

ANNUAL REPORT 2013-2014

TRANSFORMING LEARNING,
TRANSFORMING LIVES.

GROUP DIVISIONS

ACTIVATE COLLEGES

ACTIVATE ENTERPRISE

ACTIVATE GROUP SERVICES

ACTIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION

ACTIVATE INTERNATIONAL

ACTIVATE ONLINE

ACTIVATE SCHOOLS



WELCOME FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Welcome to our annual review for 2013-14 and our first as Activate Learning.

The organisation has undergone a transformation in the last 12 months. On 1 September 2013, following an extensive re-visioning, restructure and rebranding, the Oxford & Cherwell Valley Group became Activate Learning.

This change followed wide scale consultation, including conversations with our regulators, governing body, staff, learners, partners and local stakeholders.

The result has been the emergence of a dynamic organisation comprised of flexible divisions – all united by a common purpose, to ‘transform lives through learning’.

Our restructure was driven by a desire to ensure the future employability of learners throughout their lives, and recognises that developments in technology, neuroscience and the world economy require a bold and innovative approach.

In Activate Learning we have an organisation that is equipped to meet the skills needs of local communities while harnessing the efficiencies and other benefits that come from being part of a large, progressive group. This has already laid the platforms for significant growth, with key developments this year including:

- the launch of Activate Enterprise, a joint venture company providing apprenticeships, training and consultancy for businesses across the UK
- the launch of The Oxford Partnership – a collaboration between Activate Learning, GEMS Educational Solutions and Moulton College. The partnership was successful in its bid under the Colleges of Excellence programme to open three, women-only vocational colleges in The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- the expansion of Activate Schools. UTC Reading, our first school, exceeded its recruitment targets to open in September 2013. The group has since been successful in its bid to open UTC Oxfordshire in Didcot in 2015 and is developing proposals to open a studio school in Bicester in 2016. Our expertise also led to Bicester Community College selecting the group as its preferred sponsor as it prepares to re-launch as an academy in spring 2015
- approval to provide full-time education for those aged 14 plus from our further education colleges. Our first pathway in construction will open at the Blackbird Leys campus of City of Oxford College in September 2016

This annual review provides more information about the work of the group and its divisions during 2013-14. In doing so, it seeks to demonstrate how we are realising our four guiding principles of empowerment, enterprise, connectedness and transformation.

Thank you for taking the time to read it. If you would like to know more or get involved in our work please do contact us.

Sally Dicketts, CBE
Group Chief Executive Officer
Activate Learning



WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

The launch of Activate Learning in September 2013 represented a significant milestone in the development of the organisation.

Oxford & Cherwell Valley College, itself a merger of three further education colleges, had grown organically over the last 10 years. By 2013 the group included management responsibility for Reading College and was leading the development of its first school in UTC Reading.

At the same time the sector was facing uncertainty, with stringent cuts to funding set to make a significant impact on the further education landscape. The governing body, working with the executive team, agreed an ambitious strategy for growth which would provide greater depth in the curriculum and respond to emerging skills needs while securing market share and achieving economies of scale.

The result was the launch of a new group structure and identity in September 2013; one which captured the intrinsic spirit and character of the organisation while setting clear aspirations for the future. Activate Learning exists to “transform lives through learning” and this annual review demonstrates how teams across the group are working towards this common goal.

Since launch we have developed a new strategic plan which sets out our priorities for the future. We want to develop leading-edge vocational education and training that is personalised and created in partnership with learners and employers. We want to provide commercially-focused environments where our students can grow and develop. And we want to ensure continued financial viability by exploring new income streams and by maximising the efficiencies of being part of a growing group. Again, this annual review shows the first steps being made towards achieving these priorities.

We continue to operate in a challenging environment but I am confident that the commitment of teaching and business support teams across the group, and the enthusiasm and talent of our students, will help us to maximise the opportunities presented to us.

Graham Blackburn
Chair of Governors
Activate Learning



WE ARE ACTIVATE LEARNING

Activate Learning is a pioneering education group with a mission to transform lives through learning.

We exist to ignite confidence, expand opportunities, energise the community and generate prosperity.

We have developed four guiding principles that drive behaviours across the organisation in what we call The Activate Learning Way.

Principles we value:

Empowerment

- We want everyone to be the best they can be
- We fuel confidence and drive ambition in both our students and our people alike

Enterprise

- Enterprising people add value to organisations, impacting upon their culture and output
- We give people the expertise, strength, confidence and agility to meet the demands of tomorrow, to make the most of their future and to succeed
- By being more enterprising we can better shape our own future, and be better placed to help our students to shape theirs
- We foster a culture of enterprise internally – a collective positive mindset with great energy, confidence and ambition

Connectedness

- Connectedness directly powers our ability to learn and deliver transformational change
- We reach out to create productive partnerships that encourage innovation and achieve growth
- Through it we will extend our reach, increase our flexibility, expand our capabilities and our resources, strengthen our voice and enhance our influence

Transformation

- Our people are driven to make a difference and create a brighter future
- This shared ambition powers our actions. By driving change and fuelling positive progression, we help to transform lives, shape communities, build businesses and grow the economy

A UNIQUE LEARNING PHILOSOPHY

At the heart of Activate Learning lies a unique learning philosophy. It is inspired by our passion to go 'further than education' and equip learners with the self-awareness, confidence, determination, creativity and the technical skills required for success.

Our learning philosophy understands the dynamics between the brain, emotions and motivation and shapes the way that we deliver learning programmes. In brief this covers the following elements.

1. Understanding the brain and its capacity to expand and learn new things. We believe that the brain has enormous potential - it is capable of making new connections on a massive scale, all the time, and does so in response to learning new things. With the right mindset we can continually learn and grow. All that is required is self-belief, motivation and practice.
2. Providing motivation by giving learners a clear purpose for their learning. We encourage autonomy and involvement by inviting learners to co-create their learning programme and by providing opportunities to practice what they learn in realistic environments.

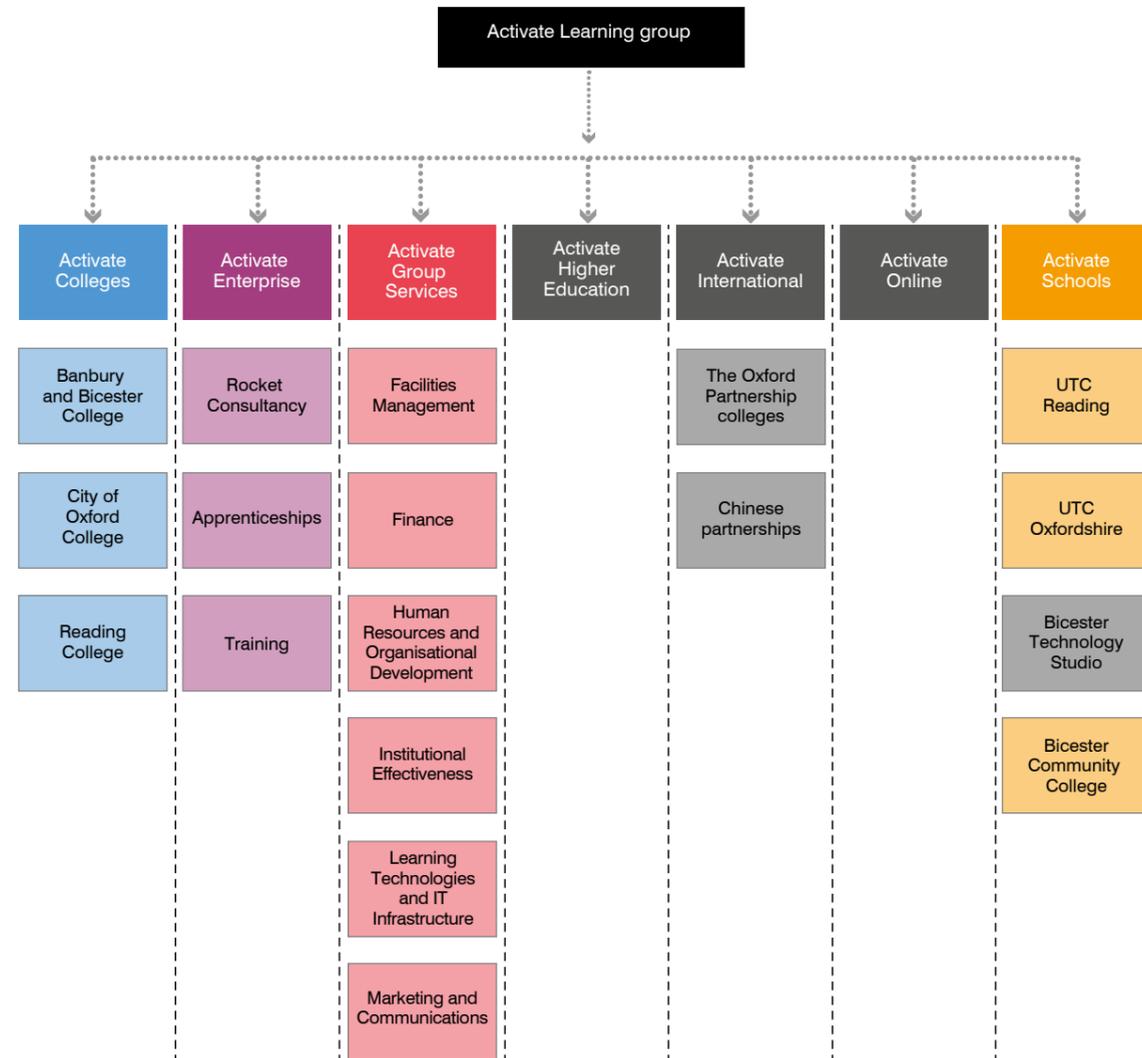
3. Recognising that the biggest barrier to our learning is our own emotions and feelings of inadequacy. We create learning environments where people feel emotionally safe and secure, able to experiment and grow. This creates confident, independent and mature individuals who are able to manage their feelings and achieve more than they previously thought possible.

You will find examples of our learning philosophy in action throughout this annual review.



A JOURNEY OF TRANSFORMATION

Having started as a merger of several colleges, the group now comprises a colleges division, schools division and an industry-facing enterprise division focusing on apprenticeships, training and consultancy. In development are an international division, an e-learning division, a group services division and a higher education division. Our group structure is summarised opposite:



FUTURE FOCUS

In July 2014 we published our first Activate Learning strategic plan, setting out our priorities for 2014-18.

Our plan sets out three clear strategic aims, and three strategic enablers that will help us to fulfil our ambitions. These are summarised as follows:

Strategic aims

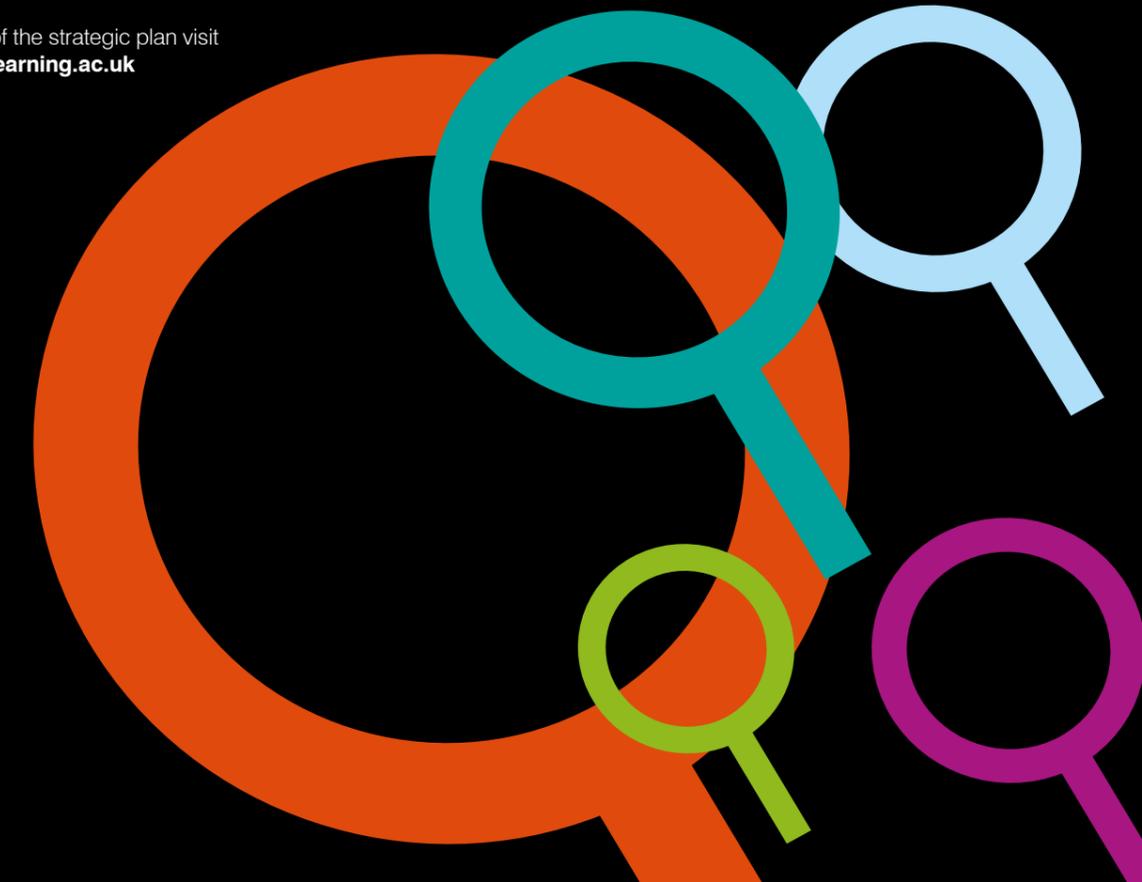
1. Develop entrepreneurially-minded and employable people by creating excellent experiences
2. Earn a reputation for leading edge, innovative teaching, learning and assessment
3. Energise our communities and create productive strategic partnerships

Strategic enablers

1. Inspire collaboration to create high quality environments that provide employment and enterprise opportunities for our students
2. Attract, develop and train a highly qualified, skilled, curious and independent workforce
3. Ensure continued financial health and solvency through growth, quality, innovation and efficiencies

The plan also includes four learner journeys that set out our vision for unrivalled customer experience.

For a full copy of the strategic plan visit www.activatelearning.ac.uk



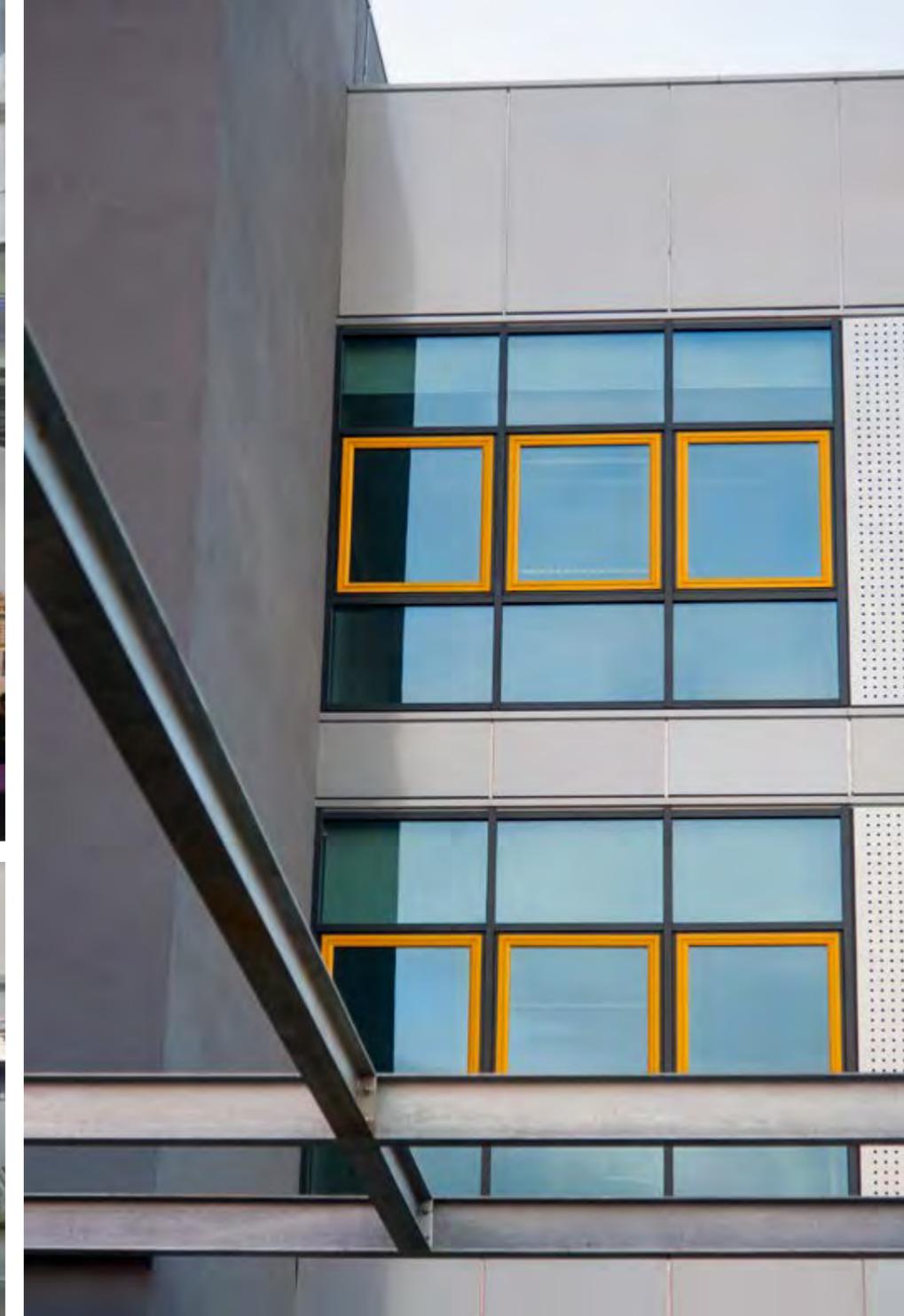
ACTIVATE COLLEGES

Our colleges division comprises three further education colleges operating across five campuses in Oxfordshire and Berkshire. Banbury and Bicester College and City of Oxford College were created in September 2013 from the four campuses of Oxford & Cherwell Valley College. Together with Reading College, they provide career-focused further and higher education programmes across Oxfordshire and the Thames Valley, overseen by locally-based management teams.

Activate Learning colleges were inspected by Ofsted in December 2013. The inspection report, published in January 2014, awarded the colleges a grade 2 (good) with a number of areas judged to be grade 1 (outstanding). During the inspection week, 89% of observed lessons were judged to be good or better.

The report noted that classrooms and workshops “buzz with activity”, that “staff have well developed, productive links with employers” and that “senior leaders promote a culture of high expectations”.

The report highlights that students at Activate Learning colleges develop “valuable employability skills” thanks to high quality teaching and learning, a focus on enterprise and effective use of the latest technology.



BANBURY AND BICESTER COLLEGE

A £6m redevelopment of Banbury and Bicester College's Banbury campus, completed this year, has seen the opening of new, industry-standard facilities for motor vehicle maintenance and creative media production.

The motor vehicle centre, officially opened by MP Tony Baldry in October 2013, provides learners with access to the latest engine diagnostic and vehicle lifting equipment. The centre has been built to MOT standards and is set to operate as a commercial MOT testing centre under the group's learning company model. Since launch, the centre team has forged productive industry partnerships, which has included the donation of four new Hyundai vehicles.



The media centre, which features Apple Mac suites, television and radio studios and a cinema room, is equipping students for careers in this fast-growing industry through further and higher education programmes. The new building sits alongside the recently refurbished creative arts centre to provide a contemporary creative hub which was praised by the Ofsted inspection team.

Staff and learners from these areas have been successful in taking the college out into the community in the last year. Three fashion students made a national shortlist of 10 in a competition run by The Clothes Show Live. Following this success the team exhibited their designs at a pop-up shop at Castle Quay Shopping Centre; showcased their work at the Fashion, Embroidery and Stitch Show at Birmingham's NEC and designed and made a dress for the Mayor of Bicester.

In May creative arts staff and students led a month-long community showcase, confidently entitled We're Here Now. The initiative brought together exhibitions, workshops and events to increase community engagement in the arts.

Hospitality and catering – rated outstanding at all three colleges by Ofsted – was re-launched under the group's learning company model in September. In addition to taking on the catering at all college outlets, students began working on rotation with an external catering and events company and running the café at Bloxham Mill Business Centre. This ground breaking venture is also providing paid employment for alumni, with former Level 3 students employed to manage

the facility and student teams. This commercial approach to learning was recognised at the PACE Awards 2014, where the college was shortlisted in the partnership with industry category.

Industry partnerships and exposure to real-world commercial environments - central elements of the group's learning philosophy - were extended to hair and beauty, performing arts and foundation learning. A group-wide partnership with award-winning high street hairdressing chain, Francesco Group, saw the opening of The Graduate Salon at the Banbury campus. The new salon offers students the opportunity to train in the latest techniques and develop salon management skills under the guidance of a style director. A partnership with The Mill Arts Centre is giving students in performing arts access to all areas of theatre production and arts centre management, while students in foundation learning are developing essential life skills by running an on-campus shop, horticulture and catering services.

The college's Bicester campus continues to build an enviable reputation as a centre of excellence for motorsport engineering. Students supported the work of Help for Heroes through a go-karting project; designed, made and trialled their own gravity racers and forged employer links at a successful careers event. In response to the significant growth of Bicester town, the college is expanding the programmes offered from the campus. In 2014-15 this will include motor vehicle programmes and the development of further engineering courses.

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THIS FACILITY HIGHLIGHTS THAT BANBURY AND BICESTER COLLEGE IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY WORK FOCUSED AND A COLLEGE FOR STUDENTS WANTING TO ACQUIRE SKILLS THAT WILL SUPPORT THEM TO PROGRESS DIRECTLY INTO EMPLOYMENT. THERE ARE A WHOLE RANGE OF EMPLOYERS LOCALLY, FROM SINGLE PERSON BUSINESSES TO LARGE CAR DEALERSHIPS, WHICH WILL NOW BENEFIT FROM YOUNG PEOPLE GRADUATING WITH HIGH-QUALITY AUTOMOTIVE ENGINEERING SKILLS.”

Tony Baldry MP at the opening of the new motor vehicle centre at Banbury and Bicester College

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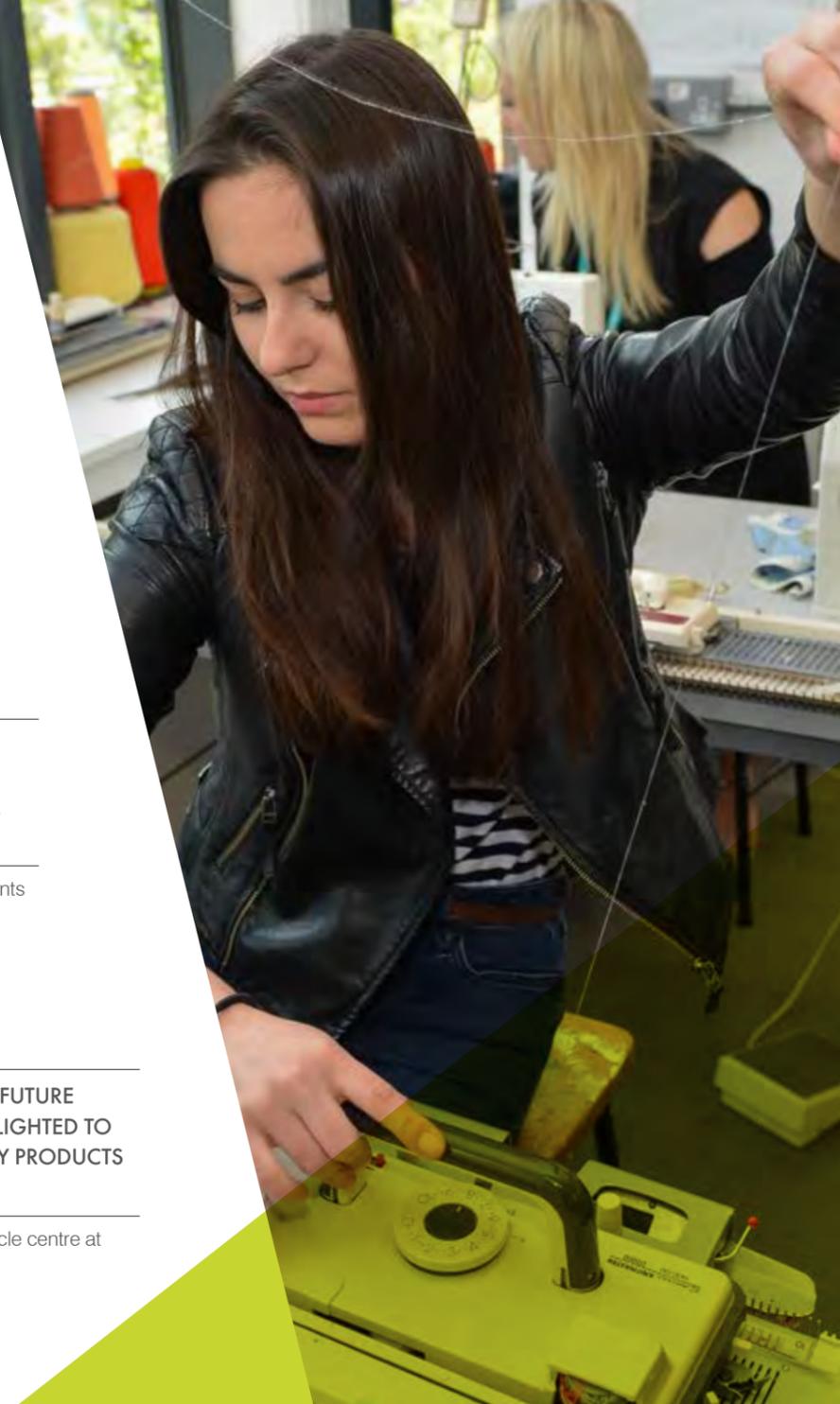
WE WERE SO IMPRESSED BY THE HIGH STANDARD OF THE DESIGNS FROM THE STUDENTS. THE RESPONSE TO LAURA'S DESIGN FROM OUR MEMBERS HAS BEEN FANTASTIC. EVEN OUR CLUBS IN AUSTRALIA HAVE BEEN ASKING FOR A COPY OF HER ADVERT. SHE'S DONE SUCH A GREAT JOB AT CAPTURING THE SPIRIT OF MG90.”

Julian White, General manager of the MG Car Club which commissioned HND Graphic Design students from Banbury and Bicester College to develop designs to celebrate the brand's 90th anniversary

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HYUNDAI UK IS COMMITTED TO HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE DEVELOP THEIR SKILLS FOR FUTURE EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION THROUGH ITS CURRENT CSR INITIATIVES. WE ARE DELIGHTED TO HAVE MADE THIS DONATION AS IT WILL ENSURE THE STUDENTS HAVE THE NECESSARY PRODUCTS THEY NEED TO BE ABLE TO PRACTICE AND DEVELOP THEIR KNOWLEDGE.”

Tony Whitehorn, President and CEO, Hyundai Motor UK on the donation of vehicles to the motor vehicle centre at Banbury and Bicester College



CITY OF OXFORD COLLEGE

A new lifestyle concept has been taking shape at City of Oxford College's city centre campus during the last year.

The Oxford Lifestyle Centre represents a £6m investment and brings together a new fitness suite, hair and beauty salons and café pod. These facilities will help to connect the college with the city's West End and offer clients leading-edge wellness facilities in a convenient location.

The centre is being run under the learning company model to offer students in sport and exercise science, hair and beauty and hospitality and catering access to commercial learning environments. The scheme will also provide employment opportunities for apprentices and graduating Level 3 students.

The learning company model, developed in partnership with members of the Gazelle Colleges Group, has been embedded across new curriculum areas in the last year. Following the launch of a new internal validation process, learning companies at City of Oxford College now include:

- StudioX1 – a video production company providing end-to-end video solutions for clients including Oxfordshire County Council, the International Business Exchange, London Welsh Rugby Football Club and England Cricket Board
- TeamworX – run by public services staff and students to provide security and stewarding and communication and teambuilding exercises for corporates and schools

- RycotewoodMADE – bespoke furniture designed and made by students from the Rycotewood Furniture Centre

These enterprising start-ups are providing learners with the technical as well as the softer skills required for career success, together with experience that will support their employability.

New employer partnerships are further helping to reduce the skills gap between education and employment by co-creating curricula that meets employer and learner needs. In January 2014, the college welcomed business people from across the county for an event exploring the attributes of a fully-rounded employee. Feedback from this event is being used to help shape learning programmes. A strategic partnership with the In Oxford Group has also led to students getting involved in high profile events including Business in Oxford, The Oxfordshire Restaurant Awards and Open Doors Festival.

The Rycotewood Furniture Centre – part of the National School of Furniture run in partnership Bucks New University - celebrated its 75th anniversary this year. The centre provides further and higher education programmes in furniture design and making and works in partnership with leading employers from the industry. Among this year's graduates, Tom Parfitt got his career off to a flying start after winning a competition to create new benches for The Queen's College, Oxford, and being selected as 'one to watch' by top-end retailer Heal's.

The college's Blackbird Leys campus has been helping to raise the profile and standard of construction skills as part of the prestigious World Skills competition. The campus hosted a one-week training event for some of the country's most talented young cabinet makers and joiners, before hosting the regional heat of the SkillBuild competition in May.



In the coming year the campus will undergo significant redevelopment, following a successful bid to create a centre of excellence for Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM). Funding from the government's College Capital Investment Fund and Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), awarded this year, will support the creation of new learning zones, workshops and design and fabrication spaces. The scheme has been designed to meet the skills needs of local STEM employers, identified as regional priority for growth by the LEP.



WITH THIS AGREEMENT, WE'RE CREATING SOMETHING DISTINCTIVE AND UNIQUE IN OXFORDSHIRE. A PROGRESSION AGREEMENT OF THIS KIND IS PARTICULARLY VITAL IN ORDER TO WIDEN PARTICIPATION IN THE COUNTY AND SURROUNDING AREAS. IT HIGHLIGHTS A CLEAR ROUTE INTO HIGHER EDUCATION AND IMPROVES ACCESS TO OUR COURSES, ADDING VALUE TO POTENTIAL ABILITY AND ACHIEVEMENT IN THE CREATIVE MEDIA INDUSTRIES."

Mark Brocklehurst, Managing Director SAE Institute UK on the signing of a progression agreement for students at City of Oxford College



SINCE THE LAST AOC CONFERENCE, I'VE BEEN GATHERING FURTHER DIRECT EVIDENCE OF THE GREAT CONTRIBUTION THAT COLLEGES ARE MAKING TO OUR SKILLS BASE, TO THE ECONOMY AND TO THE LIVES OF STUDENTS WHO PASS THROUGH YOUR DOORS. AT CITY OF OXFORD COLLEGE I WAS SHOWN AROUND THE NATIONAL SCHOOL OF FURNITURE, MEETING APPRENTICES AT VARIOUS LEVELS OF EXPERIENCE IN THE PROCESS OF BECOMING CRAFTSMEN AND WOMEN."

Vince Cable, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, speaking at the Association of Colleges conference



INNOVATION-LED GROWTH IS AT THE HEART OF OXFORDSHIRE'S AMBITION AND TO SERVICE THAT GROWTH WE NEED A WELL SKILLED WORKFORCE TO SUPPORT EMPLOYERS. YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD BE AWARE OF THE HUGE OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE LOCALLY IN WELL PAID STEM BASED CAREERS – THIS STEM CENTRE WILL HELP EQUIP THEM WITH THE SKILLS REQUIRED TO MOVE INTO REALLY GOOD JOBS AVAILABLE LOCALLY."

Adrian Lockwood, Chair of the Oxfordshire Skills Board and Local Enterprise Partnership Board Member, announcing a grant for the new STEM centre at City of Oxford College



READING COLLEGE

Reading College has been building a national reputation for the innovative use of digital technologies that inspire learners and build the capacity of staff.

The college's approach has been driven by the group's strategic priority to enable students to learn anytime, anywhere, using any device.

The introduction of a range of browser-based learning technologies, particularly Google Apps, is helping to realise this aim while also developing the digital skills of students and teachers alike.

Following an initial trial, increasing numbers of departments are now using social media and apps including Google Drive, Google+ and Google Communities to engage learners, improve collaboration and provide real-time formative assessment. This is leading to students making more rapid progress in their learning. The approach was recognised by the inspection team from Ofsted, who commented on the "plentiful and well used IT resources" and highlighted particular examples of digital collaboration.

Since the visit by Ofsted in December 2013, Reading College has featured in a national report by the City and Guilds' Centre for Skills Development considering how teachers can use technology to improve teaching and learning. Learning Technologies Manger, James Kieft, was also awarded runner-up in the ALT Learning Technologist of the Year Award.

Having developed the use of these technologies, the team at Reading College has been applying them to a staff development scheme called Pass It On.

The scheme brings together a range of free, online resources designed to develop the skills of teachers and business support teams and inspire new approaches to teaching, learning and assessment. Online resources are supplemented by networking events and 'open classroom' weeks through which teams can share their own skills and expertise for the benefit of others. The scheme has attracted similar national attention, having been shortlisted for the Association of Colleges Beacon Award for innovative staff development in 2014. The team behind Pass It On hosted the first teaching and learning conference for the sector in June, with delegates from across the UK attending to discover more and share best practice.

Outside the classroom, Reading College partnered with Hays Recruitment and business networking group The Twenties Club for the first Thames Valley Skills, Education and Recruitment Survey. The survey of nearly 100 companies found that so-called softer skills, such as attitude, are among the most prized when it comes to recruiting new talent. The findings also revealed a desire to improve collaboration between business and education in order to increase skills. The results were discussed at a special round table event, attended by Reading MP Rob Wilson.

In line with the survey's findings, departments across the college have been forging new partnerships with businesses in 2013-14. Among the highlights art and design students helped to develop a promotional campaign for deaf awareness in collaboration with a team of British Sign Language professionals, and media studies students supported a marketing agency's social media campaign by designing assets that would appeal to a younger generation. These projects seek to develop the skills and experience of learners while meeting real business needs.



The Kitchen, run by staff and students in hospitality and catering, has played host to guest chefs from leading local hotels and restaurants across the year. These events helped to expose learners to a range of cooking and leadership styles as they prepare for employment. Among the visitors was celebrity chef and Clydesdale Bank ambassador Brian Turner, who worked with learners to prepare and serve a three-course meal for invited guests.

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NEW TECHNOLOGIES PROVIDE TUTORS WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE INNOVATIVE IN THEIR APPROACHES AND USE GREATER CREATIVITY WITHIN THEIR LESSONS. I HAVE WITNESSED GREAT EXAMPLES OF HOW THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY CAN IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING AND THE BENEFITS IT BRINGS TO BOTH THE LEARNER AND THE PROVIDER/INSTITUTION. READING COLLEGE, FEATURED IN OUR REPORT, IS JUST ONE EXAMPLE OF THIS AND IT'S EXCITING TO HEAR THAT THE COLLEGE HAS CONTINUED TO INNOVATE IN THIS AREA.”

Kirstie Donnelly MBE, UK Managing Director of City and Guilds announcing its Culture, Coaching and Collaboration report

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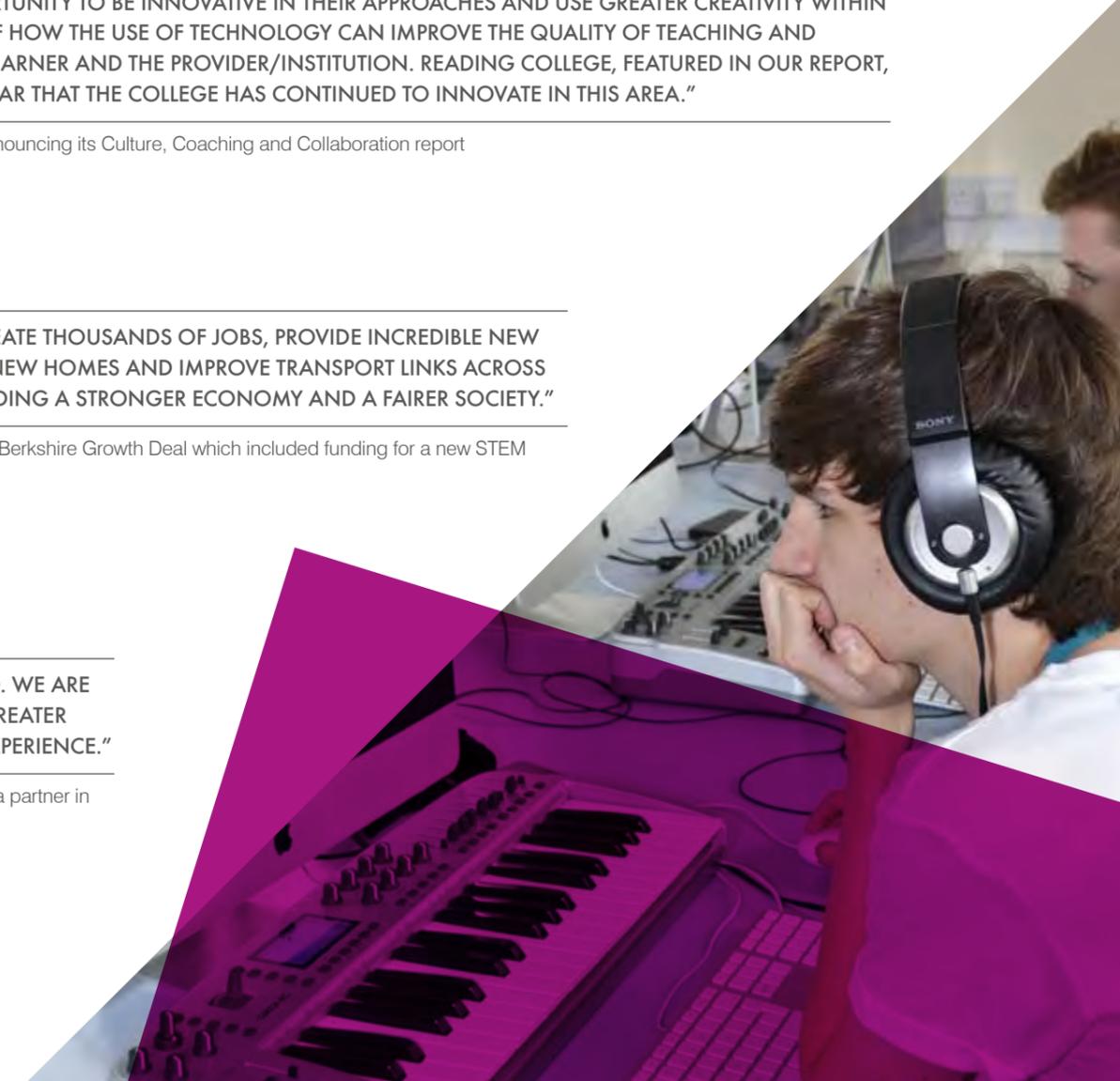
THE THAMES VALLEY BERKSHIRE GROWTH DEAL WILL CREATE THOUSANDS OF JOBS, PROVIDE INCREDIBLE NEW TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, BUILD NEW HOMES AND IMPROVE TRANSPORT LINKS ACROSS THE SUB REGION FOR PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES; BUILDING A STRONGER ECONOMY AND A FAIRER SOCIETY.”

Nick Clegg, Deputy Prime Minister, announcing the Thames Valley Berkshire Growth Deal which included funding for a new STEM solutions lab at Reading College

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HIRING FOR LEARNING APTITUDE IS A GROWING TREND. WE ARE FINDING THAT THE ABILITY TO LEARN NEW SKILLS IS A GREATER PRIORITY THAN HIRING FOR CURRENT EXPERTISE AND EXPERIENCE.”

Mark Sheldon, Managing Director of Hays Specialist Recruitment, a partner in the Thames Valley Skills, Education and Recruitment Survey



ACTIVATE SCHOOLS

Our schools division came into being in September 2013 with the opening of UTC Reading.

The UTC provides an exciting new vocational education option for 14 to 19 year olds, specialising in computer science and engineering. Activate Learning is the lead sponsor for the UTC, which is run with the support of industry partners Microsoft, Cisco, Network Rail, Peter Brett Associates and the University of Reading.

The school's curriculum is rooted in a project-based learning approach, with students taking part in real-world scenarios set by industry partners. Since launch pupils have worked with Peter Brett Associates on a project to redesign Reading train station and with Network Rail, FileMaker and Sytel to design and build a level crossing.

Students also get the opportunity to take industry-specific qualifications, usually reserved for those starting employment. Last year four UTC Reading students achieved Microsoft Technology Associate status while three became Autodesk Certified Users in AutoCAD, with one confirmed as the youngest to achieve the qualification in the UK. Among other highlights, students travelled to London to take part in a digital skills taskforce at Google's headquarters.

UTC Reading, which has been created from a refurbished and extended facility on a brownfield

site in East Reading, was officially opened by The Duke of York in December. During his visit The Duke met with staff and students, who were able to demonstrate skills in robotics and computer programming.

Following the success of UTC Reading, Activate Learning was approved to develop proposals for Oxfordshire's first University Technical College. The UTC, which has since received public backing and its final funding agreement from government, will open in September 2015 as part of Didcot's Great Western Park development.



The school will offer a curriculum specialising in science and engineering, to support the employment needs of Oxfordshire's 'science vale'. Lead industry partners include The UK Atomic Energy Authority, RM Education and MINI Plant Oxford.

In the coming year we will be further expanding our schools division with two developments in Bicester. In spring Activate Learning will become the sponsor for Bicester Community College as it re-launches as an academy. The change follows a significant turnaround at the school, under the leadership of new head teacher Tony Rushworth. In May Bicester Community College was removed from special measures and found to be 'good' across all areas. The partnership with Bicester Community College represents our first move into academy schooling, having been granted multi-academy status by the Department for Education. We will also be developing proposals for Bicester Technical Studio – a 300-place school specialising in sustainable construction and logistics to support Bicester's eco-town status. The proposals are being developed in partnership with Bicester Vision and local employers including Chiltern Railways, Red Engineering Design, The Zeta Group and Clearview Traffic.

To further expand the educational options available to young people in the county, in September 2016 we will launch our first full-time provision for pupils aged 14 plus within the college environment. The construction pathway will be offered at the Blackbird Leys campus of City of Oxford College.



THE CAREER PATHWAY COLLEGE WILL BE A BEACON FOR TECHNICAL, PRACTICAL AND VOCATIONAL LEARNING IN CONSTRUCTION AND HERITAGE CRAFT AND WE ARE DELIGHTED TO BE ABLE TO SUPPORT ACTIVATE LEARNING AS THEY EMBARK ON THIS NEW VENTURE."

Jan Hodges OBE, Chief Executive Officer of the Edge Foundation, announcing funding for the career college in construction at City of Oxford College



UTC READING IS RESPONDING TO THE SKILLS NEEDS OF LOCAL BUSINESSES, NAMELY THOSE IN COMPUTER SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING. THIS IS ABOUT GIVING YOUNG PEOPLE OPPORTUNITY BUT ALSO GIVING THEM CHALLENGE, BECAUSE EDUCATION IS ALWAYS GOING TO BE CHALLENGING."

HRH, The Duke of York at the official opening of UTC Reading



THE COUNCIL WELCOMES THE CONFIRMATION THAT ACTIVATE LEARNING HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION TO PARTNER BICESTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE AS IT MOVES TO BECOME AN ACADEMY. THIS TIE-UP WITH A WELL-ESTABLISHED AND STRONG LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER WILL ENABLE BICESTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE TO BUILD ON ITS ALREADY IMPRESSIVE IMPROVEMENT AND HELP IT TO GO FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH."

Cllr Melinda Tilley, Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Families



ACTIVATE ENTERPRISE

Activate Enterprise launched in January 2014 to provide apprenticeships, training and consultancy to businesses across the UK.

The new organisation comprises a merger with bespoke consultancy provider, Rocket Consultancy, and the group's business-facing employer services teams. It is now the Thames Valley's largest provider of apprenticeships and business training, supporting over 1,000 organisations with their staff and team development across multiple sectors.

As a joint venture company Activate Enterprise enjoys a unique position in the marketplace. As a member of the Activate Learning group it benefits from unrivalled access to leading edge teaching and learning facilities, coupled with commercial expertise and business know-how.

This position has already seen the organisation win new business. In July, Activate Enterprise announced a partnership with Berkshire College of Agriculture (BCA). Under the agreement Activate Enterprise will work with BCA to manage its apprenticeship programmes, representing around 70 apprentices and more than 30 businesses in sectors including horticulture, equine studies and motor vehicle maintenance. It means that Activate Enterprise is now partnering with four colleges (including the three Activate Learning colleges) to support around 2,000 apprentices.

In June the organisation's partnership with Banbury and Bicester College resulted in it being selected as one of only two providers in the country to offer a new apprenticeship in classic and historic vehicle restoration. The apprenticeship has been developed by the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs (FBHVC) in response to a growing skills gap. The apprenticeship was launched at Bicester Heritage and the first apprentices are now in place.

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THIS EXCITING PARTNERSHIP WILL PROVIDE US WITH THE CAPACITY TO BE THE SPECIALIST LAND BASED PROVIDER FOR THE THAMES VALLEY AS WELL AS ALLOWING US TO EXPAND OUR EXCELLENT APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME IN MOTOR VEHICLE MAINTENANCE. I AM DELIGHTED THAT THE COLLEGE WILL BE ABLE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SUCH A HIGH LEVEL OF EXPERTISE AS WE GROW OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.”

Gillian May, Berkshire College of Agriculture Principal, on the partnership with Activate Enterprise



ACTIVATE INTERNATIONAL

Our international division has been extending the group's reach to deliver our mission of transforming lives through learning on a global scale.

In April the group, working in partnership with GEMS Education Solutions and Moulton College, was successful in its bid to manage three women-only colleges in The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The consortium, operating as The Oxford Partnership, was one of four British bids chosen under the Colleges of Excellence project. The project represents a significant investment in the development of vocational skills in the country, including some of the first examples of equipping women to enter the workplace.

The Oxford Partnership will manage three colleges in the north of the country, in Al Jouf, Arrar and Qurayyat. The first was due to open in September 2014.

Elsewhere the division has been forging new partnerships which are helping to build the capacity of international teaching teams and raise the standards of vocational education.

The group was chosen by the British Council for a skills exchange project with the Technical Vocational College in the Chinese city of Nanjing.

Following initial visits by members of our executive team, staff from our teacher training and employability departments developed a bespoke programme of teacher training which will be delivered at City of Oxford College later in the year.

Further projects in Malaysia and Myanmar are helping to improve the standards of vocational learning programmes in these countries, in subjects including business and management, English studies and teaching and assessing young leaders.

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THESE DEALS ARE A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IN THE UK'S IMPROVING EDUCATION SYSTEM. EXPORTING HELPS COMPANIES TO GROW AND IS A VITAL PART OF THE GOVERNMENT'S LONG-TERM ECONOMIC PLAN TO CREATE JOBS AND REDUCE THE DEFICIT. I VISITED SAUDI ARABIA EARLIER THIS YEAR IN SUPPORT OF UK BIDDERS AND AM PARTICULARLY PLEASED THAT THEY WILL SOON BE OFFERING HIGH QUALITY PRACTICAL SKILLS TRAINING TO AN ADDITIONAL 24,000 SAUDI STUDENTS, INCLUDING 14,000 SAUDI WOMEN.”

Matthew Hancock, Minister of State for Skills and Enterprise, announcing the successful Colleges of Excellence bids



OUR YEAR

AUGUST 2013	SEPTEMBER 2013	OCTOBER 2013
Group celebrates sustained A-level performance, with a 99% overall pass rate	UTC Reading welcomes its first students	New facilities for motor vehicle and creative media studies open at Banbury and Bicester College, following a £6m investment
Planning permission granted for the new £6m Oxford Lifestyle Centre at Oxpens Road	Work begins on the new Oxford Lifestyle Centre development, which will also provide a new reception and learner services facilities	Group announces plans for a new studio school for Bicester, in partnership with Bicester Vision and local employers
FEBRUARY 2014	MARCH 2014	APRIL 2014
Designs for UTC Oxfordshire go on show ahead of the planning application being submitted	Banbury and Bicester College shortlisted in the 'partnership with industry' category of the PACE Awards 2014	Activate Learning, working with GEMS Education Solutions and Moulton College as The Oxford Partnership, wins a bid to manage three colleges in The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
	Reading College features in City & Guilds report into best practice in the use of digital technology in further education	Group announces plans for a new centre of excellence for Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) at the Blackbird Leys campus of City of Oxford College. The Technology and Innovation Centre is supported by a £1m grant from the College Capital Innovation Fund
Work begins at City of Oxford College on the new Oxford Lifestyle Centre development, which will also provide a new reception and learner services facilities		

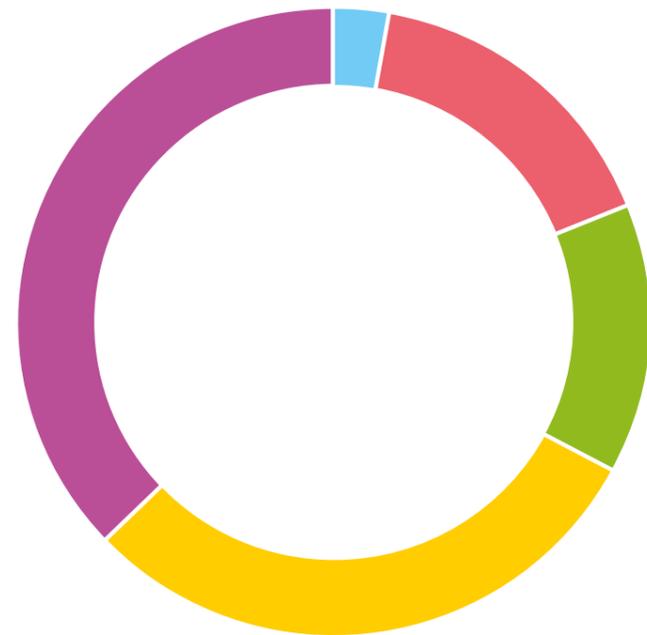


NOVEMBER 2013	DECEMBER 2013	JANUARY 2014
Official launch of Activate Learning and its two new further education colleges – Banbury and Bicester and City of Oxford College	HRH, The Duke of York, officially opens UTC Reading	Department for Education approves Activate Learning bid to develop proposals for a Studio School for Bicester
Activate Learning attends The Skills Show, the UK's largest skills showcase		Activate Learning colleges are rated good with outstanding areas by Ofsted
MAY 2014	JUNE 2014	JULY 2014
Banbury and Bicester College launches Generation Y – a project to match the needs of business with this growing demographic	Delegates attend first teaching and learning conference at Reading College	Activate Learning named as preferred sponsor for Bicester Community College as the school proposes a move to academy status
Potential employer partners visit City of Oxford College to find out more about the group's career college in construction	Classic and historic vehicle restoration apprenticeship launched to meet emerging skills needs	£4.5m grant from Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership to expand Technology and Innovation Centre in Blackbird Leys, Oxford
Progression agreement signed with SAE Institute to offer students in creative media improved access to higher education programmes	Planning permission for UTC Oxfordshire granted	Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership provides funding for new solutions labs at Reading College
		Principal Designate (Owain Johns) appointed at UTC Oxfordshire ahead of the school's opening in September 2015

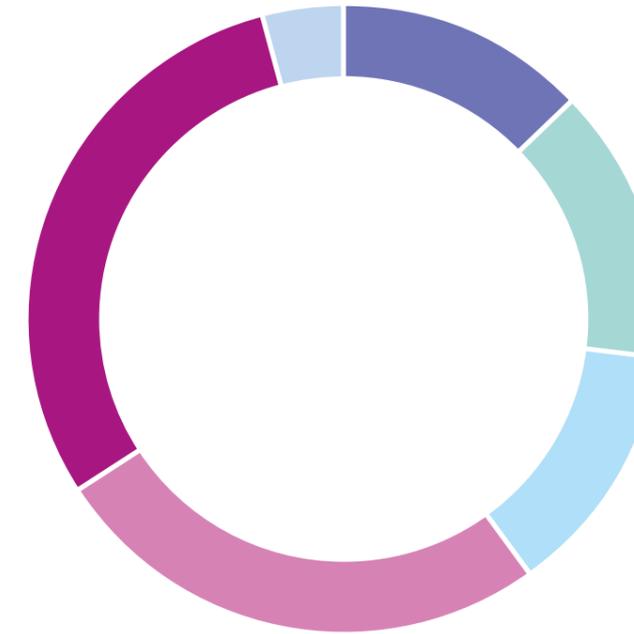


FACTS AND FIGURES

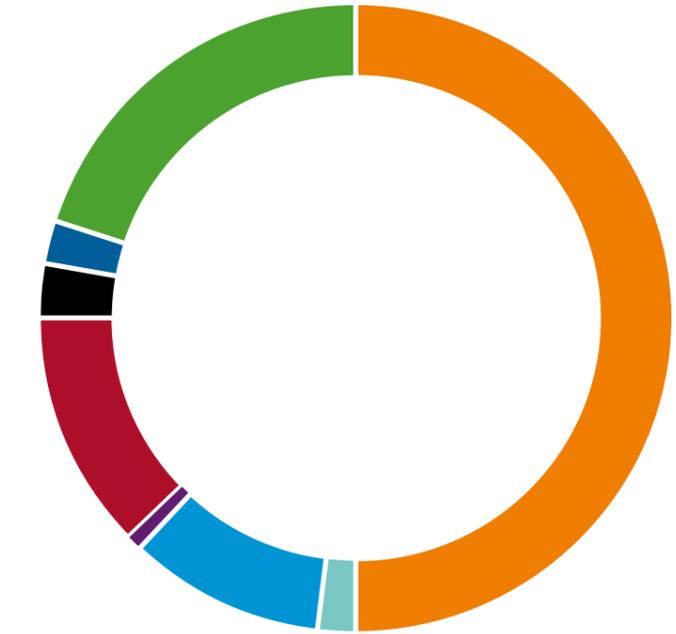
The Corporation regularly reviews performance and has set comprehensive key performance indicators, which include financial; quality and students; curriculum; marketing and brand reputation; human resources; environment.



Headcount by site/college
19,959 learners in 2013/14 were enrolled to the Activate Learning group

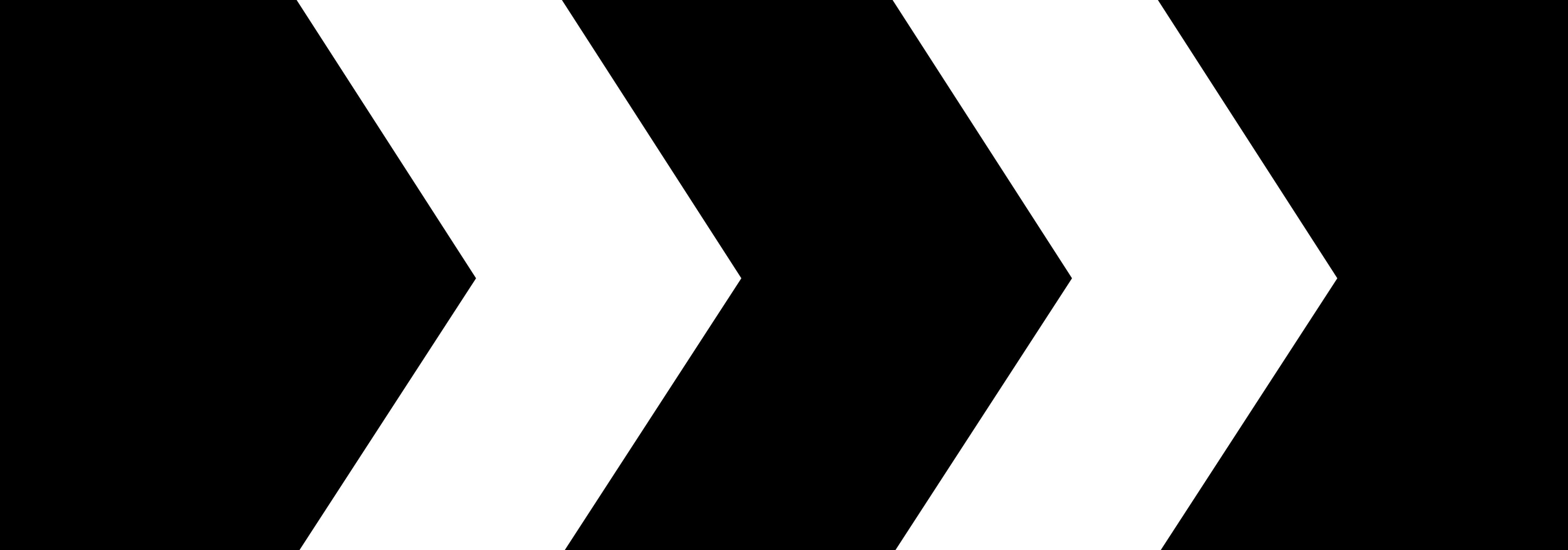


Headcount by Level
2,827 learners were studying at Entry Level
6,070 learners were studying at Level 3



Headcount by funding category
525 learners are studying higher education programmes
1,957 learners are on apprenticeship programmes





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