

STCG Careers Strategy

1. Background

South Thames Colleges Group (STCG) is one of London’s largest providers of post-16 education and training, situated in South-West London. The Group has four colleges: Carshalton, Kingston, Merton and South Thames, operating from six sites situated in the London Boroughs of Kingston, Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth. STCG’s learners come from a wide area of south and west London, with over 6,000 16-18 and 15,000 adult learner enrolments on programmes within the Group. Our learners achieve well, progress into positive destinations - further study, university, apprenticeships and employment.

The Group Careers Strategy is informed by is informed by the statutory [DFE Careers Strategy](#) and [‘Good Careers Guidance’](#).

- 1.1 South Thames Colleges Group is committed to offering a careers education and IAG programme that is accessible to everyone. This will ensure that all students are fully equipped with the skills and knowledge that will enable them to operate confidently, effectively and independently in life and work.
- 1.2 South Thames Colleges Group commits to providing an excellent careers education and guidance programme that will enable students to understand the range of opportunities available to them in today’s local and national economy and acquire the skills and qualifications they need to succeed in the workplaces of the future. This strategy sets out the ambitions and plans to expand the quality of the College’s careers education and guidance provision.
- 1.3 South Thames Colleges Group firmly believes that by providing high quality, impartial careers education, information, advice and guidance to students from all backgrounds ensuring equitable access for all students including those with special educational needs (SEND) and other disadvantaged students to develop their interests and potential, they will follow the path that is right for them to progress into work.
- 1.4 The Group is committed to developing capable people, able to adapt, progress by improving the skills needed in work.

2. Aim

- 2.1 All students having access to timely high-quality careers information, education, advice and guidance that **effectively** prepares them for their future success in education, employment or training including:
 - Access to impartial, unbiased information about potential next steps.
 - Meaningful encounters with HE educational providers and opportunities to have direct access to other providers of further education training, technical training and apprenticeships (Baker Clause).

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- The opportunity to have a guidance interview with a career’s adviser whenever significant study or career choices are being made
- Local and national links provide learners with meaningful encounters with employers and employees and opportunities to gain experiences of the workplace.

2.2 Curriculum programmes that support the Local Skills Improvement Plans priority

2.3 CEIAG programme that informs and prepares students to understand areas of opportunity in terms of skills shortages locally, regionally, and nationally (Local Market Intelligence)

2.4 Vulnerable and disadvantaged students including students with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) have access to a tailored careers information, education, advice and guidance programme that effectively prepares them for future success in education, employment or training.

3. Entitlement

South Thames Colleges Group will offer a programme of high-quality impartial careers information, advice and guidance that is stable, structured and delivered by staff equipped with the right skills and experience. The College adopts the Gatsby Careers Benchmarks model to measure the results and impact of the below:

- All students can access high quality, impartial careers information, advice and guidance from appropriately qualified staff when significant choices are being made to help clarify their aspirations for work, to understand the options open to them and to take control of and make informed decisions in terms of job and career change, training and promotion. Opportunities for advice and support is tailored to the needs of each student.
- All students receive support and opportunities to develop, demonstrate and evidence their employability skills and readiness for their next steps in employment or further study. Our local, national, and international links provide learners with meaningful encounters with employers and employees and opportunities to gain experiences of the workplace.
- All 16-18 study programme students have opportunities in Academic Tutorial to develop, demonstrate and evidence their employability skills and readiness for their next steps in employment or further study.
- All disadvantaged students including students with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) have access to a tailored careers programme to prepare them for future success in education, employment or training.

This includes:

- i. Students eligible for free meals
- ii. Others from low-income families (bursary)
- iii. Learners and apprentices who face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being, including those who were previously not in employment, education or training (NEET)
- iv. Learners in Social Care (CLA) and Care Leavers
- v. Students who are known to the Youth Justice System
- vi. Students who have not achieved level 2 English and or maths

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- Teachers regularly refer to relevant and up to date Labour Market Information (LMI) within their subject teaching.
- Learners choosing to progress into Higher Learning, including Advanced Apprenticeships and Technical Qualifications are supported to make informed decisions regarding their potential pathways.
- All students will have the opportunity to receive tailored support.

4. Method of delivery

4.1 Careers Leader

The Director of Student Services is the Groups assigned Careers Lead.

4.3 Work Experience

Young people will receive support to find suitable work placements, work shadowing and/or work experience to help develop the skills they need to enter the workplace and secure and sustain meaningful employment.

4.3 Career learning delivered as a subject:

- Discrete careers education delivered as part of a timetabled session by teachers, careers professionals and external partners such as employers (Academic Tutorial / Group sessions delivered by Advisors / Employer led sessions coordinated by Employability / CV writing)
- Career learning delivered through co-curricular activities: Learners participate in a range of informal activities which have a strong connection to the curriculum (Enrichment)
- Career learning embedded into lessons delivered by teachers via their subjects and through a programme of careers education activities (Group work / HE Fairs / Employability Weeks)

4.4 Access to Advice and Guidance

Students will be able to access high quality, impartial careers information, advice and guidance through 1 to 1 and drop-in sessions with qualified Careers Advisers.

4.5 Events and Workshops

The Student Services, Employability and Curriculum Teams and will organise a range of events, workshops and activities to support students in understanding their options, take control and make informed decisions in terms of their career goals and aspirations.

- ✓ *'Swap don't drop' events*
- ✓ *Careers and employment Fairs*
- ✓ *Apprenticeship weeks*
- ✓ *Employability weeks*
- ✓ *Higher Education Fairs*
- ✓ *CV Workshops*
- ✓ *External guest speakers bespoke to learning areas*

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- ✓ *Educational visits*
- ✓ *Personal Statement Sessions*
- ✓ *University visits*
- ✓ *Student Finance Workshops*
- ✓ *Internal Progression Events*
- ✓ *Gold Application Process*

4.6 **Induction and Tutorial Sessions for Study Programme students and Apprentices**

The Careers Advisers and the Employability Team will work closely with curriculum areas to support Academic and Tutorial delivery linking student learning with careers and provide relevant resources to help them make informed decisions. STEM subject teachers will work with Careers advisers/Employability staff to highlight the relevance of STEM subjects for a wide range of future career paths.

4.7 **On-line resources**

The Group will provide a central repository for students to access relevant on-line resources (Careers & Employability Hub). All students will also have access to KUDOS (XELLO) which is an on-line tool to support students to navigate complex academic and career landscape.

4.8 **Job Opportunities**

The Group will provide up to date information on employment opportunities relating to local labour market information, displayed on Job Boards / and through Kudos and Moodle.

4.9 **At Risk Students**

Students who are at risk of becoming NEET or withdrawn from the programme of study will be contacted to provide high quality, impartial careers information, advice and guidance on their next steps.

4.10 **Pre-Enrolment**

Careers Advisors and curriculum staff will offer the opportunity to access:

- ✓ *Drop in appointments*
- ✓ *School visits themed around careers*
- ✓ *Interviews*
- ✓ *Open events*
- ✓ *Taster Days*
- ✓ *Admissions evenings*

5. **Higher Education**

- The College will support students at every stage of applying to Higher Education, including higher level Apprenticeships.
- Careers Advisers will support tutors and students with the checking of UCAS applications and personal statement, prior to their submission.

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- The College will work with HE institutions to provide Student Finance Workshops and Personal Statement sessions for students.
- The College will organise the annual H.E. Fair to enable students to discuss progression opportunities with a range of universities.

6. Apprenticeships

- Careers Advisors will be available to provide support for apprentices who either take a break in learning or lose their employer.
- Careers Advisors will support apprentices where relevant at the end of their programme to find a new employer if they are made redundant.

7. Quality, Reporting and Review

- Progress will be monitored by the Academic Team Leadership and PDBA Matrix group which will then report to College Management teams and Group Leadership Team.
- The quality of Careers Advice and Guidance will be assessed through the Self-Assessment Report (SAR), which will inform the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), Reviews of the delivery of Careers Education against the key principles via IQAR / Learning Walks.
- The College will use student feedback, destination data focus groups to monitor the effectiveness of the Careers Strategy.
- Careers and Enterprise Company Compass Tool.
- Maintaining ‘Matrix’ quality standards through the CIC process.
- The strategy is reviewed by SLT every two years.

Cross-Referenced Policies:

- Employability and Employer Involvement Policy
- Careers, Education, Information & Advice and Guidance Policy (CEIAG)

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