

# TRURO & PENWITH COLLEGE HIGHER EDUCATION STRATEGY 2021 – 2025

Gold TEF, Over 90% student satisfaction, Ofsted Outstanding

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### **Truro & Penwith College Mission Statement**

The purpose of the College is to provide the best possible learning experience, leading to the highest possible level of achievement by our students.

*"Since its opening in 1993, Truro College students continue to achieve standards which are amongst the best in the country. Our HE results reflect the students' hard work, the efforts of College staff, our continued investment in new accommodation and resources to support learning and engagement with stakeholders in the region. "*

Bob Crossland (Chair of Governors, Truro and Penwith College)

### **About Truro & Penwith College Higher Education**

Truro College opened in 1993 and in 2008 merged with Penwith College to become Truro and Penwith College (T&PC). Since 1993, the College has grown in size and reputation and is now a popular choice for people in Cornwall who wish to study Higher Education (HE) or Further Education (FE). In over 20 years of Higher Education delivery at the college, HE student numbers increased from around 100 students to a peak of over 900 during 2013/14 and 2014/15 before declining following the removal of the HE numbers cap and changes to student loans. Currently (2019/20) enrolled numbers are over 500.

The College has successfully completed external reviews of its higher education provision: Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review (IQER), Higher Education Review, and 5 yearly Institutional Review with the University of Plymouth. The college was successful in its response to Annual Provider Review in 2016/17 with no issues raised for follow up and the college *"fully meeting requirements for quality and standards"*. T&PC Higher Education was awarded Gold Standard in the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) review based on the evidence and submission and the TEF generated positive responses to teaching and learning, assessment and employability. The feedback from the TEF panel identified *"strong college development in student engagement, student support, employability and a developing HE culture"*. The college continues to score above average on all areas of University of Plymouth student questionnaires and was the highest scoring HE provider in Devon and Cornwall for National Student Survey (NSS) student satisfaction for the last two years.

As we enter the 2021-25 period, the college has engaged in new Higher Education initiatives and has plans to expand and develop programmes linked to the South West Institute of Technology and new partnerships linked to Nursing, Health and Care. In the summer of 2020, as we move into a new more uncertain time in higher education post Covid-19, T&PC has plans that will support and develop our learners and employers throughout Cornwall and the Southwest.

## **Our students**

Over the last five years the student base has moved away from a mix of local students and students from outside of the county to the situation now with the majority being local, from a wide range of backgrounds, creating diverse cohorts on all courses. The recruitment strategy is focused on providing support for learners from as wide a variety of backgrounds within Cornwall, and from outside of the county, as possible. The College Further Education offer continues to expand with 42 A level subjects, International Baccalaureate, 67 vocational qualifications and 55 apprenticeships identified by the 2018-21 Curriculum Development Plan. In 2020 the college will add new T level programmes to curriculum that supports progression to HE outside of the county and, for students wishing to study locally, to the college Higher Education offer. Applicants are diverse and include young adults who have left school, gained experience in work and decided the time is right to return to study, school leavers and mature students, creating an exciting and vibrant mix in our classes.

The entry tariff is set so as to give as many potential students as possible the opportunity to apply and complete their studies successfully. The policy for widening participation has been very successful. The high-grade profile on Foundation Degrees and top-up years is strong, with over 50% of our Foundation Degree graduates in each of the last three years achieving a distinction or merit grade. Last year 70% of our Degree graduates achieved a first or 2:1, with 26% of all BSc and BA top-up year enrolments achieving a first-class honours degree.

Cornwall provides an exciting opportunity for employment in a diverse range of sectors. Over 75% (DLHE, 2017/18) of college students move into employment or further studies within six months of graduating and the link between high level employability skills, subject specific knowledge and personal development is important for the success of our graduates, local employers and the Cornish community.

In the last five years the bulk of students are from Cornwall (86%), are a mix of mature (21+) (52%) and school or college leavers and are from our own level 3 programmes (64%) or from other schools and colleges in the county (23%). The ethnic mix of our higher education community reflects that in the county and region and the further education and school students who we recruit from. Many of the students (39% in 2018/19) identify as disabled, many with a learning disability or mental health issue and access student support, learning support service, academic study skills workshops and academic and pastoral tutorials. Many students travel long distances over the county to attend college and reflected to compress the timetable into two or three days and normally operate between 9.15 and 16.15.

Student engagement is widely supported with every course and year having a student representative who attend four meetings a year to discuss college issues. The Student reps have a lead and deputy (one on each college site) and the lead student rep attends the College Board of Studies for Higher Education (CBSHE) and has a seat on the Board of Governors.

## **Our Partners and Stakeholders**

### ***University of Plymouth***

Truro and Penwith College is a longstanding partner with University of Plymouth. The partnership is managed through Academic Partnerships (AP), which continues to support the development of new programmes and the quality assurance process. Plymouth University Student Union work closely with College and our student representatives. The Plymouth partnership has been crucial in enabling the College to develop a quality assured range of vocational and applied higher education programmes geared to meet the needs of local employers and local students.

### ***University of Greenwich***

When Truro and Penwith College merged in 2008 the only HE provision at Penwith was a PGCE/ Cert Ed programme with the University of Greenwich. In 2020 the College has a new partnership with the University of Greenwich delivering a FdSc Nursing Apprenticeship programme with Royal Cornwall Hospital Trust.

### ***Pearson***

In terms of higher education provision, the relationship with Pearson has been relatively small with one or two programmes recruiting each year. The South West Institute of Technology developments have resulted in a new cluster of BTEC Higher National programmes for our students and employers.

### ***Higher Education Networks and agencies***

The College is a member of the Mixed Economy Group (MEG) sharing ideas and good practice with colleges in this national network and the HE Programme Team Lead is an active member of the Association of Colleges, HE Policy Group. The College is an active member of AoC and regularly attends meetings and conferences around 'College Based Higher Education'. T&PC remains an active member of Combined Universities Cornwall and is part of wider initiatives to share good practice between all members of that group.

### ***Cornwall and isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership (CIOS LEP)***

The College works closely with CIOS LEP and embraces the new Vision 2030 and 10 '21<sup>st</sup> Century' Opportunities within the county. Our Strategy focuses on the range of developments in FE and HE that link to the targets and aspirations

of young and mature learners in Cornwall and supporting initiatives linked to the local industrial strategy.

### ***Cornwall Council***

The Council's Cornwall Education Strategy 2019-2022 is a key document for the college. Our HE strategy embraces the targets set by the Local Authority and will continue to support their initiatives through providing an Outstanding educational experience for our learners, training the County's teachers and educators and providing opportunities for mature students to return to education and training.

### ***Teaching School, TPAT, SCITT, Maths Hub, Computing Hub***

A Gold TEF and Ofsted Outstanding college, T&PC is engaged in the wider education of children, young people and adults in Cornwall. The Education department engages with Cornwall SCITT (Ofsted outstanding Initial teacher training) and the Secondary SCITT unit shares the same building as the Education Curriculum Area at Truro College. Cornwall Teaching School is also based at the college and works to ensure appropriate training and development are available for teachers and staff in the education sector to support them in their roles and in progression. The college also supports Truro & Penwith Academy Trust who currently work with a diverse group of over 30 schools in Cornwall.

### ***South West Institute of Technology (SWIoT)***

The SWIoT draws on expertise from twelve partner organisations including Truro & Penwith College, University of Exeter, University of Plymouth, City College Plymouth, Exeter College, Petroc, and Bridgwater & Taunton College, investing in the development of state-of-the-art facilities for training skilled digital technicians and engineers and working with employers to ensure the curriculum is industry-led and responds to workforce and skill needs. Supported by both Heart of the South West and the Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), the SWIoT will provide training for over 150 additional students per year at T&PC.

### ***Employers***

T&PC works with local, regional and national employers at every level, through our Business team who advise on CPD opportunities and apprenticeships, through our Higher Education programme leads who ensure courses are up to date and help advise on placement opportunities for our Foundation Degree students and who are always supporting progression into employment for our learners. The engagement with employers is bespoke and unique to every business we work with, ensuring we can meet their needs and support their opportunities to expand and grow.

## **Our Curriculum:**

T&PC has a broad curriculum of approximately 30 traditional Higher Education programmes in a wide range of curriculum areas. These consist of Higher Nationals, Foundation Degrees and Bachelor's Degrees (one-year honours progression top-ups). We also have a number of Higher Apprenticeships and a wide range of stand-alone CPD modules and Higher Education CPD short courses. Each curriculum area is supported by level 3 programmes: Access to HE, Diplomas, A levels, the IB and in some cases T levels from which students may progress to our Higher Education programmes. The key areas in which we are developing curriculum are informed by the Cornwall LEP's: Five Smart specialisation areas, 10 opportunity areas, the 2020 Cornwall Industrial Strategy and CloS LEP Vision 2030.

### ***Agri-Tec/Agri Food:***

The bulk of agricultural courses are well serviced by the region's land-based colleges Duchy College and Bickton College and T&PC support the food sector through developments with Steins, through hospitality HN and CPD courses, and developments in engineering and production.

### ***Digital Economy:***

Institute of Technology developments, new Higher Apprenticeships and CPD courses will engage the non-digital population with digital technology. Developments in Cyber Security and Data Analytics will position us well to support new and developing businesses. The expansion of digital media and technology linked to the Covid-19 outbreak will create opportunities for new developments and training.

### ***E-health/wellbeing:***

Our new partnership with RCHT and University of Greenwich has created a new opportunity for young people in the county with level 3 and 5 apprenticeships and level 3 and 5 Health and Care courses planned for development. Our target is to be the leading Health and Care provider within the county.

### ***Marine Technology:***

Institute of Technology developments in digital design and engineering plus a planned full three-year engineering degree opportunity in Cornwall will enhance the number of qualified staff in Cornwall who can work in the sector providing opportunities for young people to earn higher salaries and stay in the county

### ***Space & Aerospace:***

Our project with University partners who have national and international reputations in the space sector plus links with Goonhilly and Newquay will help develop a CPD and training curriculum for new employers in this sector. IoT

developments will increase opportunities for young people in the county in this expanding sector

***Creative:***

A new Craft and Design offer alongside existing Film, Photography and Media, Applied Media and Games Design provide links into many of the employers, both SMEs and micro-businesses, operating in Cornwall and Devon. Many of these businesses are run by ex-students and the opportunities for graduates from the college are enhanced by this network of Alumni employers.

***Clean Energy:***

Working with the sector we will identify technical qualifications that will provide opportunities and develop programmes through the IoT to support new and established businesses in the sector.

***Tourism / Visitor economy:***

Using new digital technology, we will expand training and development of the hospitality and tourism sector through part-time CPD modules and Higher National delivery focused on allowing existing staff the opportunity to develop their roles and continue employment in the sector.

***Mining/ Geo-resources:***

Working with the sector T&PC will identify apprenticeships and technical qualifications that will provide opportunities and develop programmes through the IoT.

**Our Strategic targets:**

***Intent***

- to widen the access to higher education courses within the county as identified in our Access & Participation Plan
- to maintain the high numbers of mature students accessing our HE programmes
- to maintain our high level of HE student satisfaction
- to continue to support our learners through appropriate additional support, pastoral care, advice and guidance
- to improve student retention at every level of study
- to improve student success rates overall.
- to ensure student progression into employment and higher-level qualifications
- to work with employers to align our curriculum with expanding sectors in Cornwall and the opportunities that will bring for graduates.

- to maintain the learning community of students, staff and employers that has been successful over the last 5 years

### ***Implementation***

As part of the Access and Participation Plan a number of key projects that on access, success and progression but significantly as a partner in the South West Institute of Technology, opportunities for skills-based courses in the digital technology and engineering sectors are a priority. Further expansion of Pearson Higher National Certificates and Diplomas will create opportunities that align with expanding sectors within the region with an additional aim to become a significant centre for delivery of nursing, health and care in Cornwall. The opportunities that have come with the move to online delivery as a response to the Covid-19 outbreak in 2020 generates a new way of thinking about delivery with moves to create a different type of blended programme for part-time learners, reopening a sector of Higher Education that has been in long-term decline.

### **Stakeholder engagement**

- Continue to involve students in enhancement activities associated with quality assurance
- Develop opportunities for employers and students to be engaged in the design of new higher education programmes and/or short courses
- Develop excellence in learning, teaching and assessment by involving students and employers in the review and evaluation of course materials and assessment strategies
- Expand opportunities for students to become ambassadors and/or mentors
- Develop new delivery modes for short course provision to meet stakeholder need
- Develop clear progression routes from level 3 and employment into level 4 and 5 qualifications providing local opportunities to up skill employees and provide employment relevant skills
- Work closely with stakeholders/partners to share information on local business needs.
- Work closely with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

### **Programme Development**

- Develop a hub for delivering Nursing, Health and Care level qualifications
- Review and re-validate higher education programmes that are over 5 years old
- Develop part time higher education programmes as applied vocational pathways for higher level apprenticeships
- Review all prescribed and non-prescribed higher education courses to ensure that the College offer meets local demand



### Student opportunity, choice and excellence

- Expand opportunities for current HE students to work as ambassadors with FE students and raise the aspirations of vocational students
- Maintain progression opportunities for students from HE level 5 to level 6
- Increase progression opportunities for students from local cold spots and a range of backgrounds to complete a full degree locally
- Use information from student questionnaires to deliver workshops with students to identify enhancements to learning, teaching and assessment
- Expand opportunities and invest in achieving targets agreed within the College's Access and participation plan 2020/21 to 2024/25

### Enhancement of teaching, learning and assessment

- Develop a new on-line tutorial system across all higher education programmes.
- Use peer review to share good practice on using digital technologies for learning and teaching
- Develop an assessment feedback and grading programme for students to track their own improvement and target set
- Promote staff development opportunities for all HE staff both academic and administrative
- Continue to provide staff development linked to the changing HE Sector

### Staff Development, Scholarly Activity and Research

- Support academic staff in Continuing Professional Development and scholarly activity and research.
- Increase staff development opportunities for higher education staff
- Support staff to stay up to date on new developments in their specialist area.

### **Impact**

The impact of these developments will be a higher number of graduates taking on permanent well-paid roles within the county rather than returning to part-time seasonal opportunities. The reconfiguration of employment that may take place as the country recovers from the 'Covid -19 lockdown' and moves into a new business world where we are no longer part of the European Community is unclear. The college will respond by being as flexible as possible, creating short-term courses, stand-alone modules, part-time and full-time courses linked to employment sectors that develop and recover within the county. The new Higher Education environment that appears following responses to the Augur Review and the DfE level 4 - 5 Higher Technical Education Review is expected to create wider opportunities to work with employers and to establish high quality technical courses. T&PC will continue to work to meet the needs of employers in that level 4 - 5 gap and seek additional funding to replace European funds that have supported links to employer CPD in the last 5 years.

### ***Evaluation and Success***

As part of our Access and Participation Plan, we will review progress in access, success and progression into employment or higher-level courses. Our Governor HE Quality Review Committee evaluates an annual Self-assessment Review and Higher Education Action Plan which will include reference to this College HE Strategic Plan. The College Board of Studies for Higher Education reviews HE performance against the OfS Conditions of Registration and Governor representation on that Board establishes a line of communication that ensures the Board of Governors have an overview of Higher Education activity.