

DRAFT STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES 2025-29 FOR CONSULTATION

MISSION

To empower our communities to develop their economic and social prosperity in a rapidly changing world

(For reference the current mission is “To play a leading role for East Kent in developing the economic and social prosperity of the diverse communities we serve”)

The updated mission:

- Articulates the Group’s core role to empower our communities.
- Removes the specific reference to the East Kent geography, whilst still including ‘our communities’ as a central part of the mission. This reflects the need for the Group to be flexible and agile to respond to any potential future opportunities and changes to geographical boundaries (for example, devolution policy).
- Reflects the reality of the rapidly changing nature of the environment in which the Group and its communities exist, which needs to be considered in all our plans and delivery.
- Generally sharpening the mission further to ensure it is as clear and concise as possible.

VISION

For ambitions in life and work to be achieved through outstanding education and skills

Draft Strategic Goals and Objectives

NB: Specific KPIs / outcomes for each objective will be added to the final version.

Strategic Goal 1: Building on our existing strengths, deliver a wider range of inspirational, inclusive and accessible education provision that meets the needs of our communities

Objective	Why do we want to do this?	What does success look like?
1.1. Further develop our curriculum specialisms to create regional centres of excellence for key industry sectors.	To anticipate and address the skills and workforce needs of priority sectors, we will create centres that excel in delivering inspirational and high-quality provision up to Level 5.	<p>Establish four Centres of Excellence across our Colleges that have a strong national reputation and meet the skills needs of priority sectors, whilst providing the very best progression and career opportunities for learners. (Indicative sectors include Engineering, Health and Care, Hospitality and Catering, and Construction).*</p> <p>Investment in industry level resources and highly skilled staff teams.</p>
1.2. Develop an offer for adult learners that enables them to access the learning and skills they need to enhance their lives, and that meets the needs of our local communities.	<p>To enhance life choices for adults, supporting their health, wellbeing, employability and progression in work.</p> <p>To support local economic prosperity by addressing skill gaps.</p>	<p>Our communities benefit from a more skilled workforce, leading to increased productivity and prosperity.</p> <p>More adult learners studying across the Group, including in College-based, community and prison education provision, progress to and achieve higher levels of education and training, further enhancing their career prospects and life choices.</p> <p>Adult learners experience better health and wellbeing due to increased confidence, social interaction, and personal development through learning.</p>
1.3. Develop a distinctive, relevant and industry-aligned Higher Education offer that enables learners to achieve their	To deliver inclusive programmes that increase opportunities for individuals from diverse backgrounds to access higher education and skilled employment.	<p>A Higher Education centre is established, delivering inclusive programmes that advance the earnings potential and life opportunities for our diverse students.*</p> <p>Our programmes, including Higher Apprenticeships, provide a highly skilled workforce for local industry.</p>

Objective	Why do we want to do this?	What does success look like?
ambitions and meets the needs of employers.	To align HE programmes with industry needs, ensuring that students acquire the skills that are in high demand.	
1.4. Build on our strong partnership with EKC Schools Trust, providing technical education and progression opportunities for children and young people.	<p>To expand the opportunities for children to experience technical education within their local community.</p> <p>To align education to the talents and skills of young people, supporting them to remain fully engaged in their education and to make the right choices for their future careers.</p>	<p>Building on the existing strong partnerships between EKC Schools Trust's schools and our Colleges, every child has the opportunity to experience technical education and learn about future career opportunities, whilst enabling our College students to convey their passion for their chosen pathway.</p> <p>More young people studying locally on the Isle of Sheppey, enabling them to progress to careers or further learning to achieve their ambitions, and make a positive contribution to their community.</p> <p>Nursery provision is successfully established in the three communities where we do not currently have a presence (Ashford, Dover, and Sheppey), providing an increase in places to meet local needs, whilst enabling more of our Early Years students to secure valuable work placement and career opportunities.*</p>
1.5. Establish a wider range of accessible and inclusive provision to meet the increasingly diverse needs of our young people.	To ensure EKC Group remains fully inclusive, we will focus on developing education and progression pathways accessible to all young people, while targeting areas where we can achieve positive outcomes within the scope of available funding.	<p>Building on our three existing Junior Colleges establish one in each of our other three Colleges (Ashford, Dover, and Sheppey) to support young people who want to follow a technical pathway from the age of 14.*</p> <p>Mainstream and specialist SEND provision that continues to meet the dynamic changes in learner needs.</p> <p>An Alternative Provision established in communities identified as having limited and difficult-to-access opportunities for young people, particularly those not yet prepared for a College environment.</p>

** Following the reclassification of Further Education Colleges into the public sector and the removal of Colleges' ability to commercially borrow, the scope and scale of these new developments will be dependent on Department for Education capital funding and other funding opportunities.*

Strategic Goal 2: Ensure our learners are equipped for their next stage of life and work in a rapidly changing world

Objective	Why do we want to do this?	What does success look like?
2.1. Equip our learners with career and life critical skills that are embedded in all our programmes, including digital and AI, employability, entrepreneurship, innovation and sustainability.	<p>Students with limited skills in these areas have a barrier to accessing learning, achieving their potential in their future lives and careers, and making a positive impact in their local community.</p> <p>To better meet local skills needs.</p>	<p>Students will have general and sector specific skills and capabilities that will enable them to thrive in their learning programme and next steps.</p> <p>Employers provide positive feedback on the capabilities of our students in these critical skills areas, including in their work placements, apprenticeships, and progression to employment.</p>
2.2. Ensure that employers are at the heart of curriculum design, development and delivery.	<p>It is crucial that employers work in partnership with the Group to co-design and deliver education programmes. This ensures they continue to align with industry trends and provide the best opportunities for our students to gain industry experience and achieve their ambitions.</p>	<p>Students are provided with valuable, real-world experience, preparing them to meet the demands of their chosen fields and supporting their ambitions for successful careers.</p> <p>Students benefit from the most up to date knowledge and expertise via industry leading employers.</p>
2.3. A student experience that enables all learners to grow in confidence and independence, preparing them for their future lives and careers.	<p>To have a consistent student experience offer that engages students to build their talents, social skills, confidence in their own abilities and independence in life.</p>	<p>A student experience that enables students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore opportunities they have previously not been able to access in their lives • thrive in learning and in their community • grow as an individual to be confident and independent in life • make sustainable choices that take account of their impact on the environment • make a positive contribution to their communities and wider society

Objective	Why do we want to do this?	What does success look like?
2.4. Amplify the student voice creating more opportunity for all our students to be heard and represented.	<p>An inconsistent student voice across all sectors is impacting the development of a relevant and engaging student experience.</p> <p>Only a relatively small proportion of the student population are passionate and interested in leading student voice locally and nationally.</p>	<p>Student leaders in underrepresented cohorts are developed in every college with comprehensive training to fulfil their role.</p> <p>Students have a range of opportunities to develop new interests, explore and celebrate diversity and wider society.</p>

Strategic Goal 3: Develop and deliver a range of exceptional business support and training solutions, establishing long-term partnerships with our local employers to enable them to grow and innovate

Objective	Why do we want to do this?	What does success look like?
3.1. Develop and deliver a well-defined and sustainable innovation offer to support our businesses	<p>To use our facilities and expertise to support innovation in our local businesses, particularly SMEs.</p> <p>Local businesses that are supported to successfully innovate are more likely to grow and expand, creating new experiential learning and career opportunities for our students.</p>	<p>A well-defined, scalable innovation offer that responds to the needs of local businesses.</p> <p>EKC Group is seen as an enabler of productivity and business growth through strategic advice, workforce support and innovation.</p>
3.2. Develop an improved and co-ordinated product portfolio and offer to local business.	To ensure we create a cohesive and responsive offer to business across the Group, whilst creating more opportunities for our students to gain relevant skills and experience.	Businesses have a clear understanding of our offer, including Apprenticeships, work placements, T Level industry placements, and employee training.
3.3. Enhance and strengthen co-ordinated business engagement across the Group.	To more effectively meet the needs of our businesses and avoid separate and disjointed points of contact from the Group.	Businesses find it easy to engage with the Group and can access the support they need.

Objective	Why do we want to do this?	What does success look like?
		Clear and efficient communication channels between the Group and our employers, leading to increased satisfaction and loyalty.

Strategic Goal 4: Build on our investment in a sustainable physical and digital infrastructure, ensuring that our facilities, services and learning environments meet the needs of students and industry

Objective	Why do we want to do this?	What does success look like?
4.1. Deliver the Group's property strategy to enable capital investment in projects that support strategic goal 1-3 objectives, student growth, condition improvement and our sustainability objectives.	<p>To deliver our education objectives by providing high quality teaching and learning environments.</p> <p>To accommodate the needs of the communities we serve, including where there is demographic growth.</p> <p>Ensuring that all our students benefit from consistently high quality learning environments wherever they are studying.</p> <p>To embed sustainability objectives within all capital projects to meet our net zero commitments.</p>	<p>A range of high quality, fit for purpose learning environments that support the achievement of Strategic Goals 1-3.*</p> <p>Dependent on available external funding, deliver the third phase of Ashford College's expansion to meet the continued expected growth in student numbers.*</p> <p>Investment to improve the condition of our estate, which is prioritised where it will support the student experience and the delivery of our education objectives.*</p> <p>A significant reduction in our annual carbon emissions from our estate.</p>
4.2. Deliver the Group's Digital Transformation Strategy to provide a future-focused digital environment that enables all students and staff to develop the skills and	<p>To ensure we deliver our education objectives by providing high quality, digitally enabled teaching and learning environments.</p> <p>To provide our staff with the appropriate digital infrastructure and skills to work effectively and efficiently.</p>	<p>Up-to-date devices enable students to study effectively and staff to deliver outstanding teaching and business services.</p> <p>The Digital infrastructure is updated and provides students and staff with high quality and effective connectivity and access to software and systems.</p>

Objective	Why do we want to do this?	What does success look like?
knowledge required to actively participate and succeed in a fast-paced, digital and data-driven world.	To provide our students with the appropriate digital infrastructure to enable them to achieve in their studies.	<p>All Staff are supported to develop and enhance their digital skills to improve teaching, learning, assessment or business practice.</p> <p>The staff and student experience are improved and satisfaction in digital services increases.</p>

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Strategic Goal 5: Develop and invest in our people to enable them to prosper in their roles and careers, delivering transformational education and services for our communities

Objective	Why do we want to do this?	What does success look like?
5.1. Recruit, retain and develop outstanding staff to deliver inspirational education and high-quality professional services.	<p>Attracting talented teachers and trainers is essential for delivering outstanding learning programmes that equip our students with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed.</p> <p>Skilled staff are critical to provide exceptional services across the Group, ensuring that students and the organisation can thrive and achieve their full potential.</p>	<p>Having expert teachers and trainers in every curriculum department, equipped with up to date industry knowledge and a passion for their profession that inspires our students.</p> <p>Expert staff across our Group that provide a consistently high standard of student support and highly professional Group services, ensuring excellence in every aspect of our operations.</p>
5.2. Develop an inclusive, welcoming and thriving staff community, being recognised as a sector leader in inclusive practice and an employer of choice.	To enhance our inclusive environment where all staff can thrive and feel a strong sense of belonging. This will enable them to fully contribute to the Group's culture and values, fostering a more engaged, motivated workforce that drives our collective success and enriches the student experience.	Fostering a team of thriving, committed staff who are fully equipped to deliver the best outcomes for our communities. Additionally, the Group would be recognised as a sector leader in inclusive practice, setting a benchmark for excellence across the education sector.