

INTRODUCTION TO THE COLLEGE

OUR CONTEXT

WQE is a large, thriving and vibrant Sixth Form College providing courses for around 3600 students overall. We are ambitious and determined to build on our successes in providing the best possible learning experiences and outcomes for our students, in a welcoming and inclusive learning community.

WQE enjoys a strong reputation and this is reflected in its popularity with students, attracting applications from the City, from Leicestershire, Rutland and beyond. The majority of our students come from the City of Leicester, an ethnically and socially diverse urban area and the student body reflects this. The College operates from two very closely located and spacious sites, each adjoining the main University of Leicester campus and which provide pleasant, well-resourced and inspiring environments for our students and staff.

The University Road Campus is the larger of the two in size, accommodating around 2400 full time students and the Regent Road Campus accommodates around 1200 full time students.

THE CURRICULUM

Across the University Road and Regent Road campuses the College offers a curriculum that is inclusive and accessible to students from a range of ability backgrounds from Entry Level through to Advanced Level, with the overwhelming majority at Advanced Level and equivalent courses at Level 3. The broad offer includes;

- A levels and equivalent classroom vocational/applied courses at Level 3, including Extended Diplomas
- GCSEs and equivalent classroom vocational/applied courses at Level 2, including English and Mathematics
- Level 1 vocational/applied courses and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

STUDENTS AND THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS

Examination results at advanced level are strong. A levels make up the majority of provision, and the pass rate in the summer of 2021 was over 98%; progression rates for students following programmes at other levels are also high. We are particularly proud that our results are achieved by students with a wide range of prior achievement and from diverse social backgrounds. This is a reflection of our commitment to widening participation and a culture of high expectations. Our students are responsive, like to learn and want to succeed. In a typical year the majority of them progress to higher education, many staying in the Midlands region but others going further afield.

Alongside excellent teaching, high quality support and guidance are crucial to our students' success. We invested in support for our students, with specific teams overseeing students' progress and these teams work closely with teaching staff, with staff responsible for Careers or progression and with the Student Services and Academic Support teams.

STAFF

Across our two campuses, in the region of 370 teaching and support staff are the heart of our work and success. A striking feature of the staff is their loyalty; many have spent by far the greater part of their careers at WQE and remain as enthusiastic as ever. At the same time the College's recent merger and continuing growth and popularity provides opportunities for new staff to join, and the College is fortunate to still being able to attract high quality fields.

The College is strongly committed to continuous professional development and actively encourages all staff to reach their full potential. The College also continues to benefit from its very close links with five similar Sixth Form Colleges through the CENBASE peer development and review group with the mix of subject specific networks and the annual joint training day, focused on sharing practice in teaching and learning.

RESOURCES

Our financial health is strong, and we currently have a turnover of some £18m pa. Teaching areas are well resourced, and we continue to invest in order to improve students' experiences. Our buildings and estate create an inspiring environment and are well maintained. As student numbers have increased and to keep the buildings in good order the following are examples of our investments in facilities and learning environment.

A £10m project was completed in 2009, which now accommodates our Media and the Creative Arts (together with a cafeteria) and the complete refurbishment of the Science areas. In addition the science accommodation was further extended in 2011 with the construction of a new building. In 2013 we opened a newly refurbished and extended student dining and social area; in January 2014, a new Learning Resource Centre was built together with a new large Sports Hall and classroom block.

Developments then focused on improvements to teaching accommodation. In 2015 we undertook two substantial refurbishment projects, to create a suite of refurbished classrooms and a new suite of IT teaching rooms, followed in 2019 with a further £1m investment to refurbish classrooms and create additional social and café spaces.

The College's most recent Estates Strategy was approved by the Governing Body in Summer 2020 and sets out an ambitious and exciting programme to refurbish and remodel the remaining teaching rooms to create outstanding teaching and learning facilities to deliver an outstanding learning experience for all our students and staff. Particular focus is being given to the bringing together of teams and improving the quality and flexibility of our spaces.



Paul Wilson
Principal