



Annual Review 2020

**Learn, Innovate, Create.
For Life.**

h Highlands
College

www.highlands.ac.uk

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Annual Review 2020

Report from the Chair of Governors, Paul Masterton

The purpose of this review from the Board of Governors is to present the performance and progress made by Highlands College over the course of 2020.

Highlands College is Jersey's General, Further and Higher Education College. During the year the college fulfilled the learning and skills development needs of 1700 students including providing courses for school leavers, apprentices, full and part-time students and degree courses for higher education students. In addition, 2000 participants attended our adult and community education courses.

Simply put, our mission is 'to transform lives' and we do this through our vision of 'keeping students and their wellbeing at the centre of what we do every day'. As an organisation we aspire to meet the needs and ambitions of islanders and of Jersey itself. We are responsive and creative in our approach today, while keeping our sights on the horizon, anticipating future requirements for education and skills so that Jersey continues to prosper, both at the individual level and as a community. We strive to make a positive contribution to the social and economic wellbeing of the island, to offer a high-quality innovative learning experience and to improve life chances for all who choose to study with us.

Reflecting on 2020, it is difficult to recall a year quite like it. Phrases like 'pivoting online', 'social distancing' and 'furlough' entered common use, as did the term 'you're on mute'! Despite the significant challenges presented by Covid-19, the college has continued to work and to work well in meeting its objectives and caring for our students and staff. While the pandemic has had, and continues to have, significant impacts on every aspect of our lives, I am proud of how resilient the college has been in the face of unprecedented difficulties. While the final cost of COVID-19 will not be known for some time, Highlands College has responded confidently with thoughtful and effective plans and has continued to deliver learning and training throughout the year. We have learned a lot about ourselves as an organisation and are emerging stronger from the experience, better prepared for the future and deeply committed to Jersey's future success.

Highlights for the year include:

New Principal Appointed

Jo Terry-Marchant began 2020 as the Acting Principal of Highlands College of Further and Higher Education. In April, during lockdown, she was appointed as Principal following a highly competitive selection process, overseen by the Jersey Appointment Commission. Jo's unquenchable drive for excellence, her profound understanding of education and her passion for students were compelling attributes for her appointment. These, combined with her deep understanding of Jersey and her roots in the community, have enabled Jo to make an immediate impact and to set out a bold vision for Highlands and its increased importance to Jersey.

Achievement Levels

Highlands College continues to be the premier provider of professional, technical, community and higher education for the people of Jersey. As the epicentre for learning and development in Jersey, the college is a major factor in enabling the Government to meet its strategic priorities: to improve the educational outcomes for young people and upskilling and reskilling of the local workforce. Highlands College plays a major role in Jersey's future economic success, while also ensuring social cohesion and benefit.

Highlands College responded well to the pandemic and quickly pivoted to learning online with students and staff remaining on existing timetables, and students continuing to submit both course work and assignments where possible.

Perhaps not surprisingly, given the massive disruption, students did not achieve as many top distinction grades, but they persevered and passed, mostly with merits. Benchmarking data is due in March of 2021 and the College expects to compare favourably to its English counterparts.

Overall pass rate for full-time students of Highlands College 6th form remains high at 96%, with 8 out of 10 students who completed their studies in the Summer of 2020 progressing to further study or employment within 2 months. This is slightly lower than 9 out of 10 in 2018/2019 and is the early impact of a contracting job market due to the pandemic.

Satisfaction surveys remained consistently positive, with 9 out of 10 students stating they would recommend the College to a friend, while 91% felt that 'Teachers know their subject very well'. Parents praised the College's approach to communications, with 9 out of 10 parents rating the College's efforts as good to excellent, and students identified that their learning experiences online were fair at 3 out of 5 stars.

Apprenticeship pass rate remains strong at 88%, which compares favourably with the benchmark figure of 67% in England.


Higher Education achievement at University College Jersey (UCJ) is high; 95% of all students completing a programme of study at UCJ this summer passed their course, with overall grades far outstripping national benchmarks. On bachelor's degree programmes, 86% of students achieved a first or upper-second class degree. This compares with 70% of students nationally. 73% of foundation degree (Level 5) students achieved a merit or distinction.

UCJ also delivers HNCs in Construction and Civil Engineering to part-time students in employment. These programmes had a 100% pass rate, with all of the Civil Engineering cohort achieving a distinction and progressing on to a new bachelor's degree top-up programme at UCJ.

Achievement on the Access to Higher Education programme also beat the national benchmark by 17%. A majority of students are now at their desired destination of higher education.

2020 achievements at a glance

6th form
pass rate of
96%

A teal target icon with a white bullseye and a ribbon, positioned behind the 96% figure.

compared to 93% pass rate of
colleges in England (ESFA)

Highlands
College ranks
31st

Three teal triangles of increasing size, stacked vertically, positioned behind the 31st figure.

within 172 English
general FE colleges

In English
we ranked
1st

A teal trophy icon, positioned behind the 1st figure.

within 171 English
general FE colleges

In maths we
ranked

29th

A teal calculator icon, positioned behind the 29th figure.

within 169 English
general FE colleges

286
apprentices
expected to complete
qualifications

Two teal squares, one slightly larger and offset to the right of the other, positioned behind the 286 figure.

Highlands
College ranks
2nd

Two teal stars of different sizes, positioned behind the 2nd figure.

within the 172 English colleges
that report their achievement
rates for apprenticeship



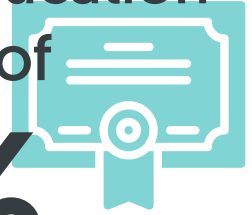
122

Students

expected to complete Higher Education qualifications

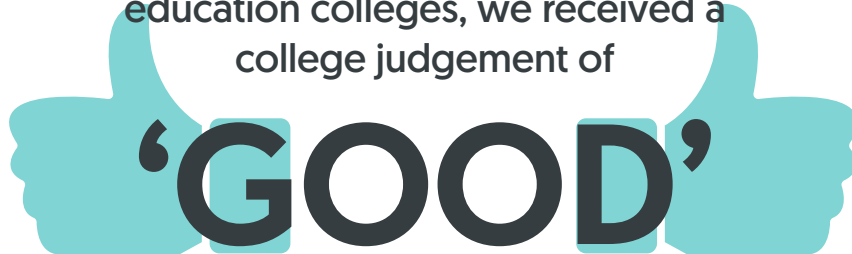
Higher Education
pass rate of

97%



compared to 79% pass rate in
English University Sector (HESA)

When compared to other further
education colleges, we received a
college judgement of



‘GOOD’

for overall pass rate for all students

Development of a Four-Year Strategic Plan for Highlands College

2020 saw the College enter a new strategic planning cycle with the subsequent launch of the College's 2020-2024 Strategic Plan. The plan was developed following consultation with internal and external stakeholders and is closely aligned to the Government of Jersey's strategic priorities. It outlines ambitious and challenging targets and can be found in its entirety on the Highlands College website. In brief, the college's three key priorities are:

- Learning and Innovation
- Putting the Community First
- Financial Sustainability and a New Campus

The College has an exciting development plan and is well on its way to becoming a leading technical and vocational college. The Governing Body is committed to supporting the staff and students of the college in making this happen. Our major piece of work, over the coming months, is to provide the strongest case possible to secure the funding for a state-of-the-art teaching and learning facility.

Innovative Technological Infrastructure

The pandemic provided a severe test of the College's IT infrastructure. With the Island going into lockdown, face to face classes became impossible. Thanks to the foresight and innovative approach of our IT department, Highlands College was able to transition to remote learning with remarkable fluidity. Not only did this allow for teaching to continue, but it also provided an important pastoral link between staff and students.

We are justifiably proud of the achievements of Highlands College in its existing campus. Looking to the future it is clear that increasing demands on the college, and profound changes in the need for learning and development, require a new facility. A new campus which is fit for the digital age will ensure that the future training needs of the island are met and that the experience for any islander studying or working at Highlands College will be truly transformative.

In any year it is right to thank all those responsible for their commitment to running Highlands College on behalf of all Jersey residents. In 2020 this has never been more appropriate. The staff at Highlands College are exemplars for their approach to education and learning and to putting our students first, while the leadership of our principal Jo Terry Marchant has been inspirational. On behalf of the Board of Governors, I offer my profound thanks to Jo and to her team for their outstanding dedication to education in Jersey. This has never been more apparent than through the pandemic.

As chair, I also thank the Board of Governors for their unstinting support of the College.

Paul Masterton,
Chair of Governors



Report of the Safeguarding Sub-Committee November 2020

Oversight of the College's Safeguarding policies, processes and obligations to its stakeholders has been delegated by the Governing Body to the Safeguarding Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee is comprised of three independent Governors who are either "Representative" or "Independent" Governors and the Heads of Student Life and Learning Support/Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND). It meets every 2 months.

The role of the sub-committee is to monitor that the College has in place policies, processes, guidance and training to enable it to meet legal requirements and CYPES Department policies related to Safeguarding. It has oversight of the college safeguarding processes to monitor and oversee their effectiveness thereby underpinning the college as a safe, inclusive, and supportive place of study.

For academic year 2019/2020 the number of 'At Risk' students (at risk of not completing their course) was 290 and the number supported by Learning Support was about 125, with some students supported by both departments. During the COVID lockdown from March to June, the role of Student Life and Learning Support was vital to maintain contact and offer personal support to students. For example, Student Life remained open with a number of students supported on a daily basis and there were over 900 contacts made with individual students by Student Life during the first 2 months of lockdown, with no students withdrawing from their course.

The start of a new academic year in September 2020 saw very marked changes in COVID precautions at the College and some 50% of teaching being done online so that "bubbles" could be maintained for student safety. New induction and transition arrangements were made to help, in particular, students who had not been in school to support their transition and follow a recovery pathway.

The number of 'At Risk' students supported by Student Life was about 114 in Nov, with 86 supported by Learning Support. Student Life and Learning Support together offer extensive programmes on wellbeing, 1-2-1 tutorials, counselling, wider enrichment, and in-class support.

The Governors on the Safeguarding Subcommittee wish to record their appreciation of the very hard and impressive work undertaken by Student Life and Learning Support over this period, with such successful outcomes.

John Pinel,
Chair of Safeguarding Sub-Committee



Quality & Standards Sub-Committee 2020 Report

The mandate of the Quality & Standards Sub-Committee is to oversee, monitor and report on Highlands College academic & teaching standards, students' achievement, and their progression, with the primary purpose of raising students' achievement and monitoring their success. This includes advising and reporting on Highlands' performance and quality assurance systems, main College policies and procedures – with a particular focus on equal opportunity and diversity. We are tasked with taking account of the College's principal stakeholders, particularly learners, parents, and employers. Membership of this Sub-Committee comprises four Governors, including a Student Governor and a Staff Governor, plus representatives from the Senior Leadership Team.

During 2020 the Quality & Standards Sub-Committee met on four occasions. In February we reviewed a comprehensive list of all College policies. We also considered reports on student retention, withdrawals from courses, course attendance, employer engagement, external quality assurance, provision of learning support and value-added (student's progression), which we noted on average were positive.

Shortly afterwards it became evident the Covid-19 pandemic was going to significantly disrupt Island-wide life, causing concern about continuity of teaching, students' learning, student and staff well-being, and maintaining standards. I am pleased to report all College staff reacted magnificently to the unprecedented circumstances by quickly moving online a substantial part of the College's provision and operations, indeed Highlands was widely recognised as an

exemplar of adapting to the spring Lockdown. Subsequent quality assurance assessments have shown Covid-19 restrictions were successfully mitigated, with students' learning, achievement and progression not being unduly impacted, apart from Apprenticeship courses that have a high level of practical learning content. On a brighter note, at the end of April we were delighted Joanne Terry-Marchant was appointed permanent College Principal providing continuity with her expertise and wealth of experience during these uncertain times.

Our subsequent meetings in June, September and November 2020 were all held online and concentrated on overseeing, monitoring and positively contributing to the College's ongoing adaptations for overcoming the pandemic, including considering student and staff feedback, the Highlands management of the UK-wide challenges with examination awards, planning for remote student enrolment, exit from Lockdown in September, developing a model for future curriculum, together with an Autumn feedback on enrolment and retention. We are confident Highlands College is well placed to continue delivering high-quality teaching and learning, including vocational skills, to our Island's population.

Paul W. Harding,
Chair of the Quality & Standards Sub-Committee

Financial Report

The Finance Sub-Committee met on 4 occasions during the 2020 calendar year to assess income and expenditure budgets, review intra-year progress, and consider material matters that may influence sound financial management of the College. I am very grateful for the work of the Senior Leadership Team of the College, the Government of Jersey Finance Business Partnering team and the Sub-Committee membership for the way in which they each brought a sharp focus to the prudent management of College finances during a challenging 2020. The College team really has embedded financial management and commerciality as core expectations across the board and this supports better decision-making on priorities and efficiency opportunities.

The College continues to face the challenge of a tight operational budget settlement from the Government of Jersey Department for Children, Young People, Education and Skills. This is compounded by an ageing estate and in 2020, also acutely impacted by the unique challenges of delivering the educational syllabus and much needed student welfare support in the most trying of circumstances. The challenge of adapting to remote learning and pastoral support was much greater than a financial one although in this latter context, I am grateful for

the support afforded by Government of Jersey under various COVID-19 support schemes e.g., to develop the outdoor space available to students.

The College budget for 2020 was £10,195m and final position at year end was a variance of 78k or 0.76%. Slightly reduced income from a COVID-19 impacted Adult & Community Education Curriculum was largely offset by reduced Non-staff Expenditure coupled with a modest reduction in Staff Expenditure.

Whilst the core central funding outlook remains tight, I am confident that the College team can optimise the funding available whilst also presenting compelling investment cases for additional funding to support the education, skills development and re-training needs of our island in the coming year and beyond.

Richard Corrigan,
Chair of the Finance Sub-Committee

Water Fountain at Government House. Construction and Engineering staff worked with local partners to create the feature to celebrate the 75th anniversary of Jersey's Liberation



Report of the Marketing Sub-Committee

The Marketing Sub-Committee first met in January 2020 and since then we have met regularly to establish critically what we should prioritise as the main elements to 'promote' the college to our nine stakeholder groups and to also increase the awareness and the importance of consistent marketing across the whole college.

Initially we supported our colleagues in getting the marketing strategy agreed, as a document to guide us through everything we should be doing both in the long and short term.

One priority, amongst many, that we are all agreed upon is to identify the thoughts of our stakeholders on where we are now; both in their perceptions of Highlands currently and where they believe we should be going forward. Focus groups will be established to gain this information, conducted professionally by 4insight and led by Lucy Fosse, our Head of Marketing, with input from a cross section of our stakeholders who will be invited to share their thoughts and importantly their aspirations for the college and thus the challenges and opportunities that will lie therein.

As we move forward, the committee will face many post pandemic challenges and will for instance be looking at sustainability and corresponding action points that will increasingly affect all of our lives, and how we communicate and agree the various aspects of this subject to the college and our stakeholders.

David Elliott,
Chair of the Marketing Sub-Committee

Murray Le Masurier, Level 3 Diploma in Childcare and Education,
being interviewed by media about his involvement with
Democracy week.



Introducing new board members



Julie Acey



Rholo Mba



**Bradley Le
Clercq**

The college caters to a wonderfully diverse body of students and so a Board of Governors that represents and reflects this diversity is essential. With this in mind, several new members were welcomed to the Board in 2020.

Julie Acey
Head of Strategy
Royal Bank of Scotland International

Julie is originally from Yorkshire where she grew up in a rural community with a large extended family. After university, she spent a couple of years in London and then 20 years in Edinburgh, prior to moving to Jersey in 2017 where she now lives with her husband and daughter.

Through her role at RBSI Julie spent a lot of time raising awareness of Purpose and in doing so gained a strong awareness of what her own purpose is and what it is that she stands for: equality and opportunity.

When asked why she became a Governor for Highlands College Julie explained,

“Through empathy and driving positive disruption, I want everyone to be the best that

they can be, and accepted and proud of that, by identifying and realising opportunities to unlock that potential. Whatever someone’s gender, sexuality, race, religion, aptitude, education I want them to have the same opportunities to grow, to adventure to thrive. That’s how a working-class Yorkshire girl ended up being the head of strategy for a leading offshore bank.

I wanted to become a Governor for Highlands College so that I can help create those opportunities for people in Jersey and to equip people with the skills they need for their future.”

Julie has a BTEC National Diploma in Business Studies which she used to gain her place at University, and then to qualify as an accountant and to have a successful corporate career. She therefore fully understands the benefit of vocational qualifications and wants to help change the outdated perception that exams are superior to vocational qualifications.

Rholo Mba
Investment Specialist
Barclays

Rholo has worked within the financial services industry since 2012, predominately providing investment and wealth planning advice to private clients, trustees and corporates both internationally and locally. A graduate of The University of Liverpool, he started his career in the retail sector, before relocating and settling in Jersey. He holds a Diploma from the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators, is a Chartered Member of the Chartered Institute of Securities and Investments (CISI) and sits on the CISI Jersey Branch Committee, a volunteer role, setting standards of professional excellence and integrity for the financial services industry locally.

Rholo has a passion for education, and is an advocate for equality, using his position within the CISI committee to help develop and empower islanders to reach their full potential, supporting schools and other professional bodies in this endeavour.

Bradley Le Clercq
Graduate Consultant
BDO Greenlight

Bradley completed his studies at University College Jersey, in partnership with the University of Plymouth, where he achieved a BA (Hons) in Business and Management.

While at Highlands College, Bradley was a student representative to the Board of Governors and became Head Student Representative for the College. He now hopes that his own experiences as an alumnus of the College will help to inform his role on the Board of Governors.

Student Governors

To ensure that our student body is appropriately represented, Honor Merchant [Level 3 Childcare and Education], Coryal Larose [Level 3 Health and Social Care] and Oliver Luce [Fda in Childhood Studies] were all welcomed to the board as Student Governors. They come to the roles from a range of both further and higher education courses.





Principal's Summary

I am pleased and honoured to be writing this summary, at the end of what has been my first year as Principal of Highlands College of Further and Higher Education.

You will have read about some of the challenges created by the pandemic restrictions, you will have learned a little about the outstanding responsiveness shown by all to meet the needs of our students and the wider island community, and you will have seen the sustained high levels of achievement across our Sixth Form, Professional Centre, Apprenticeships and University College Jersey. What you will not have seen, but what I have been privileged to witness, is the innovation, determination and resilience shown by the Highlands College community amid truly uncharted waters.

I am full of respect for the dedication of our staff, full of admiration for students who have succeeded despite multiple barriers in their way, and full of gratitude to the Governors for their unswerving support and guidance - the balance of challenge and assistance is highly valued.

Our most valuable commodity is people: it is they who will make strategy a reality, and who inspire me to keep improving and looking ahead. With our clearly defined priorities (as outlined in the College's Strategic Plan), the support of our Island community and our mission to transform lives, I am confident that we will thrive.

Jo Terry-Marchant
Principal

