



CENTRAL SUSSEX COLLEGE

## HE/Level 4 Strategy 2009–2012

### AIMS

1. To work in partnership to plan a suitable pathway of sub-degree and degree qualifications for high and medium priority by responding to local employer needs.
2. To ensure progression to Level 4 (and above where applicable) in all priority sectors.
3. To widen participation in HE by supporting provision which helps address the relatively low participation rate in the Crawley area.
4. To ensure high quality provision (including staffing, CPD and scholarly research) in accordance with Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review (IQER) and Common Inspection Framework judgements.
5. To provide distinctive adult and HE student ethos, environment and support.

**1. To work in partnership to plan a suitable pathway of sub-degree and degree qualifications for high and medium priority areas by responding to local employer needs, by:**

- Being a key partner in the new University Centre.
- Working with SEEDA, Economic Partnerships and SSCs to identify employer needs.
- Fostering strong relationships with all the Sector Skills Councils in priority areas.
- Being an active partner in Sussex Learning Network (SLN).
- Agreeing areas to be developed with SLN and the Local Partnership Board.

**2. To ensure progression to Level 4 (and above where applicable) in all priority sectors by:**

- Mapping existing Level 4 progression opportunities for Level 3 learners at the College, including those on Advanced Apprenticeships.
- Developing new Level 4 provision in:
  - **Business and Management:** incorporating retail management, finance and accounting, leadership, and human resource management.
  - **STEM subjects:** Notably electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, maths and computing but also biotechnology.
  - **Public sector related subjects:** health, social care, and teaching -Hospitality: including customer service and catering.
  - **Cultural and creative:** notably design studies.

Subject to availability of funding and/or employer demand:

- Ensuring progression on to Level 5 and above at local universities.
- Determining whether to develop Foundation Degrees, BTEC Higher Nationals or Professional Diplomas and Certificates in the priority sector.
- Developing Foundation Degrees with a partner university.
- Planning teaching and learning which will develop increasingly autonomous student learning.

**3. To widen participation in HE by supporting provision which help address the relatively low participation rate in the Crawley area by:**

- Being a key partner in the new University Centre.
- Developing further the provision of learning support for HE students.
- Ensuring HE students are aware of the availability of financial assistance and disabled student allowances.
- Improving the monitoring of retention and achievement for HE students to support progression.
- Monitoring participation using socio-economic indicators.

**4. To ensure high quality provision by:**

- Following College and Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review (IQER) quality assurance policies and procedures.
- Monitoring and improving the quality of Level 4 and HE courses in the College through the HE working group.
- Providing substantive HE teachers with relevant CPD and the opportunity to pursue scholarly activities through case loading.

**5. To provide distinctive adult and HE student ethos, environment and support by:**

- Locating the College's HE and non prescribed HE (where practicable) within the new university centre in Crawley.
- Branding the College's HE offer to complement the new university centre offer.
- Offering access to a range of learner support services both at the College and through the workplace.
- Accessing regular student feedback and responding.
- Developing remote access to learning and learning resources accessible from home or workplace.
- Encouraging student involvement with partner university student union and social groups.

# **Central Sussex College**

## **HE Strategy**

**for the period 2009/10 - 2011/12**

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a. **A brief description of the College – type, location and size**

**Strategic Context**

Central Sussex College is a large Further Education college based in the Gatwick Diamond region and West Sussex. It is in scope to respond positively to the 14-19 education and training needs of West Sussex and regionally is well placed to address the needs of the 19+ and skills agendas. It is a partner in a successful bid for a new University Centre for Crawley, which is based on stronger FE/ HE Level 3/ Level 4 interface which is critical for the Gatwick Diamond economy and also addresses the Crawley 'coldspot' for HE learners. Further details of the rationale for the bid are included in Section g and in Appendix 1.

Central Sussex College was formed from the merger of Crawley College and Haywards Heath Sixth Form College in August 2005. In addition to the two main campuses at Crawley and Haywards Heath, it has adult campuses in Burgess Hill and East Grinstead. It currently caters for over 11000 students in a wide range of curriculum subjects and from pre-entry to post graduate level qualifications.

The College is primarily a provider at Levels 1 to 3, 71% of enrolments, with 26% classified as Other, and 3% (814 enrolments on roll in 08/09) as Level 4 and above.

Central Sussex College had a successful Ofsted Inspection in January 2009. Inspectors found the College to be good and improving and the grades showed it to be the top performing general Further Education College in West Sussex.

In June 2009 the College underwent a QAA IQER Summative Review and reviewers found that there can be **confidence** in the College's management of its responsibilities, as set out in its partnership agreements, for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of its awarding bodies. They also considered that there can be **confidence** in the College's management of its responsibilities, as set out in partnership agreements, for the quality of learning opportunities it offers and that reliance **can** be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the information that the College is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

Reviewers also identified 6 areas of good practice:

- There is a well-defined structure for the management of higher education in the College, with clear reporting arrangements to ensure the maintenance of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities
- The Programme Validation Process provides a rigorous means for the consideration of new programmes
- There is an outstanding assessment strategy for the Higher National engineering programmes
- Programme teams, in co-operation with central services, provides outstanding student support
- The College responds quickly and effectively to student opinion to improve learning opportunities

- The materials used on the virtual learning environment are extensive, vocationally relevant, and well used by staff and students to improve the quality of the learning experience

The National HE Student Survey results for the College in 2008 and 2009 were very positive. In the 2008 survey 91% of students were satisfied with the quality of their course, which placed the College 9% above the national average satisfaction rate of 82% and ranked the College as seventh highest among Further Education colleges in England and Wales. In the 2009 survey, with a smaller sample, this figure increased to 100%

In September 2009 the College received accreditation for the Training Quality Standard (TQS), in recognition for its responsiveness to its employers. The College also holds Matrix accreditation, Positive about Disabled People and will undertake re-accreditation for IIP in November 2009.

The Central Sussex College's Strategic Plan 2008-2013 makes the College's Mission, core purpose and aspirations clear and establishes the College's key core value :-

Mission:-

- 'to be the college of choice by putting skills and learning at the heart of everything we do'

Aspirations:-

- Excellent learner and employer experience, irrespective of background
- Strong and effective support for our communities

Core Purpose:-

- Create confident, lifelong learners

Key Value:-

- Learning is central

The overall direction of the College is to become an outstanding provider, working effectively with local partners to develop a comprehensive 14-19 year old progression framework and entitlement throughout Central Sussex, to transform the organisation providing a college-wide culture intent on further improving responsiveness for employers in the Gatwick Diamond sub-region and to plan for and provide community learning for the residents of East Grinstead and Crawley.

The overarching aims of the College are:

- To provide a high quality vocational and academic curriculum offer with teaching and learning at the heart of the organisation's activities.
- To be an Area leader for the development of 14-19 and Skills provision.
- To establish 14-19 year old progression routes and entitlement in partnership with local schools.
- To establish a Skills curriculum offer that matches the demands/needs of identified high/medium priority sectors in partnership with regional employers and employer organisations.
- To establish and develop the leadership and management required at all levels.

- To put in place affordable investment strategies for learner growth in priority areas, for organisational development – including pay and appraisal systems and for fit-for-purpose Property/ILCT infrastructure.

The overarching aims of the College's Higher Education Strategy are:

1. To work in partnership to plan a suitable pathway of sub-degree and degree qualifications for high and medium priority by responding to local employer needs
2. To ensure progression to Level 4 (and above where applicable) in all priority sectors.
3. To widen participation in HE by supporting provision which helps address the relatively low participation rate in the Crawley area
4. To ensure high quality provision (including staffing, CPD and scholarly research) in accordance with Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review (IQER) and Common Inspection Framework judgements.
5. To provide distinctive adult and HE student ethos, environment and support.

The HE offer at Central Sussex College is internally driven by students who wish to progress to higher levels and externally driven from employer demand from the Engineering, Business, Health and Social Care, IT and Education and Training Sectors. It continues to offer, in response to strong demand predominantly part-time at Level 4, offering the opportunity to progress on to Level 5/6 locally where there is sufficient demand, and to honours degrees at partner HEIs. This is in line with the FE White Paper (March 2006) which states that 'there should be a presumption that HE delivered in FE should have a strong occupational and employment purpose'.<sup>1</sup> Roughly a third of the total higher education enrolments are HEFCE funded, constituting 132 full-time equivalents (249 enrolments in 2008/9). Of its non prescribed HE, there were 565 enrolments in 2008/9

The higher education courses offered are listed below, grouped according to the responsible awarding body.

Prescribed Higher Education Courses offered:

Edexcel

HNC/D in the following programmes:

Legacy

- Aerospace Engineering
- Electrical/Electronic Engineering
- Manufacturing Engineering
- Automotive Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering

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<sup>1</sup> Department for Education and Skills, (2006) Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances  
S:\Director\MK\HE Strategy Submission  
11 January 2010

National Qualification Framework

- Aerospace Engineering
- Electrical/Electronic Engineering
- Manufacturing (Automotive) Engineering
- Manufacturing Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering

University of Chichester

- FD Early Childhood

University of Sussex

- Certificate in Education (Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector)
- Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector)
- BSc Computing Sciences (Foundation Year)

University of Brighton

- Post Graduate Diploma in Personnel and Development

Non-Prescribed Higher Education Courses offered

Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS) Level 4, 5 & 6

Chartered Institute of Marketing Level 4 & 6

Institute of Operational Management Level 5 & 7

Chartered Management Institute Level 4, 5 & 6

CIOB Level 4 Cert & Dip in Site Management

City & Guilds Higher Professional Certificate in Technical Salon Hygiene Level 4

Additional Diploma in Teaching English ( Literacy) in the Lifelong Learning Sector  
Level 5

Additional Diploma in Teaching Mathematics (Numeracy) in the Lifelong Learning  
Sector L5

Additional Diploma in Teaching English (ESOL) in the Lifelong Learning Sector  
Level 5

Association of Accounting Technicians AAT Level 4

NVQ Level 4 Mentoring in the Workplace

NVQ Level 4 Learning and Development

NVQ Level 4 Management

NVQ 4 Assessment of Experienced Construction Workers

Award in Conducting Internal Quality Assurance of the Assessment Process

**b. Statement about why the college offers higher education, including how it relates to the college's mission**

The College focuses on providing higher education for local adults, mainly in employment, seeking to advance their skills and knowledge beyond Level 3 in order to improve their career prospects. This is in line with the FE White Paper (March 2006) which states that 'there should be a presumption that HE delivered in FE should have a strong occupational and employment purpose'<sup>2</sup>; the Skills for Growth White Paper (November 2009) which sets a new overarching ambition for skills and higher education systems that 75% of people should complete an Advanced Apprenticeship or participate in higher education by the age of 30 and demonstrates Colleges' contribution towards the Government's HE target .

In addition, the College runs a successful full-time Foundation Year in Computer Science for students progressing on to degrees at the University of Sussex.

The impact of government policy towards the education and training of adults is an important context for the College's HE strategy.

The Leitch Review of Skills identified the future economic growth of the country to be strongly linked to higher levels of education and training.<sup>3</sup> The Review focused on the important role of Level 4 provision in meeting that need, particularly the Foundation Degree. It also set the approach to be taken by government in the organisation and funding of adult education and training. This approach was that the supply of education and training for adults should be demand-led, with the demand coming from either employers or individuals, but with public funding only for those areas prioritised by government, and subject to contestability.

Priorities for Success outlines the approach to be taken by the LSC with an emphasis on individuals and employers making more of a financial contribution to their learning unless they are taking Basic Skills or have not achieved a Level 2 qualification.<sup>4</sup> It is likely that the proportion of fee expected from adult students will increase up to at least 50% in future years and there will be an expectation that a higher proportion of learning will be work-based.

Simultaneously, government policy for HE expects all full-time students to draw down a student loan, for payment of tuition fees for all full-time courses with a proportionate expectation for part-time students.

The ten-year Regional Economic Strategy for the South East has as one of its nine priorities a focus on education:

8. Raise educational attainment and aspirations, including a comprehensive approach to enterprise education and improved access to higher and further education.

Associated with this priority are the targets to increase the percentage of the working age population with qualifications at Level 4 or higher from 28% in 2003 to at least 50% by 2020 and to target the support of Further Education and Higher Education in industrial sectors that have significant skills gaps.

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<sup>2</sup> Department for Education and Skills, (2006) Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances

<sup>3</sup> HMSO, (2006), Leitch Review of Skills (Prosperity for All in the Global Economy – World Class Skills: Final Report)

<sup>4</sup> The Learning and Skills Council, (2005), Priorities for Success: Funding for Skills 2006-2008

**c. The context for the college's HE provision**

**LOCAL, SUBREGIONAL AND REGIONAL ECONOMY AND SOCIETY**

The geographical area the College serves in West Sussex, has a resident population of 363,600 according to the ONS 2008 population projection with around 21.5% of the working age population qualified to Level 4 or above, compared to 28.8% for the South East ( The State of the County - An Economic, Social and Environmental Audit of West Sussex. November 2006). Crawley in particular has a number of deprived wards, especially when Education, Skills and Training are considered, as well as a higher than Sussex average ethnic minority population. Both these factors make the town a focus for widening participation.

The College Leadership Team has conducted wide-ranging research to identify the high and medium priorities for curriculum development for the next 3-5 years.

In terms of employment, Banking, Finance and Insurance account for a third of all workplaces in the area, with the Public Administration, Education and Health Sectors employing a fifth of the total of those in employment. (Data from the LSC Sussex Labour Market and Socio Economic Review 2005.) The proximity of Gatwick and associated businesses, as well as the large construction projects in the South East are further factors in the local demand for skills. The area also has strengths in Bio Sciences, Advanced Engineering, ICT and Electronics and Pharmaceuticals. Higher Level Skills and higher employability skills are required in all of these sectors.

College Priorities

High Priority Provision	High Priority Sectors	Medium Priority Sectors
16-18 year olds	Health and Care	Information Technology
First Full Level 2 for Adults	Engineering, Manufacturing and Technology	Service Industries (Hospitality, Leisure & Tourism*, Hair & Beauty)
	Science & Mathematics	
First Full Level 3 for Adults	Construction	
	Transport	
Adults in Priority Sectors	Business & Financial Services, Leadership and Management	
	Public Sector, including Education	
Skills for Life	Cultural Industries (Digital Media & Performing Arts) Retail	

\* Hospitality, Leisure and Tourism is an area of growing importance for higher level skills in airport related jobs

Local

The local strategic objective is to ensure that any young person at age 14 can see an aspirational route through a vocational pathway leading to a Foundation Degree or HNC/HND where there is employer demand and/or employment at age 19 in addition to the well designed academic route leading to HE or employment. This is to be achieved by working with the West Sussex Children's Service, LSC

Sussex, local Schools and the College of Richard Collyer to develop and implement the 14-19 offer, including the new diplomas and Foundation tier.

#### Regional

The priority sectors identified by SEEDA are as follows:

- Environmental Technologies
- Advanced Engineering
- Life Sciences & Health Technology
- ICT & Digital Media
- Financial Services

The Gatwick Diamond has been- and will continue to be an engine of economic growth within the South East. It was the first of the nine 'Diamonds of Growth' identified for investment for growth. A strategic priority for the College is to provide the higher employability skills at Level 4 that industry needs through the development of University Centre Crawley on the College's campus. A 'Gatwick Skills Escalator' is being developed to support the Gatwick Diamond economic strategy and to meet the needs of employers in this sub-region. The College has formed a strategic alliance with East Surrey College for this work and will also be working in partnership with SEEDA, LSC (and subsequent bodies) and the Surrey and West Sussex Economic Partnership. One imperative of the 'Gatwick Skills Escalator' is to increase the pool of trained technicians at FL2 and FL3 to support the STEM agenda.

The College's sector specialisms, priorities and Centres of Vocational Excellence:-

- Construction
- Engineering
  - Instrumentation, Control, Automation (CoVE)
  - Heritage (CoVE)
- Health & Care (CoVE)
- Retail (CoVE)
- Business & Financial Services
- Science & Mathematics
- Cultural Industries

Science and Mathematics has emerged recently as an additional Gatwick Diamond priority focus within the Engineering, Technology and Manufacturing sector - particularly with Biotechnology and Pharmaceutical Industries. The Business and Financial Services curriculum area requires substantial development due to the large number of businesses and employees in Central Sussex - 37% of the business stock is in this sector.

#### **d. widening participation strategic assessment**

The College produced a Widening Participation Strategic Assessment in June 2009. A copy is included in appendix 1

The College's purpose is to create confident lifelong learners. Our vision is to support aspiration and achievement and enable our learners to be whoever they want to be. Staff have worked together to agree a set of core values and beliefs which include:

- Promoting acceptance of diversity and removing barriers
- Improving accessibility, availability and approaches for students

- Valuing what people bring from their own background and experience
- Ensuring that student development is at the heart of all that we do
- Ensuring that all students achieve their potential
- Nurturing sustainable and long-term strategic partnerships

Our approach to developing higher education in the Gatwick Diamond sub-region puts these values into practice.

Widening participation is embedded in our overall corporate strategy, and is closely linked to other strands of policy development including:

- Equality and Diversity Policy and related policies (Race Equality Policy; Disability, Gender and Race Equality Duty Schemes)
- Learner Services Strategy 2008-13

The College was inspected by OFSTED in January 2009. The overall judgement was that the promotion of equality of opportunity is good (Grade 2), and key strengths of the College include:

- Wide and inclusive range of provision
- Strong educational and social inclusion
- Good contribution to community cohesion.

The main findings were:

“This is an inclusive college which makes a significant contribution to local community cohesion. It pays very close attention to equality and diversity and promotes equality of opportunity well in many areas of its work. The College has invested significantly in staff to support this work and effectively analyses its plans and procedures to ensure that they meet the needs of all potential students. A broad range of education and training opportunities are provided for students of differing abilities including vulnerable young people and those with disrupted educational backgrounds.

The performance of students from different ethnic backgrounds and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is analysed carefully and when underperformance is detected it is successfully addressed. The range and quality of support to help all students achieve their potential are good...

The College also meets its obligations under race, disability and gender equality legislation.”

Additional information

- The College serves a local community which includes wards where the young participation level in HE and the adult qualification level are very low. There are four wards in Crawley which fall into the lowest quintile for both these measures of participation: Bewbush, Broadfield (North and South) and Tilgate. (source: HEFCE 2009).
- With regard to accessing financial support because of economic hardship, this year one HEFCE funded student receives funding from the Access for Learning Fund and four students receive Sussex Bursaries. In addition, on the Foundation Degree in Early Childhood, most students are in receipt of

80% bursaries from Workforce Development (Surrey or West Sussex) which are not income-related.

The main messages emerging for Central Sussex College are:

- Most of the HE students are recruited from the local population, and the proportion from other than white British ethnic backgrounds is similar to the population locally. However, students from white backgrounds other than British are slightly over-represented and students from black and Asian backgrounds are slightly under-represented compared with the Crawley population.
- There is an attainment gap in students taking Engineering Higher National qualifications in the 19+ age group between white students and other ethnic groups – taking 2006/7 and 2007/8 data together for statistical evaluation, because of the small cohort of ethnic minority students, there was a success rate of 53% for the 15 ethnic minority students, but 75% for the 87 white students. Whilst the sample is small, this gap needs monitoring to see if it continues in future years, but if it persists, it may indicate a need for additional support to enable them to meet the standard required for course assignments.
- Many of the students at the College are in employment and study part-time, and this is reflected in the relatively low uptake of bursaries and grants. However, on the Year 0 computing course, which is full-time, a third of the students receive bursaries or grants because they have a low income.
- The % of students self-identifying themselves as having a disability within the meaning of the Disability Discrimination Act is as high as the national figure from UCAS, but the % of students in receipt of Disabled Students Allowance is lower.
- Owing to the nature of the courses offered at Central Sussex, a much higher % of our students than the national average are mature students.
- The gender balance amongst students is very different to the national figures, with much higher participation from men.

#### Our key widening participation aims

There are three key aims for Central Sussex College –

##### Aim 1

To build upon existing measures to assist retention and success of students through improvements in monitoring, and further provision of learning support.

##### Aim 2

To increase the progression of students from Level 3 Central Sussex Courses to higher education, to help address the relatively low participation rates in HE in the Crawley area.

### Aim 3

To ensure all those higher education students who need Disabled Students Allowance and other financial assistance receive it..

#### **e. The Management & Governance of Higher Education at the College**

##### i. management

The College has an organizational structure for Higher Education that clearly specifies how responsibilities for the management of the higher education provision and the maintenance of academic standards are delegated. A programme leader for each of the current areas of provision reports to the Director of the relevant College Faculty for management purposes. Each Director in turn, reports to one of two Executive Directors with functional cross-college responsibilities. One of these is the Executive Director for Skills and Higher Education, who has the responsibility for Higher Education across the College and chairs the Higher Education Working Group. Under the College's matrix system, each faculty Director is responsible to the Executive Director for Skills and Higher Education for the higher education elements of their provision. The Higher Education Working Group is the forum for co-ordinating practice in HE, oversees programme development, monitoring and review, approvals and sharing of practice. It informs the Curriculum and Quality Council of key developments. The Executive Director of Skills and Higher Education also provides the link between the Higher Education Working Group and the College Executive and the Curriculum, Quality and Standards Subcommittee of the College's Corporation.

##### ii. curriculum development

The College's Programme Validation Process provides a rigorous means for the consideration of new programmes' as judged by QAA IQER Summative Review.

The Higher Education Working Group is the forum which oversees programme development of HE provision. It informs the Curriculum and Quality Council of key developments. The Executive Director of Skills and Higher Education chairs the Group and provides the link between the Higher Education Working Group and the College Executive and the Curriculum, Quality and Standards Subcommittee of the College's Corporation.

##### iii. resourcing of higher education, staff, facilities, equipment and learning materials

The College is responsible for the provision and maintenance of adequate and sufficient learning resources to support its higher education provision. Requirements are considered as part of the College Programme Validation Process prior to external validation by the partner university. The responsibility for ensuring that resources are provided is devolved to College Faculties and resource bids are part of the annual planning cycle. Learning resources was one aspect that was identified from student focus groups and surveys as needing further investment and this was reviewed and the College responded positively to student concerns with the provision of an HE resource room, an HE common room, increased library stocks and additional software packages. The College is committed to employing staff with appropriate subject specialisms and qualifications to deliver its Higher Education

programmes and all staff are recruited to clearly written job descriptions and person specifications

iv. CPD and scholarly activity, which includes professional updating

The IQER Summative Review (June 2009) judged that, 'The range of staff development opportunities is impressive'. Although most of this relates to further education issues, there are opportunities dedicated to higher education. The College holds regular sessions on 'sharing best practice' in Higher Education with sessions covering, Academic Infrastructure, feedback to students, course handbooks, management systems and internal verification.

In addition the College is planning to improve the information given to new staff regarding their responsibilities for the academic standards of their work, in relation to their pedagogy and assessment practices.

The College is committed to ensuring that staff teaching on HE programmes have opportunities to undertake scholarly activity and has agreed an allocation of funds to support this.

Scholarly activity will be taken to cover any or all of the following:

- Curriculum development of new HE or revalidated programmes e.g. foundation degrees, post graduate diplomas
- Curriculum development that involves research
- Taking higher qualifications- masters, doctorates and teaching/ academic qualifications as required by the College to meet the delivery needs of the HE programme
- Consultancy to industry and other agencies
- Industrial secondments or work shadowing
- Research and publications
- Practitioner /applied research
- Personal development – action research and reading
- Attending conferences and workshop externally

The College is also committed to staff engaging in industrial updating and is proactive in promoting and taking part in the Business Interchange Programme and uses its wealth of contacts with employers to help facilitate this programme

v. recruitment, retention and progression into and through HE progression – links with schools/colleges, employers and universities

The College has excellent links with schools, employers and universities to help HE students progress with their studies or employment –

- Higher Nationals in Engineering – there are progression routes to HNCs and HNDs from level 3 courses within the College's faculty of technology, and these have been taken by 62% of 2008-9 Higher National students. Students starting HNCs and HNDs come with a wide variety of educational qualifications: 70% have a National Diploma or Certificate; 10% City and Guilds qualifications; 10% A levels (progressing from schools); and 10% have other qualifications or employment experience. They can progress from HNC to HND, and at the end of the HND, they have the option to do the final year of an honours degree through the

College's progression accord with Portsmouth and Greenwich universities.

- Certificate in Education/ PGCE – these students are furthering their careers by attaining qualifications necessary for their employment setting – often as lecturers in vocational subjects in further education. They have a wide range of previous academic and vocational qualifications.
- Foundation Degree in Early Childhood – this course is provided in partnership with the University of Chichester. Applicants are already working with young children in an Early Years setting, and arrive with a variety of prior qualifications. At the end of the course, students can progress to Early Years Professional Status or other courses offered by Chichester, such as the BA Hons in Childhood Studies, followed by a PGCE (and hence Qualified Teacher Status).
- Year 0 computing – this course constitutes a foundation year for progression to a BSc degree in computing at Sussex University. It is designed for A level students who just fall short of the entry requirements for the University, or who have qualifications from overseas which are not recognised as equivalent to A level.
- Post Graduate Diploma in Personnel and Development-this is a Master's level course and candidates with experience or certificate level qualifications are encouraged to complete the Graduate Study Certificate to prepare them for the Postgraduate study requirements for the PDS
- Retention, achievement and success rates for all HE courses are closely monitored and reported in the College's HE Self Assessment report and subsequent quality improvement plan.

vi. relationship with employers

The College has strong links with employers and in September 2009 the College was awarded the Training Quality Mark in recognition of its responsiveness to employers. These links extend to our HE provision:

- Certificate in Education students must be employed as they need to complete a set number of hours in the classroom and work-based assignments. The College liaises with their mentors at their place of work. Approximately 50% of these students are College employees.
- Higher Nationals in Engineering - most students are employed when they start their courses, and are sponsored by their employers. Assignments are project-based at the place of employment, and the minority of students who begin the course without employment are encouraged to link up with the employers of other students or to do work-based projects within the College. Many find employment through links made with companies during the course.
- Foundation degree in early childhood – this course requires applicants to have work placements where they can carry out assignments. Each student has a mentor in the work-place, and there is a termly meeting between the College and the mentors.

- Post Graduate Diploma in Personnel and Development- this course requires applicants to be engaged in relevant employment.
- All of the Non Pre-scribed HE courses offered generally have the requirement for applicants to be employed within the respective related industry.

vii. relationship with higher education institution partners

The University of Sussex has had a partnership with the College since 1993 and in March 2007, Central Sussex College achieved the status of an affiliated college of the University. The partnership with the University of Chichester commenced in autumn 2008 and with the University of Brighton in autumn 2009

The College's responsibilities for ensuring the standards of its higher education are specified in memoranda of agreement with these Universities. For the Higher National Awards, Edexcel external examiners monitor standards. The relationships with the awarding bodies are strong and they give the College full support in the delivery of its responsibilities for the management of academic standards under the terms of its validation agreements

The College has a philosophy of approaching the most appropriate higher education institute for specific programmes rather than having an umbrella relationship with just one. The College researches the provision and contacts the higher education institute that it judges to be the best match.

viii. involvement with other agencies and HE networks

The College is a partner in the Sussex Learning Network, the Centre for Work and Learning and a member of the FE in HE Network. It is an active member of FE Sussex and is the lead for the Gatwick Diamond, working closely with East Surrey College and the South East England Development Agency.

**f. Assessment and Management of high level risks**

The College assesses its policies at corporate level and produces a high level Risk Register and managed through a set of Action Plans for each risk that is monitored by the Corporation. The delivery and growth of HE are addressed from a corporate perspective.

At that level risks and mitigating controls are included

- Loss of staff and resources.
- Failure to be responsive to the changing expectations of national, regional and local stakeholders including government and employers
- Failure to produce accurate management information and utilise it effectively
- Problems arising from adverse local, regional or national publicity
- Failure to achieve planned learner enrolment targets
- Failure to achieve target learner success targets
- Failure to maintain/improve teaching quality required by our partners (in this instance) HEI's and HEFCE
- Failure to maintain the financial viability of the College
- Failure to collect fee income from employers to ensure the viability of programmes
- Inability to recruit, retain and develop staff of the required experience, expertise and qualifications

- Failure to maintain positive employee relations and good staff morale
- Failure to ensure effective communication within the College

**g. Rationale for change and how the strategy meets identifiable needs (local, sub-regional and regional economy and society) and adds value**

The College is looking to grow HE in line with the demand from Gatwick Diamond employers and where there is good demand for internal progression to Level 4 and above. The College recognises that growth within the College's directly funded HEFCE delivery will be dependent on the availability of HEFCE funding or from the demand from employers who are willing to pay full fees.

For the last two years a steering group led by the University of Brighton, the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA), West Sussex County Council, Crawley Borough Council, Central Sussex College and the University of Brighton (which represents the local Universities of Sussex, Chichester, and Surrey) has committed substantial resources developing the evidence base and proposition for a University Centre Crawley with the intent of submitting a bid under the 'University Challenge'.

DTZ were commissioned to undertake research to identify demand and partner support and engage with leading employers. An FE HE progression survey of Level 3 students was also undertaken at the College which showed that 83% intended to progress to university level study, with the desire to study closer to home through a the work-based route.

The bid identified substantial demand to sustain growth to 2000 FTE's. This came from an assessment of both economic viability and general sustainability and the linkages to the College's own infrastructure

The full 'Statement of Intent' submitted HEFCE is attached in Appendix 1.

At its meeting on 25 September 2009, the HEFCE Board considered the University Challenge bid for Crawley and concluded that it was one of the six that could be developed further.

The University Centre will be a collaborative venture with the College, prioritising courses which are taught at FE level, building pathways, ensuring programmes are in line with local industrial/sector based requirements, improving links with schools, and raising awareness and aspirations.

Whilst waiting to hear confirmation of HEFCE funds available from the next Comprehensive Spending Review, to support this new venture, discussions are underway with employers, to see if any of their skills requirements can be met in the short term by the College and the universities before the establishment of a specific University Centre.

## Central Sussex College HE/Level 4 Strategy

### Aims:

1. To work in partnership to plan a suitable pathway of sub-degree and degree qualifications for high and medium priority by responding to local employer needs
2. To ensure progression to Level 4 (and above where applicable) in all priority sectors.
3. To widen participation in HE by supporting provision which helps address the relatively low participation rate in the Crawley area
4. To ensure high quality provision (including staffing, CPD and scholarly research) in accordance with Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review (IQR) and Common Inspection Framework judgements.
5. To provide distinctive adult and HE student ethos, environment and support.
  1. To work in partnership to plan a suitable pathway of sub-degree and degree qualifications for high and medium priority areas by responding to local employer needs
    - being a key partner in the new University Centre
    - working with SEEDA, Economic Partnerships and SSCs to identify employer needs
    - fostering strong relationships with all the Sector Skills Councils in priority areas
    - being an active partner in Sussex Learning Network (SLN)
    - agreeing areas to be developed with SLN and the Local Partnership Board
  2. To ensure progression to Level 4 (and above where applicable) in all priority sectors by:
    - mapping existing Level 4 progression opportunities for Level 3 learners at the College, including those on Advanced Apprenticeships
    - developing new Level 4 provision in:
      - Business and Management:** incorporating retail management, finance and accounting, leadership, and human resource management
      - STEM subjects:** Notably electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, maths and computing but also biotechnology
      - Public sector related subjects:** health, social care, and teaching
      - Hospitality:** including customer service and catering
      - Cultural and creative:** notably design studies

Subject to availability of funding and/or employer demand

- ensuring progression on to Level 5 and above at local universities
- determining whether to develop Foundation Degrees, BTEC Higher Nationals or Professional Diplomas and Certificates in the priority sector
- developing Foundation Degrees with a partner university
- planning teaching and learning which will develop increasingly autonomous student learning

**3. To widen participation in HE by supporting provision which help address the relatively low participation rate in the Crawley area by**

- being a key partner in the new University Centre
- developing further the provision of learning support for HE students.
- ensuring HE students are aware of the availability of financial assistance and disabled student allowances
- improving the monitoring of retention and achievement for HE students to support progression
- monitoring participation using socio-economic indicators

**4. To ensure high quality provision by:**

- following College and Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review (IQR) quality assurance policies and procedures
- monitoring and improving the quality of Level 4 and HE courses in the College through the HE working group
- providing substantive HE teachers with relevant CPD and the opportunity to pursue scholarly activities through case loading

**5. To provide distinctive adult and HE student ethos, environment and support by:**

- locating the College's HE and non prescribed HE (where practicable) within the new university centre in Crawley
- Branding the College's HE offer to complement the new university centre offer
- offering access to a range of learner support services both at the College and through the workplace
- accessing regular student feedback and responding
- developing remote access to learning and learning resources accessible from home or workplace
- encouraging student involvement with partner university student union and social groups

## ACRONYMS

AAT	Association of Accounting Technicians
BTEC	Business and Technology Education Council
CIOB	Chartered Institute of Building
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CIPS	Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply
CoVE	Centre of Vocational Excellence
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
FE	Further Education
FD	Foundation Degree
FL2 & FL3	Foundation Level 2 and 3
HE	Higher Education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HNC/D	Higher National Certificate/Diploma
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ILCT	Information, Learning and Communications Technology
liP	Investors in People
IQER	Integrated Quality Enhancement Review
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
ONS	Office of National Statistics
PGCE	Postgraduate Certificate in Education
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
SEEDA	South East England Development Agency
SLN	Sussex Learning Network
SSC	Sector Skills Council
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Manufacturing
TQS	Training Quality Standard
UCAS	Universities and Colleges Admissions Service

## Appendix 1 - Statement of Intent, University Centre Crawley

### Rationale for the project

The Gatwick Diamond (GD) has been – and will continue to be – an engine of economic growth within the South East, with, until very recently, high levels of new jobs and knowledge based employees. Many companies are now planning for a return to growth having strengthened their businesses through significant changes and see higher skills as a key factor. The Gatwick Diamond Initiative is a business led public-private partnership established by local economic partnerships with the bold vision that by 2016 the Gatwick Diamond will be a world class internationally recognised business location.

At the heart of the Gatwick Diamond, Crawley is home to 45% of the employment of the sub-region. Economic performance is high, but driven by substantial levels of in-commuting. Crawley's resident workforce is generally low skilled and not maximising its potential to participate in jobs requiring higher skills. **The University Centre Crawley will lead the Gatwick Diamond to even higher levels of economic performance by raising the skills of current and potential employees to the levels now required by employers.**

For the last two years a steering group of the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA), West Sussex County Council, Crawley Borough Council, Central Sussex College and the University of Brighton (which represents the local Universities of Sussex, Chichester, and Surrey) has committed substantial resources developing the evidence base and proposition for the University Centre Crawley.

- Demand has been analysed, including a survey of level 3 learners at the College, commissioned from consultants, DTZ.
- Property options have been evaluated in detail and there is a clear preferred, costed site in Crawley;
- Partner support has been secured outside the steering group and leading employers have been engaged;
- Curriculum direction and delivery mechanisms have and are being discussed;

**The proposal to HEFCE based on this detailed evidence base is for funding of £2.6m to provide initial refurbishment of the Central Sussex College tower to accommodate 250 FTE students, and transitional funding for the early years, to establish the University Centre Crawley. Further discussions will be essential on the growth profile to meet the sustainable target of 2000FTEs.**



## The aims of the project and information about the scope, scale, benefit and the value added

The University Centre Crawley will take a multi dimensional approach to meeting the needs of learners, businesses and the community and become part of a wider sub-regional skills escalator.

**The objectives of the Centre will be:**

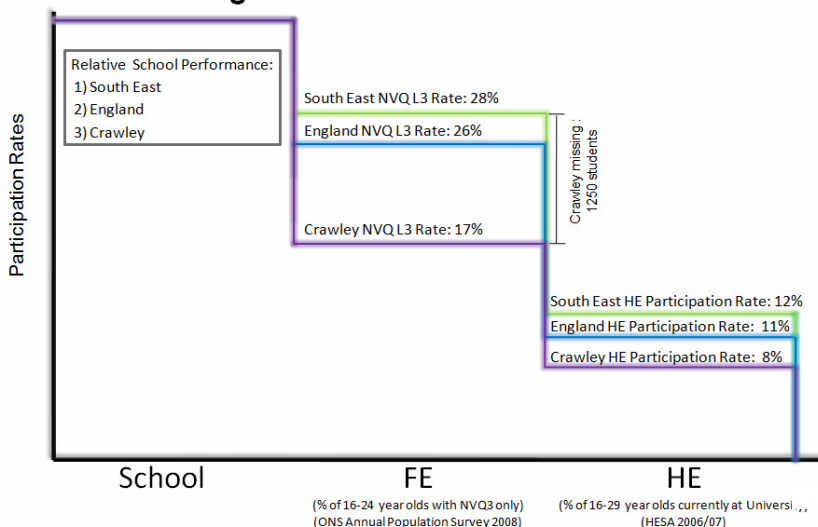
- Securing improved FE-HE progression rates and overall aspiration levels;
- Filling gaps, exploiting opportunities and meeting needs in particular subjects;
- Responding to the employer engagement support and the CPD market;
- Building excellent links with the wider community;
- Contributing to the overall intellectual capital of Crawley as the Centre grows towards a sustainable critical mass of 2000 FTEs;
- Locating the development appropriately to meet demand;

DTZ’s demand assessment has established that there is a strong evidence base for a new university centre focussed at Crawley. The University Centre Crawley would help address:

- Low aspiration levels among school leavers which is probably linked to low attainment levels;
- Lower than expected rates of progression to FE and HE (Crawley NVQ L3 rate - 17%; South East England NVQ L3 rate 28%); leading to low overall participation rates in HE;

**Fig 1: Crawley progression illustration, Gatwick Diamond, Regional and National benchmarks**

### Education Progression & Barriers

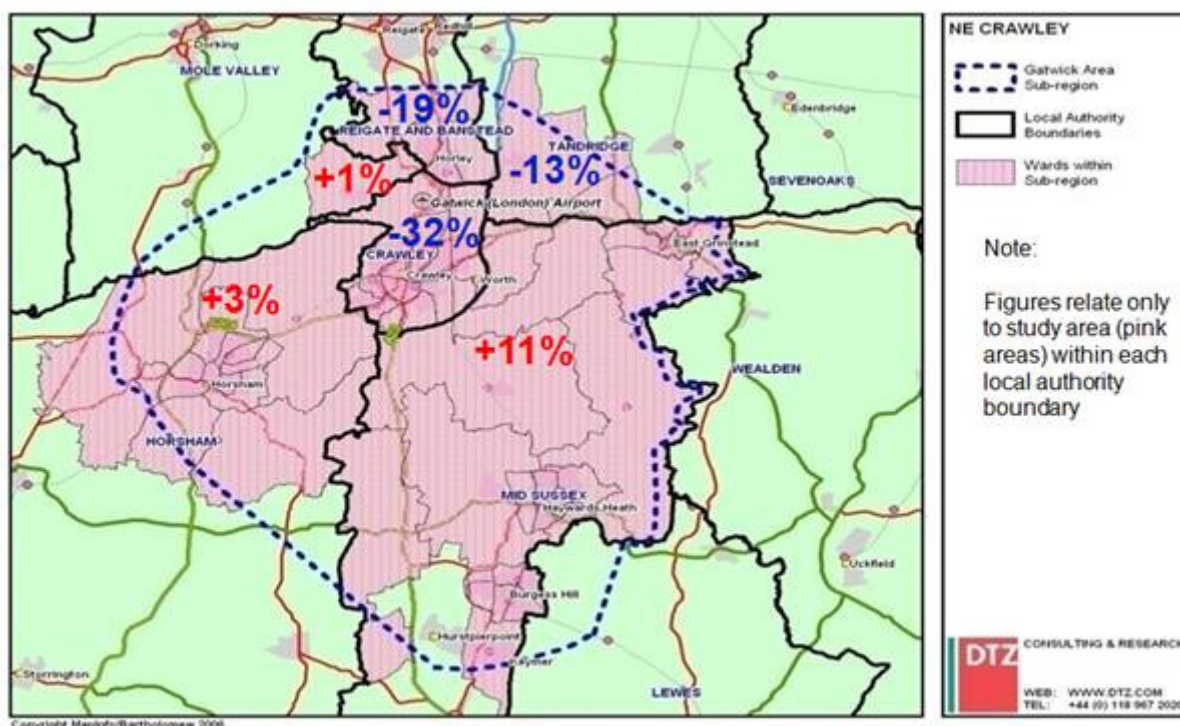


**Source:** Gatwick Diamond Higher Education, Crawley, Demand Report, DTZ

## Appendix 1 - Statement of Intent, University Centre Crawley

- An under-representation of students in the Gatwick Diamond sub-region in certain subjects; including finance business and management, alongside engineering, education, architecture, building & planning and health;
- Low levels of HE participation;

Fig 2: Differential from the UK average HE participation rate (all ages)



- There is a desire by 86% of Level 3 student respondents at Central Sussex College intending to progress to university level study (68 of 79 students choosing this option) to study close to home, according to the results of the FE progression survey;
- Low attainment of NVQ level 4 in the workforce: 14.6% people within the GD sub-region aged 16-74 hold an NVQ level 4 or higher qualifications compared to the South East average of 21.7%;
- VAT registrations in Crawley are significantly lower than in other areas of the Gatwick Diamond as well as the regional and national averages (VAT registrations per 10,000 resident working age population: 50.4 for England; 56.6 for the South East; 38.7 in Crawley).
- Employment forecasts and replacement demand requirements between 2006 and 2020 of approximately 13,000 and more than 31,000 people respectively. The total demand for new workers is 44,000 of which 14,000 will require level 4 skills (31.8%);
- CPD demand at level 4 estimated at 5,300 annualised headcount within the GD sub-region;

## Appendix 1 - Statement of Intent, University Centre Crawley

- Positive responses obtained from a large number of leading employers for new employer focussed HE programmes and a new University Centre<sup>1</sup>; and
- Opportunities to eventually link an HE centre with innovation support services. There is a gap in the market within the Gatwick Diamond area in terms of business support services and the University Centre could provide a location and services to support the innovation needs of business.

The evidence base highlights that **a new centre in Crawley is the optimal approach to address the above needs and gaps in demand**. It would improve community aspirations and school and FE progression, improve the qualifications of the workforce and secure support from employers. It would also contribute to the challenges of improving enterprise and innovation. A centre based in Crawley would best serve the resident markets identified as well as the bulk of the employers (nearly 45% of those working within the Gatwick Diamond are based in Crawley). A Crawley location would also best realise synergies (i.e. progression linkages and shared services) with Central Sussex College, securing significant collaborative university and college support<sup>2</sup> for the new venture. There is very strong local council and stakeholder support to create a university centre at Crawley.

The evidence base suggests that delivery of programmes will require a mix of locations and delivery modes – with some demand delivered in-company, some on a Crawley based campus and some within partner universities own main campuses. This responds to the need to increase and develop skill levels of current employees and in some courses to utilise specialist staff and facilities that will not be economically available at the University Centre in Crawley

DTZ estimates that there is latent demand for ca 2,000 additional HE students within the Crawley area, from progressing FE students and continuing professional development (CPD) demands and opportunities for universities. DTZ estimates that the demands and needs for HE are greatest for the FE progression market (ca 60%) and with ca 40% from the employer based market. These assessments exclude any possible relocation of niche UG/PG supply that universities might wish to consider in connection with employer focussed programmes.

Subjects have been researched in terms of student under-representation, student demand survey, key regional and sub-regional priorities and fit with local business requirements.

Key subject priorities include:

- **Business and Management:** incorporating retail management, finance and accounting, leadership, and human resource management
- **STEM subjects:** Notably electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, maths and computing but also biotechnology
- **Public sector related subjects:** health, social care, and teaching
- **Hospitality:** including customer service and catering
- **Cultural and creative:** notably design studies

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<sup>1</sup> BAA, British Airways, GSK, Accor, Thales, Caravan Club, Jeppesen, Crawley Borough Council, Virgin, EDF Energy, Cadia, Pasta Reale, Icon

<sup>2</sup> Led by the University of Brighton and supported by the University of Chichester, the University of Sussex, the University of Surrey and Central Sussex College.

## Appendix 1 - Statement of Intent, University Centre Crawley

A “skills escalator” approach to progression is likely to include foundation programmes, access courses, undergraduate programmes and on a bespoke basis CPD and postgraduate courses with employers.

The Centre would be a collaborative venture with Central Sussex College, prioritising courses which are taught at FE level by the College, building pathways, ensuring programmes are in line with local industrial/sector based requirements, improving links with schools, and raising awareness and aspirations.

### An assessment of the proposal against the common evidence base

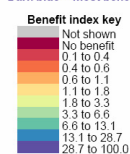
Taking one of the maps where needs are most pronounced, Crawley is not in an area where HEFCE's Common Evidence Base identifies a need for a centre. However, local evidence analysis clearly shows that Crawley is an area of significant educational underperformance within the centre of a highly performing economic area – the Gatwick Diamond. The Centre will help the sub-region to improve its economic performance for the future.

#### HEFCE Common Evidence Base: Benefit Statistic B500\_ALLUG\_YOUNG\_ALL\_WHOLE

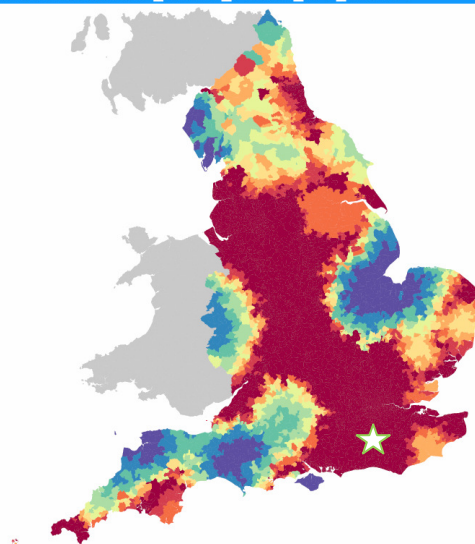
**Benefit Statistic Specification**  
B500\_ALLUG\_YOUNG\_ALL\_WHOLE  
Threshold=500 local places  
Entry places=All UG  
Population age group=Young  
Population qualification level=Any  
Area type=All

**Benefit index for new provision**  
(indexed to 100=English maximum)

Dark red = least benefit  
Dark blue = most benefit



The chart is constructed with the New Horizons Challenge Administration of www.hefce.ac.uk  
Data: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) 2005-2006  
The analysis is intended to be illustrative only. HEFCE is not responsible for any errors or omissions.  
Analysis and presentation by HEFCE 2006



Source: [http://www.hefce.ac.uk/widen/challenge/evidence/b500\\_allug\\_young\\_all\\_whole.pdf](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/widen/challenge/evidence/b500_allug_young_all_whole.pdf)

### The local evidence base or information about what it will contain

The local evidence base has been analysed by DTZ in detail, looking at:

- Demographics and Business
- Educational Performance at Schools and FE level
- NVQ Attainment and HE Participation rates
- Survey of Level 3 students at Central Sussex College to ascertain attitudes to progression, and provide input into critical success factors for the University Centre
- Profile of FE and HE Supply and Demand for the Gatwick Diamond
- Summary of discussions with employers (undertaken by the University of Brighton)

Some of the main points of this analysis are highlighted above in the scope and remit section of this Statement. The evidence underpins the core proposition being brought forward by the University of Brighton, the University of Chichester, the University of Sussex, the University of Surrey, and Central Sussex College.

Following the demand study work analysing the supply and demand context of Crawley, DTZ has also provided options analysis and financial appraisal of the most likely accommodation for the Centre. The clear outcome from the financial and options review is to initially partly refurbish the tower of Central Sussex College which they are willing to give up. Longer term the full refurbishment of the tower together with an adjacent new university building will be required to meet the financially sustainable number of ca 2000 students. This release by the College fits also with their own long term facility plans.



*The Tower, Crawley*

The full reports can be made available to HEFCE upon request.

### Links with other complementary local and regional developments

The University Centre Crawley is borne of sub-regional policy and supported by regional and national priorities.

SEEDA's Regional Economic Strategy (RES) focuses on the three main objectives of global competitiveness, smart growth and sustainable delivery. In turn SEEDA's implementation plans recognise the Gatwick Diamond as one of the South East's 'Diamonds for Investment and Growth' which will be a key driver of economic growth in the region. The creation of increased levels of knowledge based jobs will require a substantial increase in higher level skills available in the area.

## Appendix 1 - Statement of Intent, University Centre Crawley

The Gatwick Diamond Initiative described earlier brings together a wide ranging group of business and local government groups. Continuing work has identified priorities that must be addressed to ensure that the Gatwick Diamond fulfils its socio-economic potential.

### **Gatwick Diamond Economic Strategy 2007<sup>3</sup>**

One of the four objectives set out by this economic strategy concerned the development of a 'skills escalator' which provides progression routes and local access to higher level qualifications alongside raising productivity.

### **Gatwick Diamond Futures Plan Report 2008-2016<sup>4</sup>, October 2008**

The Gatwick Diamond Initiative will work with further and higher education institutions to encourage and assist in improving education and training provision in the area and linking these to future business needs. Further and higher education offers opportunities to learn and enhance skills needed to inspire the current workforce and future generations if the area is to succeed in attracting and retaining high value added businesses.

To help progress the delivery of the Gatwick Diamond Futures Plan, SEEDA, the two County Councils (West Sussex and Surrey), and the six District and Borough Authorities (Mole Valley, Horsham, Mid Sussex, Crawley, Tandridge and Reigate and Bansted) have all made financial commitments totalling £200,000 for 2009-10 with additional funds pledged for 2010-2011.

The creation of a university centre within the Gatwick Diamond is seen as a critical feature of the Future Plan and will make an important contribution to the economic growth of the area.

The four universities involved are all committed to extending their employer engagement through a variety of targeted programmes as well as widening participation to include communities who have hitherto not benefitted as much from higher education. These efforts will build higher level skills in the Crawley area and because of the current lower participation rates will not take away students from other areas in the region.

Crawley is identified as Primary Regional Centre in the South East Plan and as an innovation and growth area within SEEDA's regional strategy. The South East Plan and the Borough Council's adopted Local Development Framework both include a university centre in Crawley.

Crawley Borough Council (CBC) and its partners Grosvenor Estates and the Homes and Communities Agency are working on a mixed-use scheme that will transform the town centre and help diversify the Gatwick Diamond economy. The proposed site of the University Centre is very close to the proposed John Lewis store. The bid for a university centre in Crawley has the support of Grosvenor and the John Lewis partnership.

West Sussex County Council (WSCC) sees the development of a university centre in Crawley as a key element of its work to address skills needs across the county. Over a five year period WSCC has made a significant investment of £92 million in early years, primary and secondary education in Crawley. The development of a continuum that enables progression into higher education, and a visible HE presence that encourages the aspiration to take advantage of this opportunity, is a fundamental part of the skills escalator to which WSCC is committed.

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<sup>3</sup> [http://gatwickdiamond.co.uk/resources/documents/GD\\_Economic\\_Strategy.pdf](http://gatwickdiamond.co.uk/resources/documents/GD_Economic_Strategy.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [The Gatwick Diamond Futures Plan Report 2008-2016](#)

## Appendix 1 - Statement of Intent, University Centre Crawley

The proposal for a university centre in an area that is identified as a priority in terms of skills needs, and which has the opportunity to benefit from the significant economic potential of its surrounding area, supports WSCC's work towards delivery of the regional Framework for Action on Skills in West Sussex, and the priorities of the Economic Skills and Enterprise Board (which feeds into the Public Service Board for the county).

### Support from Partners

Letters of support from local, and regional stakeholders have been appended to this Statement of Intent. Partners have been fully engaged in the development process to date.

Key partners include:

Partner name	Nature of support
SEEDA	Financial support to the steering group so far is £75,000. Directional support through the RES which opens up possibilities should further financial opportunities arise.
WSCC	Financial support to steering group from WSCC directly and through the West Sussex Economic Skills and Enterprise Board. LEA support through £92 million investment in early years, primary and secondary schools over a five year period. Support for the initiative through delivery of the Framework for Action on Skills in West Sussex and Economic Skills and Enterprise Board, with a clear priority to support progression from further education and the workplace into HE. A strong commitment to ongoing and active involvement in the University Centre as it develops.
CBC	Financial and management support of steering group activities. Support in property evaluation and future support through the planning process for College building modifications. Future linkages through major town centre redevelopment project and other local government funding targeted at both economic support and higher level skills.
University partners	Bring their management, curriculum development, student support, knowledge and overall experience in building HE facilities, to the University Centre.
Central Sussex College	Substantial understanding of the local skills situation and the progression of students from schools to FE and then HE. The College has developed close working relationships with local employers and the Sussex Learning Network which will be invaluable to developing progression routes to the University Centre. Central Sussex will also provide 5 floors of their tower for initial refurbishment to establish the Centre. The first 2 floors could enable a 2010 start with 3 more floors becoming available in 2012. In addition, the College will transfer 105 existing FTEs in engineering subjects to the University Centre.

## Appendix 1 - Statement of Intent, University Centre Crawley

### The record of the partners in regard to collaborative projects and investments, and where appropriate, provision of higher education

The University of Brighton brings experience gained in developing the University Centre Hastings together with its work with Aimhigher and the Sussex Learning Network which is now developing the Centre for Work and Learning. In addition it has extensive experience working with FE colleges throughout Sussex (including Central Sussex College). It has developed extensive employer engagement programmes throughout the sub-region and is well positioned to help build the employer links in the Crawley and GD area necessary for the success of the University Centre Crawley.

The Universities of Chichester, Surrey and Sussex also bring a wide range of experience in developing courses, employer engagement and widening participation. Both Surrey and Sussex bring research strengths that will allow specialist programmes to be developed in the future. Surrey has extensive employer contacts through their science park and Sussex has similar links through the Sussex Innovation Centre. Chichester is leading the development of education-led regeneration in coastal West Sussex through facility upgrades, work with employers and schools/FE/HE progression. Sussex and Brighton also collaborate closely in their joint management of the Brighton and Sussex Medical School.

Central Sussex College has a long collaborative history of work in the FE sector with East Surrey College in Redhill and the Sussex Learning Network. They have worked on HE courses with all three universities in Sussex. The current college structure followed the merger with Haywards Heath College several years ago. It has a long history of working with local employers particularly in the engineering area.

Crawley Borough Council has a track record of successful partnership working in Crawley based on innovation and cooperation, and with a focus on delivery. The list of achievements is considerable with the following major examples.

Crawley Borough Council and West Sussex County Council worked together to deliver a substantial investment programme in Crawley. This has resulted in three new secondary schools, a new library adjacent to Central Sussex College, a landmark sports centre (K2) accredited as an Olympic training camp, a new recycling centre, a housing development including 40% affordable, and a current project to deliver a new neighbourhood community facility and healthy living centre.

These developments were interdependent and could not have been delivered in isolation. Most of the developments are served by the 24 hour Fastway guided bus system which was delivered through a public/private partnership. A university centre would benefit from Fastway which serves the major employment areas including the town centre, Gatwick Airport and the surrounding business district, as well as the main railway stations and a number of residential areas.

The Government's Regional Planning Strategy refers to a university in Crawley. This is reflected in the Crawley Core Strategy which was adopted in 2007 having been approved by a government inspector. As well as providing for a university, the Core Strategy confirms Crawley's position as the economic driver at the heart of the Gatwick Diamond and recognises the need to diversify the economy through 'smart growth' that maintains economic vibrancy and also addresses deficiencies in the innovation culture, the knowledge economy and skill levels.

In addition, Crawley Borough Council, Central Sussex College and West Sussex County Council work together to support a range of minority communities to access educational classes. Examples include

work with Crawley's Bangladeshi, Moroccan, and from a faith perspective Muslim, communities, to deliver basic maths and literacy learning for young people who typically are amongst the lowest achievers from an academic perspective.

West Sussex County Council (WSSCC) has a history of successful and active partnership working, including with further and higher education institutions, SEEDA and local businesses. WSSCC is a partner in a number of current collaborative projects relevant to this proposal, including the Sussex Learning Network and its newly developing Centre for Work and Learning, extensive work within the Gatwick Diamond, and the Coastal West Sussex Skills and Innovation Group. This group provides a clear example of the successful partnership working between further and higher education partners and others within a specific geographic area of the county, prioritised for skills development and delivering on the education-led regeneration agenda.

SEEDA has extensive working relationships with HEFCE most recently in the newly established monitoring group between HEFCE, SEEDA and HESE (the South East representative HE group). There is a proven track record of helping to lead the delivery of collaborative projects across the South East which includes the education-led regeneration work around Kent, the region's first University Centre in Hastings and currently the development of the University of Chichester's Bognor Regis campus.

University Centre Crawley Partnership

30 June 2009



## **HE Strategy - Appendix 2**

### **Widening Participation Strategic Assessment**

Submission to the Office for fair Access for the planning period 2009/10 – 2011/12

June 2009

## **PART A**

### **Commitment to Widening Participation**

#### **College Level**

##### **1. Introduction**

Central Sussex College offers a wide range of professional, vocational and academic qualifications, complemented by excellent training facilities and experienced, supportive teaching staff. We have a very wide curriculum offer from foundation learning and skills for life to degree and masters level qualifications. We offer an exceptionally inclusive learning environment open to all young people and adults in Central Sussex through our emphasis on entitlement, personalisation of learning and progression routes.

##### **2. An Inclusive College**

The College's purpose is to create confident lifelong learners. Our vision is to support aspiration and achievement and enable our learners to be whoever they want to be. Staff have worked together to agree a set of core values and beliefs which include

- Promoting acceptance of diversity and removing barriers
- Improving accessibility, availability and approaches for students
- Valuing what people bring from their own background and experience
- Ensuring that student development is at the heart of all that we do
- Ensuring that all students achieve their potential
- Nurturing sustainable and long-term strategic partnerships

Our approach to developing higher education in the mid-Sussex area puts these values into practice.

##### **3. How our widening participation strategic assessment links to other strategies and policies**

The College Strategic Plan 2008-2013 sets specific strategic aims, of which the following demonstrate our commitment to widening participation in higher education –

- To develop a curriculum offer with progression from Entry to Higher Education
- To develop, in conjunction with partners, a skills curriculum offer that matches the demands/needs of specific sectors at Gatwick Diamond sub-regional level, incorporating the Skills Escalator from Basic Skills to Higher Education and supporting the development of a University Centre at the College.
- To work in partnership to plan a suitable pathway of sub-degree and degree qualifications for high and medium priority areas in response to local employer needs.
- To ensure progression to Level 4 in all priority sectors.
- To develop part-time provision where there is evidence of demand.
- To ensure high quality provision including staffing, CPD including scholarly research, linked to Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review (IQER) and the Common Inspection Framework.
- To provide distinctive adult and Higher Education student ethos, environment and support.

Widening participation is embedded in our overall corporate strategy, and is closely linked to other strands of policy development including –

- Equality and Diversity Policy and related policies (Race Equality Policy; Disability, Gender and Race Equality Duty Schemes)
- Learner Services Strategy 2008-13
- HE/Level 4 Strategy 2008-2013

#### **4. Evidence of commitment to equality and diversity.**

The College was inspected by OFSTED in January 2009. The overall judgement was that the promotion of equality of opportunity is good (Grade 2), and key strengths of the College include

- Wide and inclusive range of provision
- Strong educational and social inclusion
- Good contribution to community cohesion.

The main findings were –

“This is an inclusive college which makes a significant contribution to local community cohesion. It pays very close attention to equality and diversity and promotes equality of opportunity well in many areas of its work. The College has invested significantly in staff to support this work and effectively analyses its plans and procedures to ensure that they meet the needs of all potential students. A broad range of education and training opportunities are provided for students of differing abilities including vulnerable young people and those with disrupted educational backgrounds...

The performance of students from different ethnic backgrounds and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is analysed carefully and when underperformance is detected it is successfully addressed. The range and quality of support to help all students achieve their potential are good...

The College also meets its obligations under race, disability and gender equality legislation.”

#### **5. Leadership and development of our equality and diversity strategies**

The widening participation assessment is part of the College’s commitment to equality and diversity, which is headed by the Principal, Dr. Russell Strutt. He chairs the College’s Equality and Diversity Committee, leads policy development and ensures that the equality and diversity agenda (including widening participation in higher education) is strongly represented at meetings of the Corporation and College Leadership Team. Equality and Diversity issues are regularly discussed at team meetings across the College, and are to be the subject of an all-staff INSET day in July 2009. All employees receive induction training on equality and diversity and CPD for teaching staff includes training on hidden disabilities. The College has an Equality and Diversity Officer, an Equality and Diversity Curriculum Adviser, and a Disability Adviser, as well as a large team of Learning Support Assistants. Equality Impact Assessments are undertaken to ensure that policies, procedures and practices (such as the Admissions procedure) promote equality of opportunity. The College works closely with a variety of partners to promote access to learning by groups who are often excluded, such as NEETs, young offenders, and people with mental health difficulties. There is progression from the Faculty of Skills for Life for those studying key skills and English as an additional language.

## **Higher Education at Central Sussex College**

### **Scope**

The College has four campuses: Crawley, Haywards Heath, Burgess Hill and East Grinstead, with higher education provision being located at Crawley. There are just over 300 students enrolled on higher education courses (103 FTE) in Engineering, Teacher Training, Early Childhood and Computing. The awarding bodies for HEFCE funded higher education are Edexcel, the University of Chichester and the University of Sussex.

### **Widening participation – our current position**

The figures below are taken from the College's "Widening Participation in Higher Education Questionnaire," which was distributed to HE students on HEFCE funded courses in the Summer Term 2009 and received 108 responses.

<b>Socio-economic Indicator</b>	<b>% of responses (excluding prefer to withhold and no response)</b>	<b>Comparison figures</b>
Students from state schools	86%	In the south east region, approximately 84% of young entrants to HE courses are from state schools (source: HESA)
Students who had no parents/guardians with higher education qualifications	63%	
Mature students (aged 21 or over at the date they started their course)	74%	Nationally, 23% of accepted applicants to HE courses via UCAS are mature students (source: UCAS statistics 2008)
Students in receipt of Disabled Students' Allowance	2%	Nationally, 4.5% of first-time degree students on full time courses receive DSA, and 2.5% of those on part-time courses (source: HESA)
Students who consider themselves to have a disability within the meaning of the Disability Discrimination Act	6%	Nationally, 6% of accepted applicants to HE courses via UCAS have a disability (source: UCAS statistics, 2008)
Students qualifying for a bursary or grant because of low income	12%	Nationally, 29% of young entrants to first degree courses in England are from NS-SEC classes 4 – 7 (source: HESA 2007-8)
Students whose first language is other than English	6%	In 2008, 10% of 16 year old pupils nationally (including 5% in West Sussex and 34% in London) had English as an additional language (source: DCSF: Attainment by Pupil Characteristics in England 2007/8 tables 12 and B2).

**Success rates by gender, expected year of completion 2007/8**

<b>Course</b>	<b>Male students starts - transfers</b>	<b>Male success rate</b>	<b>Female students starts - transfers</b>	<b>Female success rate</b>	<b>Total success rate</b>
<b>Year 0 computing</b>	16	88%	1	100%	88%
<b>Engineering Higher Nationals</b>	58	69%	2	100%	70%
<b>Certificate in Education</b>	26	73%	47	68%	70%
<b>Foundation degree in early childhood</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

In 2007/8, 43% of higher education students were male and 57% female (source: Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills SFR 02/2009). This compares with a College gender balance for HEFCE funded students who completed courses in 2007-8 of 67% male and 33% female, although this imbalance has been reduced in 2008-9 with the addition of the Foundation Degree in Early Childhood, with an entirely female cohort.

**Success rates by ethnicity, expected year of completion 2007/8 (excluding the five students of unknown ethnicity)**

<b>Course</b>	<b>White students starts – transfers (includes Irish and other white groups)</b>	<b>White students success rate</b>	<b>BME students starts - transfers</b>	<b>BME students success rate</b>	<b>Total success rate (all ethnicities excluding unknown)</b>
<b>Year 0 computing</b>	13	85%	3	100%	88%
<b>Engineering higher nationals</b>	49	73%	10	50%	69%
<b>Certificate in Education</b>	69	70%	1	100%	70%
<b>Foundation degree in early childhood</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>All HEFCE funded HE</b>	131	73%	14	64%	72%

Local figures - the Office for National Statistics estimate that for 2005-6, 11.5% of the Crawley population had an ethnicity other than white (Source: ONS). This compares with a College ethnic minority participation rate of 10% of HEFCE funded students who completed in 2007-8.

**Success rates by learning difficulties and disabilities, expected year of completion 2007/8**

<b>Course</b>	<b>Students without learning difficulties and disabilities starts – transfers</b>	<b>Students without learning difficulties and disabilities success rate</b>	<b>Students with learning difficulties and disabilities starts – transfers</b>	<b>Students with learning difficulties and disabilities starts – transfers success rate</b>	<b>Total success rate</b>
<b>Year 0 computing</b>	16	88%	1	100%	88%
<b>Engineering higher nationals</b>	60	70%	0	0	70%
<b>Certificate in Education</b>	72	69%	1	100%	70%
<b>Foundation degree in early childhood</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

**Additional information**

- The College serves a local community which includes wards where the young participation level in HE and the adult qualification level are very low. There are four wards in Crawley which fall into the lowest quintile for both these measures of participation : Bewbush, Broadfield (North and South) and Tilgate. (source : HEFCE 2009).
- With regard to accessing financial support because of economic hardship, this year one HEFCE funded student receives funding from the Access for Learning Fund and four students receive Sussex Bursaries. In addition, on the Foundation Degree in Early Childhood, all students are in receipt of 80% bursaries from Workforce Development (Surrey or West Sussex) which are not income-related.

**The main messages emerging for Central Sussex College are:**

- Most of the HE students are recruited from the local population, and the proportion from other than white British ethnic backgrounds is similar to the population locally. However, students from white backgrounds other than British are slightly over-represented and students from black and Asian backgrounds are slightly under-represented compared with the Crawley population.
- There is an attainment gap in students taking Engineering Higher National qualifications in the 19+ age group between white students and other ethnic groups – taking 2006/7 and 2007/8 data together because of the small cohort of ethnic minority students, there was a success rate of 53% for the 15 ethnic minority students, but 75% for the 87 white students. This gap needs monitoring to see if it continues in future years, but if it persists, it may indicate a need for English language support to meet the standard required for course assignments.
- Many of the students at the College are in employment and study part-time, and this is reflected in the relatively low uptake of bursaries and grants. However, on the Year 0

computing course, which is full-time, a third of the students receive bursaries or grants because they have a low income.

- The % of students self-identifying themselves as having a disability within the meaning of the Disability Discrimination Act is as high as the national figure from UCAS, but the % of students in receipt of Disabled Students Allowance is lower, and HE students with disabilities are not being monitored accurately enough by the College.
- Owing to the nature of the courses offered at Central Sussex, a much higher % of our students than the national average are mature students.
- The gender balance amongst students is very different to the national figures, with much higher participation from men.

## **PART B**

### **Our key widening participation aims**

There are three key aims for Central Sussex College –

#### **Aim 1**

**To build upon existing measures to assist retention and success of students through improvements in monitoring, and further provision of learning support.**

#### **Aim 2**

**To increase the progression of students from Level 3 Central Sussex Courses to higher education, to help address the relatively low participation rates in HE in the Crawley area.**

#### **Aim 3**

**To increase the number of higher education students in receipt of Disabled Students Allowance and other financial assistance.**

### **Improvement plan for 2009 – 2012**

In order to achieve these aims, the College intends to introduce the following improvements over the next three years –

#### **Aim 1**

##### **Actions**

Introduce additional oversight by the Admissions Team in Learner Support Services to the admissions process and ensure that students who have support needs identified are logged centrally into the College's student information system.

Ensure that students with learning difficulties or disabilities are identified at the start of the course and promptly referred to the Learner Services Department for any assessments or assistance they may require which is additional to the support or assessments already offered by their course lecturers and partner HEIs.

Ensure that needs relating to functional skills in English are addressed in partnership with the College's Skills for Life Faculty so that students with lower than a Level 2 competence in written English are automatically provided with assistance either by the partner HEI or the College (additional support in mathematics is already provided where necessary).

### Measurements –

- all students identified as requiring learning support through the College are offered assistance;
- success rates for HE students with learning difficulties and disabilities are more accurately monitored;
- reduction of the attainment gap between white and ethnic minority students (aged over 19) studying Higher National engineering qualifications.

### **Aim 2**

#### Actions

Ensure that HE courses are effectively marketed to existing students at all campuses through participation in HE information days, talks to students, information in the prospectuses etc.

### Measurements –

Increase in the proportion of Central Sussex College students progressing to HE courses.

### **Aim 3**

#### Actions

Train learning support staff to undertake assessments for Disabled Students Allowance.

Improve marketing of the College's courses to people with disabilities e.g. through the West Sussex Association of Disabled People and the Disabled Go website.

Improve information to students about sources of financial support.

### Measurements –

Increase the proportion of HEFCE funded HE students receiving financial support because of disability or financial hardship.

## **PART C**

### **List of existing activities designed to widen participation in HE –**

#### **Recruitment - links with employers**

Most of the College's HE provision has very strong links with employers:

- Certificate in Education students must be employed as they need to complete a set number of hours in the classroom and work-based assignments. The College liaises with their mentors at their place of work.
- Higher Nationals in Engineering - most students are employed when they start their courses, and are sponsored by their employers. Assignments are project-based at the place of employment, and the minority of students who begin the course without employment are encouraged to link up with the employers of other students or to do work-based projects within the College. Many find employment through links made with companies during the course.
- Foundation degree in early childhood – this course requires applicants to have work placements where they can carry out assignments. Each student has a mentor in the work-place, and there is a termly meeting between the College and the mentors.

## **Progression – links with schools/colleges, employers and universities**

The College has excellent links with schools, employers and universities to help HE students progress with their studies or employment –

- Higher Nationals in Engineering – there are progression routes to HNCs and HNDs from level 3 courses within the College's faculty of technology, and these have been taken by 62% of 2008-9 Higher National students. Students starting HNCs and HNDs come with a wide variety of educational qualifications: 70% have a National Diploma or Certificate; 10% City and Guilds qualifications; 10% A levels (progressing from schools); and 10% have other qualifications or employment experience. They can progress from HNC to HND, and at the end of the HND, they have the option to do the final year of an honours degree through the College's links with Portsmouth and Greenwich universities.
- Certificate in Education – these students are furthering their careers by attaining qualifications necessary for their employment setting – often as lecturers in vocational subjects in further education. They have a wide range of previous academic and vocational qualifications.
- Foundation Degree in Early Childhood – this course is provided in partnership with the University of Chichester. Applicants are already working with young children in an Early Years setting, and arrive with a variety of prior qualifications. At the end of the course, students can progress to Early Years Professional Status or other courses offered by Chichester, such as the BA Hons in Childhood Studies, or a PGCE (and hence Qualified Teacher Status).
- Year 0 computing – this course constitutes a foundation year for progression to a BSc degree in computing at Sussex University. It is designed for A level students who just fall short of the entry requirements for the University, or who have qualifications from overseas which are not recognised as equivalent to A level.

## **Additional support for HE students to support retention**

The College undertakes a wide range of initiatives that support the retention of students. These include –

- Flexible study patterns e.g. Engineering programmes include classes scheduled in the day and the evening, and the length of students' programmes is flexible to meet individual needs.
- Course-specific assessments in literacy and mathematics at the beginning of the course to identify support needs. Support is offered through the faculty staff e.g. timetabled additional mathematics and computer programming support on the Year 0 computing course (plus untimetabled 1:1 support from tutors where problems arise) ; support in mathematics from lecturers for Higher National students; access to Level 2 mathematics and literacy courses for College employees doing the Certificate in Education through Train to Gain; support through Learner Services for Foundation Degree in Early Childhood students.
- Learning support for students in receipt of Disabled Students' Allowance e.g. providing a sign language communicator for a profoundly deaf student.
- Drop-in Learning Support in the Learner Resource Centre for students with difficulties such as dyslexia.
- Learner Services and faculty staff contact and talk to students in danger of leaving the course, and Learner Services offers a range of assistance e.g. referral to the College Counselling Service or help in finding accommodation.

- Faculty staff are always available 1:1 to discuss problems students may face and offer assistance where possible (NSS survey 2008 showed 91% rated the ability to contact staff when needed very highly).
- Prompt and detailed feedback is given to students and employers are kept informed of progress (NSS Survey 2008 found that assessment and feedback was rated very highly at 82% compares with an England average of 64%).

## **PART D**

### **Levels of Resources Committed to Widening Participation in HE, including the HEFCE WP Allocation**

**TO BE COMPLETED**