

Strategic Plan 2019-24





OVER 150 YEARS OF HISTORY



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Croydon College can trace its history back to 1868 when Croydon School of Art was first established. Twenty years later, in 1888, the Pitlake Technical Institute (which later changed its name to Croydon Polytechnic) was founded.

These two institutions continued to educate separately in and around Croydon until the Polytechnic was destroyed by fire during the Second World War, prompting plans to combine them on a new site in Fairfield, right at the heart of Croydon.

The new Croydon Technical College (later known as Croydon College of Design and Technology) opened its doors for the first time in 1955 and was finally completed and formally opened by the Queen in 1960. In 1974 the College was renamed Croydon College and has remained as such on the main Fairfield site ever since.

Coulsdon Sixth Form College was formed in 1988 on the site of the former Purley High School for Boys which existed from 1914 to 1988. Originally located in Purley from 1914, in 1936 it relocated to Placehouse Lane, Old Coulsdon.

The school was Purley County Grammar School from 1914 to 1969, becoming Purley Grammar School for Boys and then, in 1973, Purley High School for Boys after the abolition of the Grammar School system and the implementation of the Comprehensive System.

In February 2019 Coulsdon Sixth Form College was incorporated into Croydon College, bringing together both of Croydon's Ofsted Good Colleges. While the Colleges are one legal entity, they continue to operate for students with their own unique identities.

Croydon College is a General Education College delivering education and training from entry level to level 6 (degree level) for those aged over 15 years old in a wide range of vocational subjects, general subjects and academic pathways. Coulsdon Sixth Form College concentrates on the delivery of academic pathways for 16-18 year olds.



THE LOCAL CONTEXT

Population

The London Borough of Croydon is London's second largest Borough with a population of c391,000. The Borough has the highest proportion of young people (22%) under the age of 15 of any London Borough, while also having more residents aged 65+ than the average in London (13.5% in comparison to 11.9%).

Croydon is a very diverse Borough, and while 82% are UK national (higher than the London average of 77%), 45% of the residents are Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic, in comparison to an average of 40% in London. The largest ethnic group in Croydon is White British at 47%, the next largest is Black

Caribbean at 8.6%, followed by Black African at 8%, Indian at 6.8% and Pakistani at 4.8%.

Employment

The employment rate in Croydon at 74% is similar to that of London, however more Croydon residents are less likely to be self-employed at 9.6% compared to an average of 13.7% in London, they are also likely to work fewer hours, with 28.7% working less than 35 hours compared to 25.3% on average in London.

Residents in Croydon are less likely to work as managers, directors and senior officials or associate professional and tech occupations, than on average in London, but more likely

to work in administrative, caring, leisure and other service industries or sales and customer services. This occupational profile is mirrored in the salary profile with Croydon residents' incomes £1000 lower than the median for London.

Businesses

Of businesses in Croydon, a vast majority of nearly 93% employ 0-8 people (compared to 90% for London), there are corresponding fewer small and large businesses.

In terms of industry, there are significantly more businesses in Croydon in the Construction trades (15%) compared to the London average (10%), there are also marginally more in Healthcare (5.5%

compared to 3.9%), Motor trades (2.3% compared to 1.3%) and Accommodation and Food services (5.3% compared to 4.8%), there are significantly fewer than the London average in Professional, Scientific & Technical at 23.5% compared to 19.4% and marginally fewer in Financial and Insurance, Property, Business Admin and Support Services and the Arts and Entertainment.

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Education

The highest level of qualification gained for Croydon residents is lower than the London average, with fewer graduates and more people stopping their education at level 3. Education standards start falling behind London averages for disadvantaged students and BAME students in the early years, with the proportion of those groups falling behind their peers. By Key Stage 2 the proportion of children reaching the expected standards in Reading, Writing and maths sits below the London average by 2% and 3% respectively. Only 57% of disadvantaged children are reaching expected standards at Key Stage 2 in Croydon.

When children in Croydon reach Key Stage 4 the gap between their attainment and the average for London increases further with 42.4% achieving grade 5 and above in GCSE maths and English, in comparison to 48.7% in London. Business Admin and Support Services and the Arts and Entertainment.

When children in Croydon reach Key Stage 5 the gap between their attainment and the average for London again increases, only 6.1% of Croydon children attain AAB compared to 15% in London. Average point scores across Academic qualifications including A levels are lower than the London average by 4-5%, however, applied general qualifications and tech levels perform relatively well. Below national results at Key Stage 4 impact significantly at the Colleges' Croydon Campus, in 2019/20 only 23% of 16-18 students attending the campus arrived with GCSE maths and English at grade 9-4, this compares to 44% of national college students.

Of all 16-18 students at the Croydon Campus 53% arrived with neither English nor maths, compared to 32% of all college 16-18 students nationally. This has a significant impact on the College in terms of the curriculum and the support needs of students.

Highest Level of Educational Attainment	Croydon Count	Croydon %	London Count	London %
Degree or equivalent and above	101,600	41.3%	2,805,800	47.2%
Higher Education below degree level	17,600	7.2%	378,700	6.4%
GCE A level or equivalent	50,200	20.4%	925,600	15.6%
GCSE grades A-C or equivalent	41,700	17%	823,500	13.9%
Other qualifications (GCSE)	18,600	7.6%	608,700	10.2%
No qualifications (GCSE)	16,100	6.6%	399,100	6.7%

Deprivation and Disadvantage

Disadvantage and poverty in Croydon is concentrated in specific areas around the north of the borough and New Addington. The south of the Borough is relatively affluent. The affluence of the south of the Borough masks the prevalence of disadvantage in the poorer areas within indicators of disadvantage at the Borough level. Beneath this, 4 lower level super output areas in the Borough are in the top 10% most disadvantaged in the country and 38

in the top 20%. This rises significantly for the housing index, in which there are 147 in the top 20%, suggesting access to suitable housing is a significant issue in Croydon.

Amongst the children of Croydon 19.8% are eligible for free school meals¹ in comparison to 17.4% in London and 14.1% in England². After Housing Costs 30% of children in Croydon live in poverty³.

Health and Wellbeing

he health and wellbeing of the residents in Croydon is mixed, locally it is understood that the along the 62 bus route from the north of the Borough to the south there is a 10 year difference in Life expectancy.

Croydon's Health and Wellbeing Multiagency Board⁴ has issued a new Strategy in which it states that "Over 10,000 people in Croydon live in areas ranked amongst the most deprived ten per cent nationally. 1100 children are born into poverty every year in Croydon. People living in deprived neighbourhoods are more likely to experience multiple disadvantage; die earlier and spend more years in long-term ill health."

Mental Health

There is unfortunately little data available on the mental health of the community in Croydon. However, at both the Croydon and Coulsdon Campus there are increasing numbers of students presenting with mental health issues and sadly mental health is a growing cause of students withdrawing from their education.

Regeneration

Croydon is an area of significant change, with an estimated £5.2 billion of inward investment in the Borough through a range of regeneration and property investment projects. The Croydon Campus is in the heart of the regeneration area, with significant housing developments surrounding the Campus. The new Towers at 101 George street dominate the skyline and will provide 546 new homes; planning permission is being sought for a further even taller modular build on the site of the Croydon Campus' former carpark and a planning application is currently being considered for 430 new homes on the site of the former council car park in the

area bounded by the Croydon Campus, the former College Green, the railway lines and the Courts.

In September 2019 the refurbished Fairfield Halls opened, creating fantastic opportunities for the College to collaborate on a wide range of opportunities to extend the student experience.


Across the road from the Croydon Campus, the former St Georges Walk is being redeveloped into housing with some retail provision.

There continues to be a general optimism that the Westfield Hammerson redevelopment of the Town Centre will happen, despite significant delays. Most recent reports are that the development will be scaled back from initial ambitions and be more focused on entertainment than retail.

Developments under the East Croydon Masterplan have slowed down in the current uncertainty with the recent extension of the Boxpark lease indicative of Stanhope and Schrooders slowing investment in the current uncertain markets.

In March 2019 Croydon Council announced that London South Bank University (LSBU) would be creating a presence in Croydon. The local authority will provide LSBU with space within its Davis House building beside the Council's Bernard Wetherill Building.

1. Croydon Public Health report 2019
2. Local Government Association LG Inform https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/lgastandard?metric=2174&mod-area=E92000001&mod-group=AllRegions_England&modtype=namedComparisonGroup
3. 5. End Child Poverty. Child Poverty. [Online] 2019. <http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/poverty-in-your-area-2019/>
4. Croydon Health and Wellbeing Strategy <https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/documents/s13992/Health%20and%20Wellbeing%20Strategy%20-%20Final.pdf>



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THE NATIONAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

Brexit continues to dominate national politics, causing deep divisions in society and economic uncertainty.

FE and Sixth Form Colleges are now receiving more national attention from Politicians, with all the major parties promising investment in colleges (amongst many other priorities). Following national campaigns from both the sixth form sector and the further education sector in October, the Government announced that there would be an increase in the base rate of funding of approximately 4.5% in 2020/21. After seven years static funding with no inflationary increase, 4.5% in 20/21 is insufficient. Each of the main political parties in the run up to the election is now offering more funding for FE. Apprenticeships are not key to the election priorities as they have been in the preceding two elections.

The FE sector continues to face even more change. The Adult Education Budget is now devolved to the Mayor of London for Londoners, while the ESFA continues to hold the budget for Adult Education outside devolved areas. 2018/19 is the first year of evolution and the Mayor's Office have made little change to ESFA funding rules and processes, however there appears to be a clear aim for future years for outcome related funding of Adult Education, raising concerns of colleges being subject to even more bureaucracy.

Apprenticeships for large employers continue to be funded by a levy and from January non-levy employers which until now accessed

apprenticeship funding through colleges and training providers, will for the first time have access to apprenticeship funding via the Digital Apprenticeship System.

Higher Education is being more heavily regulated under the Office for Students, which has replaced the Higher Education Funding Council and regulates all organisations which have access to Higher Education Student Loans. The Office for Students aims to focus on the interests of individual students, and as such is using data, compliance and complaints in a far greater scale than its predecessor.

Ofsted continues to inspect colleges, under its new inspection framework focusing more on the curriculum intent and impact than the previous framework which had a greater focus on student outcomes.

There are considerably fewer colleges now than 5 years ago. Harsh financial circumstances during austerity and the Government's Area Review process led to many mergers across the sector. Despite these mergers, a recent Institute of Fiscal Studies report showed that there was no improvement in the financial position of the sector.

The Insolvency Regime is now in place, there are three colleges now in administration. The FE Commissioner's Office continues to intervene in colleges where there are financial concerns. Additionally, Lord Agnew has been given the responsibility of financial oversight of the FE sector.

Following national campaigns from both the sixth form sector and the further education sector in October, the Government announced that there would be an increase in the base rate of funding of approximately 4.5% in 2020/21.

THE COLLEGE IN THIS CONTEXT

It is within this context that the College faces some key challenges in the next five years:

Ensuring our curriculum enables out students thrive

At the Croydon Campus over half of the learners do not have English as their first language, with 55 languages spoken, and 71 nationalities represented. Only 23% of our students at the Croydon Campus arrive with both English and maths GCSE at Grade 9-4 compared to 44% of all College students in England; there is a huge challenge for us to raise our students English and maths standards to better enable them to progress into further study or employment. This differs significantly from the Coulsdon Campus where entry criteria mean that 56% have GCSE's in English and maths at grades 9-4.

With large proportions of our students coming from low income families and deprived areas our curriculum needs to raise aspiration and provide students with the skills they need to progress including communication and resilience, as well as work related skills and work experience. Lower levels of prior attainment contribute to lower attainment levels below national average at the Croydon Campus, this must be addressed through raising standards of teaching and learning and better curriculum design.

Supporting our students' wellbeing

An ever increasing number of students are presenting with health issues, particularly mental health issues. Safeguarding referrals

internally continue to rise, as do the number of referrals of a serious nature to the Local Authority. Many of our students have had traumatic experiences and their actions, reactions and behaviours are affected by these. We have an exceptional number of Looked After Children at the Croydon Campus probably higher than any other College in the country (there is no published benchmark data) with 1 in 6 of our 15-18 year old students during 2018/19 in local authority care. Of our 16-18 year olds at the Croydon Campus 92% live in deprived postcodes and 42% of 16-18 years olds at the Coulsdon Campus.

Meeting the needs of the local and regional economy

Croydon Businesses need more skilled staff. Many businesses want to recruit locally as a way of reducing staff turnover and improving productivity. The College needs to continue to expand and adjust its curriculum to better meet the needs of employers, ensuring the curriculum mirrors local needs. Key areas for expansion are Construction, the Health sector and the Digital sector. In these areas we need to provide opportunities that support employers to fill skills gaps locally, and support our local community to climb the career ladder.

Financial Stability

There is some optimism that the sector will be more fairly funded, however, funding arrangements are currently becoming more not less complex, for example devolution of the AEB budget to the London Mayor,



means we have a contract with the GLA for a majority of our AEB funding, but continue to have a contract with the ESFA for historic levels of non-Londoner funding.

In addition, the GLA are considering changing the funding methodology for AEB in London to make it outcome based. The penalty for financial failure in the sector is now insolvency and there is significantly greater scrutiny of both finances and student performance.

Underlying operating losses from both colleges must be reversed to stop the College corroding its reserves.

While 16-18 population projections suggest a future growth in student numbers, there remains a need to control costs firmly. The political environment remains too turbulent to count on future funding rate increases.



**Croydon
College**



COULSDON
SIXTH FORM COLLEGE



Croydon University Centre

**Two great colleges working together
to transform our communities' economic,
social and employment prospects.**

1

Students at the heart of all we do;
we ensure our decisions and actions
focus on our students and their
attainment

2

Our staff are our greatest asset;
we value our staff and their
expertise and invest in them

3

Respect for all;
we celebrate diversity creating an
inclusive and enjoyable environment

4

Ambitious for our students;
we support our students to
achieve their potential

5

Aim to be Great in all we do;
we are reflective, innovative
and always learning

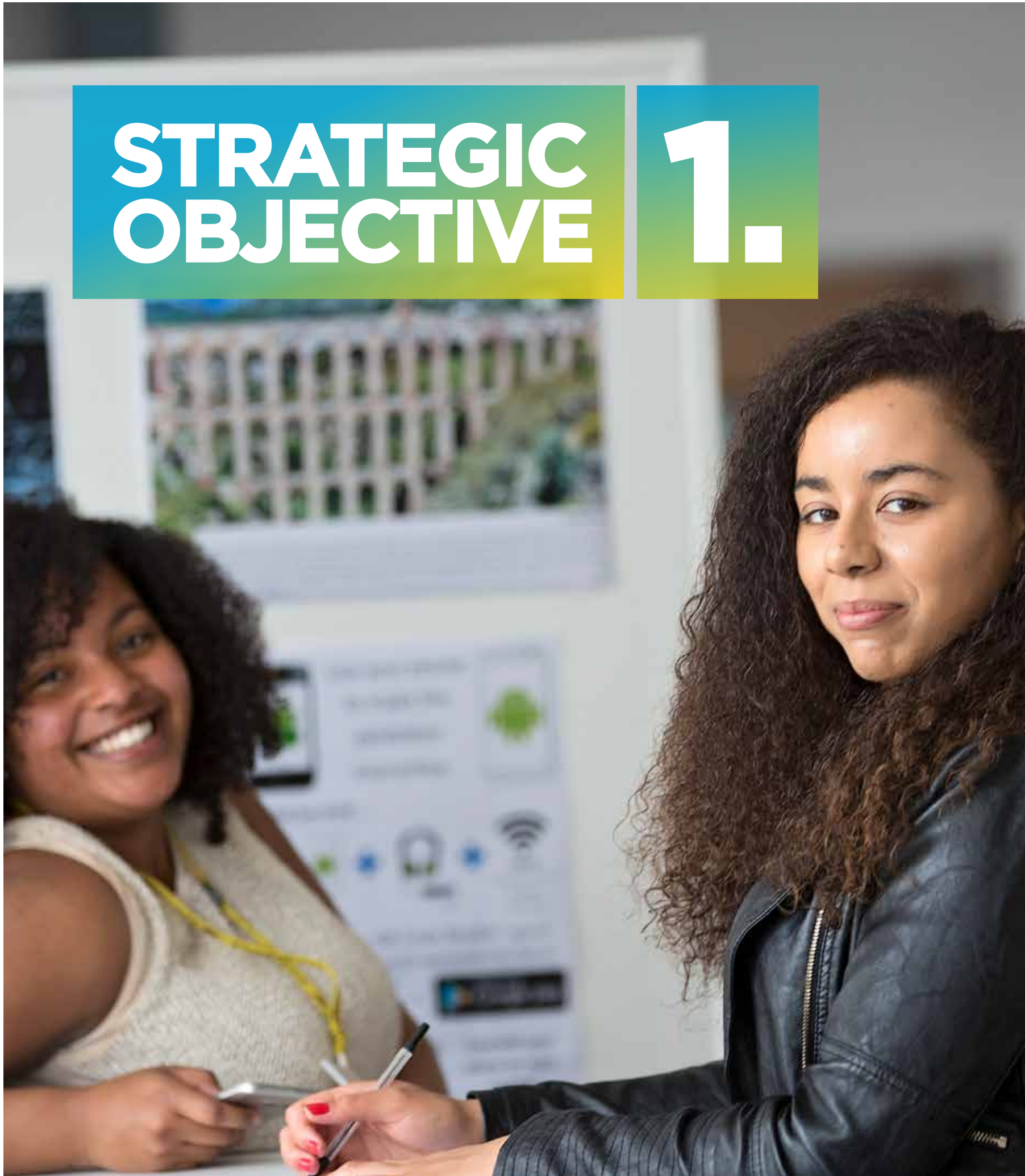
6

Serve our community;
we support our communities
economic and social prosperity

5 YEAR OBJECTIVES

CROYDON COLLEGE





STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

1.

CROYDON CAMPUS

Croydon Campus is a great general education College offering young people and adults' comprehensive pathways to employment and further study and transforming our students economic and social prospects.

Objective

What would success look like

A curriculum which meets the aspirations of our community and needs of the local economy through comprehensive pathways into employment, careers and further study from Entry level to Higher Education qualifications, including T level provision.

Students' progress and destinations are comprehensively measured and improve throughout the period of the strategy. A comprehensive curriculum from entry level to Higher Education and including T levels supports pathways to employment and Higher Education.

Outcomes for all main student groups are above national average and positive value added and/or distance travelled is achieved.

The College is exceeding benchmarks on achievement rates across main student groups and value added and distance travelled is above average.

A curriculum which provides our students with the personal, social and employability skills they need to progress onto the next level or into employment.

Positive distance travelled is achieved for the 53% of 16-18 students joining the College with neither English nor maths at GCSE grades 9-4. All 16-18 year old students access work related study or work experience, depending on their level. Personal social and employability skills are included across the curriculum.

Students and apprentices value the opportunities on offer from the campus resulting in good attendance, good participation in and out of class activities, and above sector average levels of satisfaction.

Attendance reaches 85%, student satisfaction levels are above sector averages demonstrated through the QDP survey and there is strong evidence of out of class engagement of students.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.

COULSDON SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

Coulsdon Sixth Form Campus is a great Sixth Form College offering young people with an excellent curriculum which enables them to achieve outstanding results and transforming our students prospects to successfully progress to further studies, University or an Apprenticeship.

Objective

What would success look like

An innovative and flexible curriculum which enables students to achieve qualifications needed to access further study or an Apprenticeship at the next level.

The proportion of students progressing into Higher Education or an Apprenticeship increases year on year for the next five years, as does the number of students accessing high tariff Universities.

A curriculum offer which supports the aspirations of our students and responds to the needs of the local and regional economy.

The number of students on level 3 programmes at the College increases in total and as a proportion of all students year on year during the next 5 years.

Achievement rates and pass rates which are above the national average together with high value added and progress measures which are above national averages.

Above national average achievement rates across provision in the campus with good value added and progress measures.

A curriculum and activities which support progression by developing their wider personal and employability skills.

Positive value added on English and maths where students are studying these. All students access work experience related to their study or ambitions. Extra-curricular activities raise aspiration and or wellbeing.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

3.

THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Employers and Stakeholders shape the curriculum, ensuring that we are able to meet the skills needs of the local economy.

Objective	What would success look like
Close skills gaps in the local economy by meeting employer skills and training needs, particularly in relation to Care, Construction and the Tech/Digital industries.	During the period of the plan the number of students studying Care, Construction and the Tech/Digital industries increases to better meet the needs of the local economy.
Continue to grow the Apprenticeship offer to meet local needs, including at least 3 new Degrees or Higher Apprenticeships.	Three new areas of Higher Education are developed to better meet the needs of the local economy
Work with local Stakeholders to ensure the College responds to local needs and is a key contributor in the local economy by providing bespoke training programmes.	The College is the choice provider of training and skills courses for local businesses.
Be responsive to employer skills needs, creating an agile response to new areas of demand evidenced through repeat business.	Repeat business doubles over the period of the strategy.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

4.

OUR STAFF

Workforce - Our staff are our greatest asset, they are experts in what they do, we invest in them and ensure they are valued, empowered and supported to innovate

Objective

What would success look like

A confident, happy, diverse and energetic workforce who are experts in their field and feel empowered and supported in their role.

A diverse and happy workforce confident in their roles as demonstrated through student achievement and staff surveys showing improvement in staff feedback over the period of the strategy.

Consistently good or better lessons in a vast majority of classes demonstrated by student satisfaction, and through the Quality Framework.

Student satisfaction is above benchmark with teaching and learning, learning walks, assessment of teaching and learning and student outcomes all demonstrating and

A culture which engages staff, celebrates achievement, innovates, reflects and learns creating a focus on improvement throughout the organisation, demonstrated by continual improvement.

Staff are engaged, feel valued and able to innovate, measured through staff satisfaction and quality improvement.

Invest in, develop and support our staff to ensure they are confident and highly skilled in their areas of expertise.

Staff satisfaction increases, student outcomes, attendance and retention improve annually for the duration of the Strategy.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5.

OUR COLLEGE CORE

An efficient and effective corporate core which enables the College to be Great.

Objective

What would success look like

To meet the financial KPI's planned during the merger process to 31 July 2021 and generate Good Financial Health from 2020/21 onwards.

The College is in good financial health, with good cash reserves and able to confidently generate operating surplus.

Streamline data processes to enhance the customer experience and provide excellent Management information, whilst also meeting funding regulations.

Enrolment can be completed in less than an hour for students who have previously applied and gained their expected grades. Management information supports effective

An integrated ICT and ILT strategy, which ensures technology is used to facilitate learning and management of the College.

ILT enables innovative teaching, there is a clear IT and Digital Strategy in the College enabling innovative teaching practice and effective corporate services.

Develop and implement a detailed Estates Strategy which will enable us to have the flexibility to meet the needs of a modern curriculum.

Plans for a modernised estate to meet the needs of the students and the curriculum are being implemented and a planned maintenance cycle refreshes the estate.



College Road,
Croydon
CR9 1DX
020 8760 5934
info@croydon.ac.uk
croydon.ac.uk



College Road,
Croydon
CR9 1DX
020 8760 5934
info@croydon.ac.uk
croydonuniversitycentre.ac.uk



Placehouse Lane,
Old Coulsdon,
Surrey, CR5 1YA
info@coulsdon.ac.uk
01737 551176
coulsdon.ac.uk