

South Thames Colleges Group Employer Engagement Strategy 2019-20

1. Vision:

South Thames Colleges Group (STCG) is an actively engaged institution which aims:

- To meet the needs of local businesses and employers in developing their own skills and those of their workforce to support the development of our local, regional and national economy.

And

- To ensure that the curriculum offer of STCG is relevant, appropriate, current and in line with demand from employers and labour market information.

2. Introduction and context:

There is also a separate policy, entitled “Employability and Employer Involvement Policy”, which should be read in conjunction with this policy, and has a particular focus on the development of employability skills as an essential element of the Learner Journey, which all STCG students are entitled to receive. The policy looks to ensure that all students engage with employers linked to their main qualification in order to gain skills and knowledge to further their employability, and includes the policy entitlement for students in respect of work experience and industry placements.

This Employer Engagement Strategy identifies the College Group’s broader employer engagement aspirations including, but covered in less detail, the planned development of student employability skills and opportunities.

The South Thames Colleges Group (STCG) Employer Engagement Strategy is based on the key targets of the STCG Strategy 2019-21, particularly those that directly relate to engaging with employers and our wider community.

The Group’s six strategic key targets are:

1. Consistently good or better outcomes across the Group
2. A proactive approach to wellbeing for staff and students
3. Effective and comprehensive support for students’ development and progression
4. Active engagement with partners, innovations and opportunities
5. A review of our curriculum, with paths to growth and innovation identified
6. Good or better financial health combined with substantial investment in our buildings

Each key target has a number of associated impact measures, which the Group aims to achieve. Where there are no directly related employer engagement impact measures within a strategic target, there are still ways in which employer engagement can positively impact upon the target and help to ensure STCG achieves each key target.

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Impact measures directly related to employer engagement are as follows:

- Work experience activities expand in line with government policy and are consistently good or better in their quality
- The Group remains an engaged and influential collaborator within national, regional and sub-regional partnerships
- The number of employer contacts used by the Group increases by at least 20%
- The Group wins significant contestable bids, either in partnership or alone
- New approaches to programme delivery are introduced to enhance and extend learning
- The curriculum is fully assessed against local and regional need and gaps in provision are eliminated

In order to contribute to the key targets outlined in the STCG Strategy 2019-2021 and meet the employer engagement related impact measures, there are a number of objectives as outlined below.

Relationships with Employers, Businesses, Industry led Employer groups

STCG will:

- Develop relationships with existing businesses and employers to raise awareness of the full range of opportunities available to them
- Build on existing and new partnerships including Chambers of Commerce, local councils, NHS Trusts and other local bodies and industry led groups within the four London boroughs in which STCG is based, to understand current and future workforce requirements amongst all partners.
- Prioritise sectors of strategic importance and strength within STCG
- Develop internal partnerships to create a coherent organisational approach to Employer Engagement, leading to greater opportunities for STCG’s learners and maximising commercial opportunities
- Develop a schedule of Industry Advisory Boards across all curriculum areas which help keep the curriculum current and shape the development of learning and teaching strategies
- Monitor and review bids and tenders to maximise potential for relevant funding opportunities

Employability

STCG will:

- Work with local, regional and national employers on a range of work experience and industrial placements for our learners
- Work with local employers and businesses to promote apprenticeships across a range of sectors and levels, that offer training and development opportunities for employees and apprentices
- Work with employers and industry led groups to improve opportunities for learners who experience barriers to sustainable employment
- Develop and deliver new partnerships with key employers and sectors not currently working with STCG

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Local and Regional Profile

STCG will:

- Proactively market existing products and opportunities to employers and businesses using a range of tools, including print material where appropriate, website and social media, network events and other employer engagement activities
- Promote good news stories, case studies, products and services through a planned and coherent marketing plan for employer engagement
- Promote work experience/industrial placement opportunities and benefits to local businesses and employers
- Work with local schools to ensure young learners are aware of the opportunities available to them at STCG.

Curriculum and Product Development

STCG will:

- Review our curriculum and portfolio of products regularly to ensure they continue to meet the needs of businesses and employers
- Monitor initiatives, especially those of the Greater London Authority (GLA), in particular those relating to Education and Youth and Skills and Employment, to support priorities and opportunities arising.

Use of Campuses and Estates

STCG will:

- Optimise the use of our campuses, to support business development in our region and to generate commercial income from our existing resources
- Promote our campuses as a regional resource for events and business activity to meet the needs of our local economy and community

3. Responsibilities

- The Group Leadership Team is responsible for setting and ensuring the implementation of the strategy
- The Assistant Principal – HE and Business Development is responsible for achieving the aims of the strategy
- The Head of Business Development and Heads of Curriculum are responsible for implementing the strategy
- The Business Development team, Curriculum staff, Student Support staff and learners are all responsible for delivering the objectives of the strategy.

4. Monitoring and Review

- The Apprenticeships and Business Development Matrix Group will monitor progress bi-annually.

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5. Related Documents

- STCG Strategy 2019-21
- Employability and Employer Involvement Policy 2018-19
- Careers Education, Information Advice and Guidance Policy (CEIAG)
- Employer Charter
- Single Equality Scheme

All publicly available on: <https://www.south-thames.ac.uk>

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