



Weston College **Group**

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**2019/20**

# **ANNUAL REPORT**





Animal Management  
Education Centre

South West  
Skills Campus

Construction  
Training Centre

Knightstone  
Campus

University  
Centre  
Weston

Winter  
Gardens

Lauriston  
Hotel

Loxton  
Campus

Weston  
Bay

Health and  
Active Living  
Skills Centre





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# Welcome



Weston College experienced two very different periods of time in its 2019-20 academic year, caused by the impact of Covid-19 from March this year.

Despite the catastrophic changes and challenges that had to be faced, the College transformed its delivery to digital platforms within a day and continued to deliver teaching, learning and training to thousands of learners and local, regional and national businesses.

Our reputation in maintaining delivery in exciting and responsive ways was recognised by central government and some of our practices featured as national exemplars. The Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills, Gillian Keegan, paid a virtual visit to our College and we were also invited to a launch of T Levels by the Secretary of State, Gavin Williamson. These systems, supplemented by the launch of 'Momentum' (a cross-college fast response reporting and action group) enabled rapid mobilisation of strategies and comprehensive reporting mechanisms across the many campuses of the Weston College Group.

The latter part of the year has certainly provided significant challenges to the staff and the introduction of a comprehensive mental health strategy and 'Let's Chat' initiatives have had major impact. The combination of skills and support has therefore enabled us to continue delivering unique and powerful solutions to the skills agenda, with impactful quality education supplemented by strong partnerships that have influenced change locally, regionally and nationally.

Recognition of success has occurred at numerous levels and has included United

Kingdom Business Awards in Leader of the Future and Wellbeing at Work as well as a Pearson Silver Award for Lifetime Achievement, alongside Beacon shortlisting and regional apprenticeship delivery awards. Add to that Investors in People Platinum status and there is much to celebrate from the perspective of both profile and reputation.

Our recent capital investments now include a Health and Active Living Skills Centre, as well as a purposefully designed Animal Management unit in North Somerset. Weston College was also successful in leading the West of England Institute of Technology bid which has created a partnership with UWE Bristol and Colleges in Gloucester, Bath and Yeovil.

'Creating Brighter Futures' remains our strapline and indeed we do create a value-added environment for all who study or engage with us.

Our academic results place us at the top of the league tables and include 40% first class honours, 99% A Level pass rate and high vocational course success, alongside major apprenticeship growth. This is in addition to the success of our Centres for Excellence in both Mathematics and SEND by the Government and our bid as the

lead partner in the Institute of Technology, focussing on the digital agenda.

Ambition must remain paramount and we have continued to refine staffing structures, appointing and retaining the very best staff in the field. Our work with key employers, including NHS, MoD, GKN, Airbus, Rolls Royce, Wessex Water, MoJ and many others, must be sustained and built upon. Partnerships with our HE partners - UWE Bristol, Bath Spa University and Hartpury University - alongside work with North Somerset Council, the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership and the Combined Authority in the West of England, reinforces our ambitions and excellence in training.

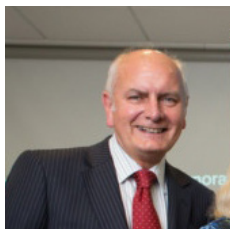
As I look back on a year of challenge, I have been impressed by the dedication and tenacity of everyone involved within the College - Governors, staff, employers and the learners themselves. Irrespective, we have developed our organisation even further and our achievements both at a quality and financial level buck the national trend. The magical 'sparkle' of my staff surpasses norms and has taken the College to even greater levels of inspirational delivery. It has been a year

where we have had to really grasp the digital agenda in ways never anticipated, work with the MoJ in terms of prison education and leading on T Levels and other initiatives.

I must thank everyone who has been part of our unique journey. The 2020/21 year will no doubt bring another set of challenges, but the College's tenacity, its strategic approach and its resilience will again provide the very best academic, technical and vocational education to all who study and train with us.

Our multifaceted imperatives - academic, social, cultural, transformational and economic - will provide impact to ensure we continue to create 'Brighter Futures' for all who engage with us.

**Dr Paul Phillips, CBE; PhD; DLit; EdD**  
Principal and Chief Executive  
TES FE Leader of the Year



I have had the privilege of being Chair of Governors of the Weston College Group for two years after serving as a Governor of the College for many years. I have great pleasure in commending the 2019/20 Annual Report to you.

The report sets out a dynamic agenda and a journey that has delivered exceptional results, despite the very obvious challenges of Covid-19 and the lack of sector investment. The results speak for themselves which are fully endorsed by the Corporation, who together act as the critical friend and scrutineer of strategy, finances, curriculum and ethos of the organisation. This year we have been involved in a range of new initiatives, and I am thrilled by the partnership that has been developed across the governing body and with other key organisations.

The FE sector at present faces unique challenges and through the leadership of our Principal and Chief Executive, Dr Paul

Phillips, we have navigated a course that has enabled us to be a leading light in our delivery and associated quality.

The approach of adaptability, agility and financial prudence, has ensured that this College is still the master of its own destiny, recognising that many colleges no longer have this luxury. With the new capital facilities now completed, even more opportunities are available for our learner population and, simultaneously, this College continues to win national and regional awards, including Centres for Excellence, emphatically proving that growth does not compromise quality at Weston College!

The 2019-20 year however called on the College to show an adaptability that is quite unique. Despite all of the challenges, the College turned its business operation around within 24 hours and unlike many institutions our College continued to deliver the full range of provision with a high proportion delivered face to face. New technologies were quickly implemented and for learners it was clearly business as normal. The resilience and tenacity at both leadership and delivery levels was exemplary and despite everything the College met its targets.

Looking forward, this College will continue to advance with the learner at the heart of all it achieves. The Institute of Technology and the new Animal Management facility at Puxton Park are already widening horizons. Yet again, our students and businesses are enhancing the local and wider economy. As our reach grows, the importance of partnerships becomes increasingly relevant - the skills and the entrepreneurship of our partners are highly valued as we share and merge our vision and ethos on this journey together.

The higher we climb, the better the view - a view that will be enhanced by sharing it with our colleagues and partners alike.

I look forward to working with you in the 2020-21 academic year

**Andrew Leighton-Price**  
Chair of Governing Body



# Weston College Group



Weston College is a general college of further and higher education in Weston-super-Mare, delivering education and vocational training to students aged 14 and above. It is regarded as one of the top further education colleges in the UK, and is the only college in the West of England to be rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted. The College provides education to approximately 30,000 learners across the UK.



University Centre Weston (UCW) offers more than 40 courses across a number of vocational and academic subject areas. UCW delivers the courses in partnership with Bath Spa University, UWE Bristol and Hartpury University. UCW is rated 'Gold' in the Teaching Excellence Framework, meaning the learning, teaching and outcomes it provides for students are of the highest quality in Britain.



Inspirational Events and Investments Limited is a subsidiary company of the Weston College Group. It runs the Winter Gardens Pavilion, Lasseater's restaurant, the Green House eatery, and the Lauriston Hotel. The company was incorporated in March 2017 and has already made a significant contribution to the regeneration of Weston-super-Mare.



Weston College's Prison Education provision is a top-performing provider of offender and detainee learning. The service is recognised for its excellent teaching, learning and assessment; the positive outcomes it achieves for learners; and its partnership approach to business planning, which ensures that the curriculum meets learners' and employers' needs.



Forward Futures Limited is the Weston College Group's in-house recruitment agency. It provides high calibre associates to the Group and its key services, such as Prison Education. Forward Futures is often the first step for applicants interested in beginning a career with the College, either on a cover/supply or longer assignment basis.



The Somax arm of the business is a logistics training centre based at the College's Construction Training Centre in Weston-super-Mare, near Junction 21. It offers over 30 training courses and qualifications (practical and classroom training), designed to meet the needs of employers in the sector.



The West of England Institute of Technology (WEIoT) is one of only 12 national Institutes of Technology licenced by the Department for Education to support local employers develop higher level skills and train employees for the jobs of tomorrow. It is a consortium of education providers and key employers across the area. Led by Weston College and involving industry, education and research collaborating to design and deliver flexible, higher-level technical learning to equip people with the skills to fully participate in, and contribute to, economic growth driven by digital innovation and emerging technologies.

# A catalyst for regeneration

As a further and higher education and training provider, the Weston College Group recognises the contribution it makes to the regeneration of North Somerset and the wider region.

North Somerset is a diverse area, with coastal, urban and market towns and rural villages. Generally, it is prosperous, with an increasing population, but has eight LSOAs (Lower-layer Super Output Areas) within the most deprived 10% in England, all within Weston-super-Mare. By providing high-quality education, training and support, the College encourages learners to stretch and achieve their academic, career and life aspirations. By mapping our training offering to regional employer needs and employment opportunities, we deliver the skilled workforce to support employers and local economic growth now and in the future.

Weston College has worked closely with West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (WE LEP) and North Somerset Council to create unrivalled training resources. April 2019 saw the opening of two major investments, supported by the LEP, both developed in close consultation with local employers: the Animal Management Education Centre

at Puxton Park and the West of England Institute of Technology (Phase 1).

In 2019/20 the College has expanded its partnerships and collaborations with other organisations, including colleges and universities locally and nationally. It has taken the lead on key collaborative projects, including West of England Institute of Technology (WoE IoT) and Centres for Excellence – for Maths and for SEND.

## PROJECTS AND INNOVATIONS IN THE PAST YEAR:

### Centre for Excellence in SEND

At Weston College we are delighted to be a designated Centre for Excellence in SEND, focussing on people, creating a highly motivated and talented workforce where inclusion is everyone's responsibility. Working with the ETF and providers we have embarked upon a journey of impact, entrepreneurship and inclusion for the SEND agenda, ensuring it is led from the top of the organisation. Since its inception in May 2019 the College is supporting the co-ordination and dissemination of best practice and CPD to other providers and employers nationally.

### West of England Institute of Technology

A significant development this year has been the development of the West of England Institute of Technology. Licenced by the Department for Education in April 2020, as one of twelve IoTs nationally, to support local employers to develop higher level technical skills and train employees for the jobs of tomorrow. Weston College is leading a regional partnership of education providers and key employers to collaborate, design and deliver flexible, higher-level technical learning to equip people with the skills to fully participate in, and contribute to, economic growth driven by digital innovation and emerging technologies.

### Supporting Adults to Reskill and Upskill for Employment

Covid-19 has impacted employment sectors disproportionately leaving many adults needing to re-train, upskill or apply existing skills in new occupational roles. The adult curriculum at Weston College is designed to be responsive and agile to the changing skills need of the region alongside supporting those impacted by Covid-19 to get back into work. We have been working closely with key partners such as the LEP, WECA, North Somerset

Council, employers and Job Centre Plus to design and develop an adult curriculum that can act as a catalyst for change for adults requiring new skills and support to find and sustain employment.

Sector-based work academies and bespoke training pathways for the unemployed are broadening the range of learning options for adults looking to secure employment. Employers such as Alliance Care, Bristol Airport, and EDF have worked with the College to devise sector specific programmes that include both a recognised industry qualification and a guaranteed interview at the end of the programme. 85% of learners who attended a sector-based work academy received a suitable job offer.

The West of England Works project funded by the Big Lottery has enabled Weston College to build and strengthen its partnerships and develop its adult community provision in the West of England area. Weston College leads the partnership that aims to engage adults and young people who are furthest away from education and employment. It has supported many young people and adults from disadvantaged backgrounds to gain employment through a community-based support programme.

Flexible and blended learning packages have been expanded to better enable adult learners to study, re-train and learn around life and work. Blended programmes in areas such as accounting, health and learning support are enabling adults who work in these to upskill through a delivery model that better fits around their job roles.

### Centre for Excellence in Maths

The Centre for Excellence in Maths has quickly established a strong regional network of colleges. Ten colleges are working with the Centre on trialling new approaches to the delivery of maths. Action research into learner motivation, engagement and pedagogical practice is being implemented across the network. The Centre is also engaging with national trials linked to new thinking around how technology and how data can be used by practitioners to promote maths improvement. It is expected that the work of the Centre will not only improve post-16 maths outcomes at the College but will also support improvements within institutions across the South West region.





# Resources to deliver for the region

The past year has seen continued investment by the Weston College Group in new training centres, providing a high quality learning environment for students and helping to address the skills gaps in priority sectors in the region.

Following the delivery in the previous year of the Health and Active Living Skills Centre and the Construction Training Centre with funding from the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership and by working in partnership with North Somerset Council, this year has seen the opening of the Animal Management Education Centre.

Working in partnership with Puxton Park and opened in January 2020, this facility will meet the growing demand of learners, including SEND learners, to access industry-standard facilities. Furthermore, the centre will facilitate the growth of training to meet the skills needs of the visitor economy and land-based sectors in the region.

The new centre has created an inclusive education facility for delivery of the practical elements of the animal management curriculum and includes classrooms, an IT suite, wash-space and a student breakout area catering for over 250 students each year.

It is located within the grounds of the Puxton Park visitor attraction, just off M5 junction 21, and through the innovative and forward thinking approach of both Puxton Park and the College, learners and staff will have invaluable access to the park's wide range of farm, domestic and exotic species in addition to an extensive acreage of farmland, facilities and resources. Students will gain a real-life appreciation and experience of working with animals within a busy working farm environment and popular visitor attraction, significantly enhancing their employability skills. The centre will deliver broad-ranging study programmes offering a complete progression pathway from Level 1 to foundation degree.

Our other significant capital development this year has been the progressing of the Institute of Technology (IoT). The capital programme for the IoT within Weston College has been conducted in three phases with Phase 1 being completed in Summer 2019, Phase 2 being completed in Summer 2020, and Phase 3 scheduled for completion in March 2021. The Phase 2 works created the IoT Hub, including a new suite of teaching and high-spec IT rooms in the Lord Baker Building in South West Skills

Campus, and a 'state of the art' virtual classroom, the first in a UK FE setting. Within the engineering department the area has been reconfigured to improve access to specialist equipment and in March 2021 we plan to open our dedicated Welding facility providing support to local employers and to finish the modifications.

Our investment in digital technologies has been well timed, with the creation of Teams Rooms and other digital capabilities to enable the College to capture teaching for students not able to attend lessons due to distancing or self-isolation. The IoT Hub at the Skills Campus provides a dedicated space for higher education learners on the campus.

Looking ahead, 2020/21 will see, in addition to the completion of the IoT capital programme in Weston-super-Mare and North Bristol, much needed investment in the condition of our existing estate via the DfE condition fund capital monies and we hope to support the delivery of T Levels by introducing a bespoke early years practical learning centre, jointly funded by the DfE and the College, an asset much needed in Weston town centre.





# 16-18 curriculum

Despite all the challenges presented by Covid-19 it has been another successful year for our full-time, 16-18 curriculum.

Learners and staff have shown significant adaptability, resilience and perseverance. Lockdown saw staff and students expertly switch their teaching and learning online developing new and innovative ways to collaborate, share practice and showcase their work. Examples were wide and varied and included creative arts students showcasing their talent at their virtual summer show, hospitality students completing online cookery challenges and health students working in placement throughout the first wave of the pandemic. Wherever you look across the College, irrespective of whether it was pre or post the pandemic, young people have been engaged in learning and enrichment opportunities that are helping to make them become some of the most employable young people in the country. The College continues to be the first choice for young people looking to study academic and technical programmes. The College focus on ‘careers not courses’ has shaped a curriculum that is providing learners with extended work and industry placements. Industry Advisory Boards and employer involvement in assessment

and curriculum design is helping learners gain the knowledge and skills needed for work or higher-level technical study. Differentiated personal development based on the attributes most demanded within a particular employment sector is supporting young people to develop the behaviours business want as well as enabling them to prepare for life as an independent adult.

Applications and enrolments to the College continue to rise. Covid-19 has not discouraged school leavers from making the College their first-choice destination. Applications rose by 9.4% with increasing numbers of learners applying for programmes in the regional skills priority areas of engineering, construction, health and professional services. The College has seen engagement with IAG events and activities increase during the lockdown. New initiatives such as virtual parent information evenings, industry insight events and access to a virtual bridging programme designed to support students to get ready to learn and effectively transition to the College has seen engagement increase by 57%.

The College is leading the way on technical reforms as a pilot centre for the first wave of T Levels. T Levels are the next generation

days of industry placement they provide learners with defined pathways into higher level technical careers. Digital Design and Development has been launched with further pathways in Construction, Education and Health to follow in 2021. The College has gained national recognition for the development of a transition programme at Level 2 that provides a ‘gateway’ to the T Level. The programme provides extra time, contextualisation and development on core skills such as English and maths that are crucial to learner’s progression and success at Level 3 and above.

### Learner Outcomes

A broadening range of options at Level 4 and above and expert careers support are encouraging more learners to aim high. A new and bespoke personal development programme (ID Pro and ID6) is supporting final year Level 3 and A Level learners to develop their professional profile and associated network. The proportion of students progressing to Russell Group Universities increased by more than 10% in 2019/20. The proportion of learners progressing to higher apprenticeships or degree apprenticeships continues to rise. The proportion of advanced and higher apprenticeships increased by 10% in last

# The Year in Numbers

academic year. The following highlights the key statistics and performance outcomes for young people on Study Programmes in 2019/20.

Retention <b>94.21%</b> (↑2.7%)	Achievement <b>87.16%</b> (↑1.62%)	Attendance <b>90.04%</b> (↓0.61%)	A Level Pass Rate <b>99%</b>
A Level high grades (A*-B) <b>47.37%</b> (↑7.37%)	GCSE Maths and English Re-take High Grades (9-4) <b>37%</b>	Growth in School Leaver Applications <b>9.4%</b>	Proportion of Learners on track to complete Work or Industry Placement <b>85%</b> (↑5%)
Growth in learners progressing to Russell Group Universities <b>10.4%</b>	Proportion of Level 3 learners progressing to higher level learning <b>75%</b>	Proportion of Level 3 learners applying to UCW <b>36%</b>	Conversion rate of Level 3 learners applying to UCW <b>54.1%</b> (↑5%)



# Adult and part-time provision

The core focus of Weston College's adult provision concentrates on being the catalyst for adults in the West of England to access lifelong learning, whether this is supporting adults into employment, providing access to higher level qualifications, re-training or re-entering the labour market. The programmes of study provide adults with the necessary skills, knowledge and behaviours to operate effectively in life and work. The provision helps them to achieve the next stage of their unique pathway, be that a new career, a promotion or a new hobby.

Proudly standing at the heart of the community, Weston College has worked hard to provide an agile response to Covid-19 lockdowns. We exacerbated our strategy to make education more accessible to meet the needs of all adult learners through online learning to support the challenges many members of our adult community faced considering increased unemployment.

In a world that changed beyond recognition due to the global pandemic, Weston College ensured we remained focused on providing support at the heart of the community both locally and regionally offering a curriculum to support:

- Learners who require employability skills and transition support to find and sustain employment
- Learners to re-train and pursue a career in new professional or technical disciplines
- Learners wanting to secure their first full Level 2 or 3 qualification in a vocational discipline
- Learners to achieve key qualifications in English and maths
- Learners to gain higher-level qualifications
- Learners who want to gain access to higher education
- Learners who want to diversify their skills through a new hobby

The Weston College portfolio for adult learning continually adapted, the flexible approach allowed learning to continue and support to be provided throughout the national restrictions.

## Achievement rates

In the 2019/20 academic year 90% of adult learners successfully completed their courses.

Increased flexibility in the learning approach for adults studying English and maths has continued to achieve impressive results, with year on year improvements for GCSE English at 92% and 91% of maths students passing their GCSE courses.

## Investment in curriculum and resources

The College Group continues to invest in its curriculum and resources to train adults in sectors that will drive and fuel the regional economy to support the significantly challenging economy resulting in the changing needs of the community due to the pandemic. Our Business Growth team are constantly engaging with employers and seeking new opportunities for our adult learners both with employment opportunities and valuable insights to support curriculum design. In continuously adapting to these changes, the College has developed new adult provision that focuses on the rapidly changing needs of employers and the community.

This year we continued to engage with job centres, employers, referral partners and industry specific training providers to support the significant challenges created by the pandemic. Our re-training courses and online learning are part of the innovative approach at Weston College to support the needs of the long-term unemployed and people with specific barriers. This has successfully supported adult learners progress through a structured programme of individualised learning and development.





# Apprenticeships

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Despite the significant operational and strategic challenges created by the Covid pandemic mid-way through the year, Weston College continued to grow its apprenticeship provision as well as improve quality outcomes for its apprentices and employers.

Weston College apprenticeship starters grew by over 16% which was driven by larger employers utilising their apprenticeship levy funds. These employers now account for 74% of all apprenticeship enrolments, which has seen a growth of 14% from the previous year. This growth and development saw Weston College crowned the winner of the Training Provider of the Year at Bristol and Bath Apprenticeship Awards for the second year running.

The transition from Frameworks to Standards has improved employer responsiveness, giving us greater flexibility and enabling us to create bespoke apprenticeship programmes tailored to the needs of individual employers. Now in our third year of transformation, we are seeing the development of our apprentices' knowledge, skills and behaviours culminate in outstanding end point assessment grades across many of our Apprenticeship Standards.

Partnerships with companies such as Wessex Water, Airbus, Rolls Royce, North Somerset Council and The Bristol Port Company have enabled the College to offer apprenticeships in vocational occupations, such as the Water Process Technician for Wessex Water. In addition, the College has also agreed this year a partnership with The Football Association to increase the participation of underrepresented groups in football through apprenticeships.

Our strategic partnership with UWE Bristol has led to a joint delivery of degree apprenticeships in engineering, digital, environmental health and healthcare, utilising both organisations' expertise in apprenticeship and degree level delivery, respectively. This has resulted in supporting growth in higher level apprenticeships and expanded our apprenticeship portfolio, which continues to be a strategic growth area for the coming years.

The level of apprenticeships that were enrolled this year saw a noticeable shift towards degree apprenticeships. The increase in our degree portfolio has seen starts increase by 31% since 2018/19. Additionally, Level 2 Intermediate apprenticeships have increased by 11%

this year. However, this will decline in 2020/21 with the removal of the historical Apprenticeship Frameworks and no replacement at Level 2 with the new Standards in many occupational areas.

New provision has been tailored to meet the needs of employers, and includes new apprenticeships in health, digital, engineering and professional services. The Health and Active Living Skills Centre has focussed on expanding our offer in healthcare and developing new apprenticeships in healthcare science and for 2021, Nurse Associates.

The newly opened Institute of Technology (IoT) at our South West Skills campus is supplying innovative and cutting-edge digital technology that is being used to improve the quality of teaching and learning and enables a truly virtual classroom experience.

The ongoing reforms for apprenticeships since 2017 have continued to shape the landscape for the College, this has led to a strategic review of our offer, both financially and quality focussed, by streamlining processes and having a clear focus leading to the creation of our Apprenticeship Hub team to strengthen the quality of delivery in each faculty area.

The challenges created by Covid-19 on our apprenticeship provision with both current apprentices and employers in-learning and on new business has been significant. The current national picture displays a 40% reduction in overall apprenticeship enrolments, however, as a College we are bucking this trend with a reduction of 16%. Our employer partners see apprentices as one of the solutions for a successful Covid-19 recovery.

The Covid-19 communication and management strategies for our apprentices effectively enabled apprentices to continue their learning and reduced the financial impact on the College that affected many other training providers. The digital infrastructure already in place at the College allowed us to rapidly move our apprenticeship learning and assessment online. This rapid implementation was so successful it resulted in the majority of apprentices being able to achieve their apprenticeship in time.

Our timely success rates for this past year are over 10% higher than the previous year despite the effects of Covid-19. The College was also able to successfully implement the End Point Assessment

(EPA) flexibilities to ensure our Standards apprentices were able to complete their EPA and achieve their apprenticeship.

Our focus for the next 12 months is to continue to improve the outcomes for all apprentices and mitigate the further impact of Covid-19, especially on apprentices who are at risk of redundancy or require a break in learning.

The College will continue to support apprentices and employers with the Covid-19 recovery planning and to build on the last few years growth, with the overall aim of retaining a high quality employer responsive provision.





# Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

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Weston College has been recognised for its outstanding provision which continues to lead nationally through proactively informing the sector, sharing good practice and developing a highly innovative and successful provision for learners through the SEND Centre for Excellence. The College places empowerment and personalisation at the heart of its strategic plans, creating a highly inclusive ethos and culture.

Learners are central to the planning and delivery process and are empowered to contribute to the strategic initiatives and wider college developments to ensure they are fully involved in the decision-making process and shaping the SEND provision for future learners. This provides SEND learners with high-quality accessible and sustainable 'in-county' provision, including a residential training element for learners with autism and the Sensory Learning Base for learners with profound, complex and multiple learning difficulties – both not usually seen outside of specialist colleges.

The Principal and Chief Executive as a visionary and an influential leader has been recognised nationally and internationally for his integral support for other colleges and training providers becoming inclusive organisations. This exceptional achievement allows Weston College to share best practice and drive a step change in the sector's approach to SEND and support FE providers to create a culture that is truly inclusive.

## Leadership hub: influencing from the top

Despite the pandemic, our leadership hub and communities of practice within the SEND Centre for Excellence continued to create truly inclusive FE cultures by supporting a significant number of college leaders and SEND practitioners at other organisations to ensure learners achieve their aspirations, through:

- Improving the quality of provision through motivating staff and learners
- Creating an inclusive culture with SEND learners at its heart
- Making SEND learners a top priority to ensure they succeed in adult life.

## The SEND Virtual Platform

Throughout the national lockdown periods our EdTech strategy focussed on “digital inclusion”; including #MyVirtualCollege and the abundance of digital and assistive technologies provided the most complex learners with SEND, the opportunity to engage in the virtual curriculum.

## Despite the pandemic

We have:

- Seen the attendance of learners with SEND exceed the 90% college target
- Retained 95% of learners with SEND
- Achieved 87% overall success rates for learners with SEND (93% for HN and 96% with an EHCP)
- Engaged with over 1300 SEND practitioners and employer across the sector to share best practice
- Continued to expand our innovative practice for learners with SEND providing exceptional support in world-class facilities to over 1,500 learners.

## The Alternative Classroom

We have continued to significantly invest in our resources including providing truly innovative, alternative re-engagement opportunities within Butcombe Farm enabling 'engagement to employment' from garden to market.





# Law and Professional Services Academy

The Weston College Group's Law and Professional Services Academy is the regional centre of excellence for professional services education.

The Academy provides learners with professionally accredited training in law, business, human resources, administration, management, finance, accounting, computing, IT and other professional services.

The academy offers classroom and work- based learning options and nationally recognised qualifications so employers can train new staff and upskill existing employees.

The Group's Business Growth team supports employers throughout the process, providing expert guidance on how to fund the programmes through either the government's apprenticeship levy or through government apprenticeship funding for small employers.

The Academy has enjoyed a number of notable successes this year.

The number of students on the six Chartered Institute of Legal Executive (CILEx) courses on offer at the academy increased by **20%** in 2019/20.

Learners on these courses significantly outperform national averages in terms of results for the fourth consecutive exam window, with a **100%** pass rate on almost all CILEx Level 3 and 6 units.

The first CILEx graduates from the academy are now working as legal professionals and the first Legal Apprentices have successfully completed the new Paralegal and Chartered Legal Executive Apprenticeship standards.

The Academy also offers Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) courses including the Level 5 Certificate in Human Resources Management and Level 3 and 5 HR Apprenticeships.

The five Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) courses offered by the Academy are equally popular and learners studying the AAT qualifications achieve well with achievement rates significantly above national benchmarks.

During 19/20 the Law and Professional Services Academy has expanded the provision further to meet learner and employer needs with the introduction of new high-quality media rich online/in class blended learning provision in Accountancy.

The VLE (Virtual Learning Environment) for the CILEx provision also allows learners access to over 200 online recorded lessons and other online resources. These facilitate a more flexible blended learning approach for professionals, as an alternative when work or family commitments prevent them from being able to attend classes.

The Law and Professional Services Academy also offers a wide range of management courses and work-based learning options at Level 3 through to degree level. The academy provides bespoke provision and is responsive to employer's needs. As a result of Covid-19 a plethora of new online fast track courses have been developed to respond to a growing need from business to upskill their existing workforce to support managing remote teams and remote performance management.





# University Centre Weston

University Centre Weston (UCW) is the higher education division of the Weston College Group. It was awarded University Centre status in 2016 and continues to build upon its identity bucking the national trend by continuing to grow its student numbers. The number of HE students grew by 8% in 2019-20.

Over 1,000 students are now enrolled on its 40+ courses, with a broad range of subjects and degree-level qualifications on offer. The number of students undertaking Higher and Degree Apprenticeship continues to grow with UCW partnering with the NHS, public sector organisations such as the Ministry of Defence and companies such as Airbus and GKN Aerospace to deliver training for their staff. Increasingly the Higher and Degree Apprenticeship agenda is driving growth of higher technical skills for the regional and national economy.

With the West of England Institute of Technology (IoT) status being awarded to Weston College in April, there has been significant capital investment in resources for digital, health and advanced engineering UCW learners. The IoT is designed to respond directly to higher technical skills gaps in the regional and national economy, supporting many more

people in our communities to upskill and reskill for higher technical careers working closely with a range of employer partners.

New full Honours Degrees in Games and Animation Production, Applied Computing and Hair, Make-up and Prosthetics for Production, have contributed to growth. A new Environmental Health Practitioner Degree Apprenticeship was developed and Foundation Degrees in Applied Computing and Public and Environmental Health successfully converted to full Honours Degrees for delivery from September 2020.

Part of the reason for UCW's continued success in such a competitive marketplace is the quality of the provision on offer. The coveted Teaching Excellence Framework Gold award UCW first achieved in 2017 was extended until summer 2021 based on the quality of data outcomes.

UCW has received a number of accolades and awards in 2019-20. UCW's support staff were asked to deliver an OFS (Office for Students) good practice webinar regarding UCW's integrated approach to inclusion in relation to enabling student achievement. business graduate Henry Green was AOC HE Student of the Year runner up, and UCW staff and students were nominated

for multiple Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) Excellence Awards, winning Team of the Year.

Covid-19 posed significant challenges but UCW's response was robust, ensuring student support, learning, teaching and assessment continued throughout lockdown. UCW worked with its awarding partners to amend assessments where required to ensure students could complete their programmes. As a result, 40% of Honours students achieved First Class Honours and continuation levels were over 92%, higher than previous years and most recent benchmarks. Staff found innovative ways to enable end of year shows, exhibitions and film festivals to continue through lockdown and students were still able to showcase their outstanding achievements.

UCW's national student survey results were positive, with seven of the eight aggregated assessment areas scoring above the national average sector wide figures, with assessment and feedback being 2% higher than the top quartile figure. Three programmes, Early Years, Film and Media Arts Production and Popular Music all had 100% student satisfaction rates. Two additional courses

rated above the top quartile satisfaction rate of 90% – Business Management and Sport Studies.

UCW will continue to focus on offering quality, work-based courses in outstanding facilities to meet the strategic aim of appealing to students from diverse backgrounds, and fulfil its commitment to provide an outstanding higher education experience, enabling success and inspiring ambition.





# Blended learning

The Covid-19 pandemic and resulting UK lockdown was a catalyst for rapid adoption of technology in teaching, learning and working. Since 2017, the College's education technology strategy set the goal to embed Microsoft Office 365 cloud applications into the digital teaching and learning.

Microsoft Teams was first introduced at scale in 2018 as the core application for learners to access their 'community of learning', course resources and enhance the connectivity with course tutors and other learners. This foresight ensured Weston College was well-placed to switch to a digital delivery model, alongside wider student support services for what became the **#MyVirtualCollege** initiative.

The emergency response to remote teaching highlighted the digital capability and resilience of the Weston College workforce, rapidly integrating more efficient working practices through digital collaboration and communication. The College has committed to a forward focus on planning for learning and developing effective digital curriculum. Employing a practitioner-based Digital Coach team to

support staff in planning engaging digital delivery and devising solutions to the many challenges faced by educators in response to Covid-19.

Development of digital learning resources has continued to grow with the creation and launch of a full suite of online modules for the College's Individual Development (ID) programme. This included bespoke modules for work placement and careers guidance, and more. Fully online qualifications have also been developed for Access to Healthcare, Sport and Enterprise. The implementation of two industry leading video learning platforms (ClickView and LinkedIn Learning) has also extended the high-quality digital learning resources for learners and staff.

The newly installed Virtual Classroom using Barco WeConnect technology was completed in October 2020 as a joint development project with Jisc. This UK first for further education will seek to further develop digital delivery models, including active learning and participation to improve challenge and engagement. With ease of accessibility, the Virtual

Classroom will also present a valuable facility for adult retraining in the current climate, providing a high-quality digital classroom experience for those that may be re-entering education.

The opportunity to rethink and reshape curriculum to embed blended learning and flexible digital delivery models has never been greater. Our education technology strategy has ensured the resources, support and facilities are well-aligned to realise flexible and innovative approaches to curriculum delivery as part of 2021/22 curriculum planning. The College's medium and long-term vision for digital education will respond to the national demand for highly flexible, responsive and accessible learning opportunities, underpinned by skilled digital practitioners and outstanding learning resources.





# Forward Futures Limited

As the primary onsite temporary recruitment service provider to Weston College, Forward Futures has continued to provide academic, business support and service sectors cover associates at its Weston-Super-Mare campuses and more widely throughout the South West and South East under the Prison Education Framework contracts in Kent, Surrey and Sussex, covering 19 prisons.

Despite, however, the exceptional circumstances around the pandemic, the 2019/20 academic year continued to create opportunities for those wishing to begin or further develop their careers in the FE and HE sector. The Forward Futures recruitment company is often the first step for applicants interested in beginning a career with Weston College, either on a cover supply or longer assignment basis – and there were opportunities for associates to take up assignments before the pandemic took hold, with the hope that a significant number of these could re-start in the next academic year with a re-opened College.

Regardless, the same yearly challenges arose in recruiting for areas of national skills shortages, with the same focus on sourcing Forward Futures associates of a high enough calibre to fill these gaps temporarily, or indeed have the potential to be successfully recruited into permanent roles with the College.

## Key Focus

Although the pandemic and resulting College and Prison Education department closures have limited the opportunities for further onsite development and support of associates, this has also provided an opportunity to test and further develop the remote operational capabilities of the Forward Futures head office.

With a new recruitment manager at the helm in 2019/20, an increased level of customer focus and an improved/simplified electronic agenda has been apparent.

Regular service review meetings now occur with deans of faculties and other line manager clients within the College, and guidance is given to them regarding the legalities and considerations of the securing and management of agency workers with their faculties or departments.

## Key developments:

- Improved website and use of social media
- Social media collaborations with Weston College to specifically target candidates in wider demographic area
- Use of of online interviews via Skype / Teams
- Creation of standardised communications via iTrent
- Improved registration forms adhering to paperless agenda
- Creation of iTrent electronic expense and petty cash forms
- Working with HR to simplify the staffing structures on iTrent and cost codes
- Simplification of timesheets, ensuring a more user-friendly process with less delays and associate errors
- More flexible timescales for timesheet submission process
- Implementation of a reminder report one day prior to payroll cut-off

- An effective and responsive service to associates and in-college clients providing a “business as usual” approach as much as was possible during the pandemic.

Covid/lockdown-dependent and where possible, the organisation has continued to recruit industry-based associates, especially within the performing arts as well as the construction and engineering sectors. This has benefited the departments and students by imparting first-hand and current knowledge of the requirements and standards expected by employers in their chosen industries. There is also a continued supply of learning support assistants to the College’s exemplar Faculty of Inclusive Practice.

Under normal circumstances, the high calibre of many Forward Futures associates is recognised with increasing numbers securing permanent roles with the College, year-on-year. However this year and due to Covid-19 limitations, this figure was predictably lower – but still demonstrating that this flexible workforce is highly beneficial to the college and the learner experience.







# Inspirational Events and Investments

This year, the hospitality sector has been particularly hard hit. Following a continued increase in the number of positive cases and the indication of an imminent national lockdown, the Winter Gardens and the Lauriston Hotel temporarily closed in March 2020.

Whilst the Lauriston Hotel was able to temporarily reopen in September, the ability for the Winter Gardens to reopen its doors to the programme of events and special occasions booked remains impossible in the current climate - with the prospect of large numbers of guests mixing being an unsafe proposition or the limited number of guests allowed to conform with social distancing making events financially unsustainable and/or failing to meet their intended purpose.

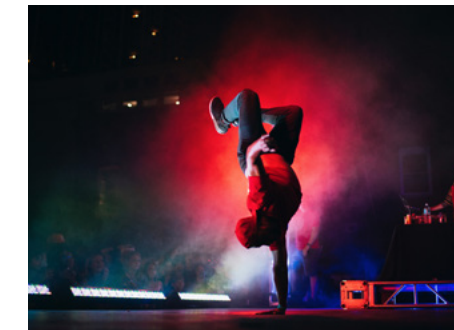
Despite the reopening of the Lauriston in September, this meant that the high season was completely lost and the impact of this on the financial performance of the company is extremely clear. It presented a position that could not be allowed to continue, and together with concerns over both financial and operational performance at the Winter Gardens, change was clearly essential.

Therefore, whilst the Covid-19 position was continually reviewed, the College progressed two pieces of work. Firstly we have transferred the use of the ballroom temporarily into teaching space, primarily for the use by performing arts where social distancing rules are even stricter, and the lounge room at the Lauriston for use by inclusive practice students.

Therefore, whilst the Covid-19 position was continually reviewed, the College progressed two pieces of work. Firstly, we have transferred the use of the ballroom temporarily into teaching space, primarily for the use by performing arts students where social distancing rules

are even stricter, and the lounge room at the Lauriston is now used by inclusive practice students.

Secondly, recognizing the need to learn from activities since it took over control, (especially in the area of economic viability and sustainability), the College has engaged with a market leader to evaluate processes and protocols with the aim of ensuring the Winter Gardens continues to meet its objectives of providing an outstanding community facility while ensuring a secure and sustainable operating model. We look forward to implementing the findings of the review during 2020/21.





# Winter Gardens Community Board

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While all sectors of the world's economy are affected by the coronavirus outbreak, the hotel, leisure, retail and travel industries have been particularly compromised.

Prior to lock-down, details of the continuing wide-range of events were shared and noted, coupled with the commendable fact that every weekend was booked throughout 2020. Mid-week activities remained a challenge, but a summer tea dance programme was prepared to run from March until September. The work of the Committee was reported but progress has been delayed on the establishment of the Friends Charity.

Sadly the premises closed in March 2020 due to the impact of Covid-19 and government advice on entertainment venues. Interim meetings have not been held face to face but continuous communications between the Chair and the College have continued during the pandemic.

The work of the Board has hit a hiatus but the College's aim is to return the pavilion to community use as soon as it is permitted, safe and viable. Board members do retain responsibility for overseeing a transition back to such usage when the time comes.

Recent changes have included: Re-allocation of Board administrative support, addition of Community members and fallout from election shifts in Council representation. This is something the Board has managed despite the current 'hold' position and intends to return to a revised dialogue with the College after the current facility review has concluded, and we look forward to contributing to a positive and sustainable future for the Winter Gardens.



# Prison Education

Weston College is one of the “Big Four” key prison education providers in the UK. Following 6 years’ successful delivery of the OLASS 4 contract in 10 South West prisons which concluded at the end of March 2019, Weston College commenced delivery of the new Prison Education Framework (PEF) contracts in 19 prisons in 2 Lots in the South West and 1 Lot in the South East from April 2019.

## Key points and highlights:

- Timely commencement of the new Prison Education Framework (PEF) contracts in the South West for Lot 1 (5 prisons in Avon and South Dorset) and, for Lot 4 (4 prisons in Devon and North Dorset) and in the South East for Lot 8 (10 prisons in Kent, Surrey and Sussex including 3 women’s prisons and 1 foreign national prison) on 1st April 2019.
- New prison education contractual, academic and financial year now runs from April to the end of March.
- New PEF contracts increased annual income from £9,315,530 to £15,943,203. (April 2019 to March 2021).
- Second year PEF contract increased annual income from £15,943,203 to £16,370,160 per annum (April 2020 to March 2021), with further funding and ongoing bids for DPS contracts.
- Successful Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) contracts for Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) service at HMP Bristol, Eastwood Park and Portland.
- DPS contracts secured for the delivery of art, virtual campus co-ordination and assessors qualifications.
- Unprecedented level of investment in new IT hardware and software coupled with broadband roll-out and virtual campus enhancement.
- Successful bid for Investors in People Platinum accreditation gained by PEF as well as Weston College main site staff.
- Increased library service contracts within the PEF contract to 7 prisons in the South West at HMP Bristol, HMP Portland and HMP The Verne in Lot 1 and HMP Channings Wood, HMP Dartmoor, HMP Exeter and HMP Guys Marsh, developing and extending Library and Learning Resource Centre (LLRC)

services to provide community hubs for information; enhancement, equality and diversity and resettlement activities in addition to promoting and supporting improved literacy for life and work.

- Large scale CPD programme roll-out in order to upskill the high volume of unqualified or underqualified staff transferred by previous provider.
- Production of a new PEF Operating Manual defining quality assurance processes in line with Weston College format and new Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF).
- Introduction of New Teacher Quality Management Plans (TQMP) produced to meet PEF contract specifications and financial KPI.
- Multiple creative art entries submitted to the Koestler Trust Awards with many prize winners.
- Art lecturer from HMP Standford Hill was nominated for a prestigious national Butler Trust Award.

## Covid-19:

- Contractual Covid Relief Payments introduced on March 23rd 2020 to maintain delivery during Covid-19 epidemic.
- Weston College led the way in the development of a robust large scale in cell learning resource provision to maintain engagement at the start of the Covid-19 epidemic.
- Implementation of robust health and safety procedures and risk assessments to maintain staff welfare during the Covid-19 epidemic.
- A number of HMPPS/MOJ short scrutiny visits took place from HMIP inspection teams with considerable success seen at HMP Bristol.
- Successful virtual PEF Academic Conference took place focusing on EIF.
- HMP Bristol was the first adult prison in England to recommence face to face delivery during Covid-19.
- Introduction of online CPD programs including CET, TAQA and Business Administration Apprenticeship.







# Strategic partnership

Partnership working is a key focus of the Weston College Group. We work with businesses and organisations across the region and beyond to provide the skills that employers need for their future workforce.

“ The partnerships we share with Weston College, and our involvement with University Centre Weston, are highlights to us at Bath Spa University. The outstanding work of the College, and its national recognition as an education provider of excellence, make it a privilege to work with them. The combination of business acumen and profound care for the student experience are unique in the region and a beacon for others to emulate. ”

**Sue Rigby**

*Professor of Higher Education and Vice-Chancellor, Bath Spa University*

**BATH SPA  
UNIVERSITY**

“ UWE's partnership with Weston College goes from strength to strength. It is a genuine privilege to work with such a forward thinking, innovative and entrepreneurial organisation who share our commitment to student experience, collaboration and impact for the West of England region. With a continued and unwavering focus on exceptional quality they have many very happy learners, customers and partners who, like us, are champions and advocates of Weston College. ”

**Jo Midgley**

*Pro Vice-Chancellor, University of the West of England, Bristol*



“ Weston College is a key local partner for North Somerset Council. This year we've been working closely with Weston College to develop and deliver our Employment and Skills Strategy for North Somerset. This document will help us to bring together partners to support our residents into good quality jobs and progression opportunities. The College is a vital part of North Somerset's employment and skills landscape and their provision and support to our residents is outstanding. ”

**Jo Walker**

*Chief Executive, North Somerset Council*



“ Weston College is a key local partner for Aerospace Bristol. We have successfully collaborated on many initiatives to support our charity, including hosting events, working in partnership on a media filming project and hopefully industrial placements to support our volunteers.

This highlights some of the support available from the College. We look forward to developing this partnership during 2019/20 and beyond.”

**Amy Seadon**

*Learning and Community Engagement Manager, Aerospace Bristol*



“ Skills is a key issue for Lloyds business customers and Weston College offers courses and apprenticeships relevant for employers, providing industry-standard training facilities.

By working with the team at Weston College, we have successfully delivered business events and they make it easy to work in collaboration in addressing the South West skills gaps.”

**Chris Loach**

*Area Director, Somerset, Lloyds Bank*



“ Weston College is one of the largest and most successful colleges in our region, a great champion of AoC's '#LoveOurColleges' campaign and central to raising the awareness of the strategic importance of all our South West FE colleges.

Over the last six years, Principal and Chief Executive Dr Paul Phillips has been the South West College representative on the AoC National Board and has ensured that the views of the South West members has informed the work and campaigning of AoC.

The College is another excellent example from the South West of how an FE College can assist and lead the national debate on the skills agenda.”

**Ian Munro**

*Area Director (South West), Association of Colleges*



“ Weston College has continued on its growth trajectory this year, playing an important role in the regeneration of Weston and beyond. It delivers a range of excellent training solutions to local businesses, has modern state of the art facilities across all its campuses and demonstrates a strong tradition of innovation.

We are pleased to work alongside Weston College on a range of business support initiatives helping to make sure that North Somerset is a place where ideas can flourish and businesses can grow.”

**Angela Hicks**

*Chief Executive, North Somerset Enterprise Agency*



“ Weston College is a key local partner for Weston Chamber of Commerce, supporting businesses in the town to access skills advice and training programmes. We have joined forces on initiatives during the pandemic, creating a spirit of communication and collaboration, including the successful Wednesday Working Lunch series and the Weston Place Agency to ensure a bright future for our local economy and business community.”

**Sue Shillabeer**

*President, Weston Chamber of Commerce*



“ Weston College is a key strategic partner offering a vibrant and employer focused provision. The College is working with us to attract talent from our local communities for a wide range of NHS careers whilst developing our staff with future focused skills for transforming care. The Health and Active Living Skills Centre is providing new opportunities for close partnership working and co joined delivery of skills and training.”

**Robert Woolley**

*Chief Executive, University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust*





“ Our partnership with Weston College has been invaluable to us in so many ways. We have collaborated on numerous successful initiatives across various departments and many of our staff members have furthered their educational aspirations and have received excellent training at the college. However, the most significant product of our partnership is our on-site animal education facility.

When we opened 14 years ago, many local children came to visit our park and now, as young adults, they have the opportunity to come back and pursue a career in Animal Management. We take great pride in providing our future animal keepers, farmers, veterinarians and veterinary technicians an environment that feeds their desire to learn and develop the skills necessary to follow their career dreams.

We are so grateful for our partnership with Weston College and we look forward to building our relationship with them for years to come.”

**Alistair Mead**

*Managing Director, Puxton Park*



“ Weston's skills rebirth has moved up a gear, with new centres for health and sport, construction skills, maths and special needs to complement the university centre.

They mean local employers and investors can find capable, qualified staff in almost any sector you care to name. Weston can be proud of its College.”

**John Penrose**

*MP, Weston-super-Mare*



“ As one of the region's largest single location employers offering a wide range of exciting career opportunities it is fantastic to collaborate with Weston College across a number of initiatives. Weston College consistently delivers excellent training solutions for local businesses and with leading edge facilities, community outreach and skills programmes. We look forward to developing this partnership further in the future.”

**Dave Lees**

*CEO, Bristol Airport*



“ Weston College is an important partner for Visit Somerset, supporting businesses across Somerset and beyond. 2020 has been an incredibly challenging year for the visitor economy but the College has been visible and supportive, which is the exactly the spirit of our partnership – collaboration. In the past few years, we have successfully worked together to deliver projects including digital media and hosting events regarding the skills agenda, inclusivity and the importance of health and well-being. The value of this partnership is unrivalled and the relationship is built on a foundation of partnership working and communication, with a shared agenda. This will ensure we continue to support the region, together, during and following the Covid-19 pandemic in 2021 and beyond.”

**John Turner**

*Chief Executive Officer, Visit Somerset*



“ It has been a real inspiration for locals to see Weston College not only thrive but achieve Ofsted Outstanding status as well as expanding its offering and recently providing university degrees for its own brand as well as its partner universities.

Its outreach into the community in the last few years offering time, effort, expertise and collaboration has been very welcome by businesses small and large. We look forward to seeing the continued rise of its student numbers so that we can truly call ourselves a university town.”

**Michelle Michael**

*Director, Grand Pier*



“ Weston College has been actively supporting businesses during Covid-19 through their Wednesday Working Lunch series, which was positively received. Their Covid-19 Recovery Hub provides clear guidance in one place for SMEs to access, which is helpful as employers understand the support and government incentives available during the pandemic. We enjoy an excellent working relationship with the College and we look forward to developing this relationship in the next 12 months. ”

**Sam Holliday**

*Development Manager, Federation of Small Businesses*



“ ADLIB are proud to have been invited to be on the Weston College Digital Industry Advisory Board. With the tech industry evolving at pace, with Weston College, this Digital Industry Advisory Board has a purpose for us to have direct input into the College curriculum. ”

**Nick Dean**

*Managing Director, ADLIB*



“ Weston College is an important and valued partner of Somerset Chamber of Commerce. 2020 has presented many challenges, but the College has responded by being visible and supportive to both the Chamber and our business membership throughout the pandemic. Skills remains an important theme for our region to prosper in 2021 and beyond, and I'm confident that our excellent relationship with the College, which is built on a foundation of strong communication and a shared agenda, will continue to evolve for the benefit of the region. ”

**Alistair Tudor**

*Operations Manager, Somerset Chamber of Commerce*



“ We enjoy an excellent working relationship with Weston College. Covid-19 has been a hugely challenging time for lots of businesses and it's clear that the team are proactively supporting employers with options regarding skills development, and as a key stakeholder of the College, we are regularly informed of their plans and progress. We look forward to developing this positive relationship over the next 12 months, helping businesses across the region invest in their people and the opportunities the new economy is presenting. ”

**Matt Hatcher**

*Director, Natwest Bank*



“ Weston College is an important and valued member of the West of England Initiative at Business West. 2020 has presented many challenges, but the College have responded by being visible and supportive to businesses and stakeholders in the region. We look forward to developing this relationship for the benefit of the region in 2021 and beyond. ”

**James Durie**

*Chief Executive, Bristol Chamber & West of England Initiative, Business West*





# Impact on students



“ As soon as I started my apprenticeship I saw how important it would be in my development. I was introduced to an entirely new concept of leadership. ”

**Dan**  
Leadership and Management

*Dan went on to win Gloucestershire Apprentice of the Year 2020 and is currently the Director and joint owner - ASGuk (Systems) Limited*



“ The Art Foundation Diploma really opened my eyes to the fashion world. It provided the perfect balance between business and creativity. ”

**Harriet**  
Art and Design

*After graduating, Harriet moved to Ohio, USA to work for Abercrombie and Fitch. Harriet then progressed to become a fashion designer for Old Navy in San Francisco.*



“ It's fantastic to get the results I was hoping for, I've learnt a lot of skills that have prepared me for university, I set tough targets but the tutors were really accessible which helped me get the results. ”

**Joe**  
A Levels

*Joe went to Durham University to study Politics and Economics; his twin brother Sam went to the University of Birmingham to study Chemical Engineering.*



“ Studying at Weston College enabled me to achieve my ambition to work with animals. ”

**Arianne**  
Animal Management

*After a college placement at Green Pasture Vets, Arianne gained employment there too.*



“ During my course, I completed a placement at PureComms. It gave me an understanding of the industry and opened my eyes to potential future career paths. ”

**Josh**  
Computing and IT

*Josh is now a Cyber Security Apprentice with BT.*



“ The staff and students create a fun and enjoyable learning experience. ”

**Eli**  
Brickwork

*Eli aims to go onto an apprenticeship and has the ambition to have his own business.*



# Impact on employers

Weston College works with employers across the South West and beyond to deliver training solutions to address their skills needs and provide them with high-quality training, including apprenticeships.

“ Weston College is a significant and valued partner not only in the Weston Area Health Trust but increasingly with University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust.

They have an innovative and ambitious approach to training, development and learning and are leading the way for others to follow.”

**Jeff Farrar**  
*Chairman, Weston Area Health Trust and University Hospitals Bristol, NHS Foundation Trust*



“ Weston College are a key part of the business community both in Weston and the region. Investment in skills training and facilities, working collaboratively with employers, and providing skilled graduates are all important to the prosperity of Weston-super-Mare, North Somerset and the wider region. Albert Goodman are actively supporting this agenda by partnering with the College to deliver the NextGen Speaker Series, bringing inspirational business speakers to Weston, highlighting the town as a fantastic place to study, live, work and grow a business.”

**Chris Walford**  
*Partner, Albert Goodman*



“ This is our fourth year of working with Weston College in the delivery of a range of specialised engineering degree apprenticeships. I believe we have a true partnership with the College. The College listens and reacts to us and our apprentices over suggestions for improvements and areas that require attention. The marketing and recruitment team have gone out of their way to support us in our unique requirements for candidate assessments.

The option for our first year apprentices to live in halls is also a major plus point for our scheme and undoubtedly helps to put both apprentices, and parents, minds at rest when leaving home for the first time. All of this is reflected in the excellent results across the four year groups and 90+ apprentices we currently have under training with University Centre Weston.”

**Philip Rotherham**  
*Senior Apprentice Scheme Manager, Ministry of Defence*



“ Weston College has supported our Young Talent Programme, helping us to reach over 10,000 people in 12 months, which has received regional and national recognition.

Our bespoke Thatchers Brand Academy Apprenticeship, created in partnership with Weston College, has created a new source of talented employees and we were delighted to not only win the Weston College Employer of the Year Award, but also our apprentice Molly received the Apprentice of the Year Award at the 2019 Weston College Business Awards.

We look forward to developing this successful partnership in the future.”

**Martin Thatcher**  
*Managing Director, Thatchers*



“ The 2019/20 academic year was once again a year of strong collaboration between Weston College and industrial partners such as ourselves in spearheading the development of the West of England Institute for Technology. As an Anchor employer GKN Aerospace continues to be excited to be supporting the continued development of the West of England IoT. We see it as key to helping us to develop our talent pipeline.

Vital to its success will be employers working with the IoT to assist in the development of the curriculum, therefore ensuring the learning it delivers keeps pace with emerging digital and innovative technologies. This is essential to enable our present and future employees to fulfill their potential and therefore for businesses to grow.

Looking towards 2021 we are hoping to see this collaboration strengthened further with exciting developments on the horizon regarding the Bristol delivery provision of the IoT.”

**Paul Ashbee**  
*Technical Training Manager, GKN Aerospace*



“ The Bristol Port Company relationship continues to grow momentum and the 19/20 academic year has seen 10 Level 3 Management apprentices complete their courses, all passing with Distinction and gaining their Functional Skills qualifications where required. We launched the new class of 2020 during lockdown with another Level 3 Management apprenticeship programme of 12 learners. Alongside this we continue to teach 11 senior leaders who are working towards their Level 5 Leadership apprenticeship and all will complete in early 2021. We also completed during lockdown with 5 new supervisors, who had no previous management experience, but stepped up during the pandemic period. All 5 have since secured full-time supervisory roles and will be embarking onto the next cohort of Level 3 Management apprentices in 2021. It is also likely that another Level 5 cohort of leadership apprentices will be in place for 20/21.

We have also undertaken the following additional training: BE - Car and trailer driver training, BE - Car and trailer duty of care driving assessments and D1 minibus training.”

**David Brown**  
*CEO, The Bristol Port Company*



# The year in headlines



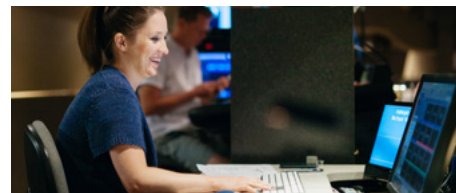
## Lecturer wins English Veterans Award

A lecturer has won a major accolade for his service as a Royal Marine and achievements since leaving the forces. Dave Beresford, who is a [Public Services lecturer](#), received the Lifetime Achievement Award at the [English Veterans Awards](#).



## Learner wins regional apprenticeship award

James Morris, has been named the Civil Engineering Contractors Association South West Apprentice of the Year. James picked up his award at CECA's Annual Members' South West Lunch.



## Learners benefit after lecturers join elite Microsoft group

Louise Pratten, Shaun LaTouche, and Lynne Richards have been awarded Microsoft Innovative Educator Expert status giving them the opportunity to join Microsoft's global network of educator experts. This means a wealth of benefits and possibilities for learners.



## Animal Management alumni wins Scholarship Award

Marcus Banks from Clevedon received an award from Professor Iwan Davies, Vice-Chancellor of Bangor University. Marcus previously studied the [Animal Management BTEC Extended Diploma](#) at College and is now studying Zoology with Herpetology at Bangor University.



## Tutor from Weston College at HMP Standford Hill wins Butler Trust Award

Nikki Dennington, tutor and assessor at HMP Standford Hill won a well-deserved award for her outstanding contribution to using the arts, often with prisoners experiencing additional difficulties.



## National Employer of the Year – A Landslide Victory for the College

This year's winner of the prestigious Employer of the Year at the Lloyds National Business Awards.



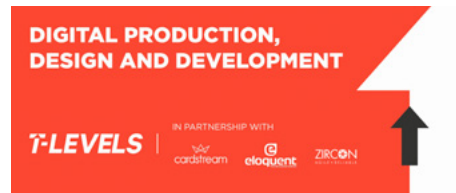
## Platinum Status for Weston College

Building on its existing Gold accreditation and Champion status, the College received Platinum as a result of a whole-College approach to prioritising the development and well-being of its employees.



## Apprentices continue to provide invaluable support to the frontline

Weston College had just over 350 apprentices in key worker roles during the pandemic, this represents about 18% of the College's total apprenticeship provision. These 'exceptional' apprentices continued to battle the frontline in: hospitals and care homes; utilities services; childcare settings; emergency services; plus, transport and logistics organisations.



## Leading Tech employers endorse Weston College's new Digital T Level programme

Leading digital companies, Wiltshire based Zircon Software, and Somerset based Eloquent Technologies and Cardstream, have pledged their support to Weston College and the new qualification, by committing to take on Digital T Level learners for their Industry Placements.



## Weston College and Dr Paul Phillips CBE win Double Gold at the UK Business Awards

The UK Business Awards was held virtually for the first time, but this didn't stop Dr Paul Phillips CBE winning GOLD and being crowned Leader for the Future for his leadership shown during Covid-19 in creating [#MyVirtualCollege](#).



## Learners Triumph at Prestigious BTEC Awards

Two learners were celebrated at the prestigious BTEC Awards. Finley Nock received the Silver award in Health and Social Care Student of the Year category and Emma Browning received the Bronze Award in the category Engineering Student of the Year.



## Students selected nationally for FA Leadership Academy

Seven college students across the UK have been selected to attend the annual FA Leadership Academy (FALA) - two of those seven were Weston Sport learners Katie Sharkey and Ethan Reed.



# The year in numbers

## Finance

### Income

£33,610,000

Funding body grants

£8,958,000

Tuition fees and contracts

£4,552,000

Other grants and contracts

£17,140,000

Other income

£18,000

Investment income

£64,278,000

Total income

### Surplus

£85,000

Surplus before other gains and losses

£2,109,000

Surplus before pension adjustments  
(ESFA Specific)

### Expenditure

£42,022,000

Staff costs

£420,000

Restructuring costs

£18,641,000

Other operating expenses

£2,201,000

Depreciation

£909,000

Interest and other finance costs

£64,193,000

Total expenditure

## Demographics

### Students by gender

48.7%

Male

51.3%

Female

### Students by age

48.0%

Under 21

17.5%

21 to 30

34.5%

Over 30

### Adults

More than 6,465 people aged 19 or over are enrolled at the College; 1,521 on an apprenticeship and 1,062 studying higher education courses at University Centre Weston.

### Number of enrolments (UCW)

765

Full-time

297

Part-time

### Number of enrolments (excluding PEF)

94

Under 16

9,723

16 to 18

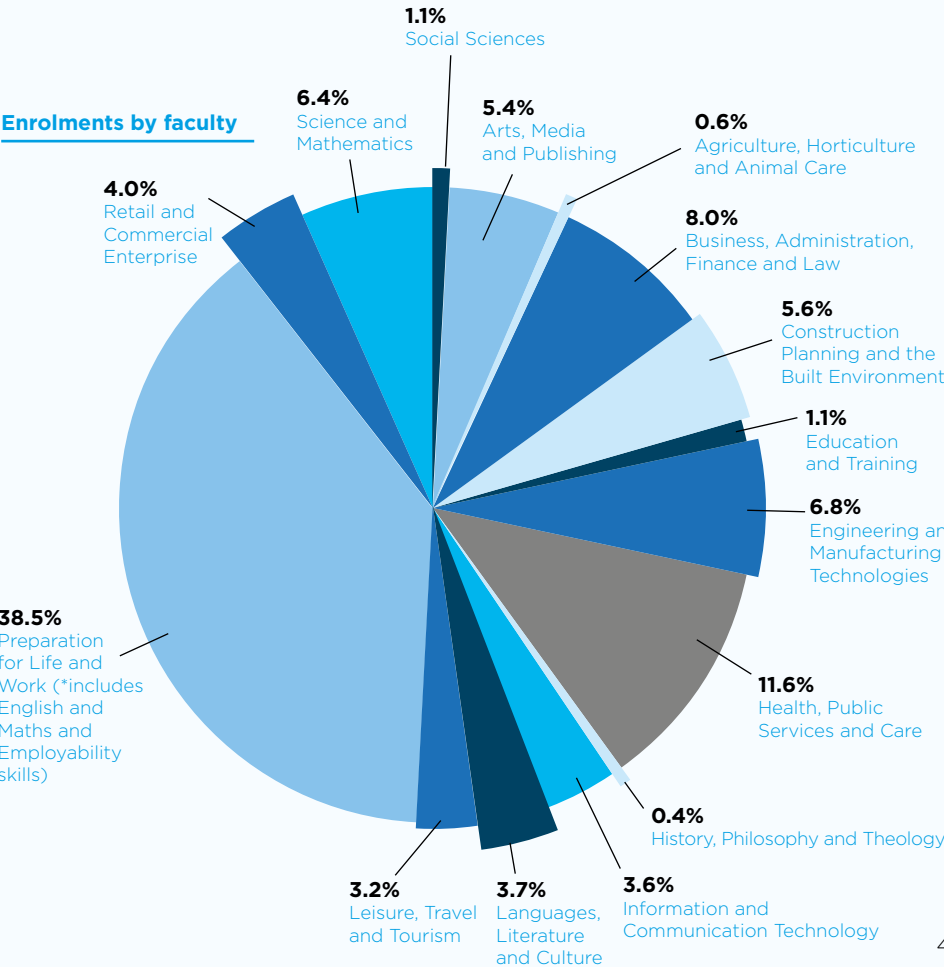
13,873

19 and over

23,690

Total

### Enrolments by faculty



# Corporation during the academic year 2019/20

Governor	Role	Background
Paul Ashbee	Governor	Industry
Mark Canniford	Chair of Audit Committee and Lead Governor for Safeguarding	Commercial
Chris Carter	Vice Chair of Corporation and Chair of Finance Committee	Legal
Tim Cowley	Vice Chair of CQC Governance Committee	Industry and legal
Gemma Day	Governor	Commercial and HR
Ann Driver	Governor	Education and Governance
Simon Earles	Governor	Industry

Andrew Leighton-Price (Chair from Feb 2019)	Chair of the Corporation, Chair of Forward Futures, Prison Education, SOMAX, Inspirational Events and Investments, and Releasing New Potential	Audit and Finance
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Governor	Role	Background
Jo Midgley	Vice Chair of Corporation and Chair of CQC Governance Committee	Higher Education
Alex Nestor	Governor	HR and Commercial
Maxine Park	Staff Governor (Academic)	Education
John Penrose	Corporation Associate	MP for Weston-super-Mare
Dr Paul Phillips	Principal and Chief Executive	Education, Business and Finance
Ian Porter	Lead Governor for Health and Safety	Industry
George Reah	Corporation Associate	Industry
Fiona Waters	Staff Governor (non-academic)	Education
Katie Wilkinson	Student Governor (HE)	Education



# Contact us

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[enquiries@weston.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@weston.ac.uk)

## Knightstone Campus

Knightstone Road, Weston-super-Mare,  
BS23 2AL

## Loxton Campus

Loxton Road, Weston-super-Mare,  
BS23 4QU

## South West Skills Campus

Locking Road, Weston-super-Mare,  
BS22 8NL

## Construction Training Centre

Locking Head Drove, Weston-super-Mare,  
BS24 7NA

## Winter Gardens

South Parade, Weston-super-Mare,  
BS23 1AJ



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