



EMPOWERING LEARNING

**STRATEGIC
PLAN
2021-25**

WHO WE ARE

Activate Learning is a pioneering education group with a global reach, committed to transforming lives through our approach to learning. The group comprises secondary, further and higher education, apprenticeship and business training.

VISION

“To achieve far-reaching, progressive change and impact through learning.”

MISSION

“Providing talent for business and transforming lives through our Learning Philosophy by empowering every learner to reach their full potential.”

WHY WE EXIST

Activate Learning believes everyone is capable of improving their lives through learning, with emotional support, motivation, purpose and the right application. We aim to provide this to everyone who studies with us across the different parts of our group.

We work to ensure everyone who studies with us doesn't just develop their knowledge and understanding of their subject areas, but also leaves us feeling confident as a learner knowing how their behaviours and attributes make them highly sought after and employable.

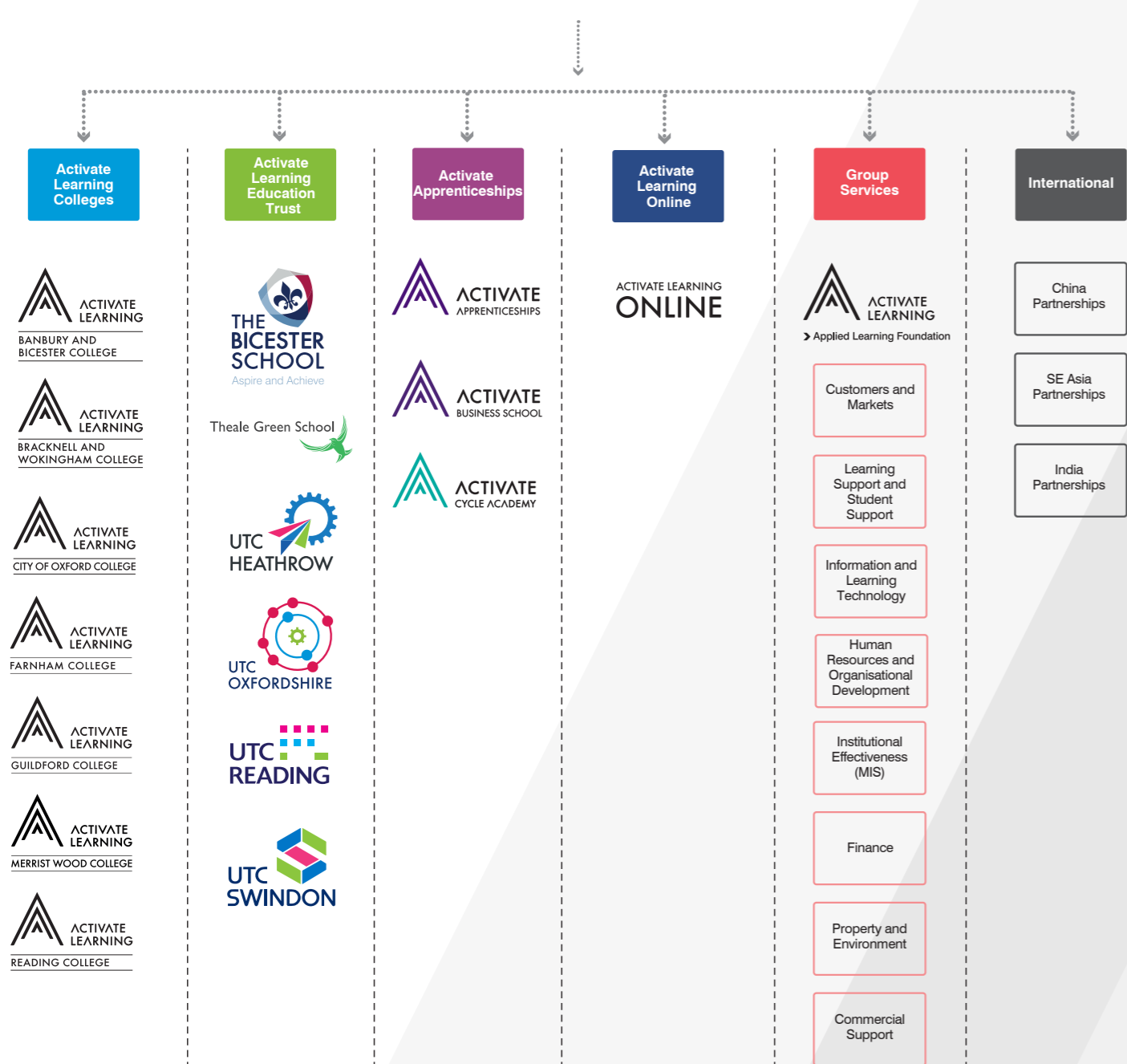
As people's needs change as they advance throughout their careers, we will be there with them at every step of the way should they need us, helping them to maintain a lifelong approach to learning.

We want to be a driver for change, and to do this we engage with different employers across multiple sectors to ensure what we deliver through our various learning programmes is what they want to see in their workplaces.

Our Learning Philosophy (see p6-7) continues to provide our culture and the framework from which we build these work-ready learners. It recognises the need to provide opportunities to develop emotional intelligence and resilience. We do this by working with employers to help our students to gain real-world skills, which can be put into practice through live projects and industry placements.



OUR GROUP MEMBERS



OUR VALUES



OUR LEARNING PHILOSOPHY

Our Learning Philosophy provides a common set of values and language for learning across our schools, colleges and workplaces. It helps us collaborate and achieve success for our learners, our people and the employers and communities we serve.

We believe anyone is capable of great things if they can learn to believe in themselves. Our Learning Philosophy helps them to do this.

It shows how hard work, persistence, the right incentives and a supportive and safe environment, can change the way we learn and develop highly employable talent for our local communities and the employer partners we work with.

It's built around three pillars: our brains, our emotions, and being motivated.



BRAIN

Employers recognise that their workforce will need to continually up-skill themselves. The good news is that we all have the capacity to develop ourselves throughout our lifetime.

Like any other part of your body, the more you work your brain and train it, the stronger it becomes. You can master great things when given the right guidance, put in lots of practice and work hard. Every time you practise something it strengthens your brain, so that the next time, it's not as hard. And as you improve, you can start to take on new things and understand more, so you can continue and thrive on the path you take through life.

EMOTIONS

As an educational organisation, we need to encourage our students to learn and make them feel confident and well supported in this process. Learning is an emotional experience and when you feel confident, well supported and you trust your teacher, your brain is more open to learning. If you are forced into it and feel afraid, your 'thinking brain' closes down.

On the other hand, negative feelings built on previous bad experiences can stop your brain from working at its best and affect how you learn.

Working with you, we will help you to be more resilient and bounce back when you feel you've failed – because we all fail at some point! Failure is only a negative if we allow it to be. It is an amazing learning experience and can give you the confidence to keep going and stand out from the crowd.

MOTIVATION

Creating highly motivated young people that are ready to take on new challenges as they enter the workplace is something we pride ourselves on. We teach our learners to be inquisitive and ask questions so they understand the task at hand.

You should always understand why you are learning what you are learning. You're more interested in learning something if you can see its worth to you and how it will benefit you in the future.

We will work with you to help you work out what you want from your learning experience. We will provide you with a range of experiences and opportunities through the businesses and partners we work with, to give you a sense of purpose in what you're doing and help you take the next step, whatever that might be.



STRATEGIC DRIVERS

The following drivers will be central to our strategy and help to shape our plans over the next five years.



The discipline of neuroscience is continually expanding our understanding of how we learn. We are evolving our knowledge about how the brain functions and how we understand the impact of emotion on the brain and the way we learn.

The brain is a powerful organ, capable of creating new connections on a massive scale, at any stage of life, and it does this in response to anything new that is learned. We recognise each individual's potential to activate their brain and push the boundaries of their learning, given the right mindset and conditions. The only thing that holds us back is our own lack of self-belief and our motivation to learn. As experts in applied learning, we must use this knowledge to create an environment where learning can thrive and learners develop the emotional intelligence and technical skills required to navigate a changing landscape.

The pace of technological change is accelerating. Automation is changing the shape of the labour market in all sectors and educators must prepare learners for jobs which are yet to be created. Our approach has been to extend and enliven students' learning; removing traditional barriers by offering access any time, any place, via any device. As we enter the next phase of our development, we will continue to invest in learning technologies to extend our customer base and offer seamless learning for every student. We will also develop learners' digital and soft skills to enable them to successfully navigate the changing context.



We are preparing learners and staff for global careers and global citizenship. Whether or not individuals work in different parts of the world, every business is impacted by customers and markets on a global scale.

Learners must understand the global context of business and appreciate the cultural variations that make each market and culture distinct. As we expand our own international operations, we can enhance the learning experience of our UK-based students, through knowledge and cultural exchanges and by sharing experiences of teaching and learning overseas.

Wellbeing is at the heart of our beliefs and values and we recognise that how you feel has a massive impact on how well you are able to function, both in your studies and in the job you do.

When people are happy, have a sense of belonging and feel well, they are able to focus on the task at hand better and have more resilience to take on any surprises life may throw at them.

Activate Learning celebrates and cherishes the diversity of those who work and study with us. We want everyone to feel safe on our campuses and know they will be treated with respect as their wellbeing is important to us.



As a values-driven business, our resources are finite and precious and we do not want to waste them. As an organisation that wants to offer the highest quality to its staff, students and employers, we wish to use our resources in an effective and efficient manner.

From the curriculum we deliver, to the carbon footprint of our campuses, Activate Learning recognises that we have a duty to ensure everything we do is considered against the backdrop of the impact it will have on both our local and global environment.

We also recognise that we have a duty to create learners who are more environmentally aware and are able to make informed choices.

OUR 3 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The Learner Journey

With our Learners, we will co-create a highly memorable learner experience, with impactful, high-quality learning and feedback, empowering learners' progress.

The Staff Journey

With our Staff, we will co-create a culture that values and sustains a love for professional development, interdependent learning communities, and builds progressive career paths.

The Employer Journey

With our industry partners, we will co-create an exciting and responsive curriculum that empowers our learners to become highly enterprising and employable.



OPERATING CONTEXT

AS WE EMBARK ON OUR NEXT GROUP STRATEGIC PLAN (2021-25), THE FOLLOWING FACTORS WILL SHAPE OUR ACTIONS.

Post-Brexit phase as the UK leaves the EU single market and starts to develop its own international trade agreements.



In 2020, the UK-wide report from the Independent Commission on the College of the Future, titled The College of the Future, was published. This sets out a strategy for the Government that would provide a flexible framework for colleges to support the development of the whole workforce, as well as initial education opportunities for everyone. The report highlights how colleges must identify local and regional priorities and that offerings are developed with employers and other stakeholders, especially other providers.

Post COVID-19 recovery as global economies build back up after the impact of the global pandemic.



2021, the Government publishes its Skills For Jobs White Paper, which sets out its ambition to level up the FE sector, giving it greater parity of esteem with higher education.

Sustainability is an emerging trend across the three LEP areas we currently operate in, a greater focus on emerging low-carbon industries and an increased demand for sustainable construction and infrastructures.



The plans for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc announced by Government in February 2021, set out a long-term strategic plan to help coordinate the infrastructure, environment and new developments in the corridor between the two cities, encompassing the north part of the county in Oxfordshire. This will be delivered by an Arc Growth Body, which will act as an economic leadership voice for the Arc, championing its talent and assets internationally, supporting businesses, and fostering innovation.



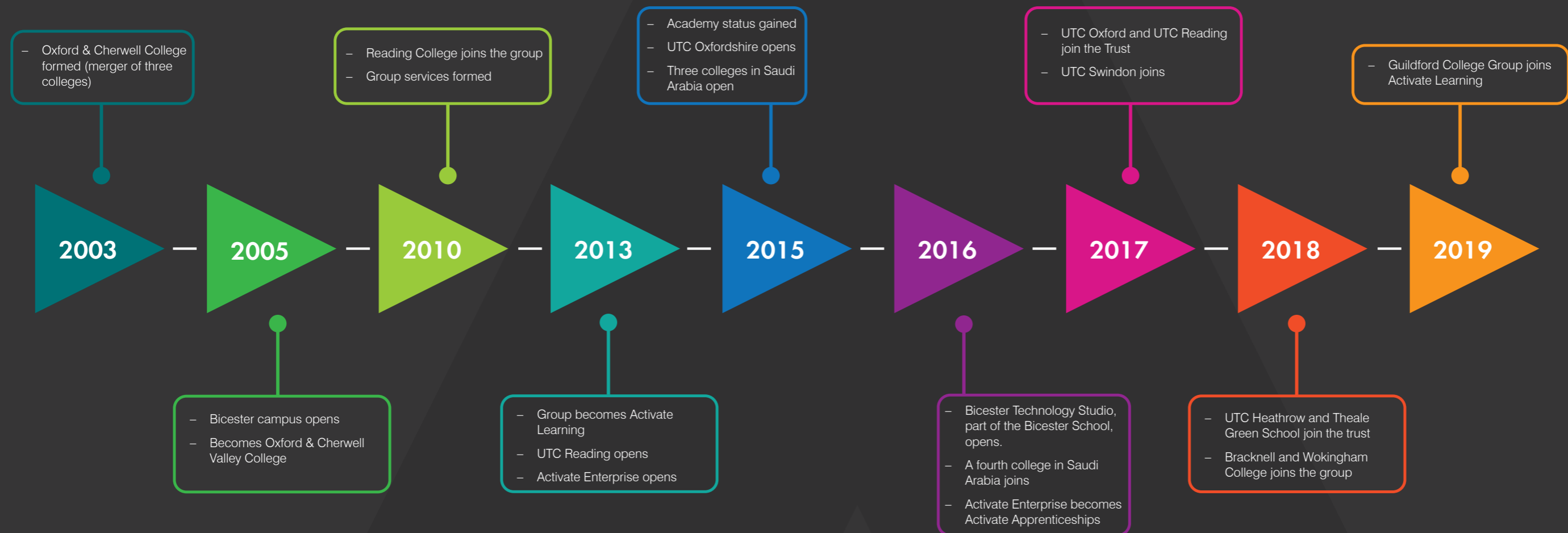
The Industrial Strategy Council's UK Skills Mismatch 2030 report highlights that there will be a chronic shortage amongst the workforce in leadership and management skills, digital skills, interpersonal and communication skills, critical thinking and information processing, teaching and training skills, and STEM skills.

Automation is likely to displace a significant share of work globally by 2030. According to McKinsey, "In about 60% of occupations globally, at least one-third of constituent activities could be automated, implying substantial workplace transformations and changes for all workers."




OUR JOURNEY SO FAR


We have been on an exciting journey as an education provider since we were founded in 2013 and in the past several years have seen significant growth in the size of the group through merger.




ACTIVATE LEARNING AT A GLANCE


Activate Learning touches the lives of thousands of people every day, helping them to learn, upskill and develop. Did you know:

 **27,000+**
That's the number of students we have enrolled across our FE and leisure learning courses in a year.


3,000
Apprentice learners being trained with Activate Apprenticeships.

18 
The number of countries that Activate Learning operates across, including China, India, Malaysia, Philippines, Argentina, and Armenia.


550+ 
That's the number of students we have enrolled on our HE courses in a year.

 **2,000+**
The number of businesses we work with across the Activate Learning group to help co-design and deliver our various learning programmes.

 **100+**
years of educational history

Although Activate Learning was founded in 2013, some of our FE colleges have been serving their local communities for decades and one, Farnham College, has been part of its community since 1938.

16-84
The ages of our youngest FE learner and oldest leisure learner across the Activate Learning group.

3 
The number of mergers Activate Learning has been through since 2013, growing our colleges from three to seven.



The Learner Journey

By 2025, we will have the reputation as the best place to learn in our locations and we will be over-subscribed.

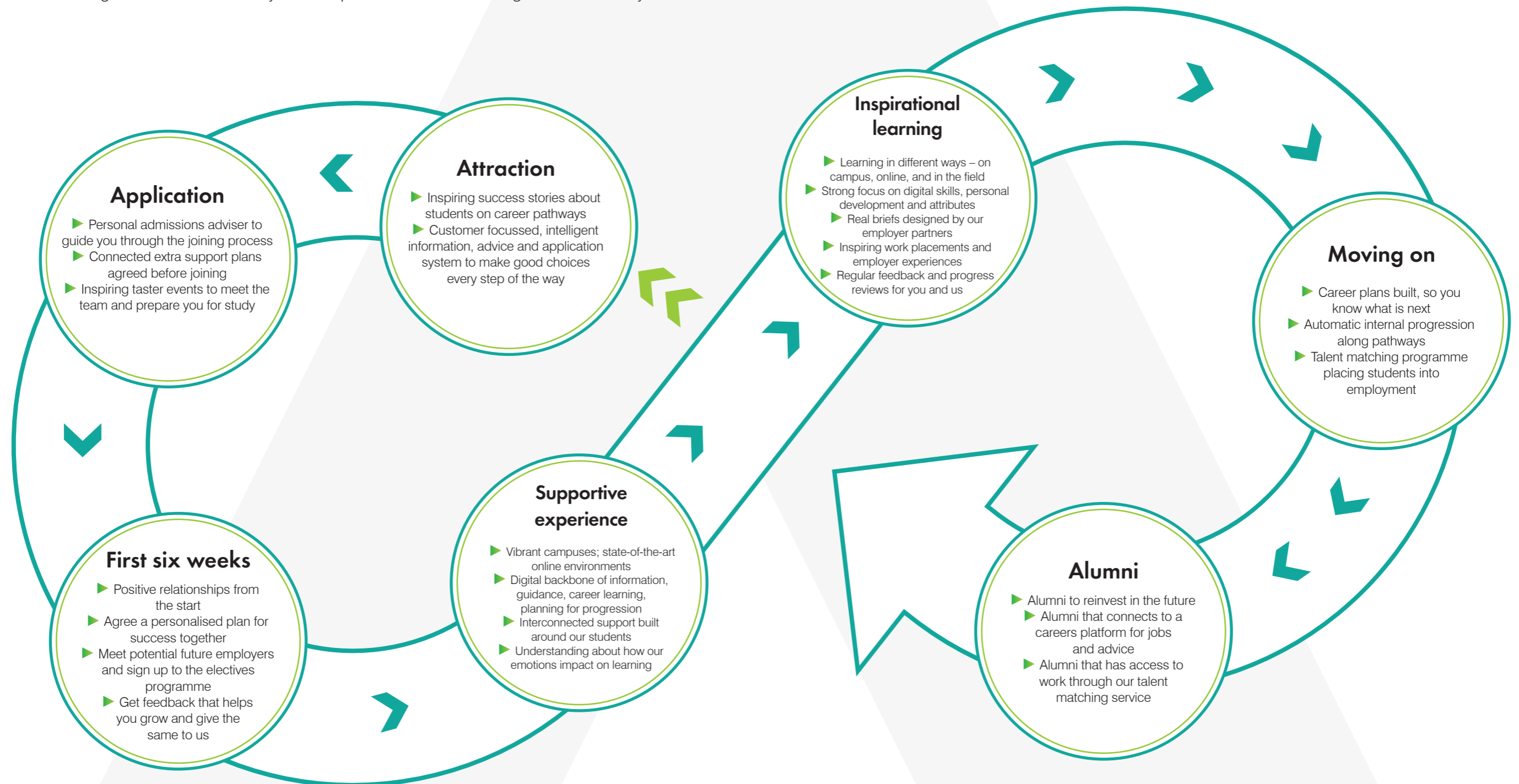
Students' guaranteed career progression is enabled by our unique Learning Philosophy, which recognises the dynamic between brain, motivation and emotion and the impact these elements have on our capacity to learn. Through building positive relationships with students, staff and employers, we raise aspirations, build confidence and develop the whole person, going far beyond just delivering qualifications.

Whether students learn online, in the workplace or at one of our vibrant campuses, we belong to a diverse community which is passionate about learning and continuously

engaging in developing their skills, understanding and attributes, and are open to receiving and offering feedback.

We proudly share and celebrate the success stories of our students who are empowered with curiosity, courage and resilience to learn in the multiple ways open to them and develop the lifelong learning habits and positive attitudes that make them prized employees in a global workforce.

As an organisation dedicated to learning, we achieve continuous improvement fueled by the learner voice. Feedback from our students is a vitally important tool and one that we will use as the main measure of our success in regards to this objective.

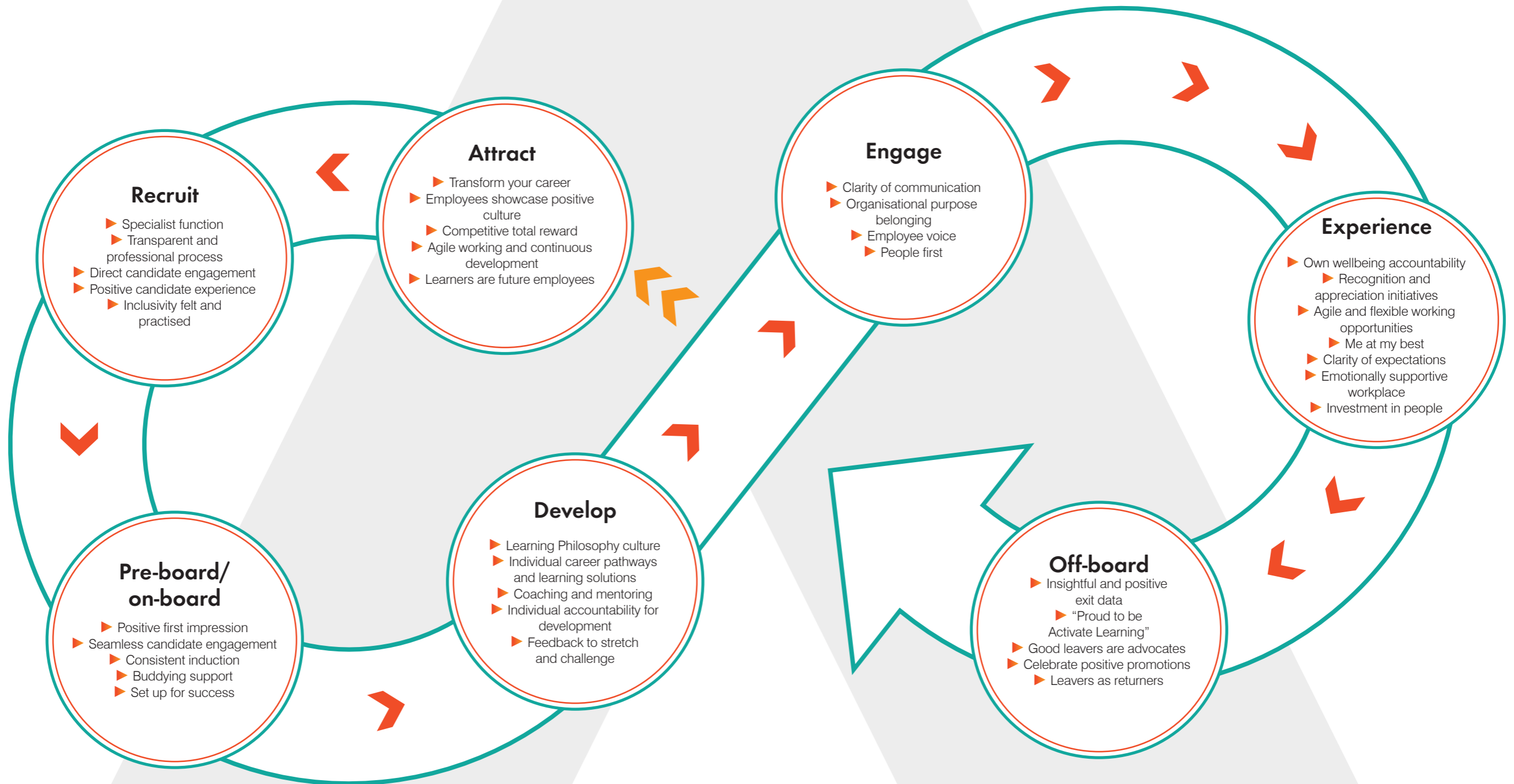


The Staff Journey

By 2025, Activate Learning will be an employer of choice in the sector, through the co-creation of a culture that values and sustains a love for professional and personal development, interdependent learning communities and builds progressive career paths. Our Learning Philosophy will form the foundation of our culture where everyone has the potential to achieve and develop in an emotionally secure environment for the right reasons.

Employees will feel connected and have a sense of belonging with their team and the organisation, from day one. They will come to work and be themselves at their best, within a culture which is accepting and inclusive. They will have a voice and feel heard and know how they contribute towards the success of the business, whilst feeling valued and appreciated.

Feedback from our staff is a vitally important tool and one that we will use as the main measure of our success in regards to this objective.



The Employer Journey

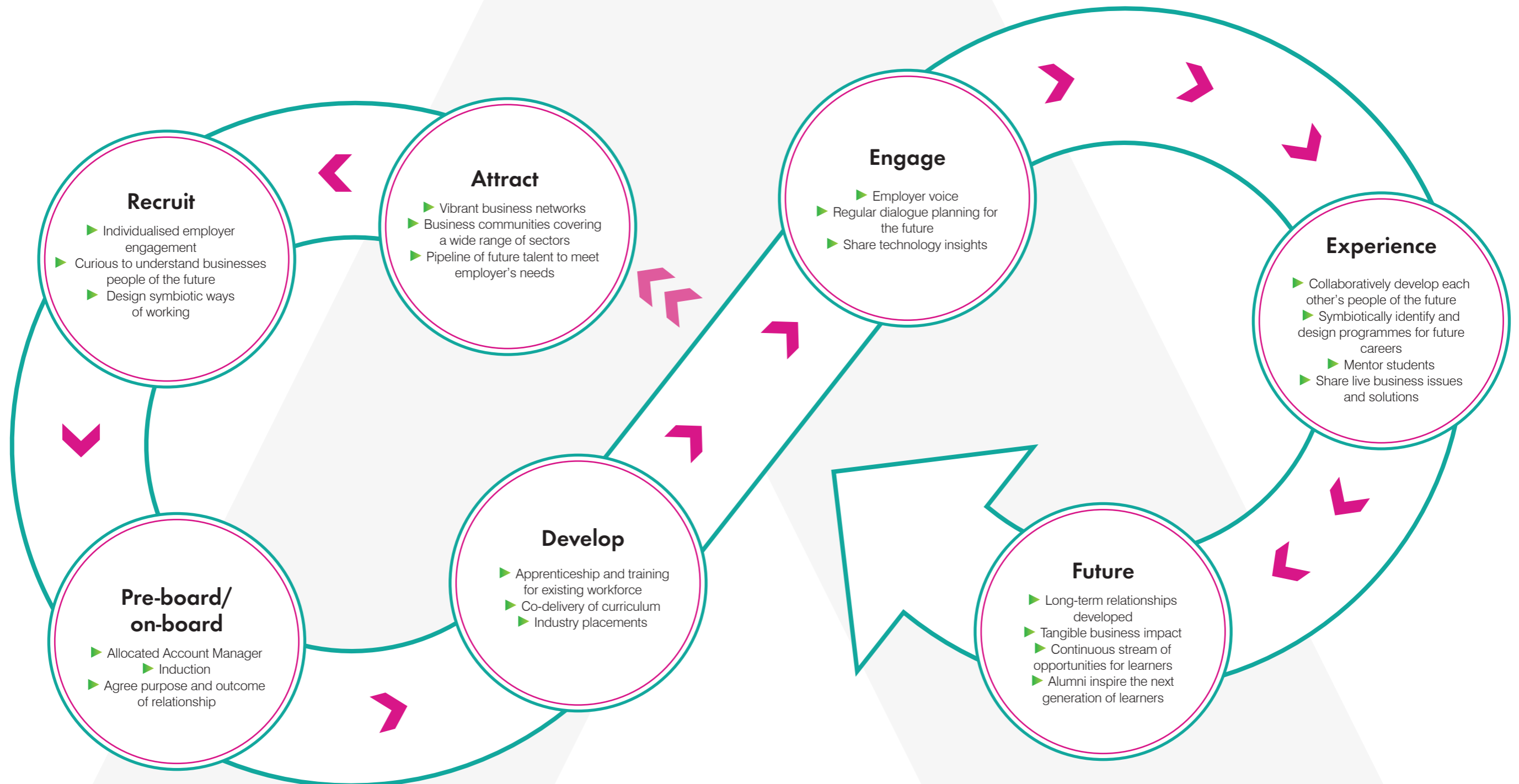
By 2025, Activate Learning will be leading the sector through symbiotic co-creation with employers. We are all about delivering our Learning Philosophy and our vibrant range of community employers support us to co-create what we teach.

By working with large employers, we are able to use their networks and increase the breadth of our engagement to gather greater insight into our business communities. These communities co-create innovations, growing their businesses together through sharing research on the latest techniques and technologies, enhancing our students' career pathways, as well as their business.

We work with selected employers to develop an offer which meets local and national skills shortages. Our partners recognise the impact we have on their business through the multiple ways we engage with them and specifically, the learning we provide to their existing and future workforce.

Our Employer Journey supports our learner and employee journeys by providing positive destinations for students and development activities for our employees.

Feedback from our employer partners is a vitally important tool and one that we will use as the main measure of our success in regards to this objective.



Group members

Colleges

- Banbury and Bicester College
- Bracknell and Wokingham College
- City of Oxford College
- Farnham College
- Guildford College
- Merrist Wood College
- Reading College

Schools

- The Bicester School
- Theale Green School
- UTC Heathrow
- UTC Oxfordshire
- UTC Reading
- UTC Swindon

Training

- Activate Apprenticeships
 - Activate Business School
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