

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE COLLEGE**

### **OUR CONTEXT**

WQE is a large, thriving and vibrant Sixth Form College providing courses for around 3750 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 2500 full time students and the Regent Road Campus accommodates around 1250 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 2023 was 95%; 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 over £20m pa. Teaching and support areas are well resourced, and we continue to invest in systems and infrastructure 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 we have continued to invest in our facilities and learning environments.

2009 saw the construction of our state of the art Media and Creative Arts building and the complete refurbishment of our Science areas. Our science accommodation has since been further extended and developed with the construction of new laboratories and preparation facilities. 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 existing teaching accommodation. We have undertaken substantial refurbishment projects, to create outstanding teaching and learning environments, including new suites of IT teaching rooms, support areas (including Welfare and Skills) and additional social and café spaces.

The College's most recent Estates Strategy was approved by the Governing Body in Summer 2020. This Strategy sets out an ambitious and exciting programme to refurbish and remodel our accommodation to create outstanding teaching and learning facilities to deliver an outstanding learning experience for all our students and staff. Particular focus has been given to the bringing together of all our teams and improving the quality and flexibility of our spaces. Excellent progress has been made in delivering this Estates Strategy, with major refurbishment projects being completed over the last 3 years and further projects planned.