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Thank you for taking the time to read the Macclesfield College Strategic Plan for 2018-23.

I am proud to continue to lead Macclesfield College - a further and higher education institution that is truly vocational - as it advances on its journey to becoming ‘Outstanding’ in all aspects.

The past three years represent a landmark period for Macclesfield College. Not only have we realised the ambitious and demanding objectives we set ourselves to achieve back in 2015 with the publication of our previous strategic plan, but we have also emerged from this watershed term as one of the North West’s established leaders in the provision of high quality further and higher education. This is especially pleasing given the perpetually challenging and constrained economic climate in which colleges, like ours, continue to operate.

Moreover, we have accomplished our objectives in consummate style, receiving numerous award nominations, industry accolades and accreditations along the way. Perhaps the most notable of these came in 2016, when we were officially recognised as the number one college in Cheshire for both employer and learner satisfaction, in a survey undertaken by leading industry publication, FE Week.

Of course, our crowning achievement since my arrival in summer 2015, came in November 2017 when our most recent Ofsted report confirmed our hard-earned and richly deserved status as a ‘Good’ college. To have come such a long way in such a short space of time - a little over three years - is a truly momentous and notable success of which I am extremely proud. Particularly in the manner in which it was realised, with staff and senior management alike working tirelessly and collaboratively to ensure that we significantly improved our standing in the tremendously competitive Cheshire region.

Here at Macclesfield College, we embrace diversity and see the needs and aspirations of our students as being central to every single decision we make. We take our responsibilities as an FE, HE and skills training provider extremely seriously and, through our work, we give access to high quality learning to each and every student. This is complemented by a proven pathway to success through our outstanding teaching and pedagogy. Furthermore, we are continuing to transform and change lives throughout the community we serve, by being fully committed to our overarching mission of “empowerment through learning”.

Although it is important for the College as a whole to recognise and reflect on how far we have come in such a brief period of time since my arrival, it is now absolutely critical that we now focus on the next exciting leg of our journey here at Macclesfield College, as we edge ever closer towards our collective goal of becoming ‘Outstanding’ together.

The coming five years will undoubtedly see us continue to face considerable and exacting challenges; financially, our beleaguered sector is struggling to successfully navigate through these difficult times. That said, everyone here at Macclesfield College is looking to the future with a good degree of optimism, that additional funding will reach what is a vital and well-deserving sector that transforms lives and supports local economies.

To date, our hard work, commitment and dedication to the task has seen us develop and deliver high quality, enterprise-driven learning to people of all socio-economic backgrounds and abilities. What’s more, our award-nominated apprenticeship programmes - devised and coordinated by our employer-responsive arm, Maxim Business Training - have been highly successful in ensuring that courses, based on national standards, have been implemented with precision and skill, valued by employers and met with local, regional and, indeed, national skills needs.

This strategic plan - written and designed to cover the period 2018 to 2023 - sets out how we will ensure our long-term sustainability, whilst holding firm to our core mission and values. Whether you are a member of staff, a student or a friend of Macclesfield College, I look forward to working with you over the next five years and, together, experiencing and sharing in the further success of our local college.
A MESSAGE FROM
OUR CHAIR OF THE
CORPORATION

Despite all of our success here over the past three years, standing still is never an option here at Macclesfield College.

We need to become even more embedded in the community we are here to serve, working at all levels to ensure we deliver outstanding education and learning for everyone.

We want to create a college that is ‘the place’ for work-based learning; a place that students and the wider community alike recognise as inspirational, and where people want to come as their first choice.

Furthermore, we want to build on our previous achievements in creating an environment where young people not only achieve academically, but also grow as individuals in terms of personal and social development.

Moreover, we want to build on our achievements in creating a stable environment in which people not only can achieve academically, but also grow as individuals.

AIMS TO 2023 - ACADEMIC

- to be judged by Ofsted as officially ‘Outstanding’.
- to achieve growth (in terms of learner numbers in HE, apprenticeships and traditional 16 to 18), Macclesfield College is targeting a capacity of 1500 full-time learners.
- to have access to industry-relevant staff who understand the pedagogy required to stretch each individual learner to their fullest potential.
- to ensure the achievement rates of our most vulnerable learners are in line with all other learners enrolled at the College.
- to be fully aligned with the Gatsby measures for careers progression.
- to provide a high quality tutorial provision that prepares our learners to be tomorrow’s global citizens.
- to continue to ensure a layer of support for learners such as tutorial coaches, learning mentors, counsellors, careers advisors, plus the relevant external agencies, so that learners can achieve their maximum potential.
- to reach a target of 1,000 apprentices on programme by 2023 via Maxim Business Training, our dedicated employer-responsive arm.
- to achieve outstanding status for our apprenticeships vision here at Macclesfield College, again via Maxim Business Training.
- to achieve a level of leadership & management that is unrivalled in the FE and HE sector.
- to achieve a cohesive, workable innovation strategy and investment programme - targeting the local economy.
- to future-proof our ability to deliver the new T-Level strategy and to be agile in delivering new Government initiatives.
- to map and align local business to College curriculum innovation that demonstrates employer-led provision. Macclesfield College will continue to work with key regional organisations and industry, in support of our plan.
- to move our Adult learning provision to ‘Outstanding’ by 2023, helping to ensure the needs of our community are met, including better progression to employment, an improved Level 2 offer and enhanced career guidance.
- to ensure that the East Cheshire region will recognise Macclesfield College as the first choice for Higher Education, by 2023.
- to be regionally recognised and valued so as to achieve the TEF ‘Silver’ standard, enabling us to develop a suite of bespoke degree-level qualifications that mirror the real needs of the regional economy.
- to develop a culture within our staff of scholarly excellence, encouraging them to present and disseminate their research where applicable.
AIMS TO 2023 - RESOURCES & SERVICES

❖ to be financially outstanding and sustainable, with a £2 million cash balance by 2023.
❖ to have a staff cost to income ratio of 65 to 68%, through effective budget planning, staff utilisation and team structures.
❖ to provide fit-for-purpose College Estates and Resources which match the ambition of the curriculum, and ensure that learners have access to excellent resources and technology.
❖ to achieve a departmental income for Maxim Business Training, in excess of £2 million.
❖ to build and enhance a highly responsive and diverse marketing function that aligns to the regional demography, ensuring opportunities are executed to achieve the number of applications for each funding stream of the College.
❖ to create a framework of community and employer opportunities in the local region to harness greater cohesion in the area, such as dual branding, sponsorship and board representation, thereby ensuring that Macclesfield College is fully utilising every partnership and opportunity to serve our community.
❖ to be both proactive and reactive in regard to change and innovation in the FE and HE sector, thus ensuring employability has a strong thread throughout our provision.
❖ to be central to the community we serve – particularly in terms of the regeneration of the Macclesfield area and the College’s outreach to the community.
❖ to achieve genuine and demonstrable community cohesion that places the College at the centre of local skills strategies – for both short and long-term needs.
❖ to continue to recognise student welfare, mental health and support for learners, offering a fully inclusive College that is vocationally focused to providing tomorrow’s global citizens.
❖ to achieve a resilient, progressive and dynamic workforce. Attracting, retaining and developing the best staff with leading CPD.
❖ to become the College of choice to work for.

THE MISSION “Empowerment through learning”

After much deliberation from staff and senior management alike, it has been decided that we retain our existing mission statement - “Empowerment through learning”, as we plot our journey to becoming a recognised regional and national centre of excellence in Higher Education and, ultimately, an “Outstanding” college as defined by Ofsted. It has served us extremely well to date and has helped to reinforce our central message to learners across East Cheshire - that learning enables us all to better ourselves both personally and professionally, and contribute to the economy and long-term prosperity of the dynamic East Cheshire region.

CORE VALUES

INTEGRITY

We benefit from an open, honest and transparent approach. This, combined with our strong moral principles, will ensure further positive progress to 2023.

RESPECT

Listening to the needs of all stakeholders and treating them at all times with dignity, honour and tolerance which is paramount going forward.

PASSION

Our collective and relentless drive for excellence in everything we do, is central to us achieving our ambitious development plans to 2023.

ACCOUNTABILITY

We are committed to taking full responsibility for our actions as an education and training provider, and dedicated to reporting regularly to the relevant bodies.

AMBITION

Our overriding ethos focuses on genuine innovation and a demonstrable ambition to be the best education and training provider in our region... and beyond.
LOOKING ON TO FIVE MORE YEARS OF SUCCESS...

In order for us to be judged as officially ‘Outstanding’ by 2023, Macclesfield College will have realised achievement rates that exceed provider rate averages across the entire curriculum offer. In order to drive our proven service standards to even greater heights, 90% of our teaching and training will be judged as either ‘good’ or ‘better’ by the end of the proceeding five-year period, leading to the vast majority of our learners achieving at or above their target grades.

On leaving Macclesfield College, it is envisaged that our alumni will then be progressing into vocationally relevant further training, education or employment in the Cheshire and Warrington region, thereby making their contribution to the north of England’s largest and most vibrant economy.

Lastly, we are aiming to ensure that 100% of our learners will be benefiting from high quality, meaningful work experience placements, by 2023.

6 Strategic Planning Document: 2018-2023

RE-ALIGNING OUR GOALS AND KEY OBJECTIVES FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

Key to us achieving our ambitious targets to 2023, will be an unflinching determination and steely resolve on the part of everyone connected with Macclesfield College, to work together and ensure that we all adhere to a set of pre-defined and inter-related set of basic principles.

1. To live and demonstrate the College’s values daily, and strive to deliver our mission in all that we do.

Our path to becoming outstanding will be reinforced by us living and breathing our central mission statement - empowerment through learning. A key part of our immediate strategy in this area is to achieve national recognition as a specialist in a particular area of educational or skills training.

2. To work in a culture that’s striving to be the best for the College and all of its learners, inspiring and showing them the pathways to success.

Our new, dedicated Learner Experience Team will play a key role in ensuring this is achieved, by providing young people with first-class learning advice and Information Advice and Guidance (IAG), delivered in tandem with exciting new courses ranging from Management to Motor Vehicle.

3. To provide a sustainable and stable college environment for the region, through strong strategic and financial acumen.

A stable college environment will be further established and realised through a programme of prudent investment and financial rationalisation, to ensure the limited budget we have is spent on the most vital parts of our infrastructure.

4. Embracing change with an open-minded approach for the good of the College, exploring opportunities and possibilities with a progressive attitude.

Our responsiveness to change and proven adaptability as an FE and HE organisation will stand us in excellent stead, as we seek to expand our provision in key areas, such as Maxim commencing to launch a regional delivery programme.

5. To diversify and adapt our offer and provide unique and higher level qualifications that meet the immediate, short, medium and long-term goals of the East Cheshire region.

We have worked tirelessly to secure industry-leading strategic partnerships, pathways to employment with Job Centre Plus and high-profile representation with key bodies such as SEMTA and the AoC.

6. To continue to attract, retain and develop outstanding staff to provide the best quality service to its learners, employers and the wider audience.

The ongoing recruitment of the right individuals and, most importantly, the retention of their services through proper remuneration and benefits, is key to keeping us on the fast-track to excellence.

Andrea Murphy - College Vice Principal for Curriculum & Quality.
“College leaders have fostered a culture of high expectations... and are ambitious for the College. They successfully communicate their vision, which is understood and shared by staff. A consistent expectation of high standards, and shared college values, underpin their focus on improvement.”

“The proportion of learners who achieve their qualifications is now high. Learners make swift progress. The standards of their written work and the development of technical skills are good.”

“Learners benefit from high-quality external work experience.”

“Apprenticeships are implemented skilfully, and meet local, regional and national skills needs.”

“An extensive enrichment programme develops learners’ practical, social and personal skills. Learners benefit from guest speaker visits, additional workshops and trips to industry settings. Learners regularly compete in - and often win - awards at national competitions.”

“Support for learners is highly effective. As a result, learners such as care leavers and those with high needs, mental health difficulties or other significant barriers to learning complete their courses to achieve their qualifications.”

“Learners and apprentices are well prepared for life and work in modern Britain.”

“Learners benefit from very good, impartial careers advice.”

“Learners have good relationships with their teachers and their peers.”

“Learners enthusiastically celebrate diversity; they treat each other with respect and work together harmoniously.”

“Learners benefit from well-planned and meaningful work-related learning, external work experience and enrichment activities.”

“Learners behave well, take pride in their learning and produce work of a high standard.”

“Highly-skilled teachers and good links to industry.”

“Learners develop highly effective practical and vocational skills that prepare them well for the workplace.”

“Leaders and managers have established strong links with local employers and many employers seek to employ learners on completion of their courses.”

“Employers are integral to the planning of apprenticeship programmes that are closely aligned to the needs of their business and the apprentice.”

At the close of Academic Year 2017/18, there were a total of 1157 full-time learners aged 16 to 18 enrolled at Macclesfield College.

Despite a prevailing climate of budgetary constraints and enforced cut-backs in this vital area, full and part-time adult learning programmes at Macclesfield College are among the best attended in the entire region.

In spite of the ongoing uncertainty that is currently encircling the apprenticeships sector here in the UK since the introduction of the Levy, Macclesfield College is bucking the national trend of decline in this key area for the future of the UK’s economy.

Macclesfield College serves a broadly affluent area in one of the UK’s most commercially dynamic regions. Therefore, HE remains a key focus for the College, and further growth is predicted in the next five years.
SERVING THE REGION’S GROWING ECONOMY...

At Macclesfield College, we offer a vibrant and varied vocational curriculum that meets the needs of the East Cheshire region... and beyond.

For our learners to progress and optimise their employability and career potential, it is vital that we encourage them to aim for excellence in their vocational choices, whilst also ensuring that they gain a comprehensive and relevant skills set to get them fully work-ready in an ever more competitive jobs marketplace.

Our region benefits from a diverse and dynamic industry base, with engineering and manufacturing both playing pivotal roles in establishing the north of England’s strongest economy. The Cheshire and Warrington sub-region is responsible for around 25% of the North West’s total manufacturing output. Particular strengths also lie in chemicals, finance and business services and logistics, with key growth potential also being identified in the agritech and digital sectors.

Our challenge is to align the skills of our learners with the precise needs of the regional economy we serve, to stimulate continued growth.

Macclesfield College is unique in that it has a full vocational curriculum offer across all levels of study.

This means that all learners are being prepared for the world of work, by highly qualified industry specialists with access to cutting-edge professional developments. This ensures our students have the competitive edge when applying for jobs, degree-level courses (whether at university, or those offered by Macclesfield College) or higher apprenticeships.

At the College, we pride ourselves on the richness of our curriculum. Whether a student wishes to specialise in an occupational trade such as joinery, hair & beauty or hospitality and catering, we have the ideal course to help them take that first step on the career ladder. One of our key specialisms is our wide-ranging engineering courses; in fact, we are one of the only colleges nationally to offer aeronautical engineering.

It is not just the quality of our provision that sets us apart from our competitors, but also the world-class work experience that every single one of our students engages in each year they study with us. Some of the prestigious placements this year with companies such as Mercedes Benz, AstraZeneca and Angry Birds have led to our students securing work placements at the end of their course; so impressed have employers been with the professional attitude and commitment instilled in all of our students.

We are lucky to have access to exceptional facilities and, whether students are studying IT, business or science they leave Macclesfield College with the ability to take the next steps with confidence. Often this is due to the enrichment opportunities they receive whilst they are with us. Whether it is the prestige of becoming World Skills finalists, as our media students experienced this year, or our public services learners experiencing life in an army training camp, there is never a dull moment.

The creativity of our students is something of which we are particularly proud and seeing our talented performing arts and musicians taking part in the Barnaby festival, along with our fashion students displaying their creations at the local town hall, was a fitting end to another successful year.

Progression to Positive Destinations

Our data shows ‘positive’ destinations for the overall college at the end of 2016/17 as very high, at 98%. This evidences good teaching and learning and the development of appropriate work-related learning and enrichment opportunities which have prepared learners for their intended next stage in their learning and/or career.

The College’s Management Information Services department will initiate a data collection exercise, contacting our alumni within six months of them leaving Macclesfield, in order to ascertain their specific destinations. This will be achieved via various different methods of information capture.
ENHANCED EMPLOYER RESPONSIVENESS

Since the Levy was introduced - along with the new Apprenticeship reforms - it has been a challenging time, with providers having to gain approval on the Register of Apprenticeship Providers, bidding for non-Levy contracts with the ESFA, along with the process of the Digital Account Service.

As part of the reforms, all apprentices are required to spend a minimum of 20% off the job, and employers who do not pay the Levy are required to contribute 10% of the total training cost negotiated.

A recent report by an independent non-party think tank has confirmed that the reforms implemented have been harsh, and are having a negative impact on apprenticeship numbers nationally (April - October 2017 was 40% lower than the previous year).

However, due to successfully gaining supplier approval for a number of large Levy payers and the excellent relationships Maxim Business Training has forged with our local employers, the department is continuing to grow its apprentice numbers.

This Academic Year, there are 242 apprentices due to complete their apprenticeship, compared to 188 last year, and just 115 in Academic Year 2015-16.

The department has effectively moved most of its apprenticeship programmes from frameworks to standards, to ensure our apprenticeship offer effectively meets the needs of our employers, and this was positively acknowledged during our most recent Ofsted report. New provision has been introduced over the past year, including HR apprenticeships, lab technicians and higher level management programmes. Maxim continues to look at further development of its apprenticeship offer, and there is particular emphasis around healthcare. We are currently working with both Macclesfield General Hospital and The Royal Manchester Hospital for new apprenticeship pathways for clinical staff. This includes the maternity apprenticeships at Level 3 and Healthcare Science Associate at Level 4.

Maxim Business Training is the dedicated employer responsive division of the College, providing a broad and diverse range of vocational and first-rate apprenticeship courses to local learners and businesses alike, all delivered within a relaxed and productive environment centred on high quality learning. Maxim is well-known and widely respected throughout our region and, through it, we work with some of East Cheshire’s largest and most influential employers, including AstraZeneca, the East Cheshire NHS Trust and Lucideon. As a result of the strong links forged regionally by Maxim - and the comprehensive employer engagement undertaken to date - we have been immensely successful in expanding and transforming our apprenticeships provision, to include new programmes that meet employer needs head-on and deliver opportunities to young people, once they have completed full-time education programmes.

TOP MARKS

Published annually by the Department for Education, these league tables measure School and College performance against key criteria, and sit at the heart of the Government’s accountability framework regarding education, skills and training.

CONSISTENTLY HITTING OUR DEMANDING TARGETS

Macclesfield College has continued on its three-year trend of ongoing progress and improvement in key Teaching and Learning KPI’s.

SUSTAINED EXCELLENCE IN APPLIED LEARNING

We are now officially the best-performing FE College in the whole of Cheshire for delivering Applied General Qualifications.

CHESHIRE’S LEADING COLLEGE FOR 16-TO-19 YEAR-OLDS

Macclesfield is now also the leading College in Cheshire for providing Technical Level Qualifications.

OFFICIALLY A GRADE 2 PROVIDER

Macclesfield is now also officially a ‘Good’ College.
In terms of expenditure, finance and overall economic solidity, Macclesfield College has been a consistently strong performer over the past three years.

- The College was officially rated as strong for Financial Health, in 2016-17.
- The College has grown and diversified its 16 to 18 provision, for 2017-18 with partners.
- The College has doubled the numbers of learning hours by students.
- Looking forward to 2023, Macclesfield College will strive to be ‘Outstanding’ regarding all aspects of finance, with a cash balance of £2 million.
- By 2023, it is also anticipated that we will have achieved a staff cost to income ratio of 65-68%.
- By 2023, we will have provided fit-for-purpose College Estate and Resources that match the ambition of the curriculum and ensure that learners have access to excellent resources and technology.

To achieve our overarching goal of becoming truly financially ‘Outstanding’, we will be reaching and realising a set of key financial indicators. Firstly, a percentage debt over income level of under 20%.

Secondly, in terms of overall business solvency, we will be adjusting our current ratio of greater than - or equal to 1.6. Thirdly, we will be enhancing our operational performance across the board, with education-specific earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA) of greater than, or equal to, 8%.

Our ultimate ambition of being demonstrably financially ‘Outstanding’ will also be realised by us achieving a minimum surplus position (after interest, depreciation, tax and amortisation costs). Likewise, it will be successfully achieved by us reaching our planned and targeted income growth over the next five years.

Through detailed and unrelenting scrutiny, underpinned by effective framework methods of procurement, we will be able to achieve the required efficiencies in the College’s overall expenditure, whilst maintaining and enhancing the quality of service on which we rightly pride ourselves.

In terms of us accomplishing our projected staff cost to income ratio of 65-68%, effective and thorough budget planning will be key, as will detailed sensitivity analysis in order to drive positive outcomes for the College.

Our challenging target of 65-68% staff cost to income ratio will also be realised by astute and effective utilisation of staffing (minimum staff utilisation of 98%).
Likewise, we will be employing and implementing effective and efficient staffing structures throughout the College, all of which will be fully benchmarked with the education sector.

In order to develop, implement and establish a fully fit-for-purpose College Estates and Resources programme that accurately mirrors our ambitions, caters to the demands of our new curriculum and ensures our learners enjoy unfettered access to first-rate resources and technologies, we will be devising and launching a 5-year accommodation strategy.

This comprehensive and tailored strategy will be focused on the consolidation of our off-site provision of Motor Vehicle training onto our state-of-the-art campus.

Likewise, we have aspirations to build a new Construction and Built Environment training centre - again on campus - in collaboration with key strategic partners, to provide first-class, professional skills training and apprenticeships in this buoyant and dynamic industry sector.

We have also recently added and launched a new Animal Care & Management facility, from where we will providing specialist courses that deliver core knowledge of areas such as health, nutrition, behaviour, communication and general maintenance.

The sale of excess land on and around our campus will also be an essential part of us comfortably reaching our new College resources strategy by 2023.

This will also be complemented by a broad-based, long-term maintenance plan aimed at us protecting and enhancing our assets and facilities, here at Macclesfield College.

Considerable challenges, however, lie ahead if the region is to continue to maintain its economic output and productivity in the longer term, with an ageing workforce, widening skills gaps and mismatches with employer needs all remaining key issues for the Cheshire and Warrington region.

Our aim is to create a state-of-the-art campus that will become a recognised centre of excellence for academic, vocational and skills training in the county of Cheshire and the wider North West region by 2023, by investing into our facilities and equipment.

Lastly, we are committed to building and maintaining an IT infrastructure within the College, that meets the current and future needs of our learners.

As a further and higher education provider, we fully appreciate that our Information Technology provision needs to be at the cutting edge and this will be achieved as a priority, despite the ongoing budget constraints affecting the education sector.

We're officially a ‘Good’ College.

We’ve achieved the QAA standard for Higher Education.

We’ve got a great team that just loves to teach.

97% of learners start work, move on to apprenticeships, higher education or a higher level course with us.

97% of our learners would recommend a course to their friends.

We’re among the best apprenticeship providers in the area, with success above the national benchmark.

We’re passionate about getting our students ready for work. More than 500 learners took part in work experience during 2017-18.
HELPING US TO REACH OUR CORE AUDIENCE AND...

Over the past three years, Macclesfield College has benefited greatly from well-planned, multi-platform marketing activity, which has been successful in re-establishing the College’s reputation and re-inforcing our central position to the community we serve.

As part of our five-year strategic plan to 2023, we are now looking to build and enhance a highly responsive and diverse marketing function to benefit the College and help ensure we reach our core markets with even greater efficiency going forward.

This focused new strategy will be aligned precisely with the region’s demography, to ensure that future opportunities and routes to market are executed to their maximum extent, in order to achieve the appropriate number of applications for each funding stream of the College.

Detailed analysis using market intelligence to build annual strategies that will maximise footfall and applications to ensure maximum output.

Adopting a college-wide approach towards understanding learner needs with a curriculum offer that appeals and aligns to the current and future workforce.

QUALITY AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Over the past three years, the College has fostered a culture of excellence, thanks to first-class staff development practices.

December 2017: Staff Engagement Survey
Staff engagement increased from 34% in 2016/17 to 70% in 2017/18 (representing a 36% increase). Strong, positive responses included the following:
- 99% of staff support the mission statement.
- 99% of staff support the strategic aims/objectives.
- 96% of staff agree that Macclesfield College is a friendly place to work.

February 2018: Student Engagement
For the mid-year (February) surveys, learner engagement increased from 45% in 16/17 to 82% in 2017/18 (37% increase).

- 91% of full-time learners agree that vocational course teachers help develop their maths skills.
- 97% of full-time learners agree that teachers encourage them to behave well & work hard.
- 98% of part-time learners agree that the feedback they get on their assessments is helpful.
- 98% of part-time learners agree that the teachers know their subjects well.

100% of Higher Education learners agree that exams and tests are well organised.

98% of Higher Education learners agree that the rooms they use are suitable for the course.

It is a primary aim of Macclesfield College to continue to attract, retain and develop outstanding staff to provide the best quality service to all of our learners, employer partners and key stakeholders.

By 2023, we will have developed one of the region’s most experienced, professional, proactive and reactive staff base working within the FE and HE sector, by complementing our existing and valued team members with top quality, highly qualified recruits including Mentors, Faculty Heads, Programme Leaders, Quality Managers and Adult Education specialists.

As a College, we benefit from strong leadership, clarity of purpose, exemplary values, fully transparent management processes and, above all, open and effective channels of communication. Over the next five years, we are looking to take our levels of team work, shared vision and cohesion to the next level, in order to achieve a level of leadership, management, teaching and training that’s unmatched anywhere in the FE and HE sector.

This will assist Macclesfield College in becoming both proactive and reactive with regard to change and innovation within the sector, whilst helping to ensure that Macclesfield’s talent pool aligns seamlessly with the Cheshire and Warrington LEP.
HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The College’s HR strategic objectives inform, shape, develop and contribute to how the College approaches, addresses and responds to the drivers that influence its business goals to be an ‘Outstanding Learning Provider’ and ‘Employer of Choice.’ At all times, the College aims to instil a high-performance culture which attracts and retains the ‘best staff’, and has in place the conditions and structures to enable all staff to strive for high performance to fulfil their career ambitions in a College that challenges and supports them in their development. This will be continued into 2023.

ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE

Staffing Complement:
The College’s current staff population is 31% male and 69% female, which correlates neatly with the wider education sector gender ratios. Whilst education sector trends evidence nationally a higher ratio of male to female employees working in senior management roles, Macclesfield College counters this trend with 70.5% of the College management/executive roles undertaken by females.

Staff Ethnicity:
Staff ethnicity is 95.4% White British, 2.8% Asian and 1.8% Other. The ethnicity ratios for the Cheshire East demographic in respect of White British and Asian ethnicity mirror the College’s ratios.

Staff Advising of a Disability:
The total number of staff advising of a disability at the time of reporting was 4.72%. This complements the findings of the FE College Workforce Survey Data for England which reported that 4.7% of FE staff disclosed having a disability.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion remains at the forefront of all of the College’s recruitment activities. In November 2017, the College confirmed its commitment to the Equality and Human Rights Commission’s ‘Working Forward’ pledge.

Mental Health Awareness:
A further College initiative has seen NCFE Mental Health Awareness certified training offered to staff to develop an increased awareness for staff of the symptoms and effects of mental health.

Disability Confident Employer:
The College has, since gaining accreditation in 2016 as a Disability Confident Employer, been proud to promote its continuing commitment to removing barriers, increasing understanding and ensuring that disabled people have opportunities to fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations.

Talent Management:
Talent assessment and review continues to afford staff with opportunities to progress and develop through promotion, secondment, coaching, mentoring, shadowing and enrichment of roles.

Beacon Teachers (Magic Weavers):
The College has introduced Beacon Teachers (Magic Weavers). Magic Weavers are ‘outstanding teachers’ who assist new and existing staff to also become outstanding teachers by further developing and implementing innovative teaching and learning resources.

... ESTABLISH THE COLLEGE AS A TRUE REGIONAL LEADER

Adopting a college-wide approach to optimising application to conversion into full and part-time students, ensuring good value for money and appreciable return on investment.

Macclesfield College’s new marketing function will create a framework of community and employer opportunities in the local region. This is intended to harness enhanced cohesion in the area, and will take the form of dual-branding, sponsorships and board-level representation, to ensure that we are utilising every available partnership and possible opportunity to serve our local community.

Macclesfield College will strive to communicate our marketing outcomes and progress annually to key stakeholders and the business and local communities alike, in the form of a yearly communications strategy.

Building a robust and sustainable marketing and communications infrastructure, to facilitate enhanced public relations and enable good news to infiltrate the world outside College. This is to help ensure that current and newsworthy information is always channelled in an accurate, efficient and timely manner, in order to effectively celebrate, promote and publicise the success of our learners.
Here at Macclesfield College, we will be adapting our overall offer over the next 5 years to fit the demography of the town and its surrounding area over the corresponding period. Over the next 5 years, we see the town of Macclesfield itself grow and dip in demographics.

**Macclesfield Town Region - School Leaver Numbers to 2023**
Conversely, its outer areas will be growing significantly to 2023, and Macclesfield College will diversify our offer and align our marketing strategy accordingly. This will be in order to maximise learner numbers and achieve our forecast yearly targets, on each dedicated income stream.

**Wider East Cheshire Region - School Leaver Numbers to 2023**

![Graph showing school leaver numbers from 2017 to 2021. The numbers trend from 3,150 in 2017 to a peak of 3,550 in 2019, then decrease to 3,450 in 2020, and remain steady at 3,500 in 2021.](image-url)
STRATEGIC INPUTS

- A comprehensive, diverse and responsive curriculum that is tailored to the precise skills needs of local businesses.
- Ambitious strategic plans to develop facilities and resources for new apprenticeships, particularly in building technologies.
- Clear progression routes to advanced and higher level skills programmes.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment across Macclesfield College.
- Excellent strategic partnerships with the regional business community, local authority, influential commercial bodies and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).
- A highly successful apprenticeships programme that’s grown by 150% since the publication of our previous strategic plan in 2015.
- A concerted and well-planned, multi-platform marketing strategy.
- State-of-the-art campus, benefiting from first-rate facilities and learning resources.
- The College has instilled a high-performance culture where all staff to strive to fulfil their career ambitions in an environment that challenges and supports them in their development.
- Leadership and management across our challenging curriculum areas is highly effective.

STRATEGIC OUTPUTS

- We were successful in enrolling a total of 1157 16-to-18 year-olds on our full-time courses by the beginning of Academic Year 2017/18.
- We made considerable improvements to our achievement rates across our main study programme for 16 to 18 year-olds. It was up from 86.4% in 2015/16, to 90.4% by the end of Academic Year 2017/18.
- Despite 2015 to 2018 being an incredibly difficult time for adult education, we continued to maintain a high quality provision in this key area, and remain one of the region’s leading providers.
- Learner satisfaction within our adult education programmes is consistently high, and 2,222 individuals were enrolled on these courses by the close of Academic Year 2017/18.
- Our employer-responsive arm Maxim Business Training is now firmly established as a leading provider of apprenticeships here in East Cheshire, rated Grade 2 “Good” by Ofsted in our latest inspection in November 2017.
- Maxim has effectively moved all of our apprenticeship programmes from traditional frameworks to high quality standards, to ensure our apprenticeship offer effectively meets the needs of our local employer base.
- Since the publication of our previous Strategic Plan Document in 2015, Macclesfield College has successfully met ‘UK Expectations’ across all areas of higher education, with several areas of good practice being identified by the QAA review team.
“Macclesfield College always provides an open door, and is absolutely determined to engage with the community it seems proud to serve.”

Trevor Langston - South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce and the Macclesfield Pledge.

“Through innovative and enterprising initiatives, it is great to see the College linking to Macclesfield, opening the town to students to make their mark.”

Neil Puttick - Local Councillor for Macclesfield’s South Ward, Macclesfield Town Council.

“Macclesfield College is a first-rate Further and Higher Education institution that is fully committed to its students and maintains education’s place as a doorway into the world of work.”

Peter Jones - Founder and Chairman of the Emerson Group.

“Macclesfield College is, by nature, a forward-thinking institution that provides a valuable opportunity for the region’s young people.”

Kevin Green - Chief Executive of Macclesfield Town Football Club.

“Every community needs a successful college. It’s as simple as that. Macclesfield College is driving personal, social and economic transformation in East Cheshire.”

David Hughes - Chief Executive, Association of Colleges.

“I have been impressed by the degree to which the College engages with issues affecting the wider Macclesfield community, demonstrating commitment to the long-term prospects of students and the town as a whole.”

Jo Wise - Strategic Regeneration Manager North, Cheshire East Council.

“With the help of Macclesfield College, we are inspiring young people into healthcare careers, with an elite training programme combining academic excellence with practical experience.”

Rachael Charlton - Executive Director of HR & OD, East Cheshire NHS Trust.

“Macclesfield College has the human touch, and is totally committed to work closely with businesses like ours, with regard to first-class apprenticeships provision.”

Andy Gray - Training Manager, Proseal UK.

“Macclesfield College plays a critical role. Not only does it provide educational and vocational support and training for people to develop their potential, it also fully engages with its local community.”

Mike Rance MBE - Make It Macclesfield Community Interest Company.
CONTRIBUTING TO THE BUOYANCY OF THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Full-time learning here at Macclesfield College is both broad-based and diverse, with a wide range of courses and study programmes, all dedicated to optimising the potential and eventual employability of 16 to 18 year-olds throughout the East Cheshire region... and beyond.

Our local economy is buoyant, dynamic and growing at a significant rate - currently it outstrips the performance of the UK’s core cities, and enjoys the strongest GDP per capita outside London. Moreover, the Cheshire and Warrington sub-region is home to world-leading businesses operating in globally important commercial and manufacturing sectors, from AstraZeneca (pharmaceuticals) to Unilever (chemicals) and Bentley (automotive).

Notwithstanding this, our region is facing some sizeable challenges if it is to maintain its stability and current rate of growth in the longer term. These include the urgent need to bolster and replenish an ageing workforce with ambitious, employable and highly skilled young people, committed to living and working in the region.

Our duty here at Macclesfield College is to attract, recruit, retain and train the calibre of young people Cheshire businesses need to grow and prosper, nurturing their talents, developing their appetite for learning and optimising their work-readiness, with full-time courses that stimulate and inspire.

Macclesfield College enjoyed demonstrable and marked success in the provision of full-time learning for 16 to 18 year-olds, during the preceding three-year period from 2015 to 2018.

We continued to perform well in this key area, in spite of a spiky demographic profile locally, significantly increasing local participation in skills-based learning, with a total of 1157 young people enrolled on our courses by the beginning of Academic Year 2017/18. Macclesfield College continues to have a stronghold of 66% of the market share of school leavers who don’t go to local sixth forms.

Moreover, our achievement rates across the 16-to-18 bracket increased significantly, with Education and Training retention up from 86.4% in 2015/16, to 95.4% by the end of Academic Year 2017/18. Likewise, the Education and Training pass rate for 16-to-18 year-olds studying at Macclesfield College increased markedly, from 89.9% in 2015/16, again to 95.4% by the close of 2017/18.

Our provision for young full-time learners is both broad-based and inclusive, with learners of all abilities able to access high quality learning, here at Macclesfield College.

Importantly, our overriding commitment to the needs and aspirations of our young learners helped them to successfully complete their courses. Achievement rates for our full-time young learners - studying at all levels - have increased in each of the last three years. Moreover, our full-time learners are continuing to achieve at rates that are consistently parallel with - or above - the national average. Likewise, our achievement rates for learners enrolled on functional skills programmes in English and mathematics are also either in line with - or greater than - nationally reported figures.

The high level of teaching, training and pedagogy provided by Macclesfield College continues to make a positive and tangible impact on the lives of young learners across the East Cheshire region... and beyond.

As one of the region’s dedicated FE and HE institutions, we are fully committed to supporting the progression of our learners onto positive destinations. 88.5% of our young learners completing their courses by the close of Academic Year 2016/17, instantly progressed to a positive destination, either higher or further training, or directly into employment. Furthermore, progression was found to be positive for learners studying at all levels.

Taken on face value, our position as one of the FE and HE colleges serving the north of England’s largest and most buoyant economy, could - with admitted justification - be viewed as being fortunate. The economic output of the Cheshire and Warrington sub-region currently exceeds that of the UK’s core cities, and it is home to world-leading businesses, operating in globally important sectors.
Significant challenges lie in wait for the region however, and these - if not properly addressed and adequately catered for by education and professional skills training providers alike - could strike at the heart of our dynamic local economy and adversely affect its productivity and stability, moving forward.

Perhaps the most formidable challenge for the Cheshire and Warrington sub-region in the future, is the need to adequately replace and replenish its ageing, highly-skilled workforce. This is an urgent objective for the area, which equates to 230,000 high quality, qualified positions being filled by 2025.

Moreover, there is a clear mismatch between the skills local employers need, and the skills many of East Cheshire’s young learners are choosing to acquire. This is simply down to the fact that not enough people are getting the information they need, to make informed decisions about what subjects to study, in order to maximise their career opportunities in the future. This is particularly true for STEM subjects and digital skills.

Here at Macclesfield College, we are continuing to make significant inroads into helping to narrow the region’s skills gap. Almost a quarter of our full-time young learners were following STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) courses during Academic Year 2017/18.

There is an increasing three-year trend of learners progressing from Level 2 to higher level programmes. Of all learners progressing to HE, 90% of them secured their first choice at university. All learners at College who have not reached a grade 4 in English and or maths are supported to do so whilst at the College.

In reaching these outcomes we also achieved high levels of learner satisfaction - 98% - well above national comparators, and the highest recorded anywhere in Cheshire. Whilst we should be rightly proud of these successes, we fully appreciate and recognise that there is still much more to be done, if we are meet both the short and longer term needs of the region we serve.

Government policy has recently dictated that FE and HE colleges - such as Macclesfield - place a renewed focus on developing advanced and higher level skills, in order to produce the kind of home-grown, highly qualified workers regional economies across the UK need, to take the nation forward, post-Brexit.

Central to this - as we stated earlier in this section - is a pressing need to train a greater percentage of young people in STEM-related subjects, whilst honing their digital skills. As far as the Cheshire and Warrington sub-region is concerned, there is a particular focus on recruiting more young women into engineering and advanced manufacturing roles, and everyone at Macclesfield College is fully committed to playing their part in realising this hugely important target, in order to further strengthen the local economy.

Fulfil our duty as a local FE and HE provider to supply our growing regional economy - which has the strongest GDP per capita outside London - with the next generation of skilled workers.

Helping to narrow the region’s skills gap, by ensuring that young learners are taught and trained to specific local employer requirements.

Placing increased focus on STEM and digital skills, as well as the key sectors identified in our region’s Strategic Economic Plan.

Playing our part in establishing an excellent suite of technology delivering STEM and digital skills for the benefit of the region’s economy.

Ensuring that young learners gain the basic English and maths skills that would enable them to progress into STEM and digital-based careers.

Putting employers in the spotlight, by placing them at the heart of communicating with and inspiring young people and their parents.

Committed to encouraging young women into engineering and advanced manufacturing roles. In the Cheshire and Warrington sub-region, manufacturing contributes 22% of our overall economy, compared with just 9% nationally.
OUR FULL-TIME ALUMNI... WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Full-time learning at Macclesfield College is a great way to maximise your employability...

Jake Petrie - Autorola Limited:
A very popular figure at the College, Jake completed his Level 2 Diploma in Business and Admin, before accepting an exciting apprentice role at Macclesfield-based global online vehicle re-marketing specialist, Autorola. “Jake has a great appetite for work, and his personality is making him a very likeable figure in the office,” says Operations Director, Neil Frost. Now a full-time employee, Jake’s role is in Sales Support, which includes liaising with transport firms to move sold vehicles and deal with vehicle appraisals, producing and sending invoices and helping to process grievances.

Emma Higinbotham - Autorola Ltd:
A model learner during her time at Macclesfield College, Emma gained her Level 2 Diploma in Business and Admin, before leaving to take up her new position at Autorola. Working alongside her fellow College alumnus Jake Petrie in Sales Support, Emma’s daily duties include arranging transport and recording vehicle appraisals, dealing with mail and vehicle documents, and general admin. “Like Jake, Emma is a real credit to herself and the College,” confirms Neil Frost. “She is very bright, determined and ambitious and I’m sure she will go far in the world of work.”

FULL-TIME LEARNERS - AGED 16 TO 18 - VISION

By 2023, it is envisaged that Macclesfield College will have become established as the regional ‘college of choice’ for technical and professional learning for young people.

More young people than ever before - our target is to attract, develop and teach 1,500 high quality full-time learners within the next five years - will have chosen to study with us, with participation in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) related subjects rising in line with regional demand. A greater percentage of our full-time learners will also be studying at higher levels, by 2023.

Exciting and innovative new programmes, designed and developed in partnership with employers, will complement our extensive offer to young full-time learners. Foremost amongst these are our current, high-profile partnerships with the likes of AstraZeneca, Cheshire East Council, Direct Foods, East Cheshire NHS Trust, Lucideon and Proseal UK, with many more strategic link-ups in the offing over the next five years.

Through these initiatives, we are aiming to ensure that 100% of our learners will be benefiting from high quality, meaningful work placements, by 2023.

Moreover, it is anticipated that - on leaving Macclesfield College - our alumni will progress into vocationally relevant further training, education or employment in the Cheshire and Warrington region, thereby making their contribution to the north of England’s largest and most vibrant economy.

In order to optimise our methods and standards of teaching over the next five years, Macclesfield College will need to continue accessing high quality, industry-relevant staff who understand the pedagogy required to stretch each learner to the fullest potential.

At all times, our teaching and training staff here at Macclesfield College will approach their lessons in a proactive, exciting and inspiring manner, with the needs of individual learners firmly in their minds. Each tutor, trainer and assessor employed by the College will ensure that the courses they are teaching are relevant to the industry sectors they cover, whether that be through work placements or additional sector-specific training.

In order to give our staff our fullest possible support, the Continued Personal Development (CPD) provision in College, will be significantly enhanced, so that it can be accurately targeted at individual staff needs.

Furthermore, our teachers will endeavour to make best possible use of the latest learning technologies available to Macclesfield College. Over the next five years, we are committed to undertaking a full IT upgrade, which will include the update of our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).
A set of teaching and learning tools designed to both enhance a student's learning experience and encourage them to take responsibility for their own learning, VLE breaks down the curriculum into sections that can be assigned and assessed, and features student tracking, online support for both teacher and student, electronic communication (e-mail, threaded discussions, chat, Web publishing), and Internet links to external resources.

Assisted by learning tools such as VLE - combined with our unrelenting focus on aspiration - our full-time students will be consistently realising high achievement rates in all College curriculum areas by 2023.

All full-time students enrolled with us here at Macclesfield College, will be set aspirational target grades at the outset of their courses, and they will be closely mentored, monitored and supported to help them achieve their goals.

From the many opportunities provided to them to experience and prepare for the world of work, they will become highly employable. As a result, our learners will go onto positive futures, with a greater number progressing directly to advanced and higher level programmes, to assist the regional economy and help replenish its ageing skilled workforce by 2025.

Despite a reducing population of local young people aged 16-18 years, through greater market penetration and improved progression, we expect to see continued growth in the number of full-time learners aged 16-18 years over the five-year life span of this plan. Furthermore, from 2019 onwards, we are planning to target admissions from outside the Macclesfield area, moving into neighbouring towns like Leek, Congleton, Wmslow and Crewe.

We will ensure our curriculum is both appropriate and responsive to local needs, by analysing labour market intelligence and acting appropriately upon its outcomes. During the five-year life span of this strategic plan, we will review and refresh the curriculum offer to ensure it remains fully aligned to regional and national requirements.

A key part of us ensuring that our target of 1,500 full-time learners is successfully met by 2023, is the strategic use of expert, outsourced marketing by our preferred providers. Over the past three years, Macclesfield College has benefited greatly from meticulously planned and well-coordinated multi-platform marketing activity, which has been successful in re-establishing the College’s reputation at a crucial time, whilst re-inforcing our position at the heart of the community we serve.

As part of our five-year strategic plan to 2023, we are now looking to build and enhance a highly responsive and diverse marketing function to benefit the College and help ensure we reach our core markets with even greater efficiency going forward. A key element of this will be social media, which will be used to promote individual curriculum areas in an efficient and highly targeted manner.

This focused new strategy will be aligned precisely with the region’s demography, to ensure that future opportunities and routes to market are executed to their maximum extent, in order to achieve the appropriate number of applications for each funding stream of the College. All data used will have been collected from Vector, our in-house Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) tool, which represented a significant internal investment for us here at Macclesfield College, during Academic Year 2017/18.

As part of our recruitment drive over the next five years, we will also be adopting a college-wide approach towards pinpointing and catering to local learner needs, with a tailored curriculum offer that appeals and aligns to the current and future workforce.

Central to our new-look marketing output, will be a robust and sustainable internal and external communications infrastructure, in continuation of operations piloted successfully during Academic Year 2017/18. This will facilitate enhanced public relations and enable good news to infiltrate the world outside College, as well as communicating inwardly to staff via internal publications, such as the Principal’s Blog. The ultimate aim of this is to help ensure that current and newsworthy information is always channelled in an accurate, efficient and timely manner, in order to effectively celebrate, promote and publicise the success of our learners.
OUR PROCESSES AND PLANNED EXECUTION

Moving forward to 2023, the new-look marketing function at Macclesfield College’s will also create a framework of community and employer opportunities throughout the local region.

This is intended to harness enhanced cohesion in the area, and will take the form of dual-branding, sponsorships and board-level representation, to ensure that we are utilising every available partnership and possible opportunity to serve our local community.

Macclesfield College will strive to communicate our marketing outcomes and progress annually to key stakeholders and the business and local communities alike, in the form of a yearly communications strategy.

Through this, our stakeholders and partners alike will recognise us as a leading FE and HE college which serves the needs of young people and supports their economic, social and personal development here in East Cheshire.

Specifically we will:

- introduce a new higher level skills offer for key subject areas, such as Management, CIPD (the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development) and Construction Built Environment.
- Introduce the Technical Baccalaureate as an option for our talented level 3 learners. We expect the number of programmes offering a Technical Baccalaureate option to grow year-on-year, over the life of this plan.
- Upskill all College staff appropriately, in order to facilitate the successful delivery of T-levels.
- Establish the Work Placement Capacity and Delivery Fund (CDF) within the overall College structure, thus enabling links with employers and thereby facilitating the work experience element of the new T-levels.
- Ensure that all curriculum planning in this area is totally cost-efficient.
- Deliver the most relevant curriculum offer for learners within the area.
- Encourage the College’s Senior Management Team to become active members of local skills’ boards, Macclesfield Regeneration Board, HS2 Board and Digital Skills Initiative within the Cheshire area.

OUR PLANNED STRATEGIC OUTPUTS TO 2023

- An extensive, high quality curriculum offer, with a renewed focus on STEM and digital skills, in order to align with priorities identified by the Cheshire and Warrington LEP.
- Excellent standards of teaching and assessment employed into delivering exciting and innovative new programmes, designed in close collaboration with local employers and organisations.
- High-profile partnerships with industry-leading organisations across a range of key sectors that will benefit the regional economy, including Siemens, Seddon Construction, Cogent and the East Cheshire NHS Trust.
- Continued access to high quality, industry-relevant staff who understand the pedagogy required to stretch each learner to their optimum potential. Continued Professional Development (CPD) provision will be significantly enhanced for our teaching staff, to help them reach their targets.
- Macclesfield College is committed to undertaking a full IT upgrade by 2023, which will include the update of our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).
- Macclesfield College will continue to upgrade, in line with demand.

Macclesfield learners will continue to report high levels of satisfaction with college life, well above averages for the sector, both here in Cheshire and nationally.

Our young learners will develop into socially aware and responsible young adults, and they will understand how to best conduct themselves, both in professional and social situations.

Macclesfield learners will continue to report high levels of satisfaction with college life, well above averages for the sector, both here in Cheshire and nationally.
Ensure the achievement rates of our most vulnerable learners are in line with all our other learners.

Develop the skill set of technical and academic teachers to meet the needs of learners with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities, to help ensure effective integration into mainstream courses, wherever possible.

Ensure that Macclesfield College is fully aligned to Gatsby benchmarks. These are a framework of eight guidelines that define the best careers provision in schools and colleges.

We will continue to maintain our high success rates across our entire full-time provision. By equipping staff and learners with the tools to drive higher level learning, we will ensure all learners do not just pass their qualification, but aspire to and achieve the highest grades possible, at whatever level of study.

Review the standards we expect of our teaching and learning staff and ensure that our CPD (Continued Professional Development) programme supports the promotion of best practice across all of our provision.

Develop innovative and engaging ways of delivering English and mathematics courses and qualifications, to enable more learners to achieve higher grades in these vital areas.

Continue to set stretching individual targets for all of our learners, both academically and vocationally, as well as framing aspirational goals for their next steps.

Monitor and analyse the progress of all our learners, both during lesson-times and over their entire course, in order to develop their learning as quickly and effectively as possible.

Provide a high quality tutorial provision that prepares students to be tomorrow’s global citizens.

Continue to ensure a layer of support for learners such as tutorial coaches, learning mentors, counsellors, careers advisors, plus the relevant external agencies, so that all of our learners can achieve to their optimum potential.

Continue to develop the use of new and existing IT, in order to support the delivery of learning. Also to ensure that our staff possess the requisite skills to optimise the use of this technology in class.

Build on good practice in areas such as construction and engineering, by strengthening our strategic partnerships with key employers in this dynamic industry sector, such as Seddon and Wilkinson Star.

Liaise with our employer partners across the region and beyond, to ensure that our learners have the best possible opportunities to work with up-to-date equipment and resources that are relevant to the world of work, in real-time industry settings.

Engage fully in World Skills and regional skills competitions and look forward to further success in skills competitions over the life span of this plan. We are planning to host forthcoming Skills Shows on campus, thereby furthering the development of a culture of competition College-wide.

Encourage and support local employers in promoting the value of recruiting advanced and higher apprentices from learners completing full-time programmes. This will include marketing material, employer events and the development of effective learner-employer engagement services.

Work collaboratively and transparently with key stakeholders and partners including Cheshire East Council, Macclesfield Chamber of Commerce, JobCentre Plus, The Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership, the AoC Regional Committee and the Skills and Growth Company.

Work in partnership with Cheshire East Council and others in supporting provision for learners aged 11-16 years in our local schools, in preparation for them enrolling at Macclesfield College.
IMPROVED COHESION WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Macclesfield College has continued to perform well in the realm of adult education, despite the ongoing challenges and constraints facing this beleagured sector.

Our most recent Ofsted inspection in November 2017, found that our adult leaders felt safe at Macclesfield College. Our attention to health and safety is meticulous, both in practical workshops and in the college buildings. A culture of tolerance and respect permeates the learning environment and learners are confident to explore diverse and complex issues.

Our Leaders and managers work very effectively with a range of employers, stakeholders and external organisations to design programmes to fill skills shortages both in Macclesfield and region-wide.

Our managers work closely with Jobcentre Plus to design courses and widen participation in learning. For example we provide courses for accounting technicians, and the hospitality, retail and healthcare sectors in order to reduce unemployment and fill the high number of job vacancies in Macclesfield and the surrounding area.

Likewise, our learners benefit from good careers guidance and support to help them progress to employment or further learning. Most learners on access to higher education programmes progress successfully to higher education.

FULL AND PART-TIME ADULT SKILLS LEARNERS - CONTEXT

2015 to 2018 proved to be an immensely challenging and difficult time for adult education nationally.

The Government’s austerity measures - designed to reduce the budget deficit following the Great Recession- had a significant and negative impact upon adult education spending. These swingeing cuts subsequently resulted in notable decreases in adult education participation across the entire country. This was especially true in 2015, when they led directly to the redundancy of many teaching and support staff delivering adult education across England and Wales.

Despite these substantial set-backs and difficulties, Macclesfield College managed to maintain a high quality provision for adult learners throughout the East Cheshire region, and we remain one of the leading providers of adult education programmes in the area.

Currently there are 2,222 adult learners who are participating in skills learning, here at Macclesfield College. Most of these hail from communities and neighbourhoods very local to the college. The achievement rates of our adult learners have remained at a consistently high level, with an overall achievement rate of 92.5% with success above national rates at all levels of learning.

Moreover, our adult education programmes are also diverse and inclusive. 80.2% of our completing adult learners progressed to a positive destination, either higher or further training or directly into employment.

As with practically all areas of our curriculum at Macclesfield College, learner satisfaction within our adult education programmes has remained pleasingly high, in spite of all the turmoil that’s been surrounding this sector nationally.

Adult education remains a powerful tool for re-engaging those adults marginalised in society by language barriers, socio-economic disadvantages or mental health challenges.

Despite the Cheshire and Warrington sub-region being the north of England’s largest and most buoyant economy (currently, we as a region benefit from the largest GDP per capita outside London), 25% of our workers (118,000) are earning below the living wage, and there are still significant skills gaps hindering further growth, both for individuals and businesses.

Compared with the national average, our region has relatively few people who are unemployed, yet we still have approximately 40,000 individuals who are either out of work or economically inactive wanting a job.

Likewise, although we have one of the highest proportions of workers qualified to National Vocational Qualification Level 4 (NVQ4) and above (39.7%), and lower than average numbers of residents with no qualifications (7.3%), there is still a significant percentage of people (around 25%) on low wages, on benefits and, most importantly, not progressing.
The Cheshire and Warrington sub-region also has a total of 870 young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) who are known to the local authorities, and many more who are at risk of becoming NEET in the future. These residents are not benefiting from the growth in our economy, and it is a situation that urgently needs to be addressed. For these residents, 19+ (adult) skills and learning needs to be part of a holistic service that enables them to move into work and progress.

Another key factor influencing adult education here in East Cheshire, will be relevant from 2019 onwards, when local authorities will take on more responsibility to deliver quality adult education in their local areas, once adult funding is devolved from central Government, subject to agreed readiness conditions.

The currently Academic Year (2018/19) is one of transition to give local authorities time to learn the skills for success, strengthen their relationships with providers - like Macclesfield College and will continue to work with them to align national and local policy on adult education.

Our most recent ‘Ofsted’ report - published in November 2017 - rates the adult education provision at Macclesfield College to be ‘requiring improvement’, although it did acknowledge that significant improvements had been made since our previous inspection in 2016.

Likewise, in our 2016/17 self-assessment report, our Managers in the full and part-time adults skills faculty decided that the setting and monitoring of target grades for learners required improvement. A new system for setting and monitoring learners’ targets was duly implemented in early 2017.

On the positive side, full and part-time adult learners enrolled on a course at Macclesfield College enjoy their lessons, are actively involved in learning activities and develop high levels of confidence and self-esteem. Ofsted also found that they took pride in and produce a high standard of work.

Most learners reflect very effectively on their previous knowledge and competently link theory to workplace practice. For example, learners on AAT accounting programmes were found to be capable of linking the topic of profit and loss analysis to their job roles.

Working with the Cheshire and Warrington LEP to put us at the heart of high quality adult training in the north of England’s most buoyant economic region.

Helping to address worklessness and inadequate skills provision throughout the Cheshire and Warrington sub-region, helping it to progress even further and create improved living and working standards across all levels of society.

Addressing and catering for the skills gaps that exist within the region, whilst contributing to the replacement of an ageing, highly skilled workforce.

Looking to increase the proportion of people aged 20 to 39 with degree-level qualifications. It increased by just 1.5% between 2004 and 2012, compared to 9.6% across the rest of the UK.

Align our adult education provision with the region’s Strategic Economic Plan (SEP). This sets out the ambition to grow the regional economy, and create an additional 120,000 jobs by 2040.

Engaging in enhanced community activity throughout the East Cheshire area, helping local individuals to maximise their employability.
By 2023, it is envisaged that Macclesfield College will have become an ‘Outstanding’ provider in the field of adult education, with a range of courses that caters to the precise needs of our community, and offers better progression for learners of all abilities.

To help us achieve this challenging objective, we will develop a close, effective and efficient working relationship between ourselves and the Cheshire East Council.

Our adult education provision will have been carefully planned and developed in partnership with the local council, the Skills and Growth Agency, the Macclesfield Chamber of Commerce, the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership, Job Centre Plus, local employers, community groups and other local stakeholders. In doing so, our college will be widely recognised for the dynamic, invaluable contribution we will make in shaping and transforming the lives of adults across the region.

Adult participation in learning will increase during the five-year life span of this plan, supported by the devolved Adult Education Budget which will be controlled by the local authority, to whom will be a preferred education and training provider.

The teaching at the centre of our adult education courses and programmes will, at all times, be proactive, dynamic and inspirational, with a clear focus on the needs of each individual learner.

Furthermore, our teachers will make the best possible use of the latest available learning technologies, which will become more available as part of the College’s revamped IT infrastructure.

We will drive and retain a marked increase in attendance to lessons, in order to create a positive effect on the progress that our adult learners make. This will also help to facilitate enhanced lesson planning and result in learners experiencing significantly less disruption, due to low attendance, where lesson plans may previously have been scrapped due to low attendance.

We will strive to ensure the feedback from our tutors to our learners following course assessments identifies precisely what learners need to do to improve their work. Likewise, we will continue to encourage our tutors to employ questioning techniques skilfully to extend learners’ understanding, successfully develop debating skills and broaden their thinking skills.

Macclesfield College is fully committed to supporting the diverse learning needs of local adults throughout the East Cheshire region. Our strategy will look to incorporate skills shortages and upskilling needs that Brexit will necessitate. We will be at the centre of the community, aligning with the needs of SMEs, businesses and larger organisations, to ensure our local economy thrives, and our College fully supports real student opportunities locally.

In partnership with the local council, the Skills and Growth Agency, the Macclesfield Chamber of Commerce, the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership, the Macclesfield College will drive and retain a marked increase in attendance to lessons, in order to create a positive effect on the progress that our adult learners make. This will also help to facilitate enhanced lesson planning and result in learners experiencing significantly less disruption, due to low attendance, where lesson plans may previously have been scrapped due to low attendance.

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Enterprise Partnership, Job Centre Plus, local employers, community groups and other local stakeholders, we will develop and deliver an adult education programme that meets the needs of local people and local employers.

We will ensure that the entirety of our adult education budget is used exclusively to upskill, retrain and develop local work-ready individuals in order to contribute to the continued growth of the Cheshire and Warrington sub-region’s buoyant economy.

We will also ensure that all our full and part-time adult skills courses and programmes are complementary to the College’s apprenticeship and higher skills provision, thereby facilitating clear access and progression opportunities for the most ambitious and committed individuals.

By 2023, we will have also extended our short refresher courses and job change programmes in key priority sectors such as electrical installation, engineering and manufacturing, building technologies and digital technologies.

During the next five years, we will be engaging with adult learners across East Cheshire, in order to revise, review and adapt our approach and arrive at a system that best supports a blended learning experience. In doing so, we will be positioned to review our delivery models thereby allowing further flexibility, distance learning and short block delivery to best meet study and support needs for adult learners.

Some of our programmes in this key area will be aimed at improving cohesion between Macclesfield College and the community we serve.

Despite East Cheshire being one of the North West’s and, indeed the UK’s most affluent and commercially buoyant regions, there are still significant pockets of poverty and social deprivation located in some of the area’s poorest wards.

The programmes we will be devising to help address this, will be aimed at developing essential skills for adults, many of whom will be disadvantaged or socially marginalised.

These programmes will support adults in progressing into employment or further study. This provision includes basic skills, employability, mathematics, English and English for Speakers or Other Languages (ESOL) programmes.

Despite the prevailing demographics of the area served by Macclesfield College, these programmes remain a genuine priority for us, in tandem with Cheshire East Council and the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise partnership, as we collectively strive to ensure more adults are equipped to make a positive contribution to society.

We will offer an extensive programme of English and mathematics, from entry level functional skills to GCSE level at the college’s main Park Lane campus and in a number of community settings.

Notwithstanding our region enjoying some of the lowest unemployment and claimant figures recorded anywhere in the entire United Kingdom, we will continue to support some of our poorer communities, by reducing pockets of worklessness in collaboration with Job Centre Plus, delivering practical employability programmes to help get adults back into gainful employment.

These programmes will focus on core interview skills, career planning, job searching and personal development. The majority will be short courses to enable learners to progress quickly into employment, alongside the development of a relevant technical skill.

We are very aware that we have a key role to play in meeting the needs of adults with learning difficulties, disabilities or mental health issues. With this in mind, Macclesfield College will continue to work closely with Cheshire East Council, to offer high quality provision for learners with any form of learning difficulty or disability, in order to empower them to achieve positive outcomes that will enhance and maximise their potential.

Ultimately, by 2023, Macclesfield College is aiming to have around 2,500 adult learners enrolled on high quality courses and programmes, all of which will be fully aligned with the needs of the regional economy, as identified by the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership. In this way, we will play an active role in getting more than 120,000 people into work by 2040.
BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE... ON SOLID FOUNDATIONS

The past three years has been a watershed period for apprenticeships at Macclesfield College.

According to the DfE league tables in November 2017, we were the top performing college in Cheshire and Greater Manchester for apprenticeship timely completions. Through our dedicated employer-responsive arm - Maxim Business Training - we are now about to begin a challenging and exciting journey to becoming ‘Outstanding’ for apprenticeships by 2023.

Central to our ambitious targets for the next five years, is significant growth in the number of apprentices enrolled our high quality programmes. By 2023, we confidently estimate that we will have 1,000 learners working towards qualifications from Level 2 to Higher Level. In order to realise this bold target, we will be expanding our Business Development team, in order to engage with more employers across the East Cheshire region and beyond, to generate additional leads.

We will also be improving our apprenticeships rates year on year, to achieve a target of 12% over the National Provider Rate. Through Maxim, we will also be monitoring quality and ensuring continued improvement, as we look to further enhance our relationships with employers across the North West region... and beyond.

Tracy Cosgrave - College Director of Commercial Services & Employer Enterprise.

APPRENTICESHIPS AND WORK BASED LEARNING - CONTEXT

Situated in the heart of East Cheshire - one of the UK’s most dynamic and buoyant business regions - Macclesfield College is a state-of-the-art further and higher education institution.

Although we are a relatively small college with limited resources, our tireless commitment and demonstrable professionalism have seen us punch well above our weight and place employers and apprenticeships at the very heart of our agenda.

Since the appointment of current Principal and Chief Executive, Rachel Kay and Director of Employer Enterprise and Commercial Services, Tracy Cosgrave in August 2015, we have been fully committed to embracing a culture of innovation, enterprise and long-term growth via a high-profile apprenticeships programme that’s grown by 150% (in terms of apprentice numbers) in a little over three years.

To engage with the East Cheshire region’s burgeoning business community through high quality apprenticeships, we launched Maxim Business Training - our dedicated employer-responsive arm - back in October 2015. Featuring on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers, Maxim excels in delivering leading-edge, fully certified apprenticeships and trailblazers to help individuals, businesses and public sector organisations alike to focus on their futures by shaping, enhancing and transforming workforce and career skills across a broad range of industries and occupations.

In order to ensure that we as a college are always efficiently addressing and responding to the diverse skills needs of East Cheshire and beyond, Maxim has been successful in forging solid and strategic links with key stakeholders and employers across the region. This has helped us to accurately gauge and understand local skills requirements, and develop a fully tailored apprenticeship offer that seamlessly fills the gaps and contributes significantly to the ongoing economic growth, prosperity and stability of the area we serve.

Over the past three years, Macclesfield College has also worked in close collaboration with the local Chamber of Commerce, Council, MPs and other stakeholders to stimulate the take-up of apprenticeships across the East Cheshire region. Moreover, we have played a leading role in the development and evolution of the ‘Macclesfield Pledge’ - a key initiative for the town that brings together employers, providers and ambitious, work-ready young people in order to identify and realise exciting opportunities for the future.

Today, Maxim Business Training is well-known and widely respected throughout our region, and we work closely with some of its largest employers including AstraZeneca, Cheshire East Council, Direct Foods, East Cheshire NHS Trust, Lucideon and Proseal UK. As a result of the strong links forged regionally by Maxim - and the comprehensive, robust employer
ALIGNMENT WITH THE LEP SKILLS AND EDUCATION PLAN

- Ensuring that everyone in the East Cheshire region is fully informed about the career and progression opportunities open to them.
- Improving the overall quality of education and skills provision by strategically partnering with regional and national employers in key sectors.
- Encouraging greater take-up of apprenticeship programmes across the region, followed by increased progression onto Higher Apprenticeships.
- Ensuring that our apprentices have the requisite vocational skills to contribute to the region’s workforce on leaving Macclesfield College.
- Playing our part in developing a more coherent and ‘Outstanding’ curriculum offer across the Cheshire and Warrington region.
- Building on our existing good practice in working collaboratively with businesses to design and deliver the training and employability skills that local employers need.
- Focusing on the strengths and specialisms of the region’s employer base, in order to properly align our training provision to the skills required.
- Monitoring and evaluating our progress and impact as a training provider, on a consistent basis.

To reiterate, our apprenticeships programme here at Macclesfield College has increased by a hugely impressive 150%, in terms of learner numbers. We currently have 419 apprentices who are working to apprenticeship frameworks across 10 sector subject areas, at Levels 2 to 5. The dedicated and professional team in place at Maxim, has worked both collaboratively and tirelessly to develop our new apprenticeships standards, in line with regional skills needs. Moreover, Maxim is now firmly established as a leading provider of apprenticeships here in East Cheshire, rated Grade 2 “Good” by Ofsted in our latest inspection in November 2017.

Macclesfield College provides impartial Information, advice and guidance for all individuals thinking of taking up an apprenticeship and this is provided at the outset, via Maxim’s apprenticeship recruitment team. This dedicated team ensures that new learners are placed on the right courses and with an employer that is best suited to their career aspirations.

As a college, we also market and promote all of our current and future apprenticeship opportunities through well-planned events, such as career fairs and open evenings, which continue to be well supported by local employers.

Moreover, governors, leaders and managers at Macclesfield College have been successful in embedding a culture of equality throughout our organisation, and are passionate about our apprentices, including those who are totally work-based. This is to ensure they have the same support as all other learners. A clear example of this commitment, is the College’s recent introduction and implementation of a mental health awareness training programme undertaken by all Maxim staff.

This is in response to an increasing number of full-time learners nationally, who are either suffering from mental health issues, or may be showing signs of poor or impaired mental health.

In a recent survey, 97% of our learners said they would recommend an apprenticeship course at Macclesfield to their friends, whilst more than 500 of our learners participated in real work experience during Academic Year 2016-17.

What’s more, in the most recent FE Week National League Tables, we were confirmed as the top college in Cheshire for both learner and employer satisfaction, as well as being one of the best-performing colleges nationally for getting learners into employment.
By 2023, it is envisaged that Maxim Business Training will be firmly established as the preferred skills training provider for businesses across the entire region.

Thanks to the dedication of its first-rate team of training and assessment professionals, the College’s dedicated employer-responsive arm is already embedded as a leading provider of high quality apprenticeships and work-based learning programmes across the dynamic East Cheshire region and beyond.

Significant growth in the number of apprentices enrolled on our high quality programmes will, of course, be pivotal to us reaching and, potentially, exceeding our ambitious targets for the next five years, as we aim to ensure that Maxim Business Training and our pioneering apprenticeship programmes are truly ‘Outstanding’ in all aspects by 2023.

In 5 years’ time, we confidently estimate that we will have around 1,000 vocational learners all working towards achieving qualifications from Levels 1 and 2, right up to higher apprenticeships. In order to realise this bold objective, we will be expanding our Business Development team considerably. This is in order to engage with more employers across the East Cheshire region and beyond, to generate additional leads.

With the excellent skills development and training teams we have at our disposal - and judging by our latest Ofsted report - in which Maxim came in for particular praise - it would appear that this key goal is eminently achievable: “Apprenticeships are well planned and managed to meet the principles and requirements of a programme. Managers and staff have good working relationships with employers. Leaders and managers have worked particularly hard to develop standards and apprenticeships in response to local skills needs. It is just over 12 months since the Government introduced the Apprenticeship Levy which, safe to say has not proved to be universally popular, and has presented Maxim and the wider College with huge challenges throughout Academic Year 2017-18.

Under the Government’s new measures, all professional training providers have had to gain
approval by the Register of Apprenticeship providers, which Maxim did successfully back in Autumn 2017, as well as having to bid for non-Levy contracts with the ESFA.

A recent report by an independent non-party think tank has confirmed that the reforms implemented in order to accommodate the Levy have been harsh. Moreover, they have been found to be having a negative impact on apprenticeship numbers nationally. The period April to October 2017, for instance, was 40% lower than the previous year.

However, due to successfully gaining supplier approval for a number of large Levy payers, underpinned by the excellent relationships we have forged to date with employers across East Cheshire, Maxim has managed to buck this rather worrying national trend and, vitally, grow our apprentice numbers.

Furthermore, Maxim has effectively moved all of our apprenticeship programmes from traditional frameworks to high quality standards, to ensure our apprenticeship offer effectively meets the needs of our local employer base. This achievement is all the more remarkable, given the ongoing challenges and constraints colleges like Macclesfield are facing in today’s perennially tough educational climate.

In order to achieve ‘Outstanding’ status for Maxim Business Training and our apprenticeships provision, we will also be seeking to improve our integral apprenticeship rates year on year, to meet a target of 12% over the National Provider Rate by 2023.

Through Maxim, we will also be rigorously monitoring quality and ensuring continued improvement, as we look to gauge both learner and employer feedback, whilst further enhancing our relationships with businesses and organisations both regionally and nationally.

As part of this drive, we will also be demonstrating excellent destinations data for all of our apprentices, by expanding the apprenticeship offer at Macclesfield College to ensure all learners are able to access higher apprenticeship programmes, on successful completion of their courses.

A sure sign of consistent progress for Maxim this year, was its nomination and subsequent shortlisting in two categories - UK Apprenticeships and Employer Engagement - at the 2018 Educate North Awards, held in April. Although Maxim wasn’t fortunate enough to win either award, we performed in truly admirable fashion against some formidable opposition, such as the Liverpool Hope Business School, the Learning Curve Group and Manchester Metropolitan University, and thereby claimed our rightful place among the industry’s elite.

By 2023, it is envisaged that Maxim Business Training will have become an award-winning professional skills training provider, achieving national and, possibly, even international recognition for excellence in both planning, delivery and execution.
Our Planned Strategic Outputs to 2023

- An expanded business development team that will engage with more regional employers and generate additional leads, in order to increase the number of employers that we are working with, both locally and regionally.

- A commitment to continually improving apprenticeship rates year on year (both overall and timely), in order to achieve a target of 12% over National Provider Rate.

- High-profile partnerships with industry-leading organisations across a range of key sectors that will benefit the regional economy, including Siemens, Seddon Construction, Cogent and the East Cheshire NHS Trust.

- Demonstrate excellent destinations data for all apprentices by expanding the apprenticeship offer to ensure all learners are able to access higher programmes.

- Generate additional income through the increase of apprenticeship provision for both levy and non-levy employers.

- Identify a minimum of 3 sector skill areas and successfully achieve accreditation to become an End Point Assessment Centre.

Our Processes and Planned Execution

The Level 2 Diploma for Health Care Support Workers has generated a lot of interest from the staff at Macclesfield General Hospital, who are keen to progress - as they view this as an invaluable opportunity for them to step onto a higher level programme and, ultimately, a degree level course.

In addition to this, we will shortly be launching an innovative Apprenticeship Ambassador programme with Macclesfield General Hospital. This will be an information service for schools throughout East Cheshire, utilising real apprentices’ first-hand knowledge to present the Apprenticeship route as a viable and successful pathway into a career within the National Health Service.

Apprenticeship Ambassadors will visit local schools to share their Apprenticeship experiences and inspire learners. Through Maxim, they will receive bespoke training to enable them to share information about apprenticeships in Health and Social Care, as well as to positively present their own experiences.

By 2023, we estimate that Maxim Business Training will have significantly grown its provision to both hospitals, and expanded considerably in this key area, to become the region’s preferred professional skills training provider to the health care industry.

In order to facilitate delivery of these vital training qualifications, Maxim Business Training will be partnering with a number of key organisations, including the University of Wolverhampton, the University of Chester, Cheshire East Council, the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership, the Macclesfield Chamber of Commerce and the Skills and Growth Agency.

Our ultimate goal - in financial terms - is to achieve a departmental income in excess of £2million per annum. In order to reach this exacting target, we will be aiming to generate additional income through the increase and enhancement of apprenticeships provision for levy and non-levy paying employers alike.

In conjunction with this, we will also be identifying a minimum of three specialist sector skill areas in which we can successfully achieve exclusive accreditation here in East Cheshire, becoming the region’s preferred End Point Assessment Centre for these areas in the process.

Likewise, we will also be working in close collaboration with regional and national employers, in order to scope out and cater for non-funded training requirements, whilst developing alternative income streams in order to satisfy need.

Catering and hospitality has always been high on the agenda at Macclesfield College and Maxim Business Training. Now, we are set to further enrich our reputation in this dynamic sector, by launching the new Whites Chef...
Academy. featuring Michelin Star-winning, TV celebrity chef Aiden Byrne as Principal Patron. Situated on campus, the Whites Chef Academy will replace the Silk Room training restaurant. Students enrolled at the new Whites Chef Academy will work towards a Level 2 apprenticeship in Professional Cookery, Catering and Hospitality, complemented by placements with some of the College’s partner organisations.

To 2023, the College and our dedicated employer-responsive arm will seek to continue building on the considerable and significant success we have enjoyed in this area, during Academic Year 2017-18.

As one of the North West’s most economically buoyant and enterprising regions, East Cheshire is awash with ambitious young start-up companies and SMEs, and it is these kind of businesses that make a really strong contribution to the ongoing vibrancy and stability of regional and national economies.

With this in mind - and armed with full ESF funding support - Maxim is looking to deliver expert training and skills provision to the region’s small business community. The European Structural and Investment Funds programme provides funds to help local areas grow. The funds support investment in innovation, businesses, skills and employment and, most importantly, they create jobs.

As part of our strategy for continued expansion across a wide range of training and upskilling areas, Maxim has become actively engaged in a whole raft of projects currently taking place across the dynamic East Cheshire region. It is envisaged that this strategy will continue to 2023. Foremost among these is the ‘Macclesfield Manifesto’.

An innovative and far-reaching apprenticeship recruitment drive designed to develop and train the next generation of skilled workers. Officially launched in November 2018 and endorsed by both Principal and Chief Executive of Macclesfield College, Rachel Kay and the town’s MP David Rutley, the initial mandate of the ‘Macclesfield Manifesto’ is to support the region’s businesses and SMEs, by recruiting 100 young people onto apprenticeship programmes in just 100 days from January 2019. Going forward, the ‘Macclesfield Manifesto’ will look to play a key role in aligning the College with the overarching skills agenda of the Cheshire and Warrington sub-region.

“I am pleased to give my strong support to this positive initiative,” confirms MP for Macclesfield, David Rutley, “and thank Rachel Kay and her leadership team for their ambition to create significantly more apprenticeship places in our area. The College’s continued commitment to investing in skills and opportunities for local residents is to be congratulated, and I hope as many local businesses as possible will engage with the Manifesto and see how they could benefit from taking on an apprentice with the support of the College.”

In order to further maximise the buoyancy of the local economy, we have recently introduced an enhanced offer of short community and engagement courses, designed to transform and widen the local skills set. This range of employability, family learning and English & Maths refresher courses has been expressly designed to open up opportunities for local residents to brush up on vital skills, whilst offering clear and effective pathways into work, apprenticeships and volunteering.
HELPING TO ALIGN AND TRANSFORM THE REGION’S CORE SKILLS SET

By 2023, it is envisaged that prospective learners from across the region will view the College as their first choice for high quality, distinctive and cost-effective higher technical and professional education and training.

In order to support the Government priorities set out in the Industrial Strategy, achieve precise alignment with the Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Plan for Cheshire and Warrington and in line with the College’s own strategic priorities, the College will deliver higher level qualifications that are innovative, dynamic and address specific skills gaps identified by local employers.

The higher technical and professional curriculum will also develop cross-cutting skills around communication, digital skills, leadership and management thus offering learning opportunities which will be of greater value to employers and the local and regional workforce.

An aspirational ‘Stay Local and Achieve Higher’ culture will support widening participation in degree-level study and enable the advancement of individual careers and personal prosperity locally and regionally.

HIGHER EDUCATION - CONTEXT

The end of predictable and steadily-rising grant funding, assured student numbers and protection from competition, have exposed universities to open market competition and forced them to re-examine their offer and ways of working.

Although College HE has many strengths, this sea change has revealed some vulnerabilities for the HE sector and has led to a decline in HE recruitment in recent years for a range of reasons:

- Long-standing collaborative partnerships with colleges are coming to an end. Numbers of foundation degree students have declined from 90,000 to 40,000 in the last few years.
- Many universities are offering growing numbers of students a ‘Year Zero’ foundation year prior to a three-year degree. This has affected access courses as a route into higher education and further enabled universities to lower entry requirements and make unconditional offers, affecting recruitment onto HE programmes.

Colleges have moved to offer Higher Nationals in place of Foundation Degrees. However, a challenge to this approach has been that higher nationals can be perceived to lack a strong brand value in some industrial/commercial sectors (with exceptions such as construction and engineering).

Whilst it remains possible to develop and nurture excellent and fruitful collaborative partnerships with universities, university control of validation can introduce strict terms and conditions regarding recruitment targets, leading to considerable financial risk for colleges.

Another challenge for HE, and in particular College HE, has been the fall in the number of adult learners entering HE (and routes into HE); adult participation in learning, skills and training has fallen significantly (from 2.7 million to 1.6 million between 2006 and 2017 at a time when the population of England has risen by 4 million), with the number of mature students in HE dropping by more than half since 2011.

An additional challenge for College HE in particular has been the anxiety created amongst ‘non-traditional’ entrants into HE by the tripling of tuition fees. The introduction of financial support arrangements which may not adequately cover the costs of living, travel, childcare and potential loss of earnings has been a barrier for many non-traditional students who aspire to continue their education.

To exacerbate this, there remains widespread misinformation and misunderstanding regarding the mechanisms for the repayment of tuition and maintenance loans. In terms of CHE, many potential applicants do not realise the benefits of studying locally in terms of saving on college tuition fees and other associated costs.

A challenge for the whole of the HE sector has been that the adoption of student loans and rising fees have led to the continued rise of student expectations; at the same time dissatisfaction has
been expressed regarding the extent to which HE represents ‘value for money’ in terms of how many hours students are taught, the quality of teaching and whether there are facilities that were promised. Concerns over the extent to which HE courses have been ‘misrepresented’ to the customer have led to the intervention of the Competition and Markets Authority, meaning that all providers of HE must be compliant with Consumer Law.

In addition, the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) was established in 2015 to provide an independent scheme for the review of student complaints. Offering customer service, whilst maintaining academic rigour represents a challenge across the sector and implementing the mechanisms required by law can prove particularly burdensome for smaller providers of HE, such as colleges.

Perhaps the biggest challenge currently for the wider HE sector is the financial uncertainty created following the launch of a major review of post-18 education and funding in February 2018 and the freezing of tuition fees. The level of fees, interest rates, the sale of student debt, the return of maintenance grants and the length of repayments could all be under scrutiny. There have been warnings that changes to fees could mean re-introducing limits on student numbers.

Since the publication of our previous Strategic Plan Document in 2015, Macclesfield College has successfully met ‘UK Expectations’ across all areas of higher education, with several areas of good practice being identified by the QAA review team.

- The considered approach to engaging students and employers in the programme design, development and approval process that aligns provision to local employment needs.
- The proactive and responsive approach taken in seeking and responding to student feedback that enhances the quality of student learning opportunities.
- The comprehensive and integrated monitoring and review process which effectively captures and responds to emerging issues.

Over the past three years, we have also implemented a revised structure, with HE programmes located in the relevant curriculum area. These are overseen by the relevant Programme Leader and Curriculum Manager, with the development and quality of higher education provision across the College becoming the responsibility of the College Senior Management Team.

We have also reviewed and strengthened our own internal processes to maintain standards, and demonstrate total compliance with our awarding bodies’ policies and procedures. This has resulted in closer scrutiny, improved central oversight, and more formal and transparent reporting processes. Our quality procedures are reviewed and approved throughout the College’s committee structure, with final approval from the governing body.

- Renewing focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths), digital skills and the key sectors identified in the region’s Strategic Economic Plan (SEP).
- Supporting and delivering the new 2-year T-Level technical programmes, to give young learners the employability skills needed by industry.
- Continuing to produce high quality, fully qualified young adults that make a positive contribution to the North’s most successful regional economy.
- Addressing skills gaps and helping to combat the issue of an ageing workforce, with dynamic, flexible and employable individuals with the requisite qualifications and relevant technical expertise.
- Developing a fully coherent, high quality HE curriculum offer that provides easy access and clear progression routes to employment.
- Playing our part in supporting the region’s 70,000 businesses, enabling them to continue to grow and create new jobs to further benefit the local economy.
- Giving some of the region’s most talented young people the tools, techniques and confidence to progress in employment, or start their own businesses.
Prospective learners from across the region will recognise Macclesfield College as their first choice for high quality, distinctive and cost-effective higher technical and professional education and training.

In order to support the Government’s priorities outlined in the Industrial Strategy, achieve precise alignment with the Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Plan for Cheshire and Warrington and in line with our own strategic priorities, the College will deliver higher level qualifications that are innovative, dynamic and address specific skills gaps identified by local employers.

The higher technical and professional curriculum will also develop cross-cutting skills around communication, digital skills, leadership and management, thus offering learning opportunities which will be of greater value to employers and the local and regional workforce.

An aspirational ‘Stay Local and Achieve Higher’ culture will support widening participation in degree-level study and enable the advancement of individual careers and personal prosperity locally and regionally.

The College will leverage and further develop the strong and very effective partnerships cultivated with a range of local and regional stakeholders towards enhancing our degree-level offer, in order to ensure it remains responsive and relevant in a local context which is rapidly evolving. This approach aligns with the government’s call for ‘knowledge exchange’. In order to deliver the vision, the College will align its degree-level offer to allow seamless progression to higher and degree-led apprenticeships and develop key partnerships with employers and other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

This is to deliver a bespoke and flexible higher curriculum that serves to ensure there is a strong pipeline of talent available for the local and regional context, and that existing employees can continue to upskill to meet the relentless pace of change.

In terms of challenges to Macclesfield College’s HE provision, we have been adversely affected by the wider challenges to the sector. In particular the change in relationships with university partners and the changes to funding, which have prevented many adults from undertaking HE programmes.

However, thanks to the success of Maxim in terms of its engagement with local and regional employers and stakeholders, the College is now well-placed to support the Government priorities outlined in the Industrial Strategy and achieve alignment with the Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Plan for Cheshire and Warrington, in line with the College’s own forward-looking strategic priorities.

The East Cheshire region is facing a shortage of higher-level skills, with a deficit of suitably
qualified candidates relative to the number of jobs requiring them. Cheshire has some of the most significant science-based assets in the north of England, many of which are of global importance. This growing sector includes: Thornton Science Park, Sci-tech Daresbury, Birchwood Park’s Nuclear and Forensics Clusters, Alderley Park (Life Sciences), Jodrell Bank and the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) Organisation.

Headquartered at the Jodrell Bank Observatory near Holmes Chapel, the SKA project is an international effort to build the world’s largest radio telescope on two sites, one located in the Karoo Desert in western South Africa, and one located in Western Australia.

The Cheshire and Warrington sub-region is also host to a concentration of globally significant companies including AstraZeneca, Siemens, Waters Corporation and the National Nuclear Laboratory.

Additionally, the College is developing links with regional health authorities and regional creative and digital industries, all of whom have identified skills gaps for employees qualified to a higher level.

As part of the overall strategy for HE, we will be seeking to work in close collaboration with the University of Chester on aspects of curriculum development (including the delivery of Level 6) and, ultimately, work towards achieving HE qualification awarding powers in the longer term.

Our engagement with and expertise in ‘scholarly activity’ will support this aspect of the strategy; Macclesfield College led and managed a national research project on behalf of the five Cheshire Colleges (as they were then).

Macclesfield College has a clear commitment to continually improving at all levels, from programme teams to senior management. With this in mind, we have a rigorous monitoring and reporting cycle in place to promote the enhancement of learning opportunities and the student experience.

Looking forward to 2023, our ultimate aim here at Macclesfield College is to be recognised as the first choice for HE learning throughout the East Cheshire region and beyond.

Cheshire and Warrington is a highly successful economy. Its economic output exceeds that of the UK’s core cities, and it is home to an impressive line-up of world-leading businesses operating in globally important sectors. Considerable challenges, however, lie ahead for the region if it is to maintain and enhance its current rate of productivity.

Perhaps the most pressing of these challenges is the need to replace the region’s ageing, highly-skilled workforce - a vital objective that equates to 230,000 jobs being filled by 2025. Likewise, the region needs to address the deficit of up to 60,000 graduates.

The region as a whole loses up to 5,000 graduates each year, and there is a clear mismatch between the skills local employers need, and the skills many of East Cheshire’s young learners are choosing to acquire.

This is because not enough people are getting the information they need, to make informed decisions about what subjects to study, in order to maximise their career opportunities.

This is especially true for STEM subjects and digital skills, and our HE provision here at Macclesfield College will be focused on getting our students work-ready with the relevant skills to contribute to our economy.

In essence, our higher education programmes here at Macclesfield College, are all vocational, and we are currently engaged in a process of strategic change. This is in order for us to place an enhanced focus on high quality, industry-relevant HE programmes that support student employability in our region, whilst providing invaluable experience and placements in real-time working environments.
By 2023, it is envisioned that Macclesfield College will have grown to become a ‘Silver’ standard TEF (Teaching Excellence Framework) institution.

The Teaching Excellence Framework is a nationwide system that assesses the quality of teaching in English universities and colleges. This pioneering framework was introduced in 2017 by the Government’s Department for Education, to provide a reliable and up-to-date resource for learners across the country, helping them to judge the quality of teaching in English FE and HE institutions, so they can make informed decisions regarding their futures.

Likewise, TEF was launched as a catalyst to help drive up standards in teaching excellence. Colleges and universities are classified as either ‘Gold’, ‘Silver’ or ‘Bronze’ and these ratings are determined by six core metrics based on teaching, academic and pedagogical support and progression to employment.

As part of our journey towards becoming officially ‘Outstanding’ in all aspects by 2023, Macclesfield College is planning to introduce a focused suite of bespoke degree-level courses that mirror the actual needs of the regional economy we serve.

A key criteria for being eligible for TEF accreditation is ‘recognition for excellence’, both in academic and vocational teaching and pedagogy, and scholarly excellence. This is demonstrated by development and dissemination of research, and we are committed to fostering a culture of scholarly excellence within our staff base, and will actively encourage members of our team to present, publish and disseminate their research wherever possible.

Macclesfield College is already a member of the Scholarship Framework, which supports English colleges with higher education provision that enhances student learning through forms of scholarship.

It provides resources that have been researched and approved by key college higher education experts, designed to be incorporated into the policies of forward-thinking FE and HE institutions, like ours.

The Scholarship Framework is currently supporting Macclesfield College into developing, shaping and transforming our scholarship and student experience. Our progress in this key area will be measured over the five-year life span of this document, both in our National Student Survey results, and in-house student surveys.

In turn, the results of these surveys will improve our TEF commentary and provider submission in the Quality Review Visit process, preparing us to achieve degree-awarding powers.

In addition to this, we will be:

- developing and driving our ‘Stay Local, Achieve Higher’ campaign, aimed at encouraging the region’s learners to remain in East Cheshire and study higher level - 4 and 5 - courses with us here at Macclesfield College.
Partnering with other HE institutes in our region, such as the University of Chester and other HEIs (Higher Education Institutions) and good providers of HE, in order for us to offer degree-level courses that satisfy the diverse skills and employability needs of large companies and SMEs alike, enabling them to grow and further fuel our burgeoning local economy.

Developing our formal student representation system and training mechanisms further, in order to allow for the full and effective engagement of students in quality assurance processes.

Developing more formal processes to undertake a generic review of external examiner reports across our higher education courses and programmes.

Continuing and extending staff development activities, in order to create a more distinctive community of higher education practitioners.

Expanding and consolidating the development of peer observation of teaching.

Using the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) more effectively, in order to enhance learner experience and accessibility meeting learner needs, whether in its design and/or content.

Continuing to publish course and study programme handbooks that provide clear appropriate information for our students, including links to specific information provided by our awarding partners, detailed course and programme specifications and assessment policies.

Continuing to collate our policies and procedures relating to higher education through the Higher Education Hub. This is accessible to our staff and students alike, and includes our higher education programme planning and validation procedure, as well as our assessment policy and procedures. These include coursework submission, academic misconduct and assessment malpractice.

Continuing to ensure that all Internal Verifiers are occupationally competent and meet the national standards of the awarding bodies and College internal verification and moderation guidance.

Continuing to provide sustainable, clearly articulated processes for monitoring and reviewing programmes that address UK threshold academic standards.

Introducing additional measures to check timely receipt of, and response to, external examiner reports.

Continuing to operate our Business Advisory Groups, which contains a membership drawn from regional employers, service providers and community groups.

Retaining our involvement with the AoC Scholarly Activity research programme, in order to enhance our ongoing Teaching and Learning Strategy.

Continuing to compile external examiner reports, learner feedback and action planning, before summarising them in a College higher education self-evaluation document.

Holding regular course meetings to informally gather learner feedback, and formally collect module feedback. We will also continue to conduct our internal surveys. These are used to inform the College Self-Evaluation Document.

Regularly reviewing our Equality and Diversity policy, to help us continue to support the College’s overarching mission ‘Empowerment through learning.’

By 2023, we confidently estimate that there will be at least 250 full-time students enrolled on quality Higher Education programmes, here at Macclesfield College. In economic terms, this equates to just over £1 million of Higher Education income.
REGIONAL PROVIDER ANALYSIS

ESFA Funded Learners Aged 16-19 - All Subjects - All Levels - Academic Year 2017-18

ESFA Funded & Loan Adult Learners - 19-23 - All Subjects - All Levels - Academic Year 2017-18

ESFA Funded & Loan Adult Learners - All Ages - All Subjects - All Levels - Academic Year 2017-18

ESFA Funded & Loan Adult Learners - 24+ - All Subjects - All Levels - Academic Year 2017-18
ESFA Funded Apprenticeships - All Ages - All Subjects - All Levels - Academic Year 2017-18

ESFA Funded Apprenticeships - Aged 16 to 18 - All Subjects - All Levels - Academic Year 2017-18

ESFA Funded Apprenticeships - Aged 19 to 23 - All Subjects - All Levels - Academic Year 2017-18

ESFA Funded Apprenticeships - 24+ - All Subjects - All Levels - Academic Year 2017-18
REGIONAL PROVIDER ANALYSIS

ESFA Funded Apprenticeships - All Ages - All Subjects - Level 2 - Academic Year 2017-18

- Our College: 100
- Other FE Colleges: 130
- Private Training Providers: 340
- Sixth Form Colleges: <5
- School Sixth Forms: <5
- Other Providers: <5

ESFA Funded Apprenticeships - Aged 16 to 18 - All Subjects - Level 2 - Academic Year 2017-18

- Our College: 40
- Other FE Colleges: 40
- Private Training Providers: 130
- Sixth Form Colleges: 0
- School Sixth Forms: <5
- Other Providers: <5

ESFA Funded Apprenticeships - Aged 19 to 23 - All Subjects - Level 2 - Academic Year 2017-18

- Our College: 20
- Other FE Colleges: 30
- Private Training Providers: 70
- Sixth Form Colleges: <5
- School Sixth Forms: 0
- Other Providers: <5

ESFA Funded Apprenticeships - 24+ - All Subjects - Level 2 - Academic Year 2017-18

- Our College: 80
- Other FE Colleges: 80
- Private Training Providers: 160
- Sixth Form Colleges: 0
- School Sixth Forms: 0
- Other Providers: 0
ESFA Funded Apprenticeships - All Ages - All Subjects - Level 3 - Academic Year 2017-18

ESFA Funded Apprenticeships - Aged 16 to 18 - All Subjects - Level 3 - Academic Year 2017-18

ESFA Funded Apprenticeships - Aged 19 to 23 - All Subjects - Level 3 - Academic Year 2017-18

ESFA Funded Apprenticeships - 24+ - All Subjects - Level 3 - Academic Year 2017-18
REGIONAL PROVIDER ANALYSIS

ESFA Funded Apprenticeships - All Ages - All Subjects - Level 4+ - Academic Year 2017-18

ESFA Funded Apprenticeships - Aged 19 to 23 - All Subjects - Level 4+ - Academic Year 2017-18

ESFA Funded Apprenticeships - Aged 16 to 18 - All Subjects - Level 4+ - Academic Year 2017-18

ESFA Funded Apprenticeships - 24+ - All Subjects - Level 4+ - Academic Year 2017-18
### Apprenticeships - All Ages

**Market Share / Ranking - Trend (last 3 Academic Years) by Funding Model**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Macclesfield College Learners</th>
<th>Other Learners</th>
<th>Total Providers</th>
<th>Market Share (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>1,150</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2015/16</td>
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<td>1,410</td>
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### Apprenticeships - Aged 16 to 18

**Market Share / Ranking - Trend (last 3 Academic Years) by Funding Model**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Macclesfield College Learners</th>
<th>Other Learners</th>
<th>Total Providers</th>
<th>Market Share (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
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<td>88</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
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<td>70</td>
<td>340</td>
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### Apprenticeships - Aged 19 to 23

**Market Share / Ranking - Trend (last 3 Academic Years) by Funding Model**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Macclesfield College Learners</th>
<th>Other Learners</th>
<th>Total Providers</th>
<th>Market Share (%)</th>
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<td>2017/18</td>
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<tr>
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<td>420</td>
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**REGIONAL LEARNER ANALYSIS**

**Apprenticeships - Aged 24+**

*Market Share / Ranking - Trend (last 3 Academic Years) by Funding Model*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Macclesfield College Learners</th>
<th>Other Learners</th>
<th>Total Providers</th>
<th>Market Share (%)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017/18</td>
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**Funded Learners - Aged 16 to 19**

*Market Share / Ranking - Trend (last 3 Academic Years) by Funding Model*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Macclesfield College Learners</th>
<th>Other Learners</th>
<th>Total Providers</th>
<th>Market Share (%)</th>
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### Adults (SFA Funded and Loans) - All Ages
*Market Share / Ranking - Trend (last 3 Academic Years) by Funding Model*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Rank</th>
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<th>Other Learners</th>
<th>Total Providers</th>
<th>Market Share (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>2017/18</td>
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<td>740</td>
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### Adults (SFA Funded and Loans) - Aged 19 to 23
*Market Share / Ranking - Trend (last 3 Academic Years) by Funding Model*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Macclesfield College Learners</th>
<th>Other Learners</th>
<th>Total Providers</th>
<th>Market Share (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
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### Adults (SFA Funded and Loans) - Aged 24+
*Market Share / Ranking - Trend (last 3 Academic Years) by Funding Model*

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<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Macclesfield College Learners</th>
<th>Other Learners</th>
<th>Total Providers</th>
<th>Market Share (%)</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>98</td>
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</table>
Empowerment through learning

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No. 1 in Cheshire for Learner & Employer Satisfaction

[Additional logos and awards]