

# South Thames Colleges Group: Provider Access Policy Statement

2023/25

## Introduction

South Thames Colleges Group (STCG) is made up of Carshalton College, Kingston College, Merton College and South Thames College. South Thames Colleges Group is committed to providing high quality, impartial careers education, information, advice, and guidance to support every student to fulfil their potential.

High quality careers education and guidance in college is critical to young people's futures. It helps to prepare them for the workplace by providing a clear understanding of the world of work including the routes to jobs and careers that they might find engaging and rewarding. It supports them to acquire the self-development and career management skills they need to achieve positive employment destinations. This helps students to choose their pathways, improve their life opportunities and contribute to a productive and successful economy.

Our vision is to excel at what we do every day: delivering great outcomes for young people and adults of all backgrounds and abilities to make sure their life chances are improved. We work hard to ensure that our curriculum offer develops the skills, knowledge, and behaviours in our students that employers locally, regionally, and nationally tell us they need.

This policy statement is underpinned by the DfE Careers Strategy: The DfE 'Baker Clause' 2021, and the Provider Access Legislation, January 2023; Careers guidance and access for education and training providers (Sept 2022); and The Gatsby Benchmarks for Careers Education and Guidance (2014).

## Commitment

South Thames Colleges Group is committed to ensuring there is an opportunity for a range of education and training providers to access students, for the purpose of informing them about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships. We are fully aware of the responsibility to set students on the path that will secure the best outcome which will enable them to progress in education and work and give employers the highly skilled people they need. That means acting impartially, in line with the statutory duty, and not showing bias towards any route, be that academic or technical.

South Thames Colleges Group endeavours to ensure that all students are aware of all routes to higher skills and are able to access information on technical options and apprenticeships (The Department of Education, July 2021: "Baker Clause": supporting students to understand the full range of education and training options, and the Provider Access Legislation, January 2023).

## Aims

This policy for Access to other education and training providers has the following aims:

- To develop the knowledge and awareness of our students of all career pathways available to them, including technical qualifications and apprenticeships.
- To support young people to be able to learn more about opportunities for education and training outside of college before making crucial choices about their future options.
- To reduce withdrawals from courses and avoid the risk of students becoming NEET (Young people not in education, employment or training).



## **Student Entitlement**

South Thames Colleges Group fully supports the statutory requirement for students to have direct access to other providers of further education training, technical training and apprenticeships. As best practice we will comply with the new legal requirement to put on at least two encounters with providers of approved technical education qualifications or apprenticeships. This will be done in National Apprenticeship Week and National Careers Week, in addition to providers attending careers events at the college.

## **Development**

This policy has been developed and is reviewed annually by the Careers Leader and the College Academic Leadership team based on current good practice guidelines by the Department for Education.

## **Links with other policies**

It supports and is underpinned by key policies including those for Careers, Child Protection, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and SEND.

## **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**

Access to other providers is available and promoted to allow all students to access information about other providers of further education and apprenticeships. South Thames Colleges Group is committed to encouraging all students to make decisions about their future based on impartial information.

Access will be given for providers to attend during progression events and themed weeks such as HE Fairs and Employability Weeks, and through the college tutorial programme and enrichment activities.

## **Details of premises or facilities to be provided to a person who is given access**

South Thames Colleges Group will provide appropriate facilities. All rooms have computers, projectors and screens provided. Computer rooms can also be arranged. These activities will usually be organised by the Careers and Employability Teams, working closely with the provider to ensure the facilities are appropriate to the audience. Providers will be met and supervised by relevant members of the Careers Team who will facilitate.

- Please refer to our [Freedom of Speech and Visiting Speaker Policy](#) (incorporating the Code of Practice)

## **Requests for access**

Requests for access should be directed to *David Williamson*, Careers Leader. *David* may be contacted by email, [David.Williamson@stcg.ac.uk](mailto:David.Williamson@stcg.ac.uk).

## **Live Virtual encounters**

South Thames Colleges Group will consider live online encounters with providers where requested, and these may be broadcast into classrooms. Technology checks in advance will be required to ensure compatibility of systems.

## **Parents and Carers**

Parental involvement is encouraged, and parents may be invited to attend the events to meet the providers.

## **Monitoring review and evaluation**

The Policy is monitored and evaluated annually via the Group Senior Leadership Team

***Policy Review Date: January 2025***