

Access and Participation Statement

- Richmond-upon-Thames College (RuTC) is dedicated to providing an outstanding quality service and to widen access to meet the needs of local and regional employers and those of our local community.
- The college plays a significant role in the local community and within the further and higher education sector, it provides education and training at all levels from pre-entry to higher education, with nearly 3,700 students and 320 employees.
- Our vision is to create a college of further and higher education recognised locally and across London for its technical, professional and academic rigour, where students and the college work in partnership with businesses, parents, carers and the local community in creating a major gateway to employment and higher skills.
- Our intentions are to make learning accessible to all, taught and supported by qualified and confident professionals who are passionate about learning, ambitious and will act as ambassadors for the college.
- Our ambition is to ensure that enduring values of service and education are translated fully into a world-class 21st century college. Our success will be defined by the creation of a learning organisation that provides for professional and personal development, in a culture of innovation and excellence while ensuring everyone can contribute to student success through continual improvement and learning.

RuTC's goals are defined by the following aims:

- **Our purpose:**

To drive aspiration, ambition and achievement.

- **Our vision:**

A college that enhances careers and life chances with inspired provision and a commitment to our community values of mutual respect, honesty, integrity and personal accountability. The vision commits to creating life-changing opportunities that encourage individuals to be purposeful and considerate citizens who are capable of making significant contributions to the world of work and society.

- **Our values and beliefs:**

The guiding principles that represent RuTC's core values and beliefs and guide our conduct and that of our students are:

- *Mutual respect* - we will respect the rights, differences and dignity of others, regardless of their circumstance and allow individuals to achieve their potential.
 - *Honesty* - we will act with openness and transparency at all times.
 - *Integrity* - we will act with integrity at all times.
 - *Personal accountability* - we take responsibility for our individual behaviour.
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- RuTC's Higher Education Strategy underpins these aims and is focussed on ensuring that the College provides a Higher Education (HE) environment that is dedicated to equality of opportunity, freedom from discrimination and enabling learners to develop the skills required for employment and social mobility. The College highly values the diversity of its student body, 60% of students are from BME backgrounds, and is committed to minimising barriers to HE and widening access to entry and participation for all HE applicants. The college is committed to providing a high quality service designed to meet local and regional needs. This is reflected by the geographical spread of our learners. Not only do we serve the local community but the college attracts students from across 28 of the 33 London boroughs who choose RuTC for the support and quality of teaching they receive at the college. In many cases these students face barriers to achievement, with 52% of the overall college students coming from Deprivation Band Areas 1-4 increasing to 62% for adult learners as well as 18% of students having declared a Learning Difficulty or Disability.
 - In addition to setting transparent criteria for entry to HE courses, the college welcomes applications from students who may not have formal qualifications but whose varied backgrounds and previous work related experiences may be used to recognise the skills and abilities they possess to support their application for entry onto courses. To minimise these barriers and widen participation, the college is committed to providing impartial advice and guidance to ensure applicants and students are placed and supported on appropriate courses from application through to course completion and onwards to their future destinations. Learners receive a comprehensive induction at the beginning of their course to help them make the transition into HE, and through a combination of both the academic and pastoral tutorial support that HE students receive, the college is able to ensure that student satisfaction rates, retention rates and achievement rates are consistently above national averages.

- In recognition of the diversity of our students, the college aims to provide the best possible service while at the same time maintaining HE tuition fees at an affordable level. RuTC is keen to maintain this value for money approach in order to attract potential students, particularly those from non-traditional backgrounds, by providing the options of studying part-time as well as full-time HE courses and ensuring that when timetabling lessons, consideration is made to take into account that some learners may have care commitments that require increased flexibility. For those adult learners requiring additional academic skills to prepare them for HE, the college also offer a range of Access to Higher Education programmes to support adults in bridging the gap and making the progression into HE.