

# Annual Review 2021



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

**h** Highlands  
College



**h**

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# Annual Review 2021

The **purpose** of this review from the Board of Governors is to present the **performance** and **progress** made by Highlands College during **2021**.

## Report from the Chair of Governors, Paul Masterton

Highlands College is the primary Further and Higher Education and skills development provider in Jersey. The component parts of Highlands include Sixth Form, University College Jersey, the Professional Studies Centre, Apprenticeships, and Adult & Community Education. Highlands College plays a central and critically important role for Jersey, helping to transform lives, enabling our students to reach their potential, meeting the needs of the economy, while also supporting social development and the wellbeing of the island.

Every year we welcome thousands of students through our doors and take great pride in our inclusive community. We keep the needs of students at

the heart of all we do. As a learning organisation, we strive to meet the needs and ambitions of Jersey and all islanders by delivering high quality learning and skills development today while also looking to tomorrow, anticipating future skills and education needs.

The role of the Highlands College Board of Governors is to provide independent oversight for the college, ensuring that the organisation is acting in accordance with the principles and articles under which it was established. The Board is there to assist the college by providing, scrutiny, challenge and support for the Principal and for the leadership team - **Scrutiny** of how Highlands College is being managed, including the quality of the learning experience, achievement of goals and financial discipline; **Challenge** of the thinking and development of strategies and plans, assisting leadership



in developing the vision for the college, while reviewing and mitigating risks; **Support** of the Highlands team, acting as ambassadors for the college and assisting with stakeholder relationships.

Reviewing the past year, I am proud to report that Highlands College made strong progress against its plans and targets for the year and also towards its strategic objectives. Throughout this report you will find data that supports this statement and will also observe that the quality of learning experience continues to improve while educational outcomes match and, in many areas, exceed comparable UK benchmarks.

It is important to reflect that these results were achieved while Jersey and Highlands College, continued to deal with the impacts of the pandemic. For Highlands College this meant continuing to provide a blended

learning experience, incorporating virtual and in person learning, while also dealing with the direct impacts on staff and students of the virus. That the college successfully achieved what it did in the year, given these pressures, is truly outstanding.

Financial sustainability is a major priority for the college. We never lose sight of the fact that we are investing taxpayers' money into the future of the island and into our students. Our objective is to meet our budget and we take this seriously, with robust controls and processes to ensure we maintain tight financial discipline. This approach ensured that Highlands College met its financial obligations for the year and this is covered in detail later in this review. Given the enormous financial pressures on the college, again compounded by the pandemic, this is an exceptional outcome.



Given the importance of Highlands College to Jersey, the Board of Governors is acutely focussed on governance to ensure that the organisation is healthy and fit for purpose. To assist in this the Board maintains a sub-committee structure overseeing critical areas for the college. Reports from these sub-committees follow in this review, including Finance, Safeguarding, Quality & Standards, Marketing and Sustainability. Terms of reference for these committees and the Main Board are reviewed annually as the Board looks for continual improvement in its performance. Following the annual board away day, which this year focussed on sustainability, it was decided to initiate a Sustainability sub-committee, to assist the college in developing a strategy in this key area, including how the college can move towards net-zero carbon

performance and, equally importantly, how sustainability should be taught within Highlands College, including developing the skills that Jersey will need in the future as it seeks to de-carbonise.

**Highlands strategic ambitions are described in our 2020-2024 plan**

with significant progress made in each of the three priorities of 'Learning and Innovation', 'Putting the Community First' and 'Financial Sustainability and a New Campus'. Highlights from these include the development of a new and innovative curriculum, the enrolment of some 600 students on our fully funded Fiscal Stimulus courses and the on-going financial discipline as noted above. Progress towards a new campus was minimal in the year, understandable given the significant challenges the Government of Jersey was facing. We are hopeful given a study commissioned

by CYPES [department for Children, Young People, Education and Skills] that the new campus initiative will make much needed progress in 2022. The importance of Highlands to the future skilling and reskilling of the island's workforce has never been greater and the college is working closely with government in many ways to ensure that the college underpins government objectives while receiving the support and financial commitments that it needs to succeed, including a new campus.

In closing, I offer my profound thanks to Jo and to her team for their commitment and their dedication to Highlands College and for their outstanding work and success in 2021. Their contribution to Jersey cannot be overstated. I also offer my sincere thanks to my fellow governors for their support of Highlands and for their time which they give so generously.

## Highlights of the 2021 calendar year were numerous and varied.

In addition to those outlined in the Chair's introduction, you will find a small selection outlined here.

After months of self-assessment and rigorous challenge from a panel made up of external stakeholders (including Governors and Government of Jersey representatives) Highlands received a "good college with outstanding features" grading. This whole process is vital to ensure Highlands remains the premier provider of professional, technical, community and higher education for the people of Jersey. As the Island's epicentre for learning and development, the college is a major factor in enabling the Government to meet its strategic priorities: to improve

the educational outcomes for young people and the upskilling and reskilling of the local workforce.

Continuing the 'operational' theme, 2021 saw Highlands College go live with a new **Managed Information System, Tribal EBS**. This was the biggest change to any of the College's systems in more than a decade and is an integral piece of infrastructure.

“  
**good  
college  
with  
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features**  
”

### Curriculum Excellence and Innovation

Highlights include the introduction of the **new DEC! Level 3 pathway** at Highlands College. The first group of Year 1 students commenced the course in September 2021 with a phenomenal amount of industry support. The Garenne Group sponsored the development of a digital classroom with the purchase of new computers and industry standard software packages. This has since been used not only to teach DEC! students but also as a central hub for digital training for industry and DEC! tutors across the island.



The UCJ Graduation Ceremony in 2021 was a particular highlight. Due to the pandemic, the previous year's ceremony had been postponed and so the event saw the celebration not only for Class of 2021 but for Class of 2020 also. Higher Education achievement at University College Jersey (UCJ) was high; 95% of all students completing a programme of study at UCJ in 2021 passed their course, with overall grades far outstripping national benchmarks. On bachelor's degree programmes, 85% of students achieved a first or upper-second class degree. This compares with 70% of students nationally. UCJ also delivers HNCs in Construction and Civil Engineering to part-time students in employment. These programmes had a 100% pass rate. The BA (Hons) in Social work came to the end of its second year with 100% of students passing their second year and progressing onto their third year.

Pass rates on the Access to Higher Education programme also remained strong with 98% of students passing. A majority of students are now at their desired destination of higher education.

Overall pass rate for full-time students of Highlands College 6th form remained high at 98%, with 9 out of 10 students who completed their studies in the Summer of 2021 progressing to further study or employment within 2 months. This is an increase from 8 out of 10 in 2019/2020.

Satisfaction surveys remained consistently positive, with 9 out of 10 students stating they would recommend the College to a friend, while 96% 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, 95% of students identified that the 'Teaching on their study programme is good'.

Apprenticeship pass rate was particularly strong at 98%, which compares favourably with the benchmark figure of 67% in England.

**Access to  
Higher  
Education  
Pass Rate**

**98%**

**Higher  
Education  
Pass Rate**

**95%**

“

Teachers know their  
subject very well.

”



**6th** = **98%**  
Form Pass Rate

9 out of 10



progressing to further study  
or employment within

**2 months**

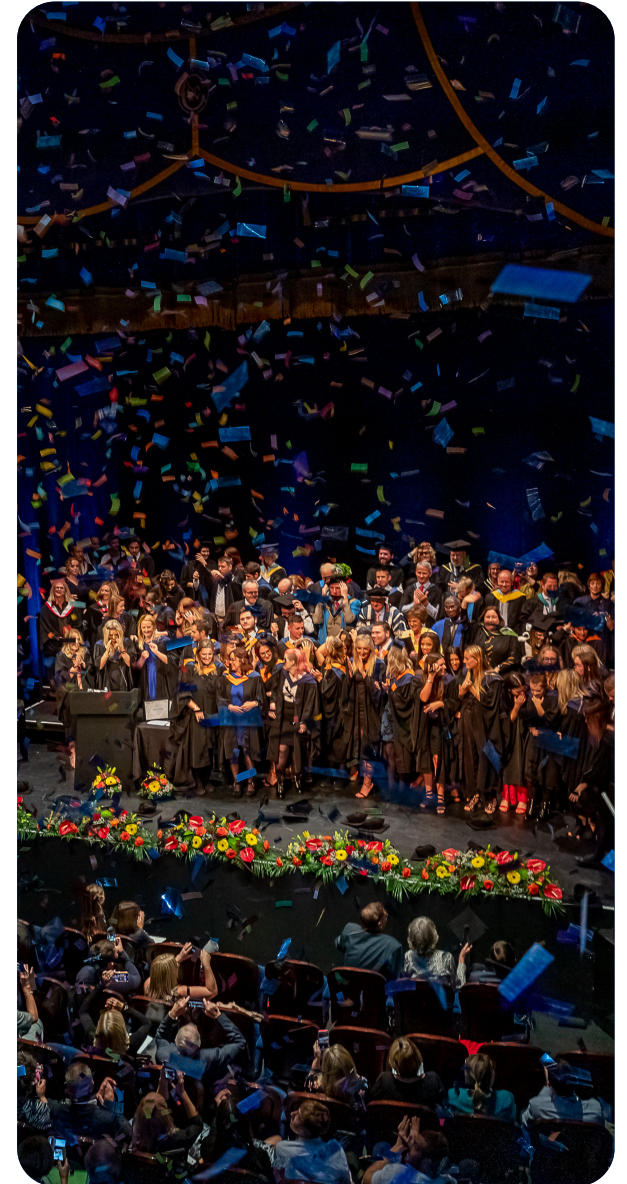
**85%**

Received a  
first or 2:1  
class degree



This compares with 70% of  
students nationally

**98%** Apprenticeship  
Pass Rate



## Report of the Safeguarding Sub-Committee

**John Pinel**

**Chair of the Safeguarding  
Sub-Committee**

This sub-committee has oversight of college policies, processes, guidance and training with regard to Safeguarding. Responsibilities of the members include ensuring the college meets legal requirements and Education Department policies, and monitoring the effectiveness of the safeguarding function thereby underpinning the college as a safe, inclusive, and supportive place of study.

The sub-committee is comprised of 3 independent Governors, and the Heads of Student Life and Learning Support/ Special Education Needs and Disabilities [SEND]. It meets every 2-3 months and reports at every GB meeting.

**Learning support** had a very successful year, supporting student numbers which were on par with the previous year.

The attendance of those students was deemed as outstanding, and so too was the retention.

Self-Assessment Review [SAR] data demonstrates a positive picture of learning support impact.

School super transition visits [for students joining in Sep 2022] will start in early 2022, with a programme of extended transition for learners with additional needs – this has been lauded by feeder schools as excellent resource and deemed as so beneficial for all those needing that extra support.

**Student Life** again had a very successful year and had involvement with 27 multi agencies to support all our students on a day-to-day basis.



The number of students supported by student life was again on par with the previous year.

The experience of the last [COVID] years has led to a better awareness of student needs and closer teamwork within Highlands College, including with Tutors and with external agencies.

We are currently working with the Anna Freud National Centre for children and families following their commission by the Government of Jersey to review on-island mental health and emotional wellbeing provision. Representatives from Anna Freud visited Highlands College and spent time with staff and students. Subsequently, a self-audit was completed, and we now have a high priority action plan in place to support the wellbeing of both our students and staff.

The Governors on the sub-committee remain satisfied that Student Life provides an excellent level of support for full-time learners to achieve 90% success on their programme of study; on par with non-supported peers.

The Governors on the Safeguarding sub-committee 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.



## Report of the Quality & Standards Sub-Committee

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

The mandate of the Quality & Standards Sub-Committee is to, monitor, improve and report on Highlands College academic & teaching standards, students' achievement and their progression. This includes advising and reporting on Highlands performance and quality assurance systems, main College policies and procedures. Membership of this sub-committee comprises selected independent Governors plus a Student Governor elected by College students, a Staff Governor elected by College staff and representatives from the Senior Leadership Team.

During 2021 the Quality & Standards Sub-Committee met on four occasions. In February 2021 we reviewed value-added (student progression) outcomes for 2020, which due to the pandemic had dropped by a half-

grade across all cohorts. Subsequently, we recommended increasing targeted face-to-face student workshop support and giving staff a workshop on increasing students' confidence, both of which were implemented. We also considered a report on learning and innovation which (despite the pandemic) remained very strong, particularly University College Jersey showing a major improvement in all key areas, along with a briefing on re-design of the future curriculum offer.

The June 2021 meeting focussed on how Highlands College was performing during the pandemic, in particular ascertaining whether staff teaching was continuing to produce high results and whether students were managing to maintain their learning and progression. As part of this review we considered an in-depth report on College policy for



Teacher Assessed Grades and support being given to students to underpin their course achievement. I am pleased to report Highlands College staff were performing magnificently and overall students were still achieving during what was a very difficult period for all Islanders.

Our subsequent meetings in September and November 2021 reviewed Further and Higher Education results and students' achievement for the 2020-21 year, which was very strong across the majority of subject areas. We also reviewed enrolment and retention for the new academic year, together with the Highlands professional partner report on Business Services. We were delighted to hear Highland College had been given significant Fiscal Stimulus funding towards improving Islanders' skills.

I am delighted to report Highland College staff and students overcame the obstacles facing them during the pandemic, which is a tribute to the excellent work undertaken by our Senior Leadership Team and their teams adapting to these unprecedented circumstances. We are confident Highlands College is well placed to continue delivering high-quality teaching and learning, including vocational skills, to our Island's population.





## Report of the Finance Sub-Committee

**Richard Corrigan**  
Chair of the Finance  
Sub-Committee

The Finance Sub-committee has delegated authority from the Governing Body to monitor the college's income and spending, to advise the Senior Leadership Team on matters related to financial management, and to support the college in making the case for appropriate allocation and distribution of funding. The committee met in February, May and October 2021, and February 2022. The college's financial position for 2021 was agreed by the Finance Sub-committee on 17th February 2022 and approved by the Governing Body on 17th March 2022.

Covid-19 has continued to have an impact on the college's financial position in 2021. Despite this headwind, Highlands has demonstrated robust financial management, with focus and control at both the senior management and faculty management level.

Income for the year at £3.2m was 2% ahead of 2020 but remains lower than pre pandemic. Full year income was £220k below target due to lower enrolments at UCJ. The income shortfall was wholly offset by lower than planned spend. Full year spend at £13.6m was 1% higher than 2020 but underspent by £220k against plan. The cost underspend is largely due to staff vacancies and fewer Adult & Community Education courses than planned. The cost underspend also absorbed Covid-19 Testing and PPE costs of £133k [This was covered from CYPES due to a Business Case presented by HC].

Focus on aged debtors by the finance team has ensured the exposure is largely due to unpaid tuition with over 95% of debtors owing for less than 30 days.

In 2021, the college received fiscal stimulus funding of £915k to support the Government of Jersey Fiscal Recovery programme.

The Finance Sub-Committee congratulates the leadership team on the result with thanks for their efforts in a challenging financial climate.



## Government of Jersey Budget



### Budget from Education Department **£10,373,000**

#### Earned Income

|                                  |            |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| Income received from course fees | £2,857,002 |
| Retail income                    | £285,892   |
| Miscellaneous income             | £98,687    |

### Total Income **£3,241,851**

#### Expenditure

|                                |            |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| Highlands Managers             | £534,420   |
| Permanent Lecturers            | £5,790,416 |
| Part-time and Supply Lecturers | £466,605   |
| Manual Workers                 | £589,309   |
| Premises and Maintenance       | £515,808   |
| Supplies and Services          | £2,098,252 |
| Administrative Expenses        | £122,540   |
| Finance Costs                  | £3,033     |

### Total Expenditure **£13,614,635**

#### Summary

|                                      |                |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| Expenditure                          | £13,614,635    |
| Income                               | £3,241,581     |
| Net Expenditure                      | £10,373,054    |
| Net Budget from Government of Jersey | £10,373,000    |
| <b>Deficit</b>                       | <b>-£54.00</b> |

## Report of the Marketing Sub-Committee

**David Elliott**

**Chair of the Marketing  
Sub-Committee**

The purpose of the Marketing Sub-Committee is to offer advice and support to the Head of Marketing and Communications. The college has thirteen primary and secondary stakeholder groups and communicating effectively with each of these is a priority. The sub-committee provides a forum through which ideas can be discussed and strategies implemented.

One of the main priorities for Marketing in 2021 was the completion of the marketing strategy. The aim of this strategy is to guide us in everything we do, both in the long and short term, to promote the college to our varied stakeholder groups with consistency and to ensure that opportunities to celebrate achievements, partner relationships etc are realised.

This strategy is now in place and is aligned to the priorities outlined in the



college strategic plan around learning and innovation, putting the community first, and financial sustainability & a new campus.

Fundamental to the development of an effective marketing strategy was meaningful research and so we engaged with an external market research company to run a series of focus groups. From these we were able to identify stakeholder perceptions of Highlands College, and this insight will serve to guide us going forward as we work to:



**Address misconceptions about the level of education provided by Highlands College and reposition the college as a “first choice” through key messaging.**

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**Raise awareness of what we are actually achieving with our excellent pass rates across the board, range of options available and high levels of graduate employability.**

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**Strengthen the identity of University College Jersey as the feedback indicated it was currently lost under the Highlands College brand.**

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**Improve communication in order to challenge misconceptions through three key marketing routes:**

- Owned – our own social media platforms and websites
- Paid – consistent paid adverts and messaging through relevant publications
- Earned – positive media recognition and press releases, as well as in-person opportunities perhaps from key members of the college [e.g. open evenings/guided tours or a focus on business connections such as IOD and Chamber of Commerce]

Subsequently the Marketing department has set itself a series of targets to be achieved over the course of 2022. A particular priority for the department is improving the way in which the Adult & Community Education provision is promoted and ultimately how it is perceived.



## 2021 View from the Principal

**Jo Terry-Marchant**  
Principal

2021 was another challenging and rewarding year. The pandemic still impacted upon operations, but my wonderful, committed, and professional staff ensured that students' learning experiences remained high quality and outcomes were great. We are an inclusive community college with an outstanding track record of enabling people of all backgrounds and ages to progress and achieve their potential.

You will learn about some of my personal highlights for 2021, but it is important to note that these are all set against the backdrop of a college that is located on a site which is no longer fit for purpose. Work is underway to address this, with the goal of developing a new campus that is fully equipped to meet the future skills needs of the Island. The island desperately needs

more technical skills training, and we provide ninety percent of all further and Higher education on-island. So, not only do our students deserve a stimulating learning environment as is already provided in the schools' estate; employers require workers who have been trained in modern settings using the latest technology. Without a new campus, our ability to respond and certainly to anticipate future needs will be hampered.

Despite the challenges created by outdated buildings, Highlands College and University College Jersey both reported outstanding academic outcomes for students.

Through the dedication and hard work of colleagues, the College developed an additional 57 programmes across a range of sectors as part of the

Government funded Fiscal Stimulus work. By the end of 2021 we had delivered programmes to nearly 600 islanders.

2021 saw great strides made across our core offering: new degree options were introduced at UCJ and for Sixth form, a major development was the launch of the DEC! programme. Work was also well underway for a new 'Future Skills' framework with the launch of the pilot planned for 2022.

Sustainability really came to the forefront with the development of a dedicated committee: a college pledge and a developing sustainability strategy.

With the reduction of Covid restrictions, 2021 saw the return of more face-to-face events, something I personally relished. To be able to properly celebrate the

success of students, colleagues and partners was wonderful.

I am full of respect for the dedication of our staff, full of pride for our students and their numerous achievements, and full of gratitude to the Governors for their unswerving support and guidance - the balance of challenge and assistance is highly valued, together with their experience of various industries where they are leaders in their fields.

Our most valuable commodity is people: it is they who bring our mission to life, and who inspire me to keep improving our offer and respond to local needs. With our clearly defined priorities [as outlined in the College's Strategic Plan], the support of our Island government to deliver a new campus and our mission to transform lives, I am confident that we will continue to thrive.





