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SINCE 1854



WM COLLEGE
STRATEGIC PLAN 2024 – 2027

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WM COLLEGE

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WM College, formally known as Working Men's College, is the oldest surviving adult education institute in Europe. The College was associated with the Cooperative Movement and the Christian Socialists, stemming from the same tradition that later led to the establishment of the Worker's Educational Association. The Working Women's College, founded 10 years later in 1864, finally merged with WM College in 1967. Early supporters of both organisations included F D Maurice, John Stuart Mill, Tom Hughes, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, John Ruskin, Ford Maddox Brown, Walter de la Mare and Octavia Hill.

Originally based in Red Lion Square, the College has been in its current home at Crowndale Road, a listed building in Camden Town, since 1905.

It is with great enthusiasm and a sense of purpose that we present our College's strategic plan for the upcoming years. Our strategic plan embodies our commitment to excellence in education, community engagement, and the holistic development of our learners and staff. It is rooted in our mission to provide a transformative learning experience while upholding the values and traditions that have defined us for generations. To achieve our vision and build on our strengths, we have five key objectives.

We are proud to provide courses for the whole community and we provide a welcoming environment for people of all ages, whether they are looking for job related skills, wanting to take up a new leisure interest or wishing to enhance their wellbeing through broader creative learning. We are a friendly college and support all learners to think beyond their initial goals to longer lifelong learning.

One of the key pillars of our strategic plan is our dedication to upskilling the local community. We recognise the importance of equipping individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to thrive in today's rapidly changing economy.

In line with this commitment, we will strengthen our partnerships with employers to ensure that our programmes are aligned with the needs of the workforce. By collaborating closely with employers, we can provide our learners with real-world experiences and valuable insights that enhance their employability and career prospects.

Furthermore, we are deeply committed to contributing to London's skills agenda. As a proud member of this vibrant and diverse city, we recognise our responsibility to support its economic and social development. Through strategic partnerships and innovative initiatives, we will actively contribute to addressing the skills gaps and driving economic growth in our region. We are a key provider of essential skills at level 2 and below within the borough of Camden, and well aligned to the local, regional and national priorities.

In addition to academic excellence, we place a strong emphasis on the mental and physical wellbeing of our learners and staff. We understand that wellbeing is fundamental to learning and productivity, and we are dedicated to creating a supportive and nurturing environment where everyone can thrive. We are also committed to the continuous professional development of our staff and creating an inclusive and supportive workplace.

As we move forward, we will remain steadfast in our commitment to maintaining our 170-year-old tradition of academic excellence, integrity, and service to the community, learners and staff. While our strategic plan outlines a roadmap for the next three years, we will continue to commit to additional effort and collaboration with stakeholders and the broader community to enhance our positioning for the future.



Dipa Ganguli OBE
Principal



Joanna Davidson CBE
Chair of Governors



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OUR VISION

Transforming lives through enriching and inclusive lifelong learning.

OUR MISSION

To provide diverse and enriching lifelong learning that meets the skills needs of the local community in a supportive environment.

OUR VALUES

Learner Centred

A determined focus to ensure our learners have the right skills and opportunities to achieve their potential. We listen to our learners and are flexible, adaptable and responsive to their needs.

Commitment to continuous improvement and excellence

Commitment to removing barriers to learning and ensuring that we continually review what to do to improve the experience for our learners.

Respectful

We are an open and welcoming college. We promote equity and celebrate diversity. We are understanding of each other's values, cultures, beliefs, and respect these in our interactions with each other.

Collaborative

We value our partnerships with the local community and employers and strive to be agile in meeting their needs and working to common goals.

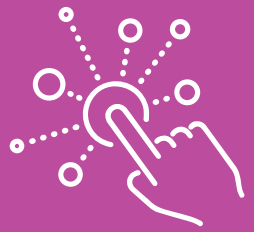
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OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
The Mayor of London's commitment to foundation learning and the development of essential skills as set out in his skills plan, including Digital Skills Entitlement for Londoners.	Future security of tailored learning and demonstrating value for money.
GLA and local government strategies to address isolation, mental health, and the needs of older people through preventative health strategies that involve learning, volunteering and community and social involvement.	Shift in priorities, policy, and regulations with a change of administration may lead to too few lower-level learners eligible for government funding.
Working collaboratively with the Business LDN to meet the local skills improvement plan.	Recruitment and retention of staff given the high costs of living in London and the surrounding areas.
Links with employers and community partners provide opportunities to codesign the curriculum offer and ensure that the offer is relevant and meeting local needs.	
Use technological developments to diversify and enhance the curriculum offer and to streamline administrative processes	Increased use of technology in College processes can risk excluding those who are digitally poor or have low levels of digital literacy. Threats to cyber security are constant, ever changing, and can have potentially severe consequences whilst measures to mitigate threats can make learning less accessible and impose significant organisational costs.

SUMMARY OF ORGANISATIONAL STRENGTHS

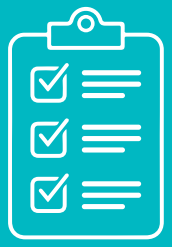
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Broad and accessible curriculum offer.



Skills of teaching staff with industry expertise.



Ofsted 2024 judged 'Good' across all criteria of the Education inspection framework.



Excellent careers information, advice and guidance expertise and strengths praised by Matrix.



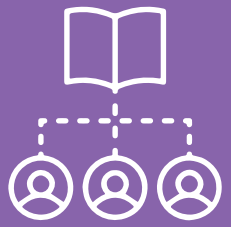
Courses and wrap around support are planned to help local residents improve their skills and social mobility.



Own site at the heart of Camden with many specialists' rooms.



Effective partnerships that support adult learners.



Part of the IAL group recognised by the government as specialist adult providers.



Dedicated and hardworking staff with a strong sense of purpose.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

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1. QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING

Quality teaching, learning and assessment tailored to the unique needs, experiences, and goals of our learners.

A relevant, flexible, and adaptable curriculum offer.

Implement learner-centric teaching methodologies, focusing on interactive and experiential learning to enhance engagement and success.

Removing barriers that hinder learning.



We will achieve this objective by:

- Providing professional development opportunities to staff to extend knowledge and skills and keep pace with sector development to bring that learning into the classroom.
- Making staff aware of expected high performance levels and celebrating their contribution and expertise.
- Being ambitious for our learners by providing access to relevant learning and progression pathways to increase their skills base and social mobility.
- Developing an annual enrichment programme that all learners can access and participate in.
- Engaging with learners and using the feedback to drive quality improvements.
- Rigorous self-assessment, leadership and management oversight.
- Extending learners' skills through incorporating interactive and engaging learning activities.
- Providing additional learning support inside and outside of the classroom.
- Align with OFSTED framework to work towards 'Outstanding' at next inspection.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

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2. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND ALIGNMENT

Align our curriculum to the local, regional, and national priorities ensuring that it considers the needs of the community, industry trends and government initiatives.

Foster industry partnerships that enable learners to gain practical experience through work experience, placements, or employment opportunities.

Effective marketing strategies, especially digital, online and through social media to attract a diverse learner population.

Deliver essential skills to the local community which are key to navigating the challenges of life and supporting adults' life chances.

We will achieve this objective by:

- Conducting a needs assessment through engagement with stakeholders, researching national and regional priorities and through identifying key policy documents and areas of focus.
- Expanding employer engagement through workplace delivery, codesigning the curriculum and corporate team-building opportunities.
- Exploring government grants and funding opportunities that support the educational initiatives aligned with national and regional priorities.
- Developing a robust marketing strategy.
- Continuing to offer basic skills in ESOL, English, maths and digital skills, helping adult learners develop the competencies needed to thrive in life.



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3. INTEGRATION OF TECHNOLOGY

Address the digital literacy skills needed by learners to progress in employment and life.

Incorporate digital pedagogy into traditional teaching and learning to prepare learners to meet the demands of the modern workforce.

Encourage a culture of security consciousness within the College and provide training to staff to enhance awareness of best practices.

Develop digital competence of learners and staff.

We will achieve this objective by:

- Increasing the digital skills offer to meet the priorities and local skills needs.
- Expanding the curriculum offer to include digital skills at higher levels and embedded within vocational courses.
- Streamlining operations, reducing costs, and improving efficiency by reviewing processes and integrating technology into the workflows.
- Ensuring that our curriculum reflects the latest technologies and innovations relevant to the industries in our region.
- Safeguarding the cyber security of the College.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

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4. FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Strengthen the financial model to demonstrate effective reconciliation of public funds.

Identify relevant new funding from both local and national government and commercial income opportunities, diversifying the income streams.

Develop comprehensive budgets that identifies cost efficiency but prioritises essential activities and aligns to the College's strategic goals.

Regularly review and adjust tuition fee structures to reflect the cost of delivering education whilst remaining competitive with other providers.

Maximize both the capital value and potential future revenues from the College's existing property holdings.

We will achieve this objective by:

- Implementing systems to integrate curriculum business planning with budget setting processes.
- Establishing and monitoring targets for contribution to central overheads from teaching departments.
- Increasing the income base through fees, contracts, commercial activity and bids for additional funding.
- Reviewing periodically the investment portfolio to get the best return on investment.
- Engaging alumni and donors to support the endowment through planned giving and donations.
- Maximising the capital return or rental yields from our existing property portfolio and expanding our footprint where we can establish a robust long-term business case.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

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5. FIT FOR PURPOSE ESTATE

Develop all our properties to the highest possible standards that befits their significance and tradition to host fit for purpose 21st century learning.

Any alterations or renovations of our main building should to be sensitive to its architectural and historic significance, as a Grade II listed building.

Implement a robust approach to sustainability in all aspects of College life, from our buildings to the curriculum, so reducing the costs of energy and operations and driving our carbon footprint to operational net zero.



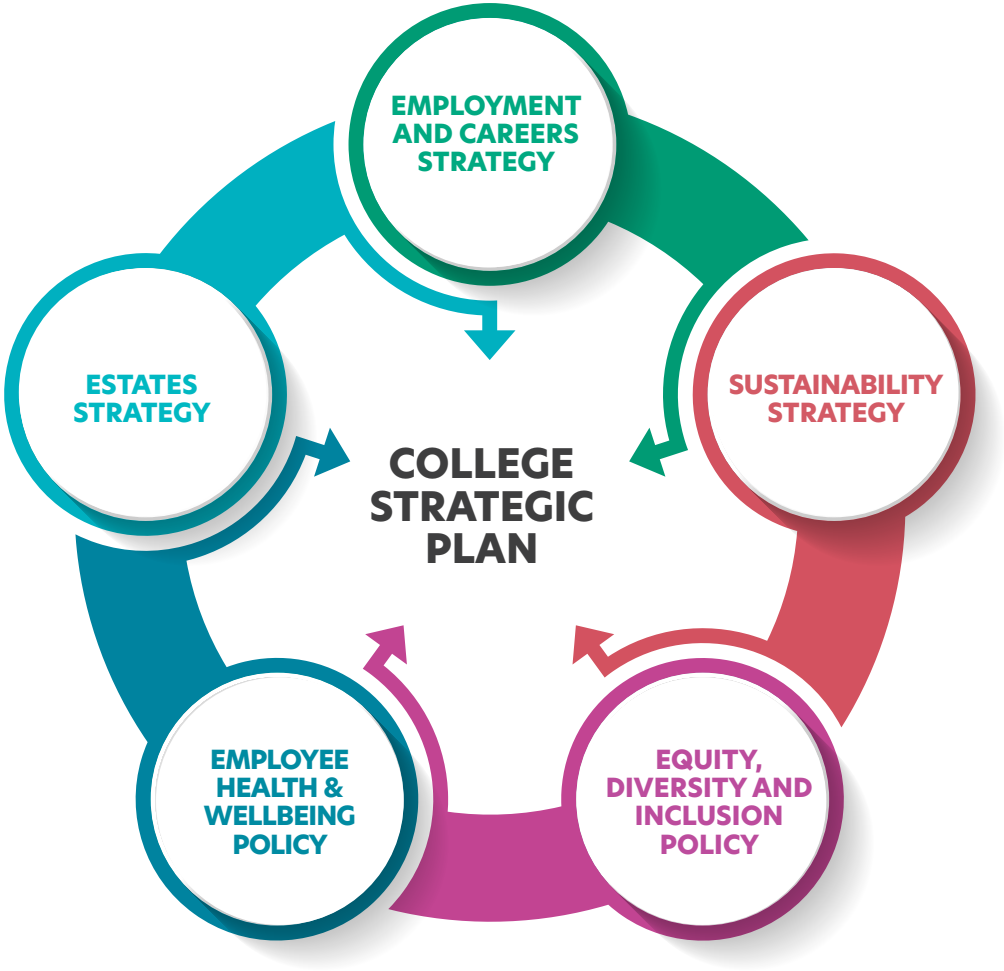
We will achieve this objective by:

- Undertaking capital works to support the health and safety issues emerging from the condition surveys and ensure these are updated on a five-year cycle.
- Planning for the external refurbishment of the Crowndale Road building to address cyclical maintenance issues including redecoration and repair of historic windows and cupola, repointing of brickwork, repairs and insulation to the roof, high quality replacement of windows to the rear elevation.
- Ensuring the satellite site at Kentish Town meets learner needs and provision to cover operational costs.
- Ensuring that physical facilities are designed to be accessible for all learners and staff, especially for emergency evacuation.
- Using materials that match the historic ones in terms of appearance and performance when conducting repairs or renovations. Completing the full seasonal commissioning of the heating & ventilation project to ensure optimal efficiency, with upgrades to the Building Management System and addressing any remedial works.
- Completing the WMC Plus concept with the refurbishment of Maurice Hall to ensure the air handling works at an acceptable noise level.

WHOLE COLLEGE FRAMEWORK

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STRATEGIES AND POLICIES UNDERPINNING THE STRATEGIC PLAN



Performance Metrics and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) linked to the strategic plan.

College action plan - Achieving our objectives (3 years)

Quality improvement plan (annual plan)

Employability and careers action plan (3 years)

Accountability statement (annual plan)

SUCCESS FOR ESOL LEARNER STELLA!



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Having not had the opportunity to go to school in Nigeria, Stella James was unable to read or write. She worked from a young age in her mother's street food restaurant and developed a strong passion for food.

When Stella moved to the UK it was a dream of hers to be a chef, writing recipes and sharing her creations with the world, but she was unsure how to without the ability to write.

Stella enrolled at WM College to study ESOL and thrived in the class. She has since progressed onto study English Entry 2. With her new skills Stella has been able to progress her education and complete two programmes with TERN and graduate from the Up Collective and the Food Power Programme, as well as completing a training programme with Migrateful.

Armed with plenty of new skills Stella has been able to set up her own Nigerian catering company, Special Delicacies, which is going from strength to strength. She is now an official Migrateful Chef and caters large gatherings and corporate events with a recent gig for Sky and an appearance on BBC Breakfast.

"I LOVE food, I love cooking, the sharing with others and the way that it brings people together. To me, it's more than just serving delicious tasting dishes. Food was part of my childhood and is forever linked to my mother."

WM COLLEGE LEARNER RUNNER-UP IN EVENING STANDARD ART PRIZE 2023

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Nicola first enrolled at WM College to study ceramics and later went onto study Art and Design Foundation Diploma.

Having completed her Foundation Diploma at the College, Nicola was able to progress onto study a degree at Central Saint Martins.

Not only has Nicola developed her education, she was also shortlisted for the Evening Standard Art prize for a body of work created under the umbrella of Motherhood, and the unseen realities.

"WM College is a wonderful place, I thoroughly enjoyed my time there and still attend shorter courses as I love the atmosphere and the people, students, and tutors alike. I have made many lifelong friends and WM College holds a very special place in my heart. I recommend it to everyone and anyone considering trying something new or returning to education."

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