



City College Plymouth

Community Learning Strategy

August 2013/15

DRAFT

Introduction

City College Plymouth is committed to providing a broad range of Community Learning activities that celebrates and responds to our community need to offer enrichment, progression and development in support of individuals, their families, their neighbourhoods and the wider community economy and sustainability. The College plays a significant role in responding to the needs of students, employers, communities and the economy and our influence, in collaboration, develops opportunities for part-time learning for adults whilst also promoting the benefits of lifelong learning through the delivery of an extensive leisure curriculum that is accessible to all.

Our commitment to the local community offers a broad range of learning, usually unaccredited, for adults aged 19 and over which allows them to “*pursue an interest, address a need, acquire a new skill, become healthier or learn how to support their children better.*” Learning topics will range from arts, culture and health to family learning and community development and is designed to help local people transform their lives, develop personal confidence and instil social inclusion within their local communities.

Context and back ground to Community Learning

Government has over the last two years published two strategy documents, *Skills for Sustainable Growth* and *Investing in Skills for Sustainable Growth*, which mapped out the future direction of the reform of further education for adults aged 19 and over. *New Challenges, New Chances* takes these strategies a stage further by making detailed proposals in a range of areas one of which is Community Learning. The future strategy has endorsed a new, clearer commitment to using the public funding subsidy to support access, and progression in its widest sense, for people who are disadvantaged and who are furthest from learning and therefore, least likely to participate.

Purpose

City College Plymouth understands the importance of maximising access to community learning for adults, bringing new opportunities, independence and autonomy to improving lives, whatever people's circumstances. The College also strives to promote social renewal by bringing local communities together to experience the joy of learning and the pride that comes with achievement in order to inspire ownership and mobilise positive community change, respect and inclusion.

As a College we understand the impact of community learning on the social and economic well-being of individuals, families and communities and hope that through sustaining and building on our links working with and alongside our community we can achieve the following:

- Utilise local partnerships to identify and prioritise need and access transparently with particular focus on learners from disadvantaged groups.
- Bring together learners from different backgrounds.
- Engage, energise and empower groups and individuals through bespoke, small, quality initiatives devoid of assumption.
- Devolve planning and accountability and involve local people in sustainable solution ownership.
- Broker routes and signposting to enable solution forums to emerge.
- Minimise overheads, bureaucracy and administration.
- Empower groups to monitor their own effectiveness in meeting their aims and objectives.

Objectives

The objectives of providing supported learning are to:

Focus public funding on people who are disadvantaged and least likely to participate, including those on low incomes with low skills.

Collect fee income from people who can afford to pay and use where possible to extend provision to those who cannot.

Widen participation and transform people's futures by supporting progression relevant to personal circumstances, for example:

- Improved confidence and willingness to engage in learning.
- Acquisition of skills preparing people for training, employment or self-employment.
- Improved digital, financial literacy and/or communication skills.
- Parents/carers better equipped to support and encourage their children's learning.
- Improved/maintained health and/or social well-being.
- Widened interest in citizenship and developed access to social responsibility.

Develop stronger communities, with more self-sufficient, connected and pro-active citizens, leading to:

- Increased volunteering, civic engagement and social integration.
- Reduced costs on welfare, health and anti-social behaviour.
- Increased online learning and self-organised learning.
- Improving the lives of our most troubled families, by turning them around.
- A vibrant patchwork of community groups enhancing local culture - in a 'small society rather than big society'.

Draft Community Learning Strategy

City College Plymouth will deliver and support learning in ways that contribute directly to these objectives, including:

Working in partnership with other providers and local stakeholders to develop and deliver a locally joined-up and responsive curriculum offer that meets local priorities; maintaining a vibrant universal offer which develops innovation across a range of partnerships.

Bringing together a *universal provision* for people from all backgrounds, cultures and income groups, including people who can/cannot afford to pay using effective local partnerships to bring together key providers and relevant local agencies and services devolving planning and accountability to local levels, with local people involved in decisions about the learning.

The College will aim to involve volunteers and Voluntary and Community Sector groups, shifting long term, 'blocked' classes into learning clubs, growing self-organised learning groups, and encouraging employers to support informal learning in the workplace supporting the wide use of online information and learning resources minimising overheads, bureaucracy and administration.

Community Learning Themes

City College Plymouth is committed to establishing new and reinvigorating existing partnerships with other key stakeholder such as the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), voluntary sector organisations, local people, businesses and services. These partnerships will be instrumental in identifying their agreed priorities and shaping the training provision to address the different local needs and wishes of our communities.

The College is also committed to maximising the value of public investment and this inward investment is referred to as '**Pound Plus**'. In doing so the College will seek to measure its outcomes alongside the increased commitment to volunteering and community involvement seen in the Plymouth area; putting a value on the contribution made by volunteers.

Draft Community Learning Strategy

The College will seek to influence a wider social impact on learners and the community- via *targeted provision*, for instance; health, family/social relationships, confidence, crime, wellbeing, citizenship and volunteering. Engagement and support for our community will provide pathways of opportunity for progression and personal achievement with opportunities to take part in events such as Adult Learning Week.

City College Plymouth is fully committed to ensuring that its students are equipped with maths and English to provide them with the essential knowledge, skills and understanding that will enable them to operate confidently, effectively and independently in life and work. These skills are seen as essential skills for progression into either employment or higher education and then employment. Additionally, City College Plymouth is committed to providing measured support where maths and English is embedded in opportunity, employability and enterprise as part of the college's Gazelle agenda.

Reviewing Progress

City College Plymouth is committed to tracking the impact of our activities in our local community and those we engage with. As such, progress against overarching and more specific objectives will be reviewed regularly.

The results, and decisions taken in response to them, will be captured in future reports, in line with our policy of transparency and accountability. This strategy is underpinned by our commitment to provide value to individual people's lives and the investment that we feel is important within our local community.