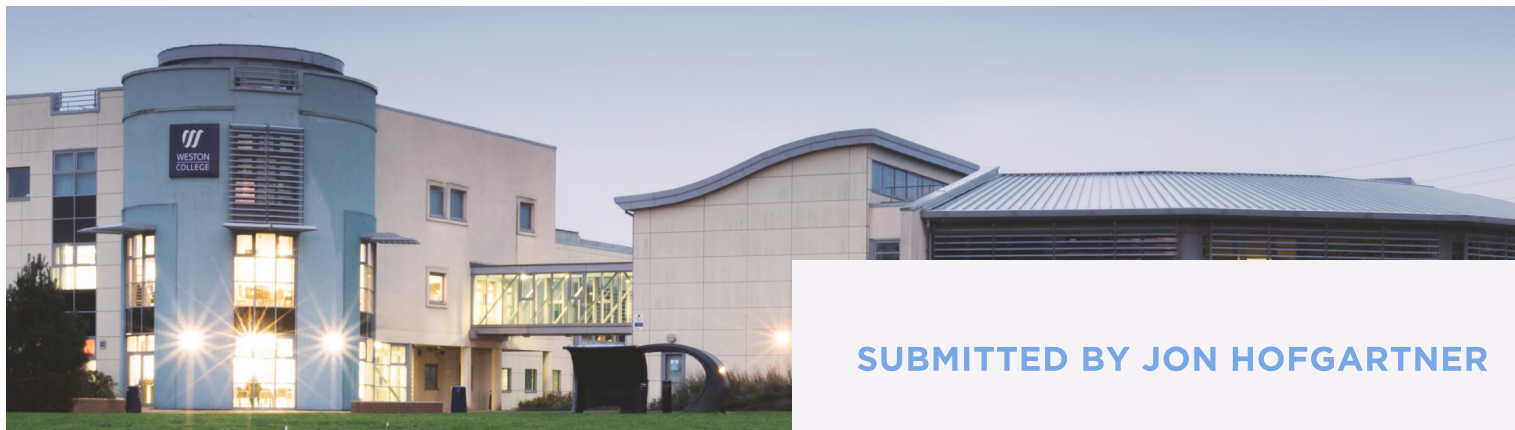


MY VIRTUAL COLLEGE



MICROSOFT DIGITAL TOOLS



SUBMITTED BY JON HOFGARTNER

With 30,000 enrolments stretched across multiple campuses, with students aged 14 years and older, Weston College serves as an example of how to turn a wide diversity of students into a strength. Thankfully, Weston College has committed to facilitating a twenty-first century learning experience in which students are provided and trained on the digital tools necessary for improved collaboration, access, and engagement.

Since students come from different backgrounds, with varied interests, and represent a source of knowledge, experiences, and creativity all their own. Of course, to transform these backgrounds into shared educational experiences, where students learn from each other just as they learn from their educators, the Weston College academic team have to work hard to break down the impulse for students to think and work on their own.

It is one thing to proclaim a commitment to using technology and it is another thing to create an environment where faculty, staff, and students feel empowered to innovate their classroom experiences. At Weston College, digital innovation is happening across its campuses and the positive results have been felt by students and faculty alike. “Adoption of Office 365 and Microsoft Teams required us to rethink everything including our device strategy, our learning spaces, and most importantly our workforce development,” says Jon Hofgartner, Director of Education Technology, Learning Resources and Progression Skills at Weston College. “It’s been a 3-year process backed with significant investment and leadership buy-in and vision.”

[Read the full article here](#)



TRAINEESHIPS

EMMA HOYAL

A busy few weeks for the Traineeships team kickstarted by a Deep Dive visit from Rhys and Antonia. Our Traineeship TDMs and lecturing team impressed, demonstrating the clear intent of our provision. Already I can see the impact of this visit and the value of our QIP actions coming to life. We have also seen the start of new Traineeship and Evolve cohorts in both Weston and Bristol, welcoming new Trainees and staff alike!

The team have worked tirelessly to ensure that we are supporting Trainees to train, develop and progress with COVID awareness alongside having high expectations for learning. This has included much collaborative working using Teams, One Note and EILP – putting our digital skills to the test! With the start of our 8th Bristol Hospital (UHBW) cohort and the introduction of brand new work placement opportunities, our Trainees are continuing to excel through unique placement opportunities sourced by our brilliant work placement team.

Most recently, we have seen a fantastic response from a career advice campaign that the Marketing team are running for us with over 80 leads - thanks Gemma and Jeremy. Over the course of just two days this week, we have supported over thirty people to identify their next course or job opportunity, and there's more to come!

We are working closely with the Business Growth and Marketing Teams to relaunch 'Traineeships @ Weston College' and build new working relationships with employers/partners across the entire region, we are looking ahead towards an exciting 2021 for Traineeships.

SUCCESS STORIES

SANDRA BULL

The Hospitality and catering team are focused on having the best year for their learners in a time when the industry is on its knees. Here at Weston in The Grove we are showing that the learner is entering a sector that requires creativity and a willingness to work.

This academic year Peter Goodship has taken the role of full time coordinator in Hospitality. His passion for the sector is clear to see through the work and assessments he has achieved with learners level 2 and 3. The drive to get learners to the best possible point for a lockdown has seen a commitment from both the learners, Pete and his small team.

Customer feedback on the areas take way lunch is excellent. With no restaurant service able to take place takeaway 3 course meals will start next Thursday to get learners through their fine dining units.

LISA PRIDDEY

.Two of our amazing Electrical Installation apprentices have passed the AM2 element of their apprenticeship.

Having worked hard through lockdown and engaging with their studies, albeit virtually, has paid off and they are now on to the next part of their apprenticeship journey.

A big well done to Patrick Hollitt from John Masfield Electrical and Josh Kellaway from Incentive with a special mention to Powertek who kindly donated a chocolate box to each apprentice.

CLAIRE ARBERY

This week we received confirmation from the Department for Education that we can secure some funds to work with our employers in North Bristol to create an IoT space within the Global Technology Centre. This will place IoT learners in the heart of the research and development for greener technologies and the future of advanced manufacturing and engineering.

MORE SUCCESS STORIES



PARENT FEEDBACK

Please see parental feedback regarding Dan Dishkin's aspirational support below.

Hi Dan,

Just wanted to say completely blown away with Joel applying to UCAS. I was really surprised and wanted to say Thank you for supporting and encouraging him, as you know he's found it hard with motivation and I was worrying about how he entertains himself outside of college! So far he's not wanted any help from myself but if you think there's anything I can do to support his application or work, Please let me know. Thank you again for what you do for these boys (girls) its so important for Boys to have positive male role models! (and I know how much Joel thinks of you- please dont tell him!)

JAMES WOOD

In the Sixth Form, we recently entered our students to the UKMT Senior Maths challenge, which was online this year, and achieved some great results which are listed below!

Gold - top 10% nationally

Silver - top 30% nationally

Bronze - top 60% nationally

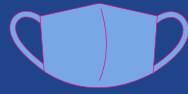
3x Gold

10x Silver

33x Bronze



STARTING A NEW JOB DURING A PANDEMIC



AMBER CLARK

From the moment I was interviewed virtually for a position at Weston College as a Work Placement Officer, I felt at ease and welcome. It was incredibly strange for myself and the interviewers of the College to recruit entirely virtual, but in such strange times we have all had to adapt and keep as safe as possible. There was nothing to worry about, as the recruitment process ran perfectly smoothly and before I knew it, I was offered a position as a Work Placement Officer here at Weston College. Everyone has been so friendly, from security staff to reception staff to leadership.

I must admit, starting my new role in a pandemic has been strange, as I had to meet each member of my team separately on a 121 basis, 2 metres apart, as well as having daily virtual catch ups on teams so I could learn my new job role. My Work Placement Team consists of a team of 7 (including me) each member of my team dedicates their support with different faculties to support the Level 3 Year 2 learners with their 315 hours worth industry placements, and this academic year we are also finding placements for the T-Level students as well. I am incredibly lucky to come into a team who focus on many different subject areas and I have come in to support the Level 3 Year 2 Sport learners.

[Read the full article here](#)

FULL TIME APPLICATIONS AND INTERVIEWS



CLAIRE DARK

The CIS admissions team have organised and successfully carried out the first round of virtual Collegiate interviews for the 21/22 full time applications. The support of all faculties to this new process has been outstanding and we want to thank you all for this.

Collegiate interviews has been very different this year, with no face to face interviews and events. Thanks to the help of Ben Smith in IT, admissions made use of the 'Bookings' App within Office 365 to manage all the Teams bookings, along with the faculty SAM's and administrators.

Applicants still have specific Collegiate Interview sessions, which are supported by Learning Support and CIS, so they will continue to receive all the information and support they need during these sessions. The applicants use our online service to manage their application and book their own interview slots to fit in with their schedules. This gives them better control of their journey and for this reason we ask that you do not rearrange the interview sessions to a different time.

There is also a plethora of information, including virtual tours and information pages, on the website and there is work in progress to make more information available to them during their journey.

The first round of interviews were a great success with an 88% turnout, which is the highest we have had on record. The most important outcome from these sessions is that the feedback from the applicants has been really positive, and they definitely seem to be embracing this new applicant journey.

If anyone would like more information on the full time application and interview process, please contact admissions or myself on X1481, or by emailing CIS@weston.ac.uk.

T LEVELS

DAVE LE FEUVRE



The journey continues It's been a really busy couple of weeks for the development of the new construction T-level.

This week alone there's been numerous webinars and planning meetings to ensure we are well placed to launch successfully next September. Our key focus has been on getting the employer backing, and ensuring that from before they start, our learners know that the curriculum is endorsed and fully supported by companies they recognise and trust. I'm pleased to say things are progressing really well, and we are hopeful to have a handful of key companies on board officially in the coming months.

This is thanks to the continued work of the Lauren Squibb from business growth and Ray Stewart from the industry placement team. We've also been approached by BAM construction to begin some live virtual discussion groups between industry experts and our learners.

This "hot topic café" is designed to get learners talking about issues in the industry, from diversity, to Covid strategies and sustainability. This will form just one of the ways we are looking to engage with BAM this year, and gives us a blueprint for how we can work with employers in the future. Our first session is on Corporate and Social Responsibilities in this Covid landscape, and should prove a great talking point for our learners.

HAPPY PUDSEY DAY

THE SERVICE SECTORS CHILDREN IN NEED DAY 2020

Due to Covid-19, things were slightly different this year and we invited our learners and staff from the faculty to take part in a 'Wrong Shoes Day'.



SANDRA BULL



HE: SOCIALLY DISTANCED BLENDED CLASSROOM



SYLVIA LANE

This term we have been testing a new TEAMS webcam and screen, which has proven to be very effective and easy to use.

Some modules cross-taught between Musical Theatre and Dance for Commercial Performance are now split over two classrooms to allow for students to stay in their bubbles and to accommodate social distancing guidelines.

The screen also makes it possible for students to log in from home if they are ill or self-isolating. The remote studio is swapped over every week so that everyone is in the classroom with the lecturer on a regular basis.

Needless to say that students receive feedback on their work via the screen, and an allocated dance captain in the virtual room helps with classroom management such as questions. Teaching styles had to adapt in order to be able to ensure all learners are engaged, but I am pleased to report that students are very compliant and focused; comments from them include that they appreciate the efforts put in place for classes to run whilst still allowing them to access specialist facilities, or to give them the option to join remotely.

We are excited for this week to run a casting workshop with a high profile agency called Pearson Casting, who will log in remotely and give feedback on our students work from an employer standpoint- more of this will be released shortly.

WELCOMING NEW TALENT TO THE COLLEGE

DONNA KENNY



**INSPIRING OUR
FUTURE TALENT**

Our Future Talent programme has grown since the start of the new academic year. The apprenticeship recruitment team have been filling various positions across the college and we look forward to coming together as a group for the first time the end of the month! I would like to welcome the following new apprentices to the college:

Natalie Branton & Taylor Palmer-Brown – Natalie & Taylor joined our Quality Team in September are both on the higher apprenticeship in Digital & Technology Solutions as Data Analysts.

Harriet Pearce – Harriet joined our Marketing Team this month and is working towards her advanced Marketing Assistant apprenticeship

Chloe Hayzen – Chloe blew our Business Growth Team away at interview and join them this month working towards her Advanced Business Administration apprenticeship.

Georgia Ferdinando – Georgia joined our Sport Faculty and is working towards her Advanced Apprenticeship in Community Sport & Health. This week has seen the Weston Mercury report on Georgia! Georgia joined this month as part of the new cohort of FA Women's Football Development Officer apprentices. The programme is run by AoC Sport, in partnership with the FA and Weston College as the training provider! We are one of 10 colleges, across the UK, who has employed an apprentice as part of the FA's new women's strategy to grow the game and develop the future workforce. We are excited not only to have Georgia join our team but also be working with AoC Sport and the FA to deliver this exciting apprenticeship!

[Read the full article here](#)

A big shout out and well done to the Marketing Department's apprentice Emma Wilkinson who sat and passed her coding exam and is now preparing for her EPA. Emma also designed the logo for the Future Talent programme, so thank you again for this. Emma has now also secured a permanent job with the MAC team as a Trainee Marketing Officer.

NATIONAL COVERAGE TES: A RISE IN EATING DISORDERS



GEORGIE FORD

The Covid-19 crisis has led to a huge rise in eating disorders - and, with sufferers commonly in their late teens, the FE sector has found itself on the front line of a 'second pandemic'. Helen Amass looks at the measures colleges are taking to identify students with these conditions and provide the right support

Training staff to spot the signs is a key part of the strategy at Weston College in Somerset, too. Georgie Ford, lead specialist practitioner in mental health at the college, says that this goes hand in hand with working with external services, which will be able to provide help with this. "Our key advice here would be to make friends with all of your external support agencies," she says. This includes establishing relationships with Camhs, clinical commissioning groups and charities such as Beat and the Anna Freud Centre - the key being to make sure that those relationships are collaborative and sustainable.

[Read the full article here](#)



Weston College and Hinkley Point C started planning the programme before the outbreak of Coronavirus, and adapted it so it could be delivered online. Cora added: “The programme was written and delivered with so much imagination. There were lots of ways to get everyone interacting, including a treasure hunt task to develop internet research skills.

“One assignment was a Dragons’ Den-style competition to come up with a product or service that Hinkley Point C would really benefit from, and the suggestions, which included a drone-based security system, were really well researched, costed and delivered. The change in the attendees’ confidence and speaking skills by the end was amazing to see.”

As part of the programme, volunteers from Hinkley Point C were invited to talk about their experiences on the Project, to give participants the insider view on working in the construction industry. Attendees heard from an apprentice as well as a team member working on the Mechanical, Electrical and Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (MEH) phase of the construction. The MEH phase is set to create 1,200 jobs and 300 apprenticeships and companies are currently recruiting into key roles as the works ramp up.

[Read the full article here](#)

SOMERSET CHAMBER COVERAGE



DAVE CREW



So here we are, in what some people are calling Lockdown 2.0. If we're being honest, I think most people are feeling a little weary about the pandemic and looking for that light at the end of the tunnel.

I'm Dave Crew – Head of Business Growth & Employer Partnerships at Weston College and Somerset Chamber has let me loose on their newsletter to provide an insight into how our business is managing its way through the pandemic.

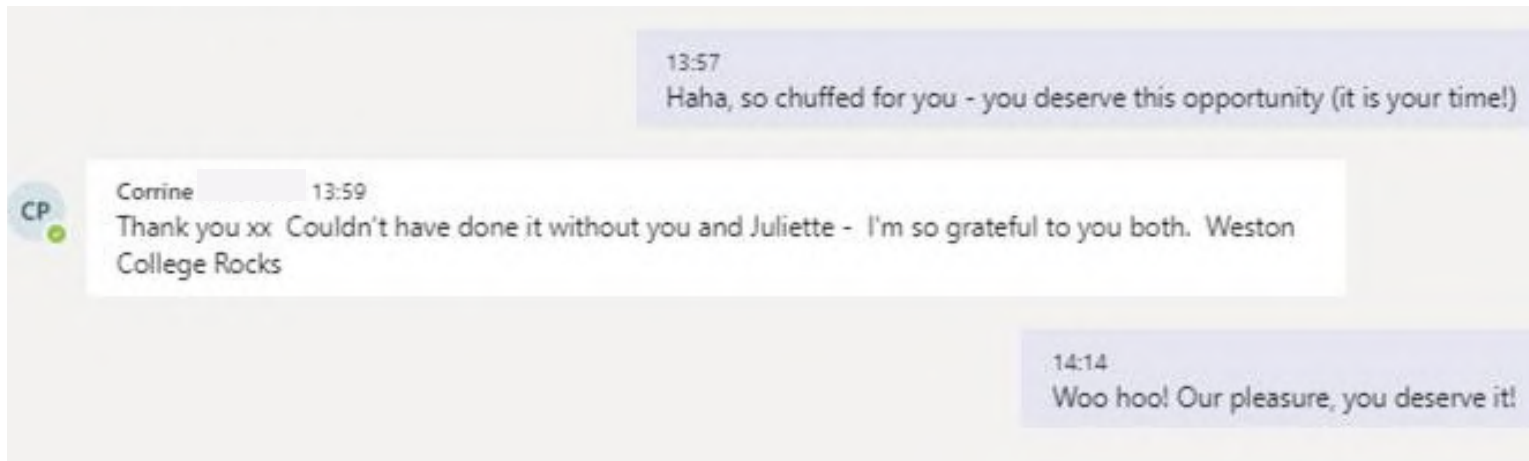
It's a challenging time, and as leaders and managers, we must continue to support and maximise what is our most important asset – our people. It's important that in daily operations, we take the time to stop, step away and ask ourselves an important question – Managing productivity, are we getting it right?

It's actually not an easy question to ask ourselves as we may end up admitting some uncomfortable truths but in an ever-changing environment as we strive to adapt to government announcements, changing consumer demands and a fluid external environment, it's such an important question.

Speaking to our clients, who are businesses of all sizes and sectors across the South West and beyond, I've heard various methods being used from 1-2-1 coaching, daily team 'huddles', team training and maintaining that all important 'team ethos'.

[Read the full article here](#)

WESTON COLLEGE ROCKS



LAURA JAMES

Corrine who worked with Juliette on Changes for Life and joined me on the Digital Admin Skills course last week has contacted me to advise that she has managed to get into employment as a supply teaching assistant. Juliette will support that Corrine who was very fragile when she first joined us, but she has come on in leaps and bounds.

Last week when looking at her CV we discussed her getting back into being a Teaching Assistant (after a long time out being a Mum and doing bits of retail). We discussed her contacting some agencies to see where she stood and as you can see from the conversation below she has been successful.

After creating her LinkedIn profile last week, she proactively contacted and networked with previous teaching people she has worked with getting recommendations and endorsements etc. This is something that she would not have done 10 weeks ago and demonstrates the impact and foundation that Changes for Life gives our students.

I also feel that the follow on course is a great stepping stone for students after Changes for Life. And love Corrine's statement of 'Weston College Rocks' – go team!

WESTON COLLEGE MENTAL HEALTH PARTNERSHIPS

MICHELLE BOLAND

At the end of October the Independent Commission on the College of the Future produced their UK wide national report with Weston College featured as a Case study in this insightful report highlighting visions and recommendations to shape the College of the Future – well done to everyone involved in being cited as a model of national best practice.

CASE STUDY

Weston College driving mental health partnerships across North Somerset



Weston College has been the driving force in building mental health partnerships across North Somerset, forming an integral part of community mental health care. Their award-winning Body and Mind framework established a regular programme of activities and support sessions linking exercise with wellbeing to engage the community and build resilience.

By linking the college's HR, mental health, sport, welfare and inclusive practice teams, it has reduced staff absence and increased student achievement and attendance. Additionally, the College was invited to join the 'Futures in Mind' committee as a Champion of Change to help transform mental health provision in North Somerset. It has trained over 200 organisations in Mental Health First Aid and shared its best practice in workforce development mental health strategies with over 300+ employers

The creation of the college's Health and Active Living Centre in 2019 (with simulated training wards, patient simulation technology and state of the art gyms, sport therapy and condition management technology) was designed to encourage a more active lifestyle whilst bridging the skills gaps across the region's health and social care. Driven by its Principal Dr Paul Phillips CBE, the concept of college led urban regeneration has been achieved through strong partnerships with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), local authorities, social care partners and health trusts.

"We firmly believe the commitment and dedication the college has shown towards building mental health partnerships has been second to none. The impact of this has meant that the college is an integral part of community mental health care and have seamless links with CAMHS and GPs meaning that students' mental health care is as collaborative as possible. The college is recognised as a Beacon by the community due to the college's innovative and dynamic partnership."

Colin Bradbury
Area Director – North
Somerset,
NHS Bristol, North
Somerset & South
Gloucestershire CCG

60 SECONDS



LISA FLETCHER

Following the Virtual A Level Event back in October with a lot of student/parent questions being subject specific, and then the second lockdown preventing the f2f opportunity we were hoping for, Jonny Dibble came up with the idea of 60 second subject specific vlogs, to try and mimic those conversations that learners normally have at an open event with individual lecturers.

The vlogs are delivered by the lecturers so potential learners can find out more about the subject in an engaging format, where they can also meet the lecturer – it also provides some fantastic content for the website, social media campaigns and email marketing for converting to an application!

[They can all be viewed here](#)

Hats off to all the A Level staff who took on the challenge and embraced the opportunity to sell their courses. Jonny is now working on a campaign to get these out far and wide, which includes Ben's team getting them out as a collective to schools as a resource for their careers and teaching staff.

EVENTS



<https://www.weston.ac.uk/news-and-events/events>

DON'T MISS UPCOMING EVENTS FOR EITHER YOURSELF OR YOUR STUDENTS.

OR PLEASE SHARE WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS WHO MAY BE INTERESTED IN STUDYING AT THE COLLEGE OR BECOMING A BUSINESS PARTNER.

23 NOV 2020



**ELEVATE - IN
PARTNERSHIP WITH
HINKLEY POINT C**

23 NOV 2020



**VIRTUAL OPEN
WEEK FOR
SCHOOL
LEAVERS**

24 NOV 2020



**KICKSTART
SCHEME
WEBINAR**

25 NOV 2020



**AUTISM
WEBINAR**

WANT TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE **NEXT EDITION?**



**PLEASE EMAIL YOUR UPDATES, REASONS TO
CELEBRATE AND NEWS TO SHARE**



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MY VIRTUAL **COLLEGE**