

Public Benefit Statement

The Corporation was established under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 for the purposes of conducting Halesowen College which is an exempt charity under the terms of the Charities Act 1993 as amended by the Charities Acts 2006 and 2011. The College is accountable to its learners, to the wider community it serves and other stakeholders. As such this public benefit statement describes how Halesowen College seeks to add value to the social, economic and well-being of the community it serves. The College is regulated by the Secretary of State for Education as Principal Regulator for all FE Corporations in England. The members of the Corporation are disclosed in the financial statements.

Aims and Objectives

The College mission as approved by its members is “to be the leading choice for post 16 education and training”. Section 3 of the 2011 Charities Act specifies charitable purposes for the public benefit which includes the advancement of education. In setting and reviewing the College’s strategic objectives the Corporation has had due regard for the Charity Commissioner’s guidance on public benefit and particularly upon its supplementary guidance on the advancement of education. The College regularly reviews its mission and strategic plan to ensure that it remains relevant and address the priorities to continue to deliver excellent standards of education and training, so students can progress into a higher level of study or employment. In the exercise to develop, consult on and finalise future plans due ongoing consideration will be given to public benefit.

The provision at Halesowen College meets the public benefit principles in as much as there are identifiable benefits to the public/section of the public through the advancement of education. The purpose of the College is the delivery of high quality education and skills training that maximises student opportunities, progression and success. This will be achieved through a framework to:

- design and promote services to fulfil the requirements of students and employers within the local and wider community.
- provide a wide range of high quality study programmes, apprenticeships and training accessible to students.
- ensure that the College actively seeks to improve quality, efficiency and effectiveness, and achieve best value in all its activities.

The aims of the College are defined in its Strategic Plan.

The college purpose and strategic plan make provisions for the advancement of education and skills to the public/section of the public through:

- High quality teaching and learning which leads students to higher/further education and/or sustainable employer.
- Widening participation through an inclusion culture.
- Excellent links with employers, partners and the local community to make a positive contribution to the local, regional and national economy.
- Strong student support systems.
- Ethical procurement and demonstration of value for money.

Higher Quality Learning and Teaching Leading to Positive Destination

Outstanding student achievement and progression to higher level courses and sustainable employment reflect the exceptional range of learning opportunities which deliver high levels of success.

The College was again judged as good by Ofsted in 2017. A rigorous system of lesson observation and developmental CPD form part of a comprehensive quality cycle to ensure areas for improvement are addressed and high standards are maintained. Achievement rates demonstrate a positive trend year on year with most courses matching or exceeding the national benchmark. The current year results are largely on a predicted basis given the impact of Covid19. The College was the second highest performing College nationally for positive progression but again the post lockdown recession and reticence of some students to go into Higher Education in 2020 will impact.

Widening Participation through an Inclusive Culture

The College is committed to having a student body that is diverse in terms of background and experience, with all the educational and cultural benefits that this brings. The College is inclusive and encourages applications from all students whatever their background and prior educational attainment. There is an outstanding breadth of curriculum which offers courses in most subject sector areas and from pre-entry through to Level 4 and above on a classroom based model or via apprenticeships. Students have individual interviews and places are offered on appropriate study programmes. Further information on the open admissions policy is available on the website. www.halesowen.ac.uk. The College has transparent systems in place to consider the admission of students with an Education Health and Care Plan and will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate learning. Recently, the College has published a statement of support for Black Lives Matter on the website

Excellent Links with Employers, Partners and the Local Community

As part of the strategy for widening participation, the College has well developed strong links with the WMCA, LEP, neighbouring colleges, Higher Education Institutions, employers and local schools. The College is an active participating in Colleges West Midlands and is working on a number of collaborative projects.

Strong Student Support Systems

There are bursary and hardship funds to remove financial barriers to education. The College has a well-established programme of activities designed to raise levels of attainment, aspirations and applications among underrepresented groups.

The College is committed to ensuring that all students benefit from an excellent learning and teaching experience as well as tutorial and pastoral support, plus community volunteering programmes, that enable students to develop as individuals and enhance future employability.

The College provides a range of student services to ensure student welfare and a successful passage through College life and beyond, including counselling, specialist provision for students with disabilities, mental and physical medical conditions and/or learning difficulties, sport and exercise facilities, careers advice including HE and job fairs, and financial advice. Support for students has continued on a digital platform throughout lockdown. The College has robust safeguarding arrangements which encompass responsibilities under the Prevent agenda and anti-slavery, and which include the promotion of British Values.

Halesowen College works with a local charity The Halesowen Foundation which supports students to develop their talents and potential in sport, music and academia alongside removing barriers to participation including funding a Healthy Minds Coach.

Post lockdown it is anticipated that a number of learners will require help with return to learn and coping strategies to manage fragile mental health.

Procurement and Trading Activities

The College has approved procurement, treasury management and financial policies which encompass:

- Not investing College funds or trading with bodies who may have aims contrary to the education and wider aims or objectives of the College or if their activities are illegal under the law. The College has adopted an Anti-Modern Day Slavery Statement.
- Not trading or entering banking arrangements with institutions, if the aims of the institutions concerned are contrary to the education or wider aims or objectives of the College or if, by so doing, the wider interests of the College are likely to be materially harmed.
- When procuring goods, budget holders should give due consideration to ethical, environmental and sustainability issues. Wherever possible and practical to do so, budget holders should reduce the level of procurement by cutting down on waste and repairing or re-using existing goods and use environmentally friendly goods whenever practical, taking into account best value. Budget holders must balance environmental and social factors alongside economic consideration to achieve value for money on a whole life basis.
- The College adheres to all relevant legislation regarding procurement including Public Services (Social Value Act 2012).

Overall the College serves the community in terms of provision of education, significant employer in the area and through trading activities. This statement captures the diverse nature and scope of benefits provided by the College and confirms its charitable status.

Each year the Corporation formally reviews all activities against public benefit – this was considered in detail at the Finance and General Purposes Committee in June 2020.

The Public Benefit statement to be published in the annual members report is included in annex A.

Public Benefit

Halesowen College is an exempt charity under the Part 3 of the Charities Act 2011 is regulated by the Secretary of State for Education. The members of the Governing Body, who are trustees of the charity, are disclosed in the annual members report and financial statement.

In setting and reviewing the College's strategic objectives, the Governing Body has had due regard for the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and particularly upon its supplementary guidance on the advancement of education. The College adjusts its courses to meet the needs of local employers and provides training to levy and non-levy apprentices. The College is committed to providing information, advice and guidance to the students it enrolls and to funding suitable courses for as many as possible irrespective of their educational background. The guidance sets out the requirement that all organisations wishing to be recognised as charities must demonstrate, explicitly, that their aims are for the public benefit.

The College first adopted a Public Benefit Statement in April 2013 which has since been reviewed annually. In delivering its mission, the College provides identifiable public benefits through the advancement of education to in excess of 4,000 students including those with high needs. The College provides courses without charge to 16-18 learners, those who are unemployed and adult learners benefitting from academic entitlement and/or taking English and Maths courses. The College adjusts its courses to meet the needs of local employers and provides training to more than 100 apprentices. The College is committed to providing information, advice and guidance to the students it enrolls and to finding suitable courses for as many as possible irrespective of their educational background.

Halesowen College demonstrates:

- High quality teaching
- Widening participation and promoting inclusion
- Excellent progression for students to employment, apprenticeship or further/higher education
- Outstanding student support
- Effective relationships with employers and the local community
- Links with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA)

The College is accountable to its learners, the wider community it serves and other stakeholders; adding value to the social, economic and wellbeing of the community it serves.

The provision at Halesowen College meets the public benefit principles in as much as there are identifiable benefits to the public/section of the public.

The purpose of the College is the delivery of high quality education and training that maximises student opportunities and success. This will be achieved through a framework to:

- design and promote services to fulfil clients' requirements and needs;
- provide a wide range of high quality learning programmes;
- ensure that the College actively seeks to improve quality, efficiency and effectiveness in all its activities.

Each year the Corporation formally review its activities to ensure that they meet the public benefit definition and that they are within its powers. No issues of concern have been identified.