



Hereward College

Promoting individual achievement



Strategic Plan

2025-28



Contents

Foreword	4
Mission and vision	6
Over 50 years of education and training	7
Key achievements from the last strategic plan period	10
Summary review of the 2021-24 strategic plan	11
Summary data	20
General context for the new strategic plan	22
The regional environmental and economic context	24
The learning and skills landscape	26
Strategic Intentions and Objectives 2025-28	28



Foreword

Writing the foreword to the last strategic plan in 2021, the focus was on the road to outstanding. We were therefore delighted when Ofsted inspectors graded the college as outstanding for high needs and strong for skills following their inspection two years later.

I'm pleased to report the Ofsted success was one of many impressive achievements during the last plan period.

We have recorded Outstanding Financial Health with the ESFA for the last five years, with healthy operational surpluses since 2022/23.

Overall pass rates have remained above national averages, with paid employment rates also consistently well above the national average.

Through fantastic employer partnerships we have delivered on our campus a new SES-sponsored engineering training facility and a Warwick Conferences-sponsored industry standard training kitchen. We have also worked closely with Whitbread on the development of the award-winning Thrive programme.

The 2021-24 plan had four strategic intentions:

- Working in learner-centred structures
- Improving teaching, learning and assessment
- Delivering responsibilities in partnerships
- Making the most of college resources

Specific objectives which were met include behaviour being graded outstanding by Ofsted and

the expansion of the breadth of provision with the launch of Foundation Blended and Aspire Blended.

Education quality improved from good to outstanding for high needs (97% of our student cohort), while the creation of our employer forum was key in the college attaining the highest grading of 'strong' for skills.

Paid work outcomes have remained very high as we worked hard to retain high profile employers and recruit new employer partners. Every learner who needs a work placement opportunity or experience of work has been able to have it.

Infrastructure investment has included government-backed certification scheme Cyber Essentials, while staff have enjoyed increased progression opportunities with new roles such as advanced practitioners, deputy curriculum managers, deputy care managers, higher level teaching assistants and SLT positions.

Retention, pass and achievement rates have been consistently high across all pathways, with 100% across the board for supported internships in 2023/24. Another indicator of the quality of education at Hereward is increasing student numbers, with a 25% rise in day students since 2018/19 to record levels.

The number of graduates gaining paid work outcomes is much higher than the national average of 4.8% for our cohort of learners, with paid work outcomes of 27%. These increase significantly for learners on supported internships, where 76% of learners who have employment as a target have secured work.

Looking forward to the next three years, an obvious challenge is the huge increase in the rate of young people with Education, Health and Care Plans at a time local authorities are under considerable financial strain. It is vitally important that the college's fees remain competitive and that the curriculum evolves with the emerging environment.

The regional economic context is reflective of the national skills shortage, with employers particularly struggling to fill roles in hospitality, logistics and health and social care. The college has tailored the curriculum and training offer to meet the needs of this skills gap, with distance learning Level 2 and 3 qualifications in health and social care and high-quality hospitality training in partnership with Warwick Conferences.

The change in government in 2024 has brought with it a number of new initiatives that need to

be considered, including a new body leading the development of national FE policy, Skills England. A new Ofsted framework is due in 2025 which will need to be considered in detail by the college. Local skills improvement plans and the accountability agreements which must address them are key strategic drivers for the sector.

Key challenges ahead include the maintenance and further improvement of the excellent environments, support and management structures that cater for the vast difference in need our learners have. This will be achieved by supporting confident and knowledgeable practitioners so that they are able to work across the many types of provision within the college.

To meet the career goals and aspirations to gain paid work which many learners at Hereward have, the curriculum must respond to the changing economic climate and local employer market – including the increasing need for digital skills with the increasing prominence of AI. The continued development of close partnerships with employers and local authority employment teams will be key.

The capital plan sets out a phased development of the campus over the three-year plan period which will increase learner capacity by 10% to meet increasing demand.

Projects include part of the residential home and the Hive business centre being converted into additional classroom space and the creation of a job shop. A 'heart of the college' redesign will see a new centre of excellence for independence and an improved vocational and sensory environment for all learners.

As our improvement journey continues apace, the next three years look set to be an exciting time for Hereward's staff and students.



Paul Cook MBE,
Principal and Chief Executive

Our mission and vision

Our mission

Hereward helps learners to make progress and realise their potential and ambitions. The creativity and skills of staff, working partnerships with the community and employers, ensure learners develop skills for life and work, achieve appropriate qualifications and develop safe and healthy lifestyles that prepare them for the future.

Our vision

Each learner's experience at Hereward College will prepare them for the next stage of their life, with outstanding employability skills and much greater control over their own future. Their growing independence and well-being will enable their talents to shine.



Over 50 years of dedicated education and training for learners with SEND



1973

Sir Herbert William Massie graduated from Hereward College with A Levels. Known as Bert Massie, he was a British disability rights campaigner. He served as Chairman of the Disability Rights Commission from 2000 to 2007, and was a founding Commissioner of its successor the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

GRAEae
THEATRE COMPANY

Graeae Theatre Company, an organisation for deaf and disabled artists, is formed by ex-student Nabil Shaban and ex-lecturer Richard Tomlinson.

1980

1971



College opens and eight months later is featured on ATV Today

1975



Jane Susan Campbell enrolled at Hereward College. She would go on to become Baroness Campbell of Surbiton DBE, a British disability rights campaigner and life peer.

1986

Hereward becomes the co-ordinating centre for the National Federation of Access Centres, with a membership of 20 centres across the UK at the time.

nnac
national network of
assessment centres



Former student and founder of Graeae Theatre
Dr Nabil Shaban opens the college's Performing Arts theatre.

2008



Ex-Hereward student Russell Smith launches his app, CarePair, which aims to connect carers and employers with one another.

2013



Nusrit 'Nelly' Shaheen stars in the 'Extraordinary People' documentary on BBC. The show documents her life as the oldest known survivor of Harlequin Ichthyosis.

2016



Hereward's new residential accommodation was opened by Estelle Morris MP, then Minister for Arts.

2003



Edward Timpson MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families, visited the college to talk to staff and students about their experiences.

2012



Jimmi Harkishin, who plays Dev in Coronation Street, visits Hereward College to open its new shop.

2015



Justin Tomlinson MP, Minister for Health and Disabilities, visits the college to celebrate the six month anniversary of the Premier Inn training centre.

2020



Hereward becomes the national delivery partner for Whitbread Group plc, the UK's largest hospitality provider, in their quest to transform the opportunities of learners with SEND via a national award-winning supported internship programme.

2024

2019



Student Emily Crilly competes in the Abu Dhabi Special Olympics and wins two gold and three silver medals in gymnastics.

2022

Employer partners working with the college



Key achievements from the last strategic plan period



Outstanding for High Needs
Strong for Skills
Outstanding Behaviour



Outstanding Financial Health 2019/20, 2020/21,
2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24



Development of national award-winning Thrive
Programme with Premier Inn



Sponsored engineering facility
on campus



Sponsored campus facility with
Warwick Conferences



Overall pass rates above national rates for three
consecutive years
Paid employment rates consistently above
national averages
Healthy operational surpluses achieved

Performance headlines:

Summary review of the 2021-24 strategic plan

The strategic plan for 2021-24 was developed under the four strategic intentions of the college. Here is a summary of progress under each heading.





The Hereward approach to working in learner centred structures

The management of behaviour in the college will be improved and become outstanding

Seen as pivotal to the development of outstanding outcomes for learners, the college developed innovative practice in the assessment and management of learners across the campus.

During the annual strategic conversation with the FE Commissioner team, the college was asked to share this practice with the wider sector. A grading of 'outstanding' by Ofsted for behaviour has been seen by the college team as a starting point for further innovation.

The college will further improve the campus environment so that it facilitates learning and reduces anxiety

A comprehensive sensory strategy has been used effectively to complement teaching and learning strategies and thus dramatically reduce behavioural issues across the campus.

A now mature strategy has become custom and practice within the college and has many enthusiastic champions.

The college will continue to explore where it can extend the breadth of its provision so that it can cater for a greater proportion of the SEND community

The popular Foundation Plus provision with custom-built teaching and learning facilities has been extended with the introduction of Foundation Blended.

The established Aspire provision has also been extended with the introduction of Aspire Blended, which gives learners more time in the main college whilst also allowing them a base within the Aspire provision.

Feedback on these programmes has been very positive, resulting in healthy intakes and further capital investment in resources. More investment is earmarked over the coming years with the target being improved outside environments to complement the high-quality internal facilities.

The residential home will be graded outstanding overall

The residential home has been awaiting inspection since 2021 and since that time has had a new registered manager and a new comprehensive quality assurance system covering all aspects of its provision.

Recent mock inspection activity has graded all aspects of the home as at least good with some areas approaching or at outstanding level.



Strategic Intention Two

The Hereward approach to improving teaching, learning and assessment

The college will meet the challenges of the next few years by elevating the quality of education from good to outstanding

All full-time provision in the college has been graded as outstanding by Ofsted. This provision covers all learners with Education, Health and Care Plans, with inspectors commenting on the superb way in which teachers sequence learning.

The curriculum intent and implementation were also strongly praised by inspectors.

Further improvement in the small adult provision that the college provides was recommended by inspectors to ensure that all teaching and learning activity is outstanding.



The ability to chart the progress of learners and for learners to understand the progress they are making against targets will be improved by the use of sector-leading software that will be implemented from September 2021 and developed over the course of this strategic plan

Learners have embraced the use of Xello over the last few years, allowing them to chart their own progress on the road to improved employment skills and voluntary and paid work.

Log-ins to the system increased rapidly from 2022 onwards, with job coaches using it effectively to support learning. New modules of safeguarding management software C-POMS have been used effectively to monitor all picture building behaviours and thus help learners receive timely assistance and feedback on their behaviour goals.

The college's RARPA (Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement) process has received much praise from inspectors and other colleges that Hereward supports and has seen staff use Databridge effectively as an evidence gathering tool in support of the process.

The remote learning offer will continue to be developed and improved over the next three years, building on the developments over the pandemic and from September 2021 the college will trial virtual reality within a variety of college programmes

Remote learning has been used to support transitions into learning and as a bridge to ensure learning continues when there has been disruption.

Staff confidence in this area has remained high following the pandemic, in part due to its continual use.

The college is still to realise the potential of VR following a number of trials and work continues in this area.

The curriculum focus on work outcomes will be improved with the creation of an employer forum that will help to steer the development of new and established offers

Employers have embraced the opportunity to work with college leaders in the development of the curriculum, with senior managers from the college's most significant employer partners contributing to the employer forum.

Of no less significance is the multitude of smaller employer partners that contribute at programme level to curriculum intent.

The college's excellent work in this area substantially contributed to it being awarded 'strong' for its skills provision – the highest grade possible.

The ability of teaching and support teams to manage more complex presentations will increase further over the next few years, building on the remarkable success since the last inspection

All areas of the college have displayed progressive improvement in managing complex presentations over the last strategic planning period but four areas in particular have displayed this improvement with either new programme offers or developments in capital resources to meet learner need - Aspire, Learning for Life, Foundation Learning and the residential home.

An effective link has been achieved between Learning for Life and the residential home and the home has been physically transformed to improve learner experience.



Strategic Intention Three

Our approach to delivering responsibilities in partnerships

The college will increase the number of employer partners and work placement opportunities so that the specific skill sets of learners have a higher chance of finding a home with an employer able to provide paid employment

Paid work outcomes have remained very high over the last few years and the employability team has worked well to retain high profile employers and recruit new employer partners.

Every learner who needs a work placement opportunity or experience of work has been able to have it and more employers are being recruited for the coming years to give ever more depth to the offer.

New models of delivery will be explored with local authorities that addresses their provision gaps and future needs and is also in line with the mission, vision and values of the college

Many of the new and successful offers by the college have been created using information gathered by local authority colleagues. When effective planning has been possible, the college has displayed with great effect its ability to develop outstanding provision to meet the needs of its local community.

The college will continue to develop its outreach services where it is economically viable

The national retendering of HE access centres meant that the outreach model of the college of co-location with employment services became unviable. Therefore, the college must now consider new ways of working in an outreach capacity.

Supported apprenticeship provision will be prioritised over the course of this strategic plan

Hereward College has remained the largest single provider of supported internships in the West Midlands. Such is the available offer at Hereward that it must now expand its ability to recruit direct entry interns to meet the demands of its employers.

In 2023 the college became partners with Whitbread Group PLC, acting as delivery partners for its ground-breaking and national award-winning Thrive Programme.

The programme is the first of its kind to see a FTSE 100 company invest in capital into the post-16 estate across the UK as well as investing in the internal infrastructure to rapidly expand its recruitment of people with disabilities.



Strategic Intention Four

Our approach to making the most of college resources

The college will seek to be a more attractive place to work, building on the progress made over the last few years

A staff survey conducted in 2022 showed significant and often double digit improvement in the vast majority of questions regarding staff welfare and management compared to 2019.

This was not achieved by accident but by listening to staff from across the college and working with them to improve their working lives. During the last few years improvements have been made in staff room provision, car parking, pay and mental health support.

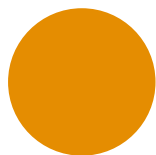
There has also been substantial investment in progression opportunities with new promoted roles created across the college including Higher Level Teaching Assistant, ILS Advanced Practitioner, ILS Deputy Manager, Senior ILS Residential and Deputy Curriculum Manager.

The IT infrastructure and resources will be maintained and improved to ensure that high quality teaching and learning can be sustained regardless of whether the learning is campus-based or remote

Government-backed certification scheme Cyber Essentials was obtained by the college in 2022, giving assurance that it had reasonable protection from malicious cyber-attacks.

This required significant investment in resources, including physical resources to ensure that the college IT system was compartmentalised. New data links have also been installed to provide a consistent quality of IT service.





The college income will be diversified with effective strategies for the increase in the Adult Education Budget, DWP income and commercial activities

Adult education budget spend has been challenging in many parts of the sector and has become more complicated with new devolved Mayoral authorities.

The Hereward offer has been affected by the sector challenges but has enjoyed success over recent years delivering over its allocation and providing modest growth.

2024 will see the development of a new commercial vehicle, Hereward Training Services Ltd (HTS) which will use the previous experience gained since 2022 in delivering commercial training to expand its service.

The college will continue to form strategic partnerships with local authorities to ensure that it can anticipate and respond to gaps in provision

Over the course of the last strategic plan the college has further developed its strategic relationship with local authorities, seen most clearly in its contribution to area inspections and to tribunals.

During these processes the college provision has been highlighted by local authorities for its excellence in providing very positive outcomes for its learners regardless of their special education needs and ability levels. This close working relationship will continue over the course of the new strategic plan period.



Summary data

Pass rates and retention rates of learners on programme and overall achievement rates (percentage of those retained that also pass) have all remained strong throughout the last five years.

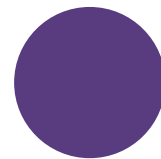
The table below compares the overall rates over time. These figures include the pass and achievement rates of learners on adult education courses which are consistently above national rates.

Headline: all learners exc. Functional Skills	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24
Retention	95%	97%	94%	94%	96%
Pass	97%	96%	96%	99%	96%
Achievement	92%	93%	90%	93%	93%

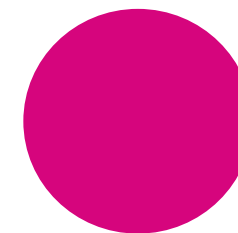
The college rightly celebrates the success of its learners and their academic attainment as well the attainment of skills and abilities that aid independence.

Many such independence outcomes are found within the Foundation pathway of the college. Equality of opportunity is a key theme of the college and is intrinsic with its values. It is therefore important that the quality of provision is consistent across the college.

The table below shows the excellent levels of consistency of pass and achievement rates across the different pathways of the college for learners aged 16-24 on study programmes in the academic year 2023/24.



Overall	Aspire	Foundation	Explorer	Discovery	Functional Skills	Supported Internship
Leavers	14	147	112	51	447	34
Retention %	100%	98%	91%	92%	98%	100%
Pass %	93%	97%	97%	96%	91%	100%
Achievement %	93%	95%	89%	88%	89%	100%



Another indicator of the quality of the education at Hereward College is the increasing student numbers. Student numbers increased to over 300 in 2020 for the first time in the college's history and have remained at circa 320 since then.

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Residential learners (all funding)	17	12	11	12	10	11
ESFA funded day learners	255	260	292	302	312	318

The number of graduates gaining paid work outcomes is much higher than the national average of 4.8% for our cohort of learners with paid work outcomes of 29%. These outcomes increase significantly for learners on supported internships, where work outcome rates vary between 40% and 100% depending on the employer. The figures displayed below show a strong performance over the last five years.

	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	23/24 Outcomes for those that have employment as a target	National statistic from the Health and Social Care Information Centre
Paid employment	19%	27%	27%	29%	49%	4.8%
Voluntary work/ preparation for employment	26%	13%	17%	15%	27%	
Total progressed to paid or voluntary employment	45%	40%	44%	44%	76%	

General context for the new strategic plan

The general trend across the country is that the rate of young people and children with new Education, Health and Care Plans has increased significantly over the last five years as the table below describes.

The local authorities that we serve are preparing for further increases over the coming years. This must be considered with the financial strain being faced by many local authorities such as Birmingham who are facing many years of reduced budgets across the board. Therefore, the financial and general resources and policy strain on the SEND system will likely remain and is presently subject to the SEND and AP review. It is important that the fees required by the college remain competitive and that the curriculum evolves with the emerging environment.

EHC Plans - to 2024	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Number of statements and EHC Plans combined	390,109	430,697	473,300	517,049	575,963

The majority of college day learners come from Coventry, Warwickshire and Solihull and a very small cohort come from Birmingham. The student numbers from each county have been subject to change over the course of the last strategic plan period. The table below shows the changes.

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Coventry	156	163	161
Solihull	46	44	37
Warwickshire	95	104	107
Birmingham	8	6	5

Hereward College is surrounded by large general further education colleges, all of which have a SEND offer. Warwickshire College Group has significant SEND provision in Leamington Spa and Coventry College has a SEND offer at their city campus.

North Warwickshire College has SEND provision in Nuneaton in partnership with the specialist college Homefield. Solihull College has SEND provision and Birmingham has many colleges with SEND provision as well as a number of independent SEND specialist colleges.

Coventry, Warwickshire and Solihull are all served by high quality special schools, many of which have sixth form provision and the vast majority of which are rated as either good or outstanding by Ofsted.

Student numbers from Coventry, Solihull and Birmingham have either grown or stabilised over the last few years, whilst student numbers from Warwickshire have increased back to the levels they were at in 2017.

Warwickshire has a SEND strategy which is based on developing post-16 provision within the county borders and therefore it is encouraging to see growth from this area.

The college's reputation is now such that it has forged better relationships with local authorities and with them it has been successful in creating provision for learners that in years gone by would have needed to be placed outside of the area.

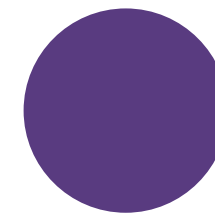
The college has also become increasingly successful in securing provision via education tribunals where the outcomes and learning experiences of our students have been examined in a legal setting and pitched against other providers.

An analysis of admissions data for 2024/25 shows that the college was not able to meet the needs of 100 learners via the EHCP consultation process.

The main reason for the unsuccessful applications was the need to further develop the college environment and its expertise to manage highly complex behavioural issues, a potential growth area for the college.



The regional environmental and economic context



Hereward College has a full-time cohort of circa 330 learners, all of whom have an Education, Health and Care Plan. The majority of learners travel to Hereward from Coventry, Warwickshire and Solihull, although residential learners are from across the country.

The characteristics of the West Midlands and particular Coventry, Warwickshire and Solihull's labour force influence the focus of where the college's skills support is targeted. For example, Coventry has a skills strategy that ambitiously aspires to provide a "citywide skills offer that raises aspirations and allows each and every resident through their lives to reach their full potential".

The college has responded to this strategy by developing programmes that develop skills that enable people to progress within key service sectors such as health & social care. There is a continued need for labour with the requisite generic, leadership and management, and technical skills to fill roles, so it is vital that the college provides the placements and skills that reflect this.

Employers particularly struggle to fill roles in hospitality, logistics and health & social care. As an example of how the college has tailored the curriculum and training offer to reflect and meet the needs of the skills gap, the offer now includes distance learning Level 2 and 3 qualifications in health & social care and the college is working in partnership with Warwick Conferences providing high quality training for both staff and students in

an industry-standard facility on site.

The West Midlands Combined Authority also has an ambitious skill strategy which states "our ambition is to develop an integrated skills system for the region through which we can stimulate economic growth, deliver better outcomes for residents and business, and create healthier thriving communities".

The college has responded to this strategy by providing leadership to Colleges West Midlands, the main regional college network, on the creation of work-based programmes for learners with special educational needs and disabilities.

The employer consultation stage of the Local Skills Improvement Plan, LSIP, was a process which involved over 1,000 local businesses and where one of the main barriers to the right skills and training being identified was a lack of awareness among employers regarding the support available from further education providers. In response to this, Skills West Midlands and Warwickshire was created and Hereward has worked effectively to raise the profile of the potential of young people with SEND to gain and maintain good quality jobs.

In 2024 the college led the creation of the inaugural Skills West Midlands and Warwickshire Excellence

Awards for SEND. This event brought together high-profile employers and education providers from across the region and highlighted best practice in SEND employment.

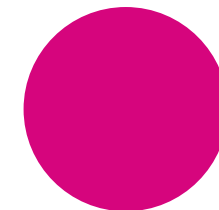
The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) has identified digital as a major economic growth area along with high value manufacturing. These themes have been reiterated in the Skills Bill 2022 and by the new body, Skills England, created in 2024.

Within the SEND community many learners have been able to secure paid work whilst operating at entry level 3, level 1 and level 2 and, in many cases, it is behaviour and social understanding that is the main barrier to their progression rather than cognitive ability. Local authority skills plans for SEND highlight the need for high quality work programmes and many have set targets for the attainment of supported internships and supported apprenticeships.

Nationally the numbers of people with a learning difficulty gaining paid employment has fallen year by year over the last six years from 8% in 2017 to just 4.8% in 2024. At the same time the number of young people being assessed as needing an EHCP has continued to rise.



The learning and skills landscape



The change in government in 2024 has brought with it a number of new initiatives that need to be considered. Most notably is the formation of Skills England, a new body that will lead the development of national FE policy. A new Ofsted framework is due in 2025 following a consultation period and this will need to be considered in detail by the college.

The Skills Act plays a very important part in forming the national and regional landscape with local skills improvement plans and the accountability agreements which must address them being key strategic drivers for the sector.

However, Hereward must observe the emerging picture from the SEND and AP review and consider the implications for long term planning. Fortunately, Hereward is now in a position to receive feedback on this important new examination of the SEND system by virtue of its position as Chair of the West Midlands SEND Forum.

Cyber security

The threat of a cyber-attack on sector organisations is increasing. Those looking to launch a cyber-attack prey on vulnerabilities in systems and procedures, with common factors which are leading to successful attacks including those set out below.

- **Obsolete infrastructure:** use of older versions of server operating systems which are not supported for vulnerability updates
- **Hacking:** insecure password controls or not enforcing multi-factor authentication (MFA)

- **Patch management:** ineffective patch management techniques, leaving open vulnerabilities and hence being a target for ransomware
- **Insecure backup storage controls:** ransomware attacks are targeting backup storage, to prevent recovery
- **Lack of awareness:** staff and students are not sufficiently trained to practice good cyber 'hygiene' and accidentally compromise the network

It should be noted though that a recent report from IBM highlighted that 95% of cyber-attacks were possible due to human error. Based on this it is clear that there is a steep learning curve for colleges to tackle.

Net zero and sustainability

The curriculum intent of the college has changed over the past few years and now features clear areas where the development of green skills and sustainable practice is paramount. This approach must also be taken with regard to all college practice if it is to move towards the ambitions of net zero by 2030. Colleges West Midlands have developed a new resource to assist providers to develop their provision to meet the new green industries and it has been very well received by colleges across the region and by Hereward staff.

Excellence in delivery using outstanding resources

The college has built a very strong platform over the last strategic planning cycle on which to build.

The position of the college in terms of its finances, quality and reputation mean that it can now set ambitious targets with confidence.

The stage is now set for excellence and innovative practice to be a norm across all areas of college provision and there are sufficient benchmarks within the college for this to be a realistic expectation of staff, students and other stakeholders.



Strategic Intention One: The Hereward approach to working in learner-centred structures



Embed the person-centred, destination-led structures and develop staff to focus support for learners to raise their aspirations and help them to prepare for adulthood and achieve their goals for health, employment, independent living and being part of the community.

Specific context

Hereward College is large by comparison to other mostly single campus providers with over 300 full-time learners and it caters for a wide range of needs. Therefore, the approach and support for different sets of learners must reflect their requirements and goals as stated in their Education, Health and Care Plans. Some very able learners require minimal supervision whilst other learners require two members of staff with them at all times. The college is equally ambitious for all its learners and celebrates success in all of its forms. For some learners, simply being able to manage in a public space is a life transforming success for them and their family which may have

taken many years to achieve. Our most functionally able learners will achieve at advanced level and will be able to apply for university places. The challenge therefore is to create environments, support and management structures that cater for this vast difference in need and to have sufficiently confident and knowledgeable staff that can work across the many types of provision within the college.

Residential provision for post-16 learners has reduced across the country over the last ten years and has been felt dramatically at Hereward, where residential numbers have reduced from over 100 to less than 15. Other residential colleges have also experienced a similar dramatic shift away from residential provision and some have struggled to gain a substantial foothold in provision for day learners. Hereward has been successful in significantly increasing its day learner numbers and still has a desire to provide residential provision but recognises that for it to do so it must be economically viable and at least Good in terms of CQC quality measures. The CQC has reported that it has a substantial backlog in the inspection of care providers and the inspection of Hereward is long overdue, having had its last inspection in 2021.

Objectives

Behaviour

Improvements beyond outstanding

- There will be a detailed analysis of the Hereward Approach to Behaviour to consider what will be needed over the next three years to build upon what is currently rated as Outstanding.

Excellent management of incidents

- There will be a detailed analysis of incident management to ensure that post-incident support is systematic and leads to more effective incident prevention.

Clinical team development

- The clinical team will be expanded. The development of a sustainable clinical team is essential to ensure that the college is not key person dependent in this vital area.

Enhanced pre-entry assessments

- A modification will be made to the Hereward Approach to Transition to ensure that the changing presentation of learners is effectively managed.

Improving the external profile of innovative practice within the college

- The college will consider all aspects of innovation and research that occur within the organisation and develop an effective way of raising its profile to present and potential future stakeholders.
- The development of commercial opportunities from innovative college practices will be considered.

Learner voice

Building on excellent practice

- Hereward practice will be mapped against the best practice from the sector to ensure that learners have the greatest opportunity to contribute to college life.

Expanding influence on the community

- The theme of taking part in and influencing democracy and democratic processes will be developed by participation with regional and national level governmental organisations such as Coventry SEND Shadow Board, the All Party Parliamentary Group for Assistive Technology and the National Transport Centre.

Curriculum

Continue to meet the needs of all learners

- The Hereward Approach to Teaching, Learning and Assessment will be reviewed to ensure that the best practice for all learners is incorporated into it.

Maintenance of outstanding curriculum intent and implementation

- The curriculum strategy will be reviewed to ensure that it is rooted in the needs of the community.

Defunding of vocational quals

- The new approach from the Labour government will be closely monitored.

There will be a stronger response to Sustainability and Net Zero

- The curriculum team will implement the Green Skills Roadmap developed by Colleges West Midlands.

Residential

Continued improvement in quality

- The home will continue its improvement in quality and gain a CQC rating of at least Good.

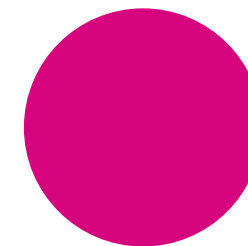
Improved marketing of the residential offer

- A new marketing strategy will be developed that makes effective use of the external assessments conducted on the home and the excellent feedback of residents and their families.
- New markets will be explored such as innovative use of personal budgets and the use of the home by non-traditional users and for respite.

The home's financial viability will be reviewed

- A detailed view of the home's financial contribution to the college will be made available to the governing body.

Strategic Intention Two: The Hereward approach to improving teaching, learning and assessment



Deliver exciting, innovative and effective learning, teaching and assessment that actively engages learners, develops their English and maths skills, helps them to make progress and enables them to achieve their goals and qualifications and move on to the next stage of their lives.

Specific context

Teaching, learning and assessment in the context of special educational needs is a complex mix of pedagogy, therapy and the application of assistive technology. Teaching staff and managers have to be skilled in lesson planning and the delivery to a broad range of learners. In addition to the traditional methods of teaching, staff at Hereward also need to have a good understanding of a range of special educational needs and mental health conditions and how those needs and conditions manifest in a college environment. In order to meet this challenge, it is essential that the college

has high quality CPD available for all its staff. The Ofsted framework changed in 2019 and will again following the “big listen” strategy from the inspectorate during 2024. At present a more holistic approach is taken to the judgement of teaching, learning and assessment which is part of the quality of education judgement. The progress of learners is still a key element in how the quality of education is measured and in particular the progress made in relation to their individual starting points.

The majority of learners at Hereward have career goals and aspirations to gain paid work. In order to meet those needs,

teaching and support staff are required to impart vocational skills. Therefore, the curriculum must respond to the changing economic climate and local employer market. The need for digital skills is projected to increase over the coming years as what some observers call the fourth industrial revolution starts to shape work and leisure time, particularly with the increasing prominence of AI. It is also projected that increased automation and the use of AI will change working patterns and demands. The qualifications landscape is also changing with the introduction of T-Levels and a renewed emphasis on apprenticeships and higher apprenticeships. The proposed defunding



and replacement of vocational qualifications has been through its first iteration and it's not clear whether this will continue.

The use of blended learning is also likely to increase as the quality of experience available digitally increases, including with the use of virtual reality applications which are also set to increase. This will bring opportunities for more flexible learning but not all learners may be able to access this flexibility, especially in cases where learner behaviour is the main barrier to future success.

Hereward College will need to continue its journey to increase the breadth of its campus-based resources and employer partners if it is to develop the high-quality teaching, learning and assessment that properly prepares learners for the next phase of their career.

Objectives

Teaching and learning

High Needs teaching and learning will continue to be Outstanding

- The college will address new challenges regarding specialist vocational teaching, new and emerging SEND practice, progress monitoring, AI, VR and CPD.

Adult education will improve from Good to Outstanding

- The minor issues raised by Ofsted will be addressed to ensure that adult provision is Outstanding.
- A new comprehensive strategy will be developed to provide growth and a greater focus on the SEND community.

Employment services will be revitalised

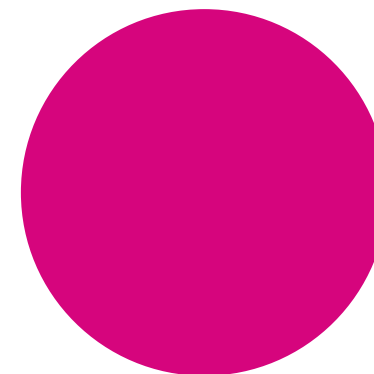
- There will be a new strategy to develop direct entry supported internships.
- The campus will be further developed with sponsored curriculum provision that gives a closer association of the teaching and learning activities with employer need.

College strategies will adapt to the changing Ofsted inspection framework

- The curriculum strategy and the Hereward Approach to Teaching, Learning and Assessment and support for learning will be reviewed in light of the new Ofsted inspection framework.



Strategic Intention Three: Our approach to delivering responsibilities in partnerships



Be proactive to benefit learners by collaborating and working with partners, including parents and carers, local authorities, health and care agencies, employers and funding agencies, to enable the learners' goals and ensure the SEND Code of Practice is delivered.

Specific context

The college is well regarded by a number of its key partners and has positive strategic level relationships with its main local authorities. New partnerships have been secured with major regional and national employers such as SES Engineering Services, Premier Inn and West Midlands Police which has elevated the ambition of our learners and their families. However, demand for good jobs from learners is high and therefore more employer partners are needed and with a greater variety of job roles.

Local authorities have been under significant financial pressure over the last decade on their SEND budgets and overspends have had to be accommodated from other parts of their total budget. Coventry City Council has been very effective at working within

its High Needs budget but other local authorities that the college serves have reported having financial deficits. It should also be noted that learners from outside Coventry also incur considerable transport costs which can run into the thousands of pounds per learner, and this places further financial strain on local authorities. Warwickshire's SEND strategy is to, where possible, place post-16 and post-19 learners within the boundaries of the county and to have a focus on employment programmes. Employment programmes such as the supported internship provision are also part-funded by the DWP and have very low element 3 costs at around £2.5k. Moving learners into jobs has further cost benefits for the local authority down the line as the need for social services diminishes once young people are employed. The benefits for the individual and society in general are also self-evident.



Objectives

Marketing

There will be a new approach with schools based on success in Warwickshire

- Successful improvement of recruitment from Warwickshire has been driven by a curriculum team-led approach, learning from which will be used to form a new strategy.

Commercial opportunities

- The subsidiary company HTS Ltd will be developed to provide services for employers and education providers.
- HTS Ltd will manage the national rollout of the Whitbread PLC Thrive programme.
- HTS Ltd will create a commercial training service that will serve the needs of employers requiring the skills to employ people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Local authority employment services

A new relationship will be developed with local authorities

- The college will continue to work closely with Solihull local authority in the development of their SEND employment services.
- The college will forge new links with employment teams in regional local authorities to explore collaborative service provision.

Strategic Intention Four: Our approach to making the most of college resources

Maximise the effectiveness of all physical and staffing resources to improve the quality of provision, grow Hereward Training and new services, and maintain the college's financial health and viability while providing value for money.

Specific context

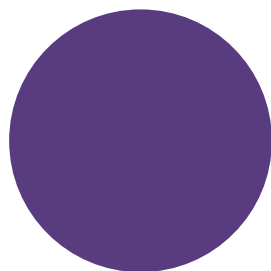
The college estate is in good condition with the majority of campus buildings assessed as being within the two highest categories used by the DfE for accessing education buildings, namely category A and category B. The exception in the college estate is the small house located at the main entrance which is in a poor condition and without a

clear plan for its future. Over the course of the last strategic plan the college did not have any significant pressure regarding space but as student numbers grow this will likely not be the case over the course of the new plan. National and regional figures suggest strongly that the numbers of young people with Education, Health and Care Plans will continue to rise, placing yet more pressure on local authorities to meet need with significant financial challenge. Therefore, the college will need to consider how it best uses its campus and whether the existing buildings and configuration will meet the future needs of the curriculum, learners and local authorities.

There are a number of areas in the campus that are vocationally specific or contain specialist equipment:

- Sports centre (MUGA, sports hall, gym)
- Physiotherapy suite

- Horticulture area
- Performing arts studio (performance space and control room)
- Music centre (recording studio, specialist music classroom)
- Media centre (specialist media classroom, radio studio, green screen area)
- The Hive Business Centre (conference room and Business in Action)
- Premier Inn training centre
- Construction and Prism engineering centre
- Art centre (art classrooms and break out spaces)
- Warwick Conferences-sponsored catering kitchen



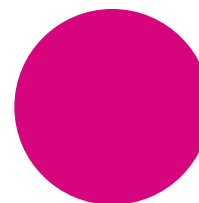
Some of the spaces and equipment are industry standard and/or good quality but a number of the spaces now require upgrading to prevent an unequal and inconsistent service being given to learners.

For example, the horticulture area consists of just one polytunnel and a small storage area that is below industry standard. Similarly the performing arts studio has an industry standard lighting and control system but a poor quality roof, making performances challenging. There are also gaps in vocational spaces which limits the offer and growth potential of the curriculum. For example, there is no recognised dance studio to support the performing arts curriculum. The quality and breadth of some vocational resources will act as a limiting factor for the ambition

and attainment of students over the next three years.

There is a growing cyber-security threat across large and small, public and private organisations and the further education sector is not immune to this threat. A number of education institutions have been subject to ransomware attacks that have severely affected their operations for some weeks and made the national press.

The college's financial position improved over the last four years as it continued its successfully journey towards learners with more complex needs whilst also having a strict methodology of managing overheads and staffing costs. In particular, the average fees for both day and residential learners have increased significantly over the last three years.



During the last two years the college has significantly decreased its funded support hours as it has more effectively deployed staff and taken advantage of economies of scale. However, class sizes have not significantly increased due to some constraining elements. These elements include the physical constraints of the buildings, meaning that class sizes above ten with associated support staff are difficult to house. Additionally, some learners do not cope particularly well in larger class environments and part of their reason for needing a place at the college is to be within a small class. However, larger class sizes can reduce costs to local authorities and in some cases can aid learner achievement. Any new accommodation strategy must examine this tension when considering how the campus might develop over the course of the next few years and beyond.

The ability to meet learner need could not be achieved without well trained and highly motivated staff. Over the last few years many staff have improved their knowledge, skills and abilities such that they can now work across different pathways, thus allowing for much more efficient deployment.

New posts have been developed that have allowed for progression for high performing staff such as the higher level teaching assistant role, ILS Deputy Manager, ILS Advanced Practitioner, Residential ILS Team Leader and Deputy Curriculum Manager.

Staff have access to a number of additional benefits:

- Between 30 – 40 days annual leave + 12 bank holidays
- Free onsite parking
- Breakfast service
- Automatic enrolment into Local Government Pension Scheme or Teachers Pension Scheme with 23% employer contribution
- College cafeteria
- Employee retail discount scheme
- Free confidential 24/7 counselling and advice service
- Option to join the cycle to work scheme
- Option to join BHSF health care plan
- VDU eye care vouchers

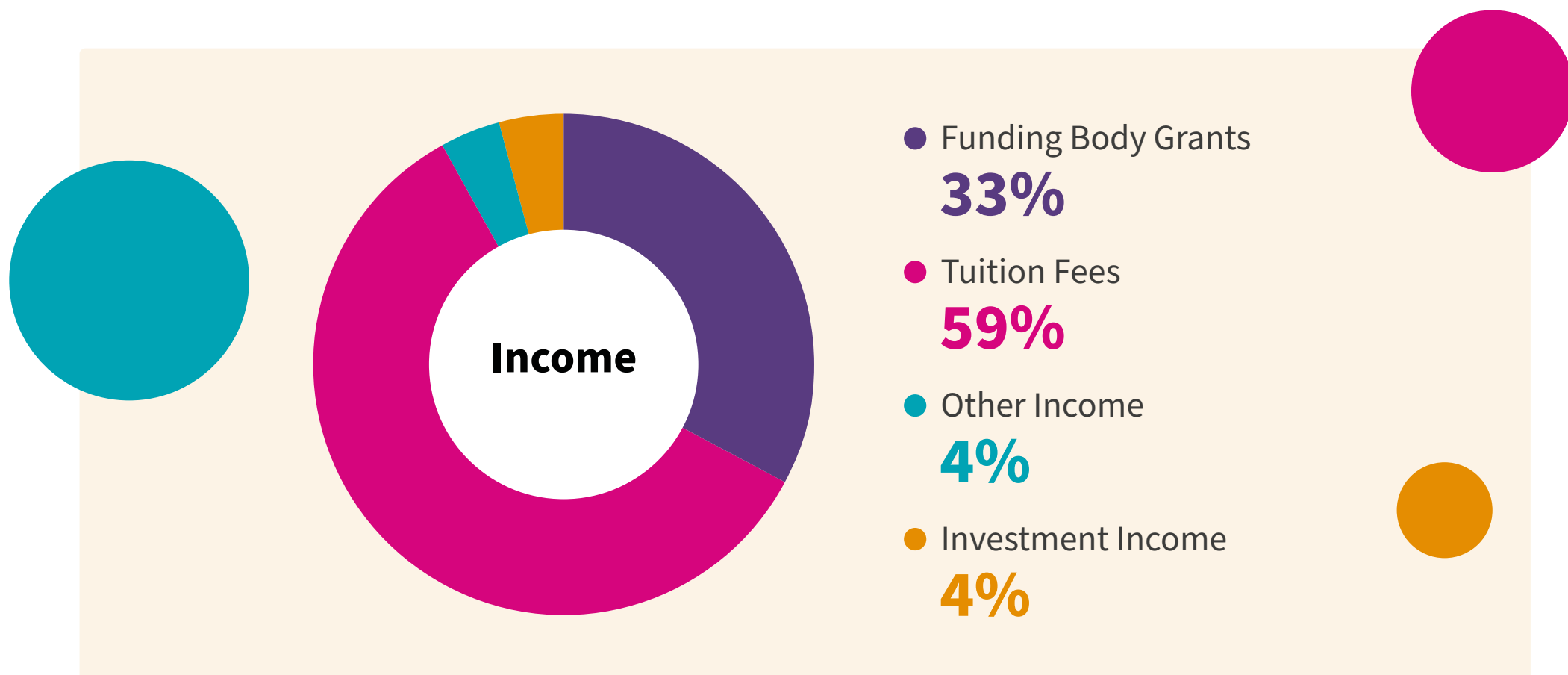
As the level of challenge of learners has increased so has the need to ensure that staff welfare is prioritised. Any learner challenging behaviour is debriefed using the college behaviour policy and post-incident support is available for staff. Staff room and relaxation spaces are available across the college but this needs further consideration as to whether it is sufficient to meet present and future needs.

The strong performance against strategic objectives from staff from across the whole organisation over the last three years has allowed the college to attain improving budget surpluses as well as being able to make pay awards above AoC (Association of Colleges) recommendations at 7%, 6.5% and 5% as well as one-off £500 payments in 2023 and 2024. The table below shows the movement of the overall operating surplus/deficit.

The table opposite shows the changes to key aspects of the college finances over the last five years. The staff costs increased during the early part of the last planning cycle but have since reduced but will need careful management over the course of the new strategic planning cycle if student numbers increase significantly.

The breakdown of college income is given opposite. The largest component is tuition fee income made up of element three funding from local authorities. The funding body grant income is that received by the ESFA and it is made up of elements 1 and 2. Therefore, the vast majority of college income is connected with the funding of day and residential study programmes. Commercial income including that obtained from leasing premises and from the former HE assessment centres is represented under Other Income and is 4%.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Financial Performance					
Turnover (£000)	8,347	9,113	10,074	11,599	13,059
Staff cost as percentage of income (%)	72.5	76.2	74.9	65.3	58.9
Fixed assets (£000)	10,435	10,258	10,166	10,239	10,224
Debt (£000)	1,888	1,760	1,632	1,504	1,376
Cash days	187.7	217.2	217.4	215.0	193.0



Capital plan



College managers have identified a number of projects that are required to be fulfilled so that there is equality of access to high quality resources across the campus.

Some projects have also been identified that will allow for growth such as the development of new classroom spaces and improvements of how learners alight from and access their transport on campus. In order to make the capital plan affordable and manageable it is phased over the next three years.

Phase One 2025/26

This will see part of the residential home and the Hive business centre converted into additional classroom space to prepare the college for an expected increase in day learners and reduction in residential learners. The completion of this work will increase learner capacity on site detailed in the table below

Year	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Room capacity	366	394	404

The conversion of residential space into day learner classroom space is a tried and tested method within the college, having been used in the creation of the Aspire and Foundation Plus accommodation and part conversion of the Hive business centre.

Phase one will also see the creation of a Job Shop and relocation of the job coach team into the Hive.

The improvements to horticulture will begin and additional parking spaces and drop off spaces will be created on the internal road towards the sports centre

Improvements will be made to staff work and rest spaces by converting the now unused college laundry into a high quality space with enclosed outdoor rest area.

Phase Two 2026/27

The “heart of the college” redesign will begin and will complete over two summer periods, utilising the holiday periods to complete the project.

A new centre of excellence for independence will be created from the existing estate’s bungalow and derelict house.

Phase Three 2027/28

The “heart of the college” will be completed providing an improved vocational and sensory environment for all learners.

The costs associated with the improvements in accommodation have been factored into the college’s three-year budget projection and are shown opposite together with the forecast planned prevention and maintenance and depreciation charge. These plans have been found to be affordable subject to increases in student enrolment/income. The phasing of these developments will allow the senior team to manage financial risk.



Objectives

Finances

The college will aim to retain its outstanding rating for financial health

The college will gain a better understanding of the financial contributions of each pathway and the residential home

Consideration of new delivery models

- The Thrive Programme has allowed college staff to examine new methods of curriculum delivery from across the UK. This will be considered further in curriculum and financial planning.

Accommodation and fundraising

There will be equality of access to high quality physical resources across the learner population

- All vocational areas will be improved or maintained at industry standard.
- Classroom capacity will be increased.
- Transport infrastructure across the campus will be improved.
- Staff accommodation and rest areas will be improved.
- The Heart of the College concept will be developed around the concourse next to Café Mojo to provide a village centre showcasing the vocational learning offered by employers.

Sensory strategy at the centre of planning

- The momentum created by the sensory strategy implementation team will be maintained.

Fundraising targets

- A review of fundraising activities will be conducted.

Net zero

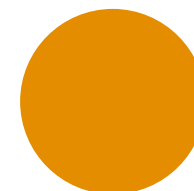
Estate's development

- A revised accommodation strategy will have Net Zero as its central theme and will complement the Green Skills Roadmap and commitments in the Accountability Statement.

Staff welfare and HR

A new approach to staff welfare

- The college has significantly invested in the HR infrastructure and will now increase its ambition regarding staff welfare and will aim towards inclusion on the Times Best Places to Work list.







Hereward College

Promoting individual achievement

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