



Gower College Swansea  
Coleg Gŵyr Abertawe

## Strategic Plan 2016-2020

Excellence in Education and Training for All

## Welcome to Gower College Swansea from the Chair of the Governing Body and the Principal and Chief Executive

The formation of the new Gower College Swansea in August 2010 – the first of the new larger transformed Further Education Colleges in Wales – was a hugely significant development for Swansea and the South West Wales region.

From the Board of Governors to College managers, lecturing and support staff, we are all aware of the challenges, the opportunities and the expectations that we and our stakeholders have for our College and we are all committed to tackling these challenges head on and making everyone proud of our students' achievements.

Swansea and the Swansea Bay City Region is a dynamic area in which to live and work. Whilst we are proud of our educational heritage, we are taking nothing for granted and need to maintain our reputation for delivering the highest quality of teaching and learning, whilst extending our range of provision and services to meet the needs of our communities.

To do this we will continue to put our learners first by inspiring them to learn and to achieve the very best outcomes possible and by valuing, inspiring, challenging and supporting staff who are our most important resource. We will also constantly monitor and review our progress through the setting of meaningful and measurable targets which will be benchmarked against the best in the sector, in Wales, the UK and internationally.

The provision of the highest quality of education is not only our mission but is also our passion and we know that the work that we do can be a driver of economic development and social justice.

This Strategic Plan is our template for the next four years and sets out our key priorities and how we will achieve them and has been developed in consultation with our staff, students and stakeholders. Of course four years is a long period in education particularly in Wales and new challenges and opportunities will arise and our College will need to be flexible, proactive and quick to respond whilst maintaining our core values and principles.

This is our commitment to you, our partners and stakeholders and we look forward to continuing to work with you on the next stage of our College journey – and thank you for taking the time to read this document and your interest in Gower College Swansea.

*Colin Cornelius*

Colin Cornelius

*Mark Jones*

Mark Jones



The lecturers are amazing, they are all very knowledgeable and teach to a very high standard. //

A Level Science



## Introduction

Gower College Swansea is a large Further Education College with over 4,500 full time and 10,000 part time learners from across Swansea and neighbouring counties. It operates from six locations across the City and County of Swansea including campuses at Tycoch, Sketty and Gorseinon and currently has a turnover of over £37million. The College is a major employer in the region with approximately 1,000 staff.

The College operates within a mixed economy of providers of post-16 education and training. There are currently 14 secondary schools in Swansea of which seven have sixth forms and therefore there is a competitive environment for post-16 learner recruitment. Within Swansea there are also two higher education institutions with whom the College works closely – Swansea University and the University of Wales Trinity Saint David. In addition, there are FE Colleges based in both of our neighbouring local authorities – Neath Port Talbot and Carmarthenshire (Coleg Sir Gâr) with whom the College both works closely with but, in some areas, competes. Until recently there were two major providers of work based learning in Swansea – being the College and the City and County's Lifelong Learning and Employment Training Services (LLETs). However in April 2016 both parties agreed to transfer the contract and staff to the College and so the College now has sole responsibility for the delivery of the £4million contract from the premises in Fforestfach.

The College has always had an excellent reputation for the quality of its teaching and learning across all of its campuses.

This includes our A Level provision which is delivered on our Gorseinon campus where over 1,500 students (the largest A Level cohort in Wales) study a range of almost 50 different A Level subjects. Overall success rates are constantly above national average with A\* - B and A\* - C grades 10% above. Across the College, over 1,000 students progress onto higher education every year with on average 200 enrolling in Russell Group Universities, of which 10 progress onto Oxbridge. The College is one of the pilot 'seren' hubs and works in partnership with Cambridge University through the HE+ programme.

Vocational provision across the College is also very strong with large numbers of students achieving 'distinction' and 'merits' and with excellent progression rates. Students from the College are regular winners of Wales and UK awards and in 2016 the College was awarded 'Accountancy College of the Year' across the UK and was shortlisted for 'FE College of the Year'.

The past 12 months have been an incredibly busy period for the College. As well as the transfer of the work based learning contract, the College acquired an 80% interest in an award winning private training company, Track Training who, although based in Bridgend, work predominantly across England. In April the Welsh Government announced the approval of the new £16.8m European Funded Skills for Industry 2 programme across the South West region, which the College leads – and which will allow the College to further develop its range of employer led courses and services.





## College Mission

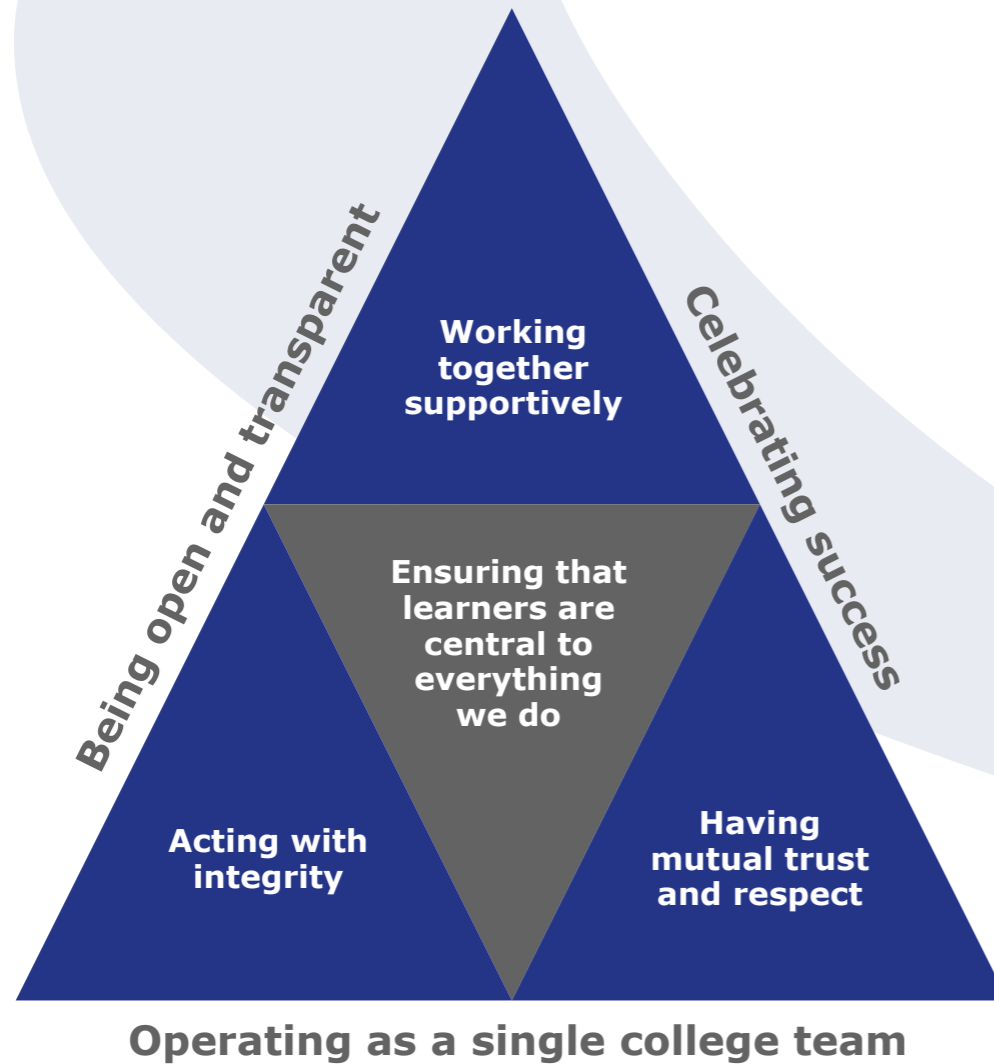
To **inspire** and **support** our learners to **achieve** their **full potential** through the delivery of the **highest quality** of **education** and **training**

## College Vision

**To be the best** choice for learners

## Core Values

The college's vision will be underpinned by the development of a strong, positive culture which will have the following core values at its heart:



## Strategic Directions

Going forward, we have identified four 'core' strategic directions and associated aims that will support the College in delivering its vision and mission.

The four strategic directions are:

1. **LEARNER** – put the learner at the centre of everything we do
2. **QUALITY** – deliver the highest quality possible in everything we do
3. **IMPACT** – achieve the highest possible positive impact on the economic and social wellbeing of individual learners in Swansea and South West Wales
4. **EXCELLENCE** – strive to be an excellent organisation, growing sustainably, innovating and investing



## Strategic Direction 1 Learner

### **Put the learner at the centre of everything we do.**

Our fundamental goal is success for all our students, regardless of what course they are pursuing. We will work to make their experience with us an uplifting one where they feel they have been recognised and treated as an individual who matters to us. We will offer an experience that is enriching, not just in academic or qualification terms, but in personal and cultural terms as well. We will aim to provide every learner with a wide support network to assist them in dealing with the wide range of challenges they will face as learners and we will be passionate about all of our learners doing well.

Our job is to assist all of our learners in enhancing their skills and in so doing to transform their lives in a positive way. Our fundamental goal is to equip them with the knowledge, skills and experience that will enhance their opportunity for employment, give them personal resilience and enterprising mentality so that they are better equipped for life.



**I'm very happy with my course and the College and have all the help and support that I need to help me achieve my ambitions. "**

Level 3 Diploma in Complementary Therapies

## Strategic Direction 2 Quality

### **Deliver the highest quality possible in everything we do.**

We believe that our learners deserve the best and so we will push to have the highest standards of delivery in everything we do. To make this a reality we will set robust targets and measure rigorously. We will make performance management a core element in the College and the environment will be a demanding and challenging one in which to excel. We will create a culture of self-awareness, reflection and criticism where we will review our performance regularly and take action to continuously improve and we will promote honesty and integrity.

Our learners deserve high quality and inspiring teaching if they are to realise their full potential. Our staff deserve to be supported and encouraged to deliver inspirational, enthusiastic and passionate teaching to our learners. We recognise that people are our most important resource. We will respect and nurture our staff and encourage them to take pride in their College. We will encourage their innovation and problem solving skills. We will provide training and support for staff which will allow them to develop their skills to meet the challenges of working in an excellent College. We recognise that the ability to adapt and change is perhaps the most important in the new economy and developing their skills will be a particular concern.



## Strategic Direction 3 Impact

**Achieving the highest possible positive impact on the economic and social wellbeing of individual learners in Swansea and the South West Wales region.**

We recognise that the success of the College is based on the results it achieves. It is therefore crucial that the College can demonstrate that it can get significant results and make a significant difference in the lives of those who come here. We believe in the fundamental ability of education to change the world, but we also know that results need to be measured and what gets measured gets done. In deciding what does get done we will ensure that the College is in constant touch with all of our stakeholders and as a result we will have a very clear evidence based picture of the needs that we must meet.

We will continue to build strong relationships with the Welsh Government's Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Economy, Science and Transport and with key business support agencies. We will continue to have an excellent relationship with City and County of Swansea and seek to collaborate in meaningful ways. We will continue to strengthen the College's contribution to the skills agenda by enhancing our engagement processes with employers; ensuring that we are connected to their networks and are in touch with their needs. We will seek to create greater partnership and collaboration across the whole education sector with our local schools, our partner universities and other further education colleges.

## Strategic Direction 4 Excellence

**Strive to be an excellent organisation, growing sustainably, innovating and investing.**

We believe that staff are our greatest resource and therefore we will invest in the skills, tools and support to empower our people to be excellent. We recognise that we are in a period of significant change and we will support continuous learning, thereby empowering our people to manage performance, to challenge, rethink and redesign processes to share information and to provide quality information.

The management of money and resources will, we believe, continue to be one of our biggest challenges going forward. We will seek to generate additional income rather than have to seek further cost efficiencies and, as a result, reduce our reliance on Welsh Government funding. However, at the same time we will continuously review delivery models and practices to maximise efficiencies and return on investment for funders. One of our key priorities will also be to develop and future proof the College's estate to meet the needs of customers.



## Targets for 2016 – 2020

In a number of targets reference is made to the College's relative performance in terms of other FE colleges.

### 1. Quality

- 1.1 Overall FE success rates to be in the top quartile of FE Wales
- 1.2 Success rates on FE main qualifications in the top quartile of FE Wales
- 1.3 Success rates in all curriculum areas to be above the Estyn threshold for excellent
- 1.4 Apprenticeship success rates in top quartile of FE Wales
- 1.5 All grades to be 'excellent' in future Estyn inspections

### 2. Students

- 2.1 FE learner satisfaction rates to be in the top quartile of FE Wales
- 2.2 HE learner satisfaction rates to be in the top half of FE Wales
- 2.3 WBL learner satisfaction rates to be in the top quartile of FE Wales

### 3. Enrolments

- 3.1 FE full time enrolments as a % of total stage four numbers to increase by 1% p.a.
- 3.2 HE enrolments to increase by 5% p.a.
- 3.3 International enrolments to increase by 5% p.a.
- 3.4 WBL enrolments meet contract value

### 4. Finance

- 4.1 Forecast surplus (£) – pre FRS 17 – to be in top three in Wales
- 4.2 % reliance on FE grants to be in bottom quartile
- 4.3 Continued investment in College's estate and infrastructure

### 5. Staff

- 5.1 Staff satisfaction rates to be in top quartile of FE survey
- 5.2 % staff qualification rates to increase year after year

### 6. Excellence

- 6.1 College staff and learners to aim to win two national awards each year

## List of Campuses

### Tycoch Campus

Tycoch Road  
Swansea  
SA2 9EB

### Gorseinon Campus

Belgrave Road  
Gorseinon  
Swansea  
SA4 6RD

### Hill House Campus

Cockett Road  
Swansea  
SA2 0FD

### Llwyn y Bryn Campus

Walter Road  
Swansea  
SA1 4QA

### GCS Training

Jubilee Court  
Swansea  
SA5 4HB

### Sketty Hall

Sketty Lane  
Swansea  
SA2 8QF



The lecturers have strong links with a range of local employers and, as a result, we get an excellent practical and hands on experience that complements our academic studies. //

HND Engineering





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