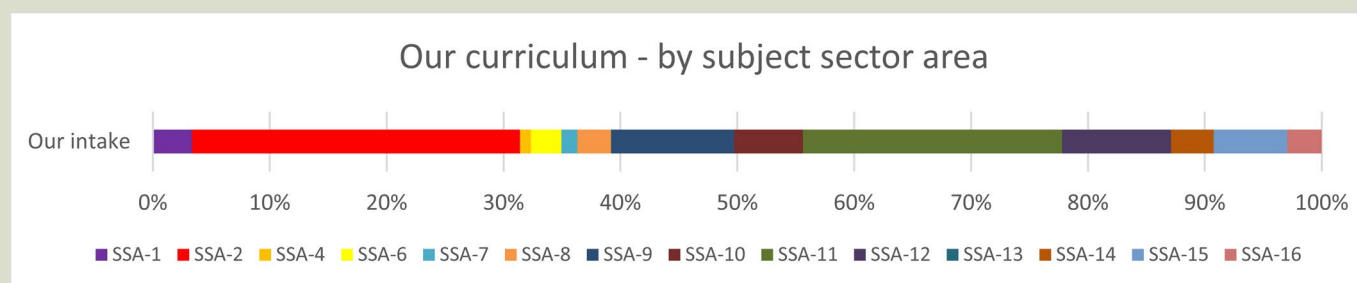
PURPOSE

4: Curriculum breakdown: level 3



While the vast majority of students pursue A level programmes, the College has a growing stable of vocational courses (BTEC, CTEC and WJEC) to cater for the needs of more modestly qualified students.

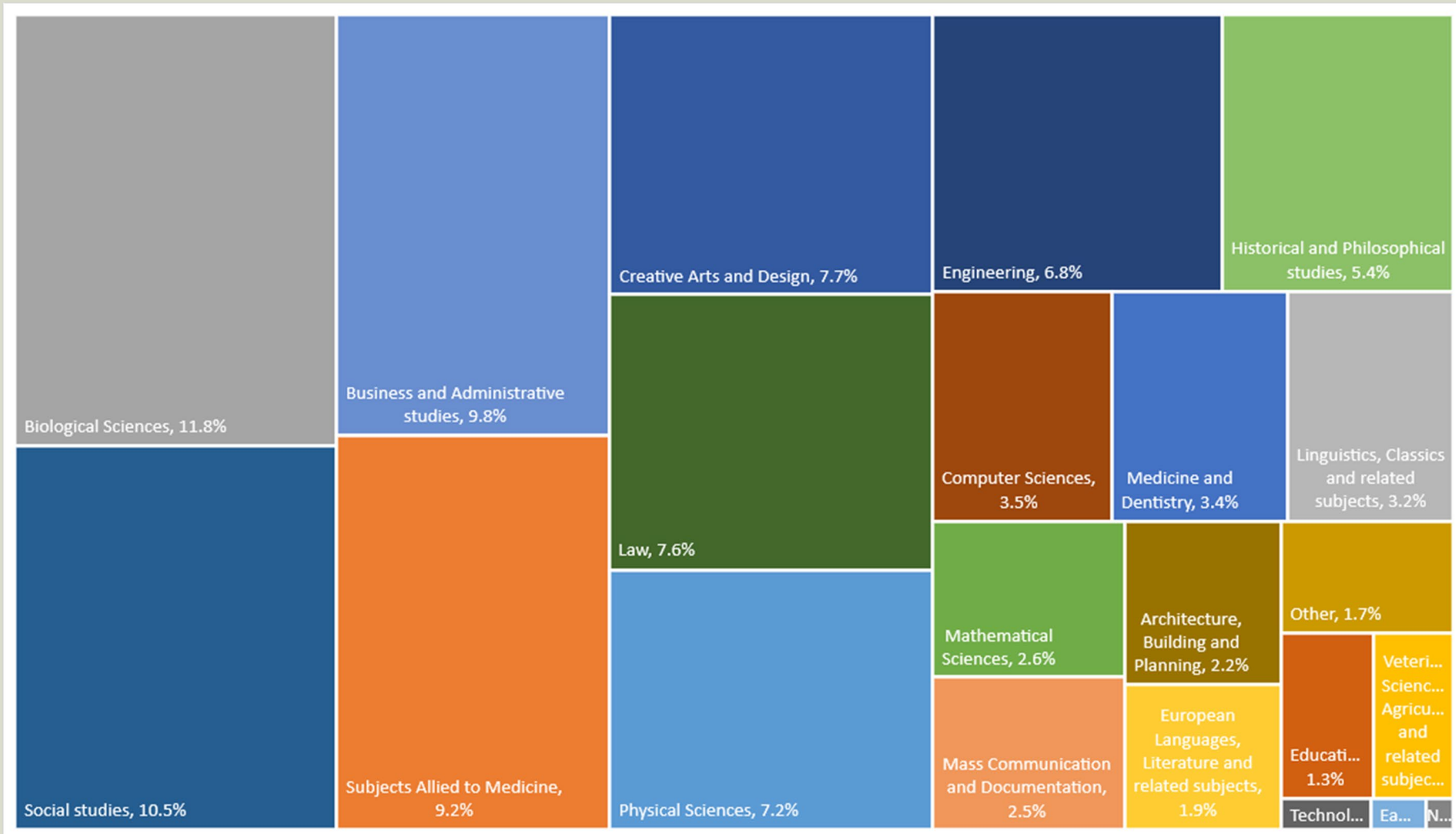
5: Curriculum breakdown: subject sector area



The analysis of enrolments by subject sector area (SSA) helps identify the largest curriculum areas in the College. The three largest areas are SSA 2 (Science and Mathematics), SSA 9 (Arts Media and Publishing), SSA 11 (Social Sciences) and SSA 12 (Languages, Literature and Culture).

PURPOSE

6: Destinations – within two years of leaving the College, 88% of students will have started courses at university. As such, our contribution to skills needs has a national focus rather than a local one. The subject breakdown of the university intake is as follows:



PURPOSE

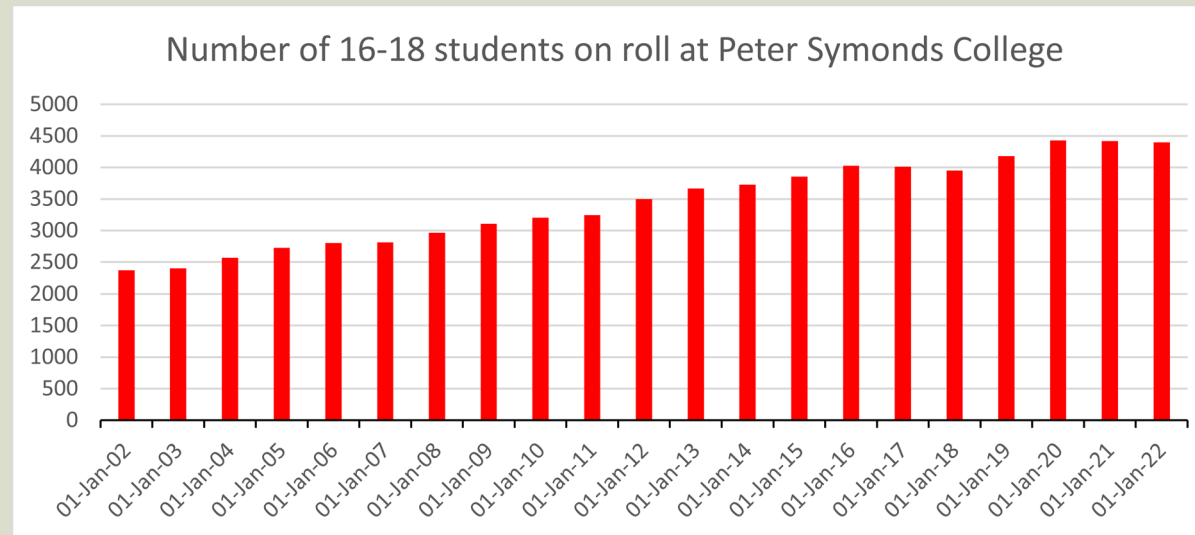
The ethos of Peter Symonds College centres on the individual. 'Counting in Ones' is our motto and is the principle which guides everything we do. Each student at the College deserves the very best and our primary purpose is to enable students to progress. Peter Symonds College is a diverse, inclusive and ambitious community in which each person is valued and encouraged to achieve. Students and staff are united in their enthusiasm for learning and the College is committed to providing a stimulating educational experience of the highest quality. Whatever their future aspirations, we nurture our students' potential and challenge them to develop personally, academically and creatively, and develop a sense of responsibility towards the communities of which they are a part.

OUR MISSION

- To be a sixth form college of size in order to utilise economies of scale and professionalisation of support services, and to offer a rich and diverse experience to students
- To offer a wide range of A level and level three vocational subjects to best meet the needs of individual learners
- To offer level two courses to 16-18 students to provide a pathway to level three study for students in Winchester and the surrounding area
- To offer courses to adults which allow progression in work
- To pursue a strategy of managed and sustained incremental growth in student numbers, twinned with sustained renewal of College buildings and facilities
- To provide an exceptional boarding experience
- To contribute to meeting the wider needs of the community through adult higher education provision
- To maintain an ethos of continual improvement and aim for excellence in everything we do, building on our strengths and responding decisively when provision falls short of excellence.

VISION

The College has long had a strategy of sustained managed growth; careful development of provision and capacity over time. In October 2022, the College opened a new twelve classroom block part-funded by a successful bid to the Capacity Improvement Fund.



Recent Developments

In recent years the College has focused on refining its 16-18 offer, and re-focusing courses available to 19+ learners.

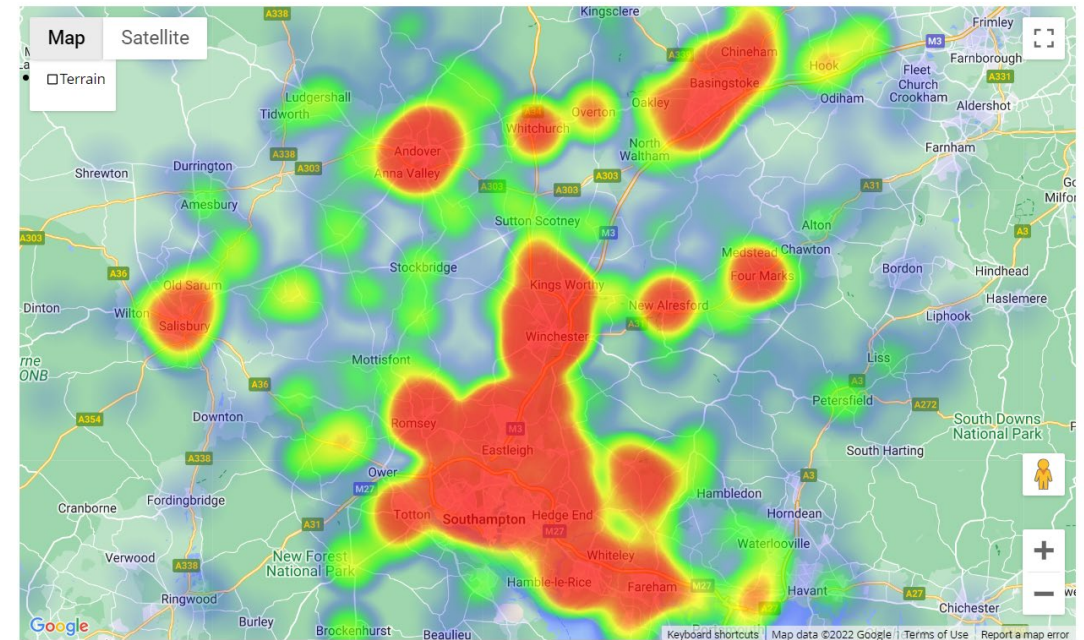
- In 16-18 provision, this has involved expanding the range of applied general courses to best meet the needs of students who have averaged around a 4 or 5 at GCSE.
- In 16-18 provision we have been one of the first group of colleges to offer T level qualifications, and in Summer 2022 we saw our first students achieve the T Level in Education and Childcare qualification.
- In our adult provision, we have withdrawn from offering apprenticeships. When these were introduced the intention was to become the provider of choice for Hampshire County Council, but the anticipated demand from this area was reduced when the Council introduced its own apprenticeship programmes.
- In our adult provision, we have withdrawn from functional skills qualifications in literacy and numeracy but have reintroduced ESOL courses to meet the needs of Ukrainian refugees hosted in the Winchester district, and further developed our work with adults with learning disabilities.

CONTEXT AND PLACE

Peter Symonds College is a sixth form college located in Winchester. Of its 4,394 full time learners, only a quarter are drawn from Winchester itself. The College draws students from across Hampshire, and has 70 boarding students. These are all ESFA funded students and we do not have Tier 4 status, so have no international students. The College's intake spans Hampshire and the Southampton and Portsmouth unitary authorities, with small numbers of students from Dorset and Wiltshire.

Our three largest contributors are the 11-16 schools in Winchester: Kings School, The Westgate School and the Henry Beaufort School. One thing that makes Hampshire unusual is the very small number of schools with a sixth form, and the fluidity of movement for post-16 study. Our location (200 metres from Winchester Railway Station) provides easy access for students from across Hampshire. 880 have railway season tickets (processed by the College) and we liaise with local bus providers to ensure bus provision matches student applications. 14% of our students were previously educated in the independent sector.

The boarding provision at the College has its origins in the military connections to Winchester, and in the past many students were the children of forces families. The withdrawal of UK forces from Germany (in particular) has reduced the proportion of students from a military background, but boarding remains full.



Our recruitment 'heat-map' reveals significant 'hot-spots' of recruitment some distance from the College with Salisbury, Basingstoke, Eastleigh, Southampton and Fareham seeing significant numbers of applications. In socio-economic terms, the College's intake is well above average. Using the IDACI measure which looks at the income context of the communities from which students are drawn, 60% of students are drawn from the top 25% of districts nationally.

APPROACH TO DEVELOPING THE PLAN

Much of the decision-making process around curriculum offer is driven by national intelligence about curriculum routes for 16-18 year olds derived from interaction with the Sixth Form Colleges Association, the Association of Colleges, the Wessex Group of Sixth Form Colleges and the Hampshire Principals Group. Senior Managers at the College are on the AoC Sixth Form Colleges portfolio group, the HE in FE group, the SFCA Curriculum and Quality Policy Group and the SFCA Governance Policy Group. This underpinning knowledge is complemented by interaction with students about course choices, direct interaction with universities and discussions around quality assurance, focusing on providing a curriculum of high quality which achieves its intended outcomes. Our 19+ vocational provision and work in the fields of childcare and education and hair and beauty involves significant interaction with employers.

Going forward we intend to pay particular attention to the Local Skills Improvement Plans produced by both the Enterprise M3 LEP and the Solent LEP. The draft plan for the EM3 LEP has been shared with providers and is included below. It focuses on general principles, rather than specific curriculum areas which need attention.

Key External Stakeholders

- Hampshire County Council
- ESFA territorial team
- Falkland Islands Government
- Employers (particularly for T level Education and Childcare, T Level Hair and Beauty Therapy, BA degree in Insurance)

Engagement with Other Providers in the Area (and beyond)

- Wessex Group of Sixth Form Colleges
- Hampshire Principals, Hampshire Vice Principals groups
- Sixth Form Colleges Association (SFCA), Association of Colleges (AoC), Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL)
- Local 11-16 providers to meet the needs of students with EHCPs
- Our eighteen partner schools, particularly the three Winchester schools: Kings, Westgate and Henry Beaufort
- Hampshire careers officers, deputy heads and heads of year
- Cambridge University and Trinity College Cambridge
- SUN university programmes, and compact arrangements with local universities (Winchester, Southampton and Southampton Solent)
- Russell Group universities

APPROACH TO DEVELOPING THE PLAN

Recent engagement with employers and charities regarding curriculum offer and design includes:

- Clinical Academy – Laser module for L4 advanced Beauty
- Ambitions Academy Trust – Bournemouth Education Degree links
- Ageas Insurance – MD Claims advised on content for Top-up only insurance programme
- T-level Hair and Beauty – Limewood, Winchester Hotel and Spa and many other local independent barbers, hairdressers and beauty salons
- Winchester City of Sanctuary – Development of ESOL programme for Ukrainian refugees
- International Rescue Committee – ESOL provision in the South East
- Blue Apple (learning disability charity for performing arts)
- GoLD – learning disability charity in Winchester
- Education and Training Foundation (work on development of Hair and Beauty T level qualification, including hosting regional events)
- Job Centre – (work on developing short courses in digital skills and starting your own business)
- Middlesex University (development of franchised MA in Education (Leadership and Management), working with a local executive headteacher on course content)

APPROACH TO DEVELOPING THE PLAN

National Skills Priorities:

- On 15 April 2023, the government published its national skills priorities. This identified key curriculum areas where recruitment needs are suspected to be particularly acute in coming years.
 - Construction
 - Manufacturing
 - Digital and Technology
 - Health and Social Care
 - Haulage and Logistics
 - Engineering
 - Science and Mathematics
- It also asks providers to prioritise a small number of high-quality programmes with a proven track record of delivering good outcomes for learners (T levels, skills bootcamps and apprenticeships)
- It recognises that sixth form colleges are more focused on academic provision and will not necessarily be involved in more vocationally focused programmes, but asks us to consider how we provide an offer that enables students to progress in priority areas
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1149695/DfE_accountability_agreement_guidance_April_2023_FINAL.pdf

APPROACH TO DEVELOPING THE PLAN

Emerging LSIP Priorities:

- The Draft LSIP priorities (for the Enterprise M3 and rest of Surrey) have been shared with providers, and are arranged around four themes. We have reviewed these priorities in formulating our contribution to national, regional and local priorities.

Overview: Draft priorities for change

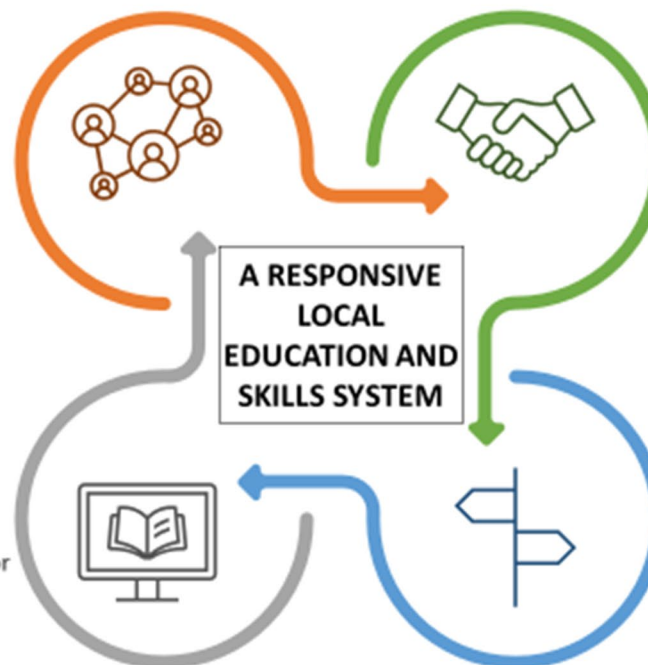
What is needed to make technical education and skills provision more responsive to the changing needs of employers and the local economy in the EM3 + rest of Surrey area?:

NETWORKS AND COLLABORATION

- Enhanced network approach and collaboration between FE providers at multiple levels across LSIP area
- Utilise existing employer networks and clusters, support them, and encourage the development of more

RESPONSIVE CURRICULUM

- Understand and consider the specific challenges and skills needs of key local sectors
- Develop clear and consistent approaches for the ways businesses can support and input on course delivery
- Embed cross-cutting skills development and interdisciplinary working into curriculums



DYNAMIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BUSINESSES AND PROVIDERS

- Identify opportunities to enhance the “connective tissue” between businesses and the FE sector
- Proactive engagement with larger “anchor” businesses to identify innovative solutions

INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

- Accessibility of information and support available to businesses
- Improved brokerage solutions to match the supply of skills with employer demand
- Support businesses to access “hidden” local talent

Contribution to National, Regional and Local Priorities

Aim / Target Outcome for 2023-24 Academic Year	Impact and Contribution to Strategic Aims, Skills Priorities and Priorities for Improvement
<p>1. To continue to provide an exceptional pathway to higher education with more students securing University places</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,750 students securing a university place in 2024 compared with 1,649 in 2021 	<p>The College has partnered with the University of Cambridge and Trinity College Cambridge to run the HE+ programme for Hampshire, focused on increasing participation from those groups which are historically under-represented in competitive university applications.</p> <p>We partner with the Southern Universities Network (SUN) to provide mentoring and support to university applicants from disadvantaged backgrounds.</p>
<p>2. To increase the numbers of students securing places to study Medicine and subjects allied to medicine at University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60 students securing a university place to study medicine in 2024 compared with 50 securing places in 2022 70 students to secure places on courses allied to medicine in 2024 (53 in 2022) 	<p>The College runs a ‘future medics’ programme aimed at maximising students’ chances of success in competitive university entrance. The number of successful applications to medicine is already remarkably high, as are the applicants to subjects allied to medicine (nursing (all routes), paramedic science, pharmacology and physiology).</p> <p>This is a national priority area.</p>
<p>3. To embed T levels as a sustainable element of the College’s curriculum portfolio</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To secure a distinction grade for all students completing T level in childcare (91% for 2022 cohort) To successfully introduce T level in hair and beauty from 2024/25 (target 20 places for September 2024 intake) Target completion of at least 40 T level students (in 2026) 	<p>The College has elected to develop T levels in two areas in which it has a track record of success in offering vocational provision and strong links with employers.</p> <p>Local ‘spa hotels’ have been particularly attracted by the T level route in Hair and Beauty and have already signed up to offering placements for our T level students.</p> <p>This is a national priority area.</p>

Contribution to National, Regional and Local Priorities

Aim / Target Outcome for 2023-24 Academic Year	Impact and Contribution to Strategic Aims, Skills Priorities and Priorities for Improvement
<p>4. To maintain and update the vocational curriculum offer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace WJEC Medical Science with BTEC Applied Human Biology for 2023 intake (target 40 starts in September 2023) • Target 70% progression to university in 2022 • To review the whole vocational offer and complete a benchmarking exercise against the national sixth form college offer • To monitor emerging government policy regarding applied general qualifications and position curriculum accordingly 	<p>We are committed to providing a route into subjects allied to medicine for students who would not thrive completing A level science subjects. The BTEC Extended Certificate in Applied Human Biology is attracting increasing numbers in sixth form colleges and has a good university progression record. The attractiveness of the BTEC brand will increase the numbers of students electing to take this programme as part of a mix of A level and vocational subjects.</p> <p>This is a national priority area.</p>
<p>5. To migrate provision to the new Carville Building, and plan for improvements in specialist provision in capacity released by this expansion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • House Business, Economics and Criminology in new building • Secure improved accommodation for Digital Music Technology and Music Performance; Performing Arts, Dance and Drama, and Art and Design courses. 	<p>The Carville Building is a twelve-classroom general purpose teaching block funded through an ESFA grant and matched funding from the College. The completion of this building in October 2022 brought significant additional capacity, and the movement of certain curriculum areas to the new block will release some accommodation to be re-purposed to improve accommodation for specialist vocational subjects for September 2023.</p>
<p>6. To complete investment programme in pastoral provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete restructure of pastoral and curriculum management (redistribution of subjects across five faculties rather than four) • Embed new roles in overall pastoral structure • Maintain two-year retention rate at 92% or higher; maintain 16-18 pass rate at 98% or higher 	<p>Our liaison with CAMHS, social services, Winchester schools and other local authority agencies has identified responding to post-pandemic mental health needs of students as an area of significant priority. During 2022-23 the College completed a £1,000,000 investment in strengthening its pastoral capacity. This includes the addition of one further faculty and associated pastoral staff, and strengthening of staffing in study support (particularly EHCP-facing staff), student services, security team, the Hub (mental health support) and Counselling.</p>

Contribution to National, Regional and Local Priorities

Aim / Target Outcome for 2023-24 Academic Year	Impact and Contribution to Strategic Aims, Skills Priorities and Priorities for Improvement
7. To plan for the introduction of digital skills courses for all 16-18 learners in 2023-24 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All learners to complete an accredited digital skills package as part of their first year at the College	While students are often believed to be 'digital natives', their understanding of basic software packages for work (Word, Excel, Access and PowerPoint) is not always as advanced as their skills at navigating social and other media. This is a key employability strand, and supports the EM3 LSIP's priority around developing cross-cutting skills. This is a national priority area.
8. To provide English Language provision for Ukrainian refugees <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To provide ESOL courses at both E3 and Level 1	To provide enhanced employability for those displaced by the war in Ukraine and settled in Winchester and district

CORPORATION STATEMENT

This Accountability Agreement was scrutinised by the Senior Management Team and the Policy and Resources Committee of the Corporation. It was endorsed by the Corporation of Peter Symonds College at its meeting on Monday 15 May 2023.

This document can be found on the Peter Symonds College website at www.psc.ac.uk.