

# INDUSTRY FOCUSED CAREER READY

Strategic Plan 2019-2024





“This strategic plan sets out our vision to be the leading specialist land-based & technical college in the UK ensuring the sectors we serve have highly skilled, technical specialists with the right attitude and aptitude for work.”

Silaging on Reaseheath Farm during the Summer of 2019 - an invaluable learning experience for our students to use industry supplied cutting edge machinery.



**Discover our future**





# PREFACE

Reaseheath College is a specialist land-based and technical college celebrating 100 years of leading technical education and training. Our influence and reach is local, regional and national, offering high quality provision in Further Education, Higher Education and Apprenticeships.

Our delivery sites comprise the main Reaseheath campus, specialist outreach centres at Oldham and Knowsley and a wholly owned private training provider (DART Training) based in Derbyshire.

Much of this provision is evidenced as industry led and providing national best practice. Our portfolio of blue chip partnerships is the envy of many Colleges and Universities and is set to develop further through the actions and ambitions of this plan.

We are the third largest employer in the sub region and contribute significantly to the region's economic prosperity. We play

an active part in the ambitious development of the rural and national economy through our close working and continued support for the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

Over the last ten years £80 million of investment in the campus has ensured students and employers have benefited from leading edge specialist resources. Visitors to the campus comment on the high quality technical facilities mirroring the practices and ambitions of industry.

Our place on the national land-based stage is confirmed through our offer of 1,000 accommodation places supported by a nationally recognised range of student services ensuring the welfare and wellbeing of our student body. The "Reaseheath Experience" is a well-documented and sought after commodity. It is in our nature to nurture.

The college is 'Outstanding' for our Ofsted Social Care inspection for

residential provision and 'Good' with 'Outstanding' features for our main Ofsted inspection. Our Higher Education provision is rated as TEF Silver.

The University Centre Reaseheath works in partnership with the University of Chester and provides Higher Education opportunities to around 1,000 students ranging from Foundation Degrees through to Masters Degree including the new development of industry led Higher Level Apprenticeships.

The college campus and estate has the potential of a significant development in research led activities. Our highly qualified and industry trained workforce is keen to take the lead in providing the link between front line academic research and the implementation of this research into the various industry sectors that we serve. The college has created a new focus in bringing together all of our outward facing business-to-business staff under one leadership team.

Together with our ambitious plans to ensure the relevance and currency of our curriculum offer, this will provide the platform to confirm our graduating students are Industry Focused, Career Ready.

Looking forward through the life of this five year plan we recognise the key local and national context over the period this plan aims to support is:

- Sustainable environment and food production
- The Government's commitment to a zero carbon position by 2050
- Development of level four and five technical provision so the sectors we serve have the higher level technical and transferable skills they require
- Development of new level three provision with the new T Levels
- Development of foundation, level one and two provision to promote inclusive employment and progression pathways

- Further implementation of the new Apprenticeship Standards
- Technology Enabled Learning and Digital skill development
- The new technologies and resultant jobs transforming the ways of working and productivity of the sectors we support
- The fourth industrial revolution
- LEP led initiatives:- Institute of Technology, Digital Skills Partnership, The Pledge, Industrial Strategy and Rural Strategy Board
- A culture that ensures students are challenged, progress and have high levels of knowledge and skills acquisition
- Staff and students in improving their mental and physical wellbeing

In that respect the college recognises the need to evolve and adapt and this strategic plan sets out to ensure the college is forward thinking and at the forefront of the sectors it serves.



**David Pearson MBE**  
Chair of Governors



**Marcus Clinton**  
Principal and CEO



# STRATEGIC PLAN

2019-2024

This strategic plan sets out our vision to be the leading specialist land-based and technical college in the UK ensuring the sectors we serve have highly skilled, technical specialists with the right attitude and aptitude for work.

Over the next five years we will continue to develop Reaseheath College & University Centre Reaseheath – building on its strong and established base of nearly 100 years, but cognisant of a fast changing external environment, new technologies and the expectations of our stakeholders.

We will do this by our guiding principles, which are to ensure that Reaseheath:

**Has a Leading Edge –**  
a national leader in the land-based industries.

We will show leadership in the sectors we serve, be engaged with our stakeholders and take an innovative approach to ensure we are at the forefront with both our specialist facilities and equipment, technologies, our people, systems and processes.

**Is Relevant –**  
and meets the needs of students and employers.

Our students will benefit from up to date high quality programmes of study that meet their individual needs and the needs of employers.

Our programmes will provide challenge, progression, knowledge acquisition and utilise new technologies. They will serve local, regional and national priorities.

**Has Excellence in all we do –**  
we will consistently exceed expectations.

We will continually strive to ensure we have a high performing culture with high expectations alongside the highest levels of support and infrastructure. We will develop our leadership and people so that they can succeed.

**Is Financially strong –**  
sustainable and able to invest to continually develop.

We will ensure that we generate the margins to allow the college to invest so that all our stakeholders can benefit from an outstanding, cutting edge environment supporting learning, personal development and positive experience at the college.

**Leads a Sustainable Environment –**  
we will, promote and innovate best practice.

Though our Academy of Land and Environment, Reaseheath Farm and our STEM Campus

We will ensure students, staff and industry have the skills, knowledge and facilities needed for the emerging challenges of net zero carbon, resource efficiency and environmental sustainability

We will ensure our specialist resources are leading innovators in modern husbandry, growing and livestock production processes; land management systems and approaches including precision farming, vertical and controlled environment farming, robotics and data; defossilising primary production and moving towards net zero.

Our PRIDE values are at the heart of all we do and sit alongside the Reaseheath Experience and Family to create a special and unique environment and community, where all can thrive, learn and be highly supported to progress and develop as individuals.

Our Student Association will continue to support students and ensure there is a thriving student community creating memories and friends for life.

LEARNERS AND  
EXCELLENCE WILL  
CONTINUE TO BE  
AT THE HEART OF  
EVERYTHING  
WE DO





WE WILL INCREASE  
OUR USE AND  
UNDERSTANDING  
OF ADVANCED  
TECHNOLOGIES  
AND THE DIGITAL  
AGENDA

Over the next five years our strategic priorities outlined in this plan are:

#### **Our Offer**

#### **Our People**

#### **Our Environment**

#### **Our Core Systems and Processes**

#### **Our Employers, Innovation and Scholarly Activity**

It is clear that the increasing usage of advanced technologies and the digital agenda in learning and in the workplace will be transformative to both. A sustainable environment and primary production sector are high on both the college and the national agenda. It is clear there is an increasing demand for higher level skills in the sectors we support.

These strategic priorities will further strengthen the college's ability to meet these agendas and serve as a national centre of rural excellence, leading, innovating and forward looking, ensuring all our stakeholders' expectations are exceeded.

These strategic priorities and our standing commitments will allow us to deliver the curriculum intent to serve these needs by ensuring our people are developed, our offer is current, our environment is conducive to the learning pedagogy of tomorrow, our employers' needs are met and our core systems and processes are joined, effective and efficient.

There is now a much-increased recognition of the value and importance of technical and specialist skills. In the land-based industries we support, there is a high demand for technical and transferable skills and ethics that our expert staff, specialist resources and training facilitate.

Our intent is to ensure our campus has that leading edge, with STEM at the heart, a green laboratory and a canvas upon which students can develop those transferable skills in this fourth industrial revolution, thus opening up numerous career pathways for life, we can attract the talent our industries and employers require.

The college is committed to ensuring that students not only leave with high levels of technical skill but benefit from the college's investment in the vital all round employability skills and personal development through our leading BeReady programme and BeReady Passport. Our excellent all round support develops resilience, thus ensuring our students have the attitudes and aptitudes for work that will enable them to succeed and thrive in the workplace and life.

This strategic plan process has been consultative and inclusive of staff, students, leaders, external stakeholders and Governors including productive staff and student conferences.

Views have been considered and have influenced the plan. Staff were keen for more emphasis on sustainability, more integrated working, more time for innovation and efficient processes as well as development of our offer to include more community provision, professional training, and joined up services for employers. Students were keen for further development of specialist resources, more social learning spaces and development of the HE experience. Both were keen to see a continued focus on wellbeing and support for those with complex and mental health needs.





## OUR MISSION

### INDUSTRY FOCUSED CAREER READY



## OUR VISION

- To be the leading specialist land-based college in the UK
- Be the preferred place to learn, work and progress
- Support the growth and prosperity of the specialist land-based industries, technical sectors and rural communities we serve
- Place our students and staff at the heart of everything we do
- An inclusive offer facilitating appropriate progression for everyone
- Deliver an inspirational learning experience and environment supported through our values, our guiding principles and commitments



## OUR PRIDE VALUES

**PEOPLE** - We will work together in a safe and secure environment with a positive approach to our own and others' health and wellbeing. We will respect democracy and individual liberty, recognising the valuable contribution each person can make to society

**RESPONSIBILITY** - We will be responsible for our own actions and decisions whilst making a positive contribution to community cohesion and pride. We will demonstrate environmental sustainability through our behaviour

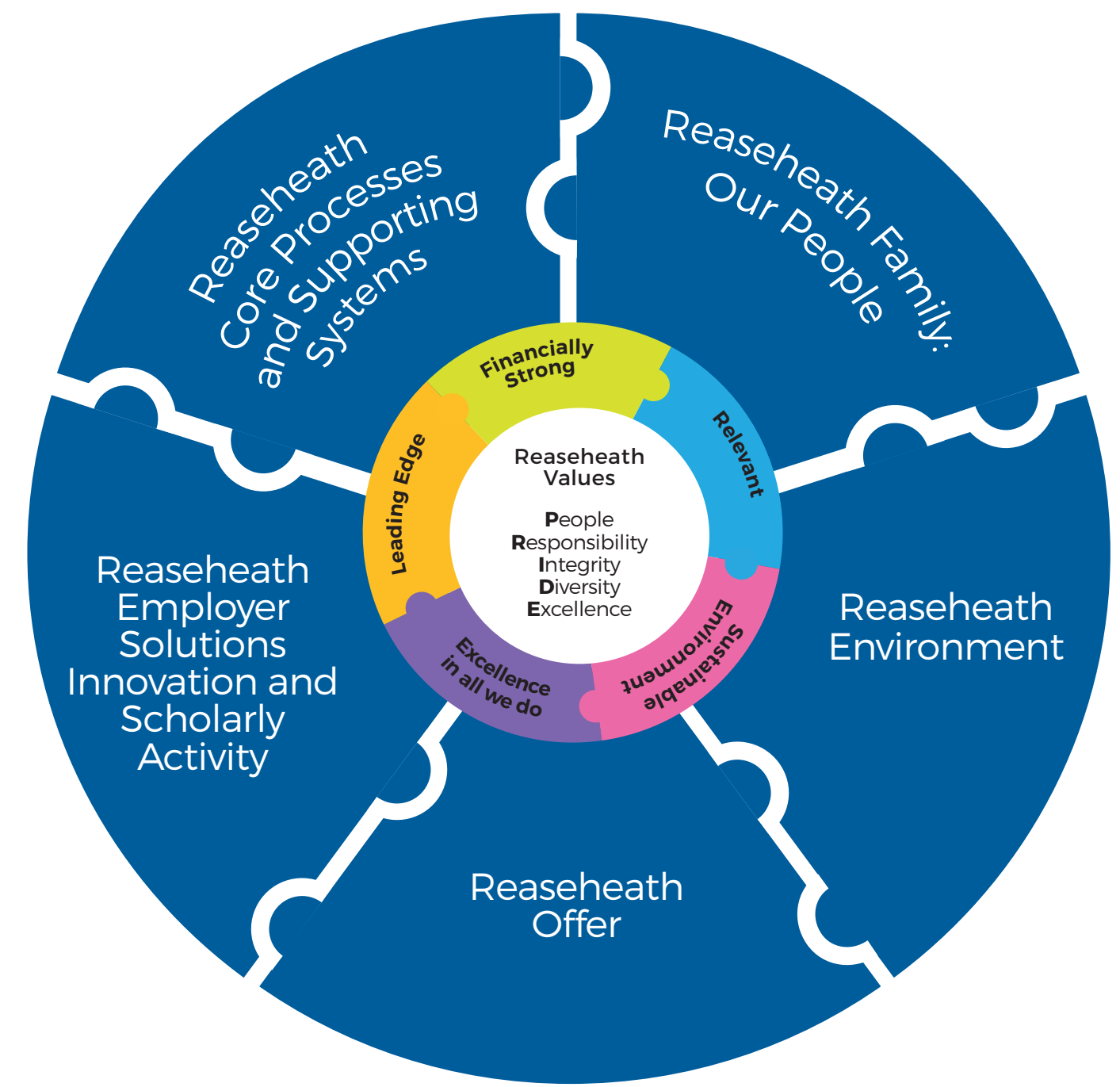
**INTEGRITY** - We will demonstrate honesty, integrity and ethical standards in everything we do. We will respect the rule of law and act fairly in the best interests of all

**DIVERSITY** - We will actively promote equality; recognise, respect, promote and celebrate diversity and individual difference and strive to create an inclusive environment. We will challenge behaviour or views which discriminate against others

**EXCELLENCE** - We will challenge ourselves to strive for the highest standards of quality and behaviour by adopting a supportive self-critical approach in our pursuit of excellence. We will always aim to be the best that we can be



# OUR STRATEGIC PLAN



**Industry Focused, Career Ready**

# OUR COMMITMENTS

- The Reaseheath family – People our passion – our PRIDE values
- Students and employers at the heart of all we do. The Reaseheath Experience
- Safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all staff, students and visitors
- BE Ready programme and Passport – preparation for the world of work
- Sector leading specialist resources and staffing. STEM focused
- Sustainable environment
- Outstanding teaching, learning and assessment
- Effective leadership and Governance
- Growing margins to support investment and financial sustainability
- Transparency in all we do
- Curriculum responsive to industry need
- Value and support our key strategic partners to achieve our mutual objectives
- Specialist land-based provision





# STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

## OUR OFFER

The scale and pace of change in the education sector is significant and a number of reforms will continue to drive this changing landscape for the foreseeable future.

The introduction of the new Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF) will take a refreshed view of the student experience through gaining a deeper understanding of the intention, implementation and impact of the institution.

The requirement for high expectations for all students and clear evidence of progress against starting points, is not something new to Reaseheath, and will continue to drive the need for a curriculum offer that is;

- Robust and technically challenging in content
- Effective in driving positive attitudes and behaviours
- Pedagogically innovative to ensure that students develop transformational technical skills and knowledge

Our offer will continue to be responsive to key reforms such as the current Apprenticeship and Higher Education reforms, implementation of T-Levels, condition of funding for Maths and English and the importance of digital literacy, whilst remaining true to Reaseheath key values and our desire to deliver high quality technical education.

New technologies are rapidly developing and transforming many of the industries we serve, which are also increasing national priorities, and we must ensure our offer and facilities reflect this, alongside enhancing the profile of research, innovation and scholarly activity within the college.

Over the period of this strategic plan, we will continue to refine our curriculum in order to facilitate high quality and impactful learning for our students, regardless of their starting points. We will ensure at all levels, employability skills are developed and there is progression to inclusive employment, apprenticeship standards or higher-level study.

In an era where digital, intuitive technology and an ever-increasing environmental conscience are at the forefront of the national agenda, we will hone our subject content to ensure that we are able to plan for an environmental and economically sustainable future for all of our sectors and students.



## The major outcomes will be:

- A coherent and ambitious curriculum offer, at all levels, that meets the needs of our students and the sectors that we serve including, but not limited to;
  - Technical Level (T-Level) routes that will further the technical skills of our students, ensuring that they meet the needs of industry
  - Delivery, and growth, of relevant high-quality Apprenticeship Standards
  - A refined Foundation Level offer that emphasises personal growth and development, realised through greater partnerships with inclusive employers
  - Level 2 programmes that result in students who are able to make positive progress into employment or further education, and who have developed valued behaviours, technical skills and knowledge
- A HE offer created in partnership with students and employers leading to high-quality and innovative programmes which have an inclusive approach, develop academic knowledge and skills and embed real-world, technical and professional education
- Implementation of an evidenced based teaching, learning and assessment strategy that ensures that our students are challenged, form durable long-term memories, and can integrate new knowledge into larger concepts
- Integrated academies, such as the Land and Sustainable Environment Academy, to enhance the student experience through greater linkage of relevant disciplines, more effective resourcing and opportunities to experience, and benefit from, impactful research and innovation
- Students who have made demonstrable progress in the development of their literacy and numeracy skills, and understand their importance for career development and development of cultural capital
- A Digital Strategy focusing on increasing our use of Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) strategies, and the latest Digital Technologies, in order to develop students' digital literacy skills
- A sector leading BeReady programme through the implementation of a 'BeReady Passport', highlighting employability skill focus in partnership with employers
- A highly effective tutorial and study-skills programme, at all levels, leading to meaningful development of students' personal and professional growth, and resilience
- High-quality work experience for all students within their study programmes, ensuring that our students benefit from meaningful industry relevant activities, that test and develop their technical skills and knowledge
- A review of delivery models to ensure they deliver the best pedagogy and experience





Employer Hub Opening



Visit from the NFU President Minette Batters



Reaseheath Graduates reach career milestone

# INDUSTRY FOCUSED CAREER READY



New Halls Of Residence opened



Students' voice to the fore at conference



Outstanding HOYS experience for equine students



RAG raises record charity funds



University Centre Reaseheath awarded TEF Silver for Teaching



National Accolade for gamekeeping student



National Food Centre - the only college in world to receive BRC AA hygiene standard



Students learn about diversity in sport



Industry support continues for apprenticeships



Reaseheath scores high in mental health awards





**WE WILL DEVELOP  
HIGH PERFORMING  
STAFF, WITH THE RIGHT  
SKILLS, IN THE RIGHT  
ROLES DELIVERING  
OUTSTANDING  
RESULTS**

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

### OUR PEOPLE

#### To have the right people with the right skills in the right roles:

Reaseheath will continue to invest, develop and shape our 'Reaseheath Family' to ensure we are able to support the evolving delivery model and Reaseheath offer.

We will continue to foster a supportive working environment, where health, safety and wellbeing are paramount, and there is space to be creative, relevant and pioneering in our thinking and our delivery.

We will nurture highly skilled, leading specialist and support staff who are able to deliver an exceptional experience for all our students and employers.



#### The major outcomes will be:

- Increased specialist, skilled, technical staff particularly in Agri-Tech, Construction and Apprenticeship, able to support the growth in provision
- An embedded sector specific CPD programme to ensure staff remain current and leading in their fields
- A highly effective and aspirational college management team supported by an engaging management and leadership development programme
- A positive culture of seeing learning in action through cross-curriculum engagement, scholarly activity, joint initiatives and projects which promote creativity and innovation
- High performing staff, with the right skills, in the right roles, utilising effective systems and processes to deliver outstanding results
- An established and supportive Well Being Centre, accessible to all, promoting and building wellbeing and resilience throughout the college
- A strong and integrated Student Voice, represented through the Student Association and working in partnership with staff to promote initiatives to enhance the Reaseheath Experience
- A learning culture which promotes an informed and proactive approach to health and safety in everything we do, and equips our students for the workplace
- A clear Equality, Diversity and Inclusion action plan informed by an organisation wide audit
- A staff total reward package highlighting Reaseheath's benefits and recognition schemes
- An engaged workforce, who feel both listened to and able to contribute, and are pivotal in shaping the future of Reaseheath





**CREATING AN  
ENVIRONMENT TO  
GIVE STUDENTS  
THE SKILLS THAT  
EMPLOYERS NEED  
FOR THE JOBS OF THE  
FUTURE**

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3 OUR ENVIRONMENT

Over the past five years the college has successfully delivered a comprehensive estates strategy. Over the next five years, we will continue to improve our environment to ensure we keep students at the heart of what we do, in providing leading specialist technical education facilities; whilst delivering on our commitment to a sustainable environment.

To achieve this, we will develop an estates and environment strategy which will support the five strategic priorities.



### The major outcomes will be:

- Apprenticeships - technical resources which support the off the job, skills development element of the delivery of apprenticeship standards
- Further Education - leading specialist resources which support both the technical and academic elements of the NQF and T-Level programmes, ensuring they meet the expectation of our students and employers
- Higher Education - improvements to UCR - to include, HE social learning and evening experience, a specific Learning Resource Centre (LRC) and defined areas within specialist vocational resources
- A Student Village encompassing a one stop shop for all student support services, improved social learning space and activities
- A Sustainable Environment Committee to support the college in its development, leading best practice in all that it does
- To continue the zoning of the campus to improve ease of access to student support resources, social learning space and further develop the campus management plan
- To review the accommodation offer to create opportunities for the corporate functions to facilitate a more co-ordinated and effective support for the college
- The development of the digital strategy which supports the delivery of Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) strategies through an effective VLE supported by developments in connectivity through Wi-Fi and core infrastructure
- The development of facilities for UCR, Employer services, conference and projects research and innovation teams to provide a coordinated solution and allow for HE growth

The estates and environment strategy will also be supported by the financial strategy which will identify capital support from the LEP, Central Government and commercial sources.





## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

# OUR EMPLOYERS, INNOVATION AND SCHOLARLY ACTIVITY

The new Employer Hub will be the focal point for businesses seeking support from our staff and students, and access to our facilities and resources to develop new concepts, products, services and solutions.

We will nurture, develop and extend our relationships with businesses, public sector and private sector partners, so that our students and clients have relevant technical and professional skills gained through work placements, high quality apprenticeships, professional training, and applied research and innovation activities.

Working with businesses and partners to understand and meet skills and knowledge gaps, and commercialise and exploit innovation, we will help them to grow and succeed, and thereby create new land-based job opportunities.



### The major outcomes will be:

- An informed curriculum and apprenticeships which deliver the knowledge, skills and behaviours demanded by land-based employers
- High-quality, professional and technical work experience opportunities integrated into our programmes of learning
- Strong progression rates into employment and further study in land-based disciplines
- A strong reputation amongst land-based employers and businesses for applied research, innovation and knowledge transfer that drives business growth
- A high-quality commercial offer of CPD and bespoke training programmes enabling clients and businesses to thrive and build competitive advantage
- Staff and student scholarship, research and innovation outputs which raise the profile of University Centre Reaseheath and enhance staff and curriculum currency
- An improved gateway into the college for employers to be able to quickly access a menu of services across apprenticeships, professional training and employer engagement activities



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5

REASEHEATH CORE PROCESSES

AND SUPPORTING SYSTEMS

Fundamental to achieving our ambitious strategies of Offer, People, Environment and Employers is a group wide infrastructure that ensures:

- Students at all levels and delivery models have the very best educational and developmental experience
- Staff are supported in their workload and have time to consider their own and the institution’s development
- Our stakeholders and partners experience the very best customer service
- The Reaseheath College Group is considered a forward thinking and innovative organisation



Over time the college has engaged and evolved a plethora of systems and processes to support the emerging business to a point today where independent systems and/or processes do not always work in harmony and do not always demonstrate best practice. We now need to review and realign our systems and processes to raise the efficiencies of our physical and human resources.

This will be through a ‘root and branch review’ of all systems and processes that have the potential of impacting on the productivity and wellbeing of both staff and students, prospective, current and alumni. Through a consultative and considerate process we will achieve our ambition of inter-operable, complementary systems and processes that add value, remove waste and release time for staff and students to engage in innovation and personal development.



The major outcomes will be:

A review and further developments of business critical processes that have documented protocols to ensure that we have a high level of compliance and a standard approach with an eye to continuous improvement.

A list of such processes might include:

- Teaching and learning process identified as delivery models
- Student support processes such as tutorial or wellbeing
- Staff recruitment process to support attracting and retaining staff
- Performance review process to enable staff to address poor performance and reward good performance
- Business planning process to include budget setting
- Performance review processes such as financial controls or academic performance
- Reward and recognition process for both staff and students

A review and further development of our systems to ensure they provide an efficient and inter-operable service.

These systems might include:

- Management information systems
- HR and payroll system
- Student performance tracking systems
- Customer Relationship Management system
- Finance management system
- Staff application system
- Farm performance systems
- Accommodation management system
- E Learning systems
- Estate management and security systems

Throughout this five year extensive exercise, which will be prioritised by business need, we will continuously check that the outcomes and deliverables align with the following KPIs and business imperatives:

- Actions and decisions are based on reliable fact and data
- Performance is constantly measured
- Time is created for innovation and continuous improvement
- We can guarantee statutory and regulatory compliance
- All processes are seen to add value
- Waste is challenged and removed at all levels
- Improved financial sustainability



OUR

SOURCES

Cheshire & Warrington LEP – Strategic Economic Plan	Time for a strategy for the rural economy
- Skills & Education Plan	Action, Edleston and Henhull Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2030
- Energy and Clean Growth Strategy	
- Local Industrial Strategy (draft)	Dept for Education – Realising the potential of technology in education
- Quality of Place Strategy	
Gov.UK - A Green Future – Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment	Local Govt Association - The future of non-metropolitan England
Gov.Uk - Clean Growth Strategy	Association of Colleges - Skills Strategy 2018-2023
Gov.UK - Post 16 Skills plan and independent report on technical education – Lord Sainsbury	Institute for Government. - UK Skills Strategy
Gov.UK - UK Digital Strategy	Local Govt Association - Work Local – Our vision for an integrated and devolved employment and skills service
National Land Based College – Strategic Plan	IAgrE – World of Opportunity – Landbased Engineering
Gov.Uk - Post –18 review of education and funding – Augar report	EIP-AGRI Seminar – Multi-level strategies for digitising agriculture and rural areas
Gov.Uk. -T Level action plan	Rural England - Unlocking the digital potential of rural areas – research
Gov.Uk - Employer Skills Survey	Gov.UK - Careers strategy: making the most of everyone’s skills and talents
Gov.Uk - Industrial Strategy	Cheshire East Economic Strategy
AgriFood Technology Leadership Council – Agicultural and Horticultural Workforce Skills and Development strategy	
Princes Countryside Fund- Recharging Rural – Creating sustainable communities to 2030 and beyond	
Cheshire East Council – Rural Action Plan	
House of Lords / Rural Services Network –	







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**European Union**  
European Structural  
and Investment Funds