



matrix[®]
quality standard for information
advice and guidance services

Assessment Report

City College Peterborough



The matrix Standard is delivered by The Growth Company on
behalf of the Department for Education
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ASSESSMENT INFORMATION	
Assessment Type	Accreditation Review
Assessor's Decision	Standard Met
Assessor's Name	Rob Barlow
Evidence Gathering/Assessment Date/s	19/3/2024 – 21/3/2024
Client ID and Assessment Reference	C10102 PN202177
Accreditation Review to be conducted by	29/1/2027

METHODOLOGY	
Evidence gathering	Teams and telephone, plus one day visit to Brook Street and JMC.
Staff interviews	Nine 1:1 and thirty seven in small groups.
Recipient interviews	Thirteen in small groups
Partner interviews	Four individual 1:1
Document review	CCP website with access to a range of information and resources as downloads and in video format, social media, a range of promotional information sheets including IAG Flyer, case studies; Accountability Agreement, Mission Statement and Operating Principles, IAG Strategy; job role mapping, matrix Self - Assessment; Customer Service SLA; range of feedback and evaluation including AIG, Placements Review, Stop and Ask, Stop and Chat.

About the organisation

At the time of the assessment visit, City College Peterborough (CCP) had an interim management structure and were undergoing a strategic review with Peterborough City Council. The review is to look at how services currently align with the council and what the future might look like in this respect. The CCP Principal reports through to the Head of Skills and Employability of the Council who works for the Director of Regeneration and Development.

The overall mission of CCP has been refreshed and a number of operating principals established.

‘City College Peterborough’s mission is to facilitate excellence. We work with integrity and an entrepreneurial approach. Our learning environment seeks out new opportunities and forges long term, meaningful connections with people and communities’.

The outcomes focused approach is clearly highlighted:

‘We will focus on helping the people we work with achieve their desired outcomes as quickly and as simply as possible by:

- Giving information, advice and guidance that helps people to gain a better understanding and make informed decisions and have choices.
- Recognising achievement and commitment to results.
- Providing clear, documented processes throughout the organisation which are standardised, minimised and owned.
- Having facilities, technology and equipment that is up to date, well maintained and easy to access.
- Being clear on our purpose and consistent in our aims.

The senior management team through a wider operational team have made considerable effort over the last six months to move the service forwards, to engage new staff/make new appointments, and establish a solid platform of continuous improvement across all areas. Work is underway to align the overall provision more closely to the Skills and Employability Strategy of Peterborough City Council and the funding plans of Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority. Operationally Blue Prints and Service Plans have been reviewed and developed and through this report examples have been provided of the developments to their IAG provision. A new Accountability Agreement has been prepared. The previous National Careers Service contract has ended, and the organisation is now funding a dedicated IAG Adviser who is supporting the Adult provision and completing their Level 6 careers qualification

Brook Street as the main campus has the front line Customer Experience team, Curriculum staff and Administrators, a central café and a broad range of teaching facilities. The organisation is increasingly working with schools, faith centres,

community centres and partner organisations in the delivery of community and family learning. There is a high demand for their ESOL, maths and English provision and their vocational provision is developing; the team are keen to look at new ways to promote and engage their non-accredited and accredited learning with a focus on improving skills, gain qualifications for sustainable employment and improving their health, wellbeing and wider social skills to lead more fulfilling lives.

The Day Opportunities (Day Opps) is focused on service provision for adults has consolidated three hubs at Brook Street (Skills Development, Employment, and City) and has a separate Industrial Hub work based centre as well as the dedicated Kingfisher Centre supporting those with complex needs. Services are on a commissioned and non-commissioned direct basis and each hub has a different focus delivered by a broad range of experienced Co-Ordinators, Officers, Service Assistants, Mentors, Enterprise staff, Job Coaches and Disability Advisor.

The John Mansfield Campus (JMC) has developed offering tailored Study Programmes with many of their students having Educational Care Plans (53%) in place and many undiagnosed (27%). There is a high demand with numbers expected to rise over the next year to over 300 in the expected cohort. The facilities are now offering a range of vocational areas, social and support spaces as well as new outdoor sports are gardening areas. The team includes a Programme Manager, SEN Curriculum Managers, SENCO- Complex Needs Manager, Tutors, Wellbeing Officers, Work Experience and Progress/Recruitment staff. Support includes individualised learning plans, opportunities for developing soft-skill outcomes and preparing for adulthood, alongside access to practical work experience and supported internships.

The Jean Hunt Building, which is situated at Brook Street Campus, specialises in supporting higher-need learners with life skills, communication, and sensory needs, and provides a useful feeder into the Day Opps services.

It was clearly evident through the assessment that staff were fully committed to developing their services and provided positive examples of service improvements. Managers and staff were particularly positive about their inclusion in the developing organisation and the role of information, advice and guidance. Day Opportunities staff have been trained in Active Support to encourage supported people to be more independent and better celebrate what they can do. There has been a change to the recording of outcomes, simplified to help supported people have more involvement. The Quality Manager has delivered training on transferrable / fusion skills to teaching staff.

“There is an incredibly more positive atmosphere in the College – a positive can do attitude!”

“They are helping me to achieve the goals in my job – they care, support and I feel safe here.”

“The atmosphere has changed dramatically – as a team we are connected.” “There is a greater link across the services.”

“I feel more connected with my learners now and supported to network.”

‘We know more about the Community Courses now that can support our supported people.’

The Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)

The nature of IAG delivery is focused on the right provision at the right time, focused on the needs of the individual and moving them forwards aligned to their individual ambitions. It is delivered by the organisation through a number of activities that are characterised by the following.

- Online presentation through their website and social media channels of course information, introductory information about support available including some early video presentations and case studies.
- Course and service guides highlighting the features and benefits of the services and provision. Posters and flyers are focused on increasing awareness. A range of learner handbooks are available including those in Easy Read format
- Taster sessions and opportunities support early engagement and transition. Promotion takes place at events and in local schools to support transition to JMC. Referrals are regularly received for the service provision in Day Opps.
- Student Portal for Study Programme learners providing opportunities to book a Wellbeing appointment, access to a range of resources that includes supporting preparing for adulthood, cafe menu, job vacancies, How to Guides, and the college calendar. The new portal for the Adult provision is currently in final development and about to be launched and will also include a booking facility for IAG sessions.
- Careers Days and work experience opportunities are delivered for Study Programme learners with a range of preparation and review sessions. The Wellbeing Team can help with Emotional Support (counselling and anger management), Mediation with friends, and referral to external support services.
- Dedicated one to one IAG Adviser provision offering sessions to support adults with a range of support including identifying work and career goals, support with CV development and interview preparation and building an action plan. A high proportion of learners accessing this service are literacy challenged with close to 70% learning on ESOL programmes. Action Plans are supporting ongoing progress.
- Safeguarding support is well promoted across the organisation with the Bee Safe logo and appointed staff wearing badges. The team are actively involved in education, information provision through news leaflets, as well as assessing risk.

- Additional learner support service is in place supporting with for example overlays, class room support help with exam arrangements.
- The Day Opportunities hubs team are offering bespoke provision through their to support adults with learning disabilities and autism and are creating opportunities for individuals to develop skills for independence, secure sustainable employment and maintain health and wellbeing.
- Individual learner enquiries and early assessment is focused on providing the right information to help potential learners decide about a course. Assessment is looking at prior learning and ability levels to ensure the right level course is accessed. Interviews are held with those exploring a vocational programme.
- With the high levels and changes to the refugee accommodation system they have been supporting potential learners with Crisis Packs for those that have been evicted.
- Teaching staff are active in the early induction process in providing early information about the details of the approach to learning, Safeguarding and Prevent as well as highlighting the range of learner support services available.
- Development of Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) and a range of ongoing reviews allow reflection on progress and the opportunity to set new learning and personal development goals. Progression discussions support next steps both within CCP and to a range of other provision.
- Vocational courses for adults are providing insight into the world of work and opportunities for placements.

The teams are using a range of approaches to track and monitor their learner and supported people engagement with IAG including Pro Monitor, IAG tracker and monitoring, ILP, RARPA, Quality Checkers and Learning Walks, Achievement Books, Action Plans, as well as a range of progress discussions that can involve a number of stakeholders. It was evident from discussions that potential learners, learners and supported people are frequently signposted to other services and organisations and examples included colleges and universities, employers and other organisations such as Helping Hands and Mencap.

The difference the IAG makes to recipients and the overall impact

The managers and staff of the organisation have a clear picture of the intended outcomes of the delivery of IAG and it is being defined in many different ways such as through the IAG Policy, the early IAG discussions with learners and supported people, development of ILPs and individual profiles and plans, initial assessment and ongoing reviews as well as through structured EHCP reviews. Class and group based discussions are helping to shape and understand interest in groups and setting out plans.

Examples of individual outcomes are many and varied and included for example, establishing reliable timekeeping, achieving learning goals, making friends and

feeling less socially isolated, building English writing and speaking skills to support children at school, understand what work is like. For some it is about helping to understand self and how to self-regulate to be able to learn and progress, achieving the qualification to work in the sector, developing money skills, developing self-confidence to ask in a shop, travelling alone, developing digital skills, being safe on-line, selling products, learning how to cook and making a cup of tea. For some supported with more complex needs it can be about sustaining wellbeing, developing recognition skills, and communicating.

The overall 'distance travelled' in terms of outcomes being achieved is being assessed appropriate to the provision through the various review systems in place and use of structured approaches such as RARPA. Surveys taken after adults have worked with the IAG Adviser are showing that 87% are continuing to work through the action plan. Overall satisfaction with a range of aspects of embedded IAG in the learner and supported people journeys are reported as high. The Study Programme team monitor 20 different learner characteristics and have introduced a purple level of risk rating to support learners with multiple and complex personal, social and learning needs.

The overall approach being taken by the organisation to assessing the impact of their IAG services and its contribution is focussed on a range of metrics. In relation to the adult learning and Study Programme provision there is a focus on engagement and enrolment, retention and attendance as well as achievement. (Study Programme retention is particularly high at 99%; positive destinations are both above 90%). Progression and satisfaction rates are seen as positive indicators overall and there was a high level being reported. Within Day Opps there was a focus on service value and ensuring that the provision was the right one for the supported people at the right time.

What is working particularly well

A number of strengths/areas that are working particularly well were identified during the assessment, which are detailed below. The numbers in brackets refer to the element and criteria of the **matrix** Standard.

- There is a strong ethos across the team that is underpinning the delivery of IAG and raising the aspirations of their learners and supported people. The genuine interest in the progression and development of learners is centred on igniting the idea of learning, wellbeing, and independence no matter how small or large the individual steps.

The developing links across the organisation are focused on individual progression and not just "course hopping". Options and choices are provided in an objective and impartial way that meaningfully align to pathways to achieve individual goals and are delivered in an inclusive way such as supporting early engagement remotely on the Study Programme; building learner journeys across maths, English and ESOL; providing SEN employability support and work experience placements; and linking Community based courses to enhance the Day Opps experience. (1.3, 2.4, 4.3)

- There are a broad range of resources in place to effectively deliver their IAG that includes the development of the learner and staff portals, core funded IAG Advisor role, consolidation of Day Ops services on campus, access to counselling services at JMC, and investment in staff capabilities and experience with many new in role. (2.8)
- There was a strong sense amongst staff of feeling safe and included in the development of the organisation. Safeguarding systems are well defined and understood including the use of My Concern and the openly promoted Bee branding that naturally highlights key staff and support services. (1.3)
- Managers and staff talked positively about how the regular Our Conversation - 1:1s are proving a solid foundation to support performance development and more particularly staff wellbeing. All staff conferences have replaced All Hands on Deck sessions. The open door approach of managers is being seen to be transparent and inclusive and the range of other support including new resources, access to counselling and trained Mental Health First Aiders are all contributing to the developing culture of wellbeing. (1.4)

Development suggestions

Development suggestions are offered in the spirit of continuous improvement and a way for an Assessor to add value e.g. where the service is of a high quality, development areas are offered to help the service be even better than it already is, or to give insight into practices seen elsewhere. There is no correlation between the number of strengths and development suggestions. Where development areas are greater in number this is not intended to indicate that the information, advice and guidance service is in any way lacking. These will form the basis for discussion at the Continuous Improvement Checks (CIC) conducted twelve and twenty-four months from the date of this Assessment, along with any other notable developments. The numbers in brackets refer to the element and criteria of the **matrix** Standard.

- CCP have made positive progress in using technology with for example the development of Freshworks to support their enquiry handing, social media, the new virtual hubs to support early engagement and sharing of resources. As they continue with their digital developments it may be helpful to explore how the use of virtual reality could possibly support work experience. Other examples might include live chat to support early IAG enquiries, increased use of online video case studies and explainers to highlight IAG outcomes. Infographics can also be a useful approach to explain more about the IAG available along the learner journey. (2.8, 3.1, 3.2)
- My Concern is providing a useful system for the team, and they may wish to explore how extended licensing can support a greater link with feeder schools and agencies and improve early transition and information sharing around Safeguarding and promoting IAG services. (2.8, 3.2, 5.1)
- The organisation has in place a range of evaluation approaches in place that is helping them to understand the difference that IAG is making. As a part of their strategic review, it may be helpful to explore how they can learn more about the

wider social and economic impact of their work. This might be for examples through gathering learner feedback say after six months about personal impact at work and/or connection in the community. Differentiated approaches may also be helpful in gathering tailored case studies that can enhance and target their promotion and engagement. Working with their local partner University may also be helpful in exploring a programme of research that could enhance pathway developments and community impact assessment. (5.1, 5.2)

- It was noted how as part of the current 100 Days Review there will be an opportunity to consider how best to develop their approach to governance. This will provide an opportunity to widen the 'community voice' and establish impact measures of success to possibly include those related to social value. (1.1)
- Managers and staff provided positive examples of how they are starting to further develop their networks and partnerships to enhance their IAG provision including for example working in a Medical Surgery to support a Social Prescriber, working with new communities, and increased cross college activity. As this work develops it may be helpful to explore a range of other areas such as bringing together groups of SENCO staff together from schools, joining the Careers Hub network meetings for Careers Advisers. Development of stronger links across the Council is a clear ambition and early connection with Public Health, Early Years and Health and Social Care teams can all add potential value. (3.1, 3.2, 4.7)
- As a part of their ongoing staff development plans it may be helpful to identify the specific skills, knowledge and qualifications related to early IAG triage activity. This may be particularly helpful for the newly formed Customer Experience Team; staff across JMC may also wish to explore how accessing training around Trauma Informed Practice might add value. (2.2, 2.5)

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1. Maintain and continually improve upon their services.
2. During the period of accreditation satisfy The Growth Company that the organisation continues to meet the requirements of the **matrix** Standard via the annual continuous improvement checks and the three-year accreditation review.
3. Complete annual continuous improvement checks in a timely way, it is expected these will be carried out annually by the accreditation anniversary date.
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