Walsall College

Education Technology (EdTech)

Strategy and Vision Statement 2020-2021

1 Our vision for education technology (EdTech)

1.1 Technology

We recognise that EdTech, electronic (e) and mobile (m) learning have introduced new opportunities and pedagogic advances for teaching, learning and assessment. EdTech can enhance the learning experience and promote an active, flexible and enriched learning environment with the ability for students/apprentices to become better informed and thereby more involved in their own learning. It allows us to reach out beyond the confines of physical boundaries and engage students in personalised, supported and self-directed modes of learning. We believe that the flexibility of personalised, blended and remote learning is significant in widening participation, promoting social and digital inclusion *(in the home, work place and the community)*, promoting independent learning opportunities, developing life-long digital learning skills and professional digital identity. We also recognise that digital technology is changing many industry jobs and workplaces. Teachers recognise that digital technologies are changing the world of work, with significant digital innovations changing most industries. Therefore, the College will implement continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities that focus on the subject industry digital innovations as well as technology for remote teaching, learning and assessment.

The Covid-19 lockdown has enforced students/apprentices to engage in remote learning and for teachers and service staff alike to be confident in their digital and EdTech skills. EdTech has played a vital role in enabling staff to keep working and students/apprentice to keep learning during the Covid-19 lockdown. The rapid EdTech transformation moving to online learning means that from September 2020, all students' study or apprenticeship programmes will look very different and will be made up of a variety of delivery modes and pedagogical approaches including: flipped classroom, blended learning and online synchronous real-time lessons using a variety of online tools. For this transformation to be successfully implemented it requires confident and skilful use of digital technologies in the teachers' teaching, learning and assessment practice.

1.2 Ambition

Developing a range of high quality e-interactivity within and beyond the classroom puts teaching and learning at the heart of the EdTech Strategy. **We will present timely and personalised e-information to students, to ensure they are given the opportunity to be stretched and challenged, aspire to high expectations**, as well as the fulfilment of the Walsall College Graduate (WCG): skilled, professional and enterprising.

Remote learning will be integrated into the students'/apprentices' study experience, which will form the '*new normal*' post Covid-19 lockdown. **The pedagogic designed and planned use of EdTech, whether flipping the classroom, online assessments, real-time and synchronous activity or effective and timely individual feedback, will ensure a high quality education experience for students.** In the event of future (national or local) Covid-19 lockdowns **students/apprentices will continue their timetable of learning activity online remotely.**

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Technology is shaping the habits, expectations and behaviours of students/apprentices across a wide spectrum of age and occupations. We need to ensure staff and students are well prepared for the technological advancement or working practices within their chosen career. **We will prepare for this technological advancement through sustainable investment in staff CPD programmes, industrial digital upskilling and student/apprentice digital professional development and identity.** Furthermore, **we will provide EdTech for collaboration and co-creating activities, which are the norm for many work places, allowing students to participate, interact and learn in new ways.**

1.3   e-Safety

Online activity brings safeguarding risks for the organisation, teachers and students/apprentices alike. **We will ensure cohesive and wide spread knowledge of e-safety is promoted to all stakeholders through an extensive training and awareness programme,** which is extended to the student through their induction and tutorial process. We work closely with our local multi-agency partners to ensure contextualised trends such as sexting, sexual exploitation and online radicalisation inform themed awareness training for both staff and students.

1.4   Equality and Diversity

Digital divides bring equality of opportunity challenges throughout the communities that we seek to serve. We do not assume all students have reliable access to computers, broadband connectivity, digital skills and/or the latest software. As a result, **we endeavour to respond to the needs of all students through the provision of open and remote access facilities, assistive technologies, equipment loans, training opportunities, alternative media and student purchasing deals.** We will continue to work closely with partners to address the digital inclusion challenges in Walsall.

2   Implementation plan

This strategy links to all of the College's Strategic Ambitions:

1. Outstanding Provision and Services
2. Maximise Staff Potential and Performance
3. Innovate and Transform
4. Energise our Communities and Partners
5. Secure and Transform our Future.

The EdTech Strategy has a direct relationship to, and supports the Curriculum, Teaching and Learning and the Quality Improvement Strategies.

2.1   Strategic Ambition 1

Through our technological infrastructure, we will exploit the educational potential of modern teaching and learning facilities, such as classroom technologies and ubiquitous devices. We want to encourage the usage of *'mobile technology,'* which will promote the use of EdTech in social and open learning spaces, facilitated through our free wifi and remote access connectivity.   We will continue a

programme of review and sustainable refresh to ensure high infrastructural standards are fit for purpose.

2.2   Strategic Ambition 1, 3 and 4

We will provide a modern approach to learning whilst meeting the online expectations of students, through a Walsall College Graduate (WCG) personalised learning space. This will encourage students to manage their learning with timely information for achievement, attendance and punctuality, maths and English diagnostics and stretch targets. Students will have the opportunity to learn collaboratively through their **tutorial activity and open learning spaces to develop their digital life-long learning skills.**

2.3   Strategic Ambition 1, 3 and 5

We will carry out an annual review of students' technological exposure for their professional futures (industrial related technology).   We will aim to future proof our curriculum through innovation and industrial relevant technologies.

2.4   Strategic Ambition 2

Digital development from novice right through to more advanced uses of EdTech should mean that all staff have the opportunity to increase their digital capital, which is essential in establishing a digitally competent workforce. Pedagogically designed use of EdTech and not simply the mechanics of using technologies should be at the forefront of ongoing teacher training and development. Therefore, we will offer staff a comprehensive CPD programme called the Digital Educator Programme with three levels: Bronze (accessibility awareness (**Mandatory**)), Silver (wide use of EdTech and applied pedagogy such as flipped classroom and synchronous teaching and learning (**Mandatory**)) through to Gold (Microsoft Certified Educator (MCE)) programme. Service area staff will go through a similar programme with Bronze and Silver being **mandatory** and Gold (Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS)).

2.5   Strategic Ambition 2

Staff and students will be encouraged to develop a positive online social and professional digital identity, whereby they understand how to keep themselves and others safe and free from harm when they are online.

2.6   Strategic Ambition 1 and 4

For equity and inclusion of all students, the multiple digital divides of access, ownership, skills, confidence and agency should be understood by the College. Rather than believing these divides to be barriers for students, the College will deploy strategies to ensure students are not disadvantaged and are given the opportunity to develop their digital skills.

2.7   Strategic Ambition 1, 3 and 4

For flexible ways of teaching and learning, there needs to be consideration of the change in student and teacher behaviours and expectations around online interaction. This is intrinsically linked to the culture, values, beliefs and agency of both groups and should be managed carefully to develop a positive teaching and learning experience. It is important that both staff and students are prepared to manage the change.

2.8   Strategic Ambition 4 and 5

We will collaborate with local and national partners to widen our expertise of e-learning and m-learning: we will participate in funding opportunities and will engage with innovative national projects, schools, Higher Education (HE), employers and other colleges.

3   Monitoring

The EdTech Strategy is embedded into the College's overall lesson planning and observation processes. The EdTech Strategy is reviewed annually (in-line with the quality improvement calendar) and an annual development plan is produced. It is the responsibility of the Assistant Principal for Workforce Development and Learning Services to oversee and lead the developments required to meet the aims and objectives of the strategy.

3.1   The College infrastructure will be reviewed annually to test whether it is fit for purpose.

3.2   All curriculum plans will include remote online learning to support the delivery of the students' study programme as agreed with the Assistant Principal for Curriculum and the Assistant Principal for Commercial Development.

3.3   All curriculum clusters, with the Assistant Principal, will review their industrial technological developments as well as their use of technology for teaching, learning, assessment and curriculum delivery. The outcome of this review will be the production of a curriculum technology plan.

3.4   All staff will complete the Digital Educator Programme (DEP) to Bronze and Silver Levels; these will be mandated. Staff will be encouraged to develop their digital skills to the DEP Gold Level.

3.5   The impact and effectiveness of personalised information, support sessions, independent learning opportunities, e-safety and timely e-information to students will be measured through student surveys, focus groups and feedback sessions.

3.6   We will undertake a media resource audit through the technology reviews to evaluate the effectiveness of Go Online 4 Active Learning (GOAL VLE), My Walsall College Graduate (WCG), specialist e-learning packages and SharePoint usage.

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3.7   We will undertake a students' skills audit, followed by an annual analysis and report. We will offer training and development opportunities to students and monitor attendance and impact. E-safety training will be monitored to ensure 100% of students complete online awareness and are kept up to date with online safety trends.

3.8   We will actively support a network of Digital Champions and monitor action research in future pedagogic use of technology through the Digital Education Research and Innovation Network and monitor its dissemination and impact.

3.9   We will aim to engage in two national projects and will develop collaborative working relationships with two sector partners.

The EdTech Strategy Group will implement and annually review the outputs of this strategy.

Dr Jayne Holt
Assistant Principal – Workforce Development and Learning Services
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Students
- Digital skills for life-long learning
- Digital workplace skills
- Professional digital online identity
- Digitally safe

Staff
- Digital Educator Programme: Bronze, Silver and Gold
- Digital industry upskilling
- Digital education research and development
- Professional digital online identity
- Digitally safe

College
- Technological infrastructure
- Digital safety
- Digitally inclusive