Context

Our college values underpin the core business of our college, i.e. teaching, learning and assessment. The teaching, learning and assessment experience is at the heart of everything we do. We are committed to providing excellence in education and training that meets the needs of all our learners. Our teaching, learning and assessment strategy therefore, encompasses all 8 of our values:

- Putting the learners first
- Excellence in everything we do
- High standards and expectations
- Providing a welcoming, caring and inclusive environment
- A respectful, open and honest culture
- Individual and collective responsibility
- Collaboration, partnerships and team working
- Enjoyment and success

In a complex environment, the teaching learning and assessment strategy seeks to provide a common framework and focus for all of our curriculum activity, encouraging innovation and forward thinking in all areas, and flexibility to meet individual student needs. Our strategy outlines the key principles and cross college operational approach that should be employed to ensure consistency for all learners and a framework for faculties to work within. We recognise our tutors as leaders of learning. To this end, programme specific implementation plans will outline how curriculum teams will support the delivery of this strategy in a way which is meaningful and focused on ensuring the best outcomes for their learners.

Underpinned by the Professional Standards for Teachers and Trainers in Education and Training (2014), our teaching, Learning and assessment strategy outlines 5 themes in order to support colleagues in the understanding of how these values relate operationally with our core business of teaching, learning and assessment. These themes are:

1. Excel and Exceed Expectations

2. Employability

3. Equality and Diversity

4. English and mathematics

5. E-Learning

Scope

The teaching, learning and assessment strategy applies to:

- On and off campus delivery
- All provision offered under the auspices of Accrington and Rossendale College
- All delivery staff

Excel and Exceed Expectations

Links to college values
➢ Putting the learners first
➢ Excellence in everything we do
➢ High standards and expectations
➢ Enjoyment and success

Key Principles

We are committed to providing excellence in education and training that meets the needs of all individuals. Learning and teaching will be delivered with a culture of high expectations from both staff and learners. We aim to challenge each learner to maximise their potential and exceed their expectations.

We will provide a high quality learning experience that encompasses, personalised learning, effective methods of assessment, and the use of technology that increases flexibility and opportunities for individual progression.

Operational Outcomes

a) All teachers and assessors are appropriately qualified and experienced in their vocational or academic area. Teaching staff should be well prepared and should undertake appropriate staff development to ensure that their subject knowledge and teaching skills are up-to-date, relevant and, where appropriate, linked to national strategies

b) All observed teaching is at least a grade 2 or above with practitioners taking practical steps to be outstanding. In addition to managing underperformance, there is a focus on celebrating, promoting and sharing best practice in teaching, learning, assessment and support

c) Assessment of learner performance and progress is timely, fair, consistent and reliable. Learners receive regular constructive feedback on their progress and how they might improve. Feedback should use and refer to target setting and achievement. All work should be marked and returned to learners within 10 working days. Recording of assessment outcomes must be formally recorded on central college systems

d) Learning should be carefully planned and prepared at lesson, tutorial, workshop and scheme level, with clear and realistic learning outcomes and recorded using College agreed documentation. Learning schemes, lesson plans & outcomes should be explicitly shared with learners. Learning should be planned very effectively to consider student starting points, progress and planned destinations.

e) Learning outcomes should be differentiated when and where this is appropriate and feasible. Each lesson should include methods to check and reinforce learning at regular intervals.

f) Teachers, assessors and support staff work closely together to focus on achievement. Learner needs should be fully understood by staff. Teaching and learning staff should use the information to support students and should be able to demonstrate how their students are meeting targets.

g) Assessment methods and learning opportunities should enable all learners to achieve "high grades" throughout the course. Curriculum teams should closely monitor learner progress to enable them to arrest performance which falls below expectation and potential, in relation to Value Added and other performance targets.

h) All teaching and learning methods - including training, coaching and mentoring should inspire and challenge all learners and enable them to extend their knowledge, skills and understanding

i) Staff will have well planned sessions that include:
➢ 'Big picture' and agreed learning outcomes which will state clearly what the students will have learned by the end of the session
➢ Links to previous session/unit
➢ Prompt start
➢ Shared criteria against which performance will be measured
➢ Maths & English targets
➢ New information
➢ Learning activities
➢ Assessment of learning
➢ Review of learning

j) Learning activities will include highly effective independent learning activities. This can be in the class or out of the class through homework/independent study

k) All staff should set high expectations of their learners. This could be levels of performance, behaviour, progress etc.

l) Teaching and learning staff should plan & spend time to reflect & evaluate the success of learning sessions. Best practice should be shared effectively.

Director of Quality and Standards. Reviewed August 2015

m) Regular and systematic celebration of learner achievements should take place appropriately

Employability

Links to college values

> ➢ Putting the learners first
> ➢ Excellence in everything we do
> ➢ High standards and expectations
> ➢ Collaboration, partnerships and team working

Key principles

Accrington and Rossendale College has positioned itself as a career focused college. The College is committed to preparing its learners for work as an integral aspect of their studies to enable their progression and success in a competitive economy. Our programmes and support services are designed to equip learners with entrepreneurship skills and to help them gain employment and success in their chosen occupation.

Operational outcomes

a) All full time learners will undertake planned work experience or recognised equivalent.
b) All learners will be given the opportunity to participate in real life enterprise activities designed to encourage creativity, risk taking, managing responsibility and the development of entrepreneurial skills.
c) All learners will have access to high quality careers guidance informed by reliable labour market information.
d) The curriculum offer will be profiled against local and national employability opportunities in all teams.
e) All teachers will provide professional, disciplined and focused learning environments with a strong emphasis on current industry standards. Discussions with employers on programme design should focus exactly on the specific vocational skills and more generic employability skills that employers regard to be critical for the re-cruitment process and for sustaining employment.
f) All curriculum teams will use employer and learner feedback to review and continually improve the quality of College provision
g) All curriculum teams will establish links with at least one occupationally relevant employer to enrich the curriculum by:
    i. Ensuring the curriculum enables learners to meet current industrial standards
    ii. Contributing to the curriculum through guest talks or participation in student projects
    iii. Contributing to mock interviews and employer selection processes.
h) All curriculum teams will set targets to improve learner progression rates into employment and reduce the number of 'unknowns' in our destination data
i) All teachers and assessors will undertake industrial updating through secondments or work shadowing at least once every two years.
j) The College will provide good access to up to date techniques and equipment used in industry

Equality and Diversity

Links to college values

- ➢ Putting the learners first
- ➢ Excellence in everything we do
- ➢ High standards and expectations
- ➢ Providing a welcoming, caring and inclusive environment
- ➢ A respectful, open and honest culture

Key principles

We are committed to the active pursuit of an equality and diversity policy which addresses the need and right of everyone in College to be treated with respect and dignity, in an environment in which a diversity of backgrounds and experience is valued.

The college promotes high expectations of all learners and closely monitors any potential achievement gaps that may exist between groups of learners with different backgrounds. The college has been successful in closing the achievement gaps between different groups of learners and aims to ensure there are no discernible differences in success between those from disadvantaged backgrounds or those with personal barriers to learning.

Operational outcomes

a) An atmosphere of mutual respect free of discrimination should be created and discrimination of any sort should actively be discouraged and challenged. Appropriate ground rules are set and agreed with learners.

b) Teachers / Assessors should make every effort to ensure that their materials and resources are not discriminatory or stereotypical. Teaching materials are developed which actively promote equality and provide opportunities and explore diverse lifestyles and abilities even if they are outside the experience of the student group. Course materials, resources and displays celebrate cultural diversity and include positive images of different social and racial groups

c) Opportunities for the promotion of equality and diversity should be celebrated and integrated accordingly into the lesson

d) Programme teams will analyse student demographics and profiles to inform curriculum planning and ensure inclusivity within the classroom

e) Teaching and learning staff will ensure that sessions are planned to promote equality and diversity and take advantage of naturally occurring opportunities that arise within the session

f) Teachers/Assessors should make every effort to ensure that the needs of groups of learners and individuals are met

g) All learners must undergo an induction process in which they are made aware of the full range of support available, the location of the welfare services, their rights and responsibilities under the College Charter, The College Values Statement and the College Single Equality Scheme

English and mathematics

- ➢ Putting the learners first
- ➢ Excellence in everything we do
- ➢ High standards and expectations
- ➢ Individual and collective responsibility
- ➢ Enjoyment and success

Key Principles

We are committed to providing excellence in English and Mathematics that meets the needs of all individuals. English and Mathematics learning and teaching will be taught in a culture of expectations from both staff and learners. We aim to challenge each learner to maximise their potential and exceed their expectations.

We will provide a high quality learning experience that encompasses: personalised learning, effective methods of assessment and the use of technology that increases flexibility and opportunities for individual progression.

Operational outcomes

a) All study programme learners will follow an English and Mathematics qualification, in line with the funding condition, if they are yet to achieve a Grade C in either subject at GCSE.

b) Apprentices will follow English and Mathematics Functional Skills at a level determined by the Framework they are following and, once achieved, will continue to follow English and Maths teaching for the length of time they are an apprentice.

c) All teachers and assessors will be prepared and able to deliver English and Mathematics as they naturally occur within the delivery of their usual vocational or academic subjects.

d) Planning of lessons will include consideration of elements of English and Mathematics that will natural occur during the lesson. Appropriate resources and examples will be planned for inclusion in the lesson.

e) English and Mathematics points of contact will be assigned to each faculty to provide advice and dialogue to vocational staff regarding the delivery of English and Mathematics within vocational teaching.

f) Schemes of learning to be shared between vocational staff and the English and Mathematics teachers on the study programme so English and Mathematics topics covered in vocational areas can be reinforced in English and Mathematics lessons.

g) Vocational staff to be aware of the English and Mathematics level each learner is working at and to be aware of what this level means in terms of English and Mathematics skill.

h) Appropriate resources, such as calculators and dictionaries, are to be available in vocational classes to aid the development of English and Mathematics skills with vocational teaching as opportunities occur.

i) As English and Mathematics opportunities arise in vocational and academic classes, these are to be maximised through classroom activities as appropriate to the vocational topic being delivered.

j) English and Mathematics skills should be marked and fed back to learners when vocational assignment are marked. Spelling, use of grammar and punctuation are examples for English and correcting calculations are examples for Mathematics.

k) Additional coaching hours for learners, delivered by English and Mathematic specialists will be utilised to maximise the chances of learner success in examinations.

l) Administration of English and Mathematics examinations will be in line with examination board procedures and will be delivered efficiently to reduce the anxiety of learners.

E-learning

Links to college values

- ➢ Putting the learners first
- ➢ Excellence in everything we do
- ➢ High standards and expectations
- ➢ Individual and collective responsibility
- ➢ Collaboration, partnerships and team working
- ➢ Enjoyment and success

Key Principles

We are committed to engaging with eLearning and digital technologies to create and nurture a culture of innovation and creativity that delivers high quality, flexible and engaging learning opportunities that enrich and enhance the students' learning experience.

This will complement other approaches to teaching and learning to provide a high quality learning experience that encompasses personalised learning and effective methods of assessment to increase flexibility and opportunities for individual progression.

Operational Outcomes

a) All teachers and assessors are appropriately skilled and experienced in delivering a blended learning model using eLearning techniques and digital technology. Teaching staff should be well prepared and should undertake appropriate staff development to ensure that their digital literacy and teaching skills are up-to-date, relevant and, where appropriate linked to national strategies

b) All learners on all programmes should have access to relevant materials on the Virtual Learning Environment. Teachers and Assessors should ensure that this area is maintained and compliant with the VLE Framework. All Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) quality audits should be at least grade 2 or above with a clear action plan to be outstanding. In addition to managing underperformance, there is a focus on celebrating, promoting and sharing best practice in eLearning, online assessment and support.

c) Learning activities will include highly effective independent learning activities. This can be in the class or out of the class through homework/independent study. There is an expectation that this is facilitated via eLearning.

d) eLearning outcomes should be differentiated when and where this is appropriate and feasible and should include methods to check and reinforce learning at regular intervals.

e) eLearning and the use of digital technologies should be incorporated at lesson, tutorial, workshop and scheme level; ensuring that opportunities to deepen and accelerate learning using these methods are exploited.

f) All teaching and learning methods that make use of digital technologies or eLearning should inspire and challenge all learners and enable them to extend their knowledge, skills and understanding.

g) eLearning and digital technologies should be used imaginatively to enhance face to face teaching and to enable and/or extend learning beyond the classroom. Learners should be able to access a wide range of information which supports them in their learning.

h) Teaching and learning staff should plan & spend time to reflect & evaluate the success of eLearning/digital technology sessions. Best practice is shared effectively.

i) eLearning to be identified in schemes of work to ensure it is an integral part of the teaching and learning process by supporting an adaptive delivery approach. All schemes of work should include timetabled eLearning hours.

Measuring Success

Successful achievement of the TLA Strategy objectives will be judged using a range of internal and external key performance indicators at institutional, course or learner level. The KPI's for the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment will include, but are not exclusive to:

- Retention, achievement and success data
- Observation of Teaching and Learning profile
- Student Perceptions of College survey ratings and student comments, compliments and complaints monitored through the Getting it Right process
- Attendance
- Progression and destinations data
- Overall SAR judgement grades

In addition to quantitative data, Assessment of the effectiveness of Teaching, Learning and Assessment will also derive from the following qualitative sources:

- Observation of Teaching and Learning analysis and the achievement of agreed targets
- Effectiveness of staff targets set during performance reviews (appraisal)
- Course level External verifier reports
- Institutional level Awarding Body reviews
- OfSTED inspection
- Internal reviews and audits of assessment practice