



People Strategy

PEOPLE STRATEGY.

The aim of the Gateshead College People Strategy is:

To be the place where people want to work, feel valued and share a passion to help our learners succeed.

Our strategy is underpinned by our values:

- **Respect others** – We are kind and considerate to everyone.
- **Take Responsibility** – We act honestly and do what we say we will do.
- **Have courage** – We give things a go and stand up for what is right.
- **Be creative** – We are open minded and explore new ways of doing things.
- **Work together** – We value our differences and learn from each other.

The strategy has six interconnected themes:

1. The Evolving Workplace
2. Attracting and Recruiting Talent
3. Developing our People
4. Engaging our People
5. An Inclusive Culture
6. Supporting Wellbeing



Achieving the Gateshead College People Strategy will create a vibrant, inclusive, and innovative environment where everyone thrives. Line managers will play a crucial role delivering the People Strategy, aligning workforce planning, engagement and development with business needs, ensuring the right people with the right skills are in the right roles to deliver the Strategic Plan while ensuring financial sustainability. By attracting and retaining great people who share our values and ethos, we will create a College community committed to learners' success. Continuous development for all staff will enhance skills; enabling people to realise their potential and respond to challenges and opportunities.

Our values will underpin a culture that treats everyone with respect and empowers our staff to innovate. Diversity will be celebrated, creating a sense of belonging and ensuring everyone feels valued. The health and wellbeing of our staff will be a priority, enabling managers to support wellbeing, manage absence and create a healthy work-life balance. We will promote good physical, financial, social and mental health and provide opportunities for staff to access support and education. Together, these efforts will create an environment where Gateshead College is the place where people want to work, feel valued and share a passion to help our learners succeed.

THEME ONE.

The Evolving Workplace

Our management team will work collaboratively, aligning workforce planning and development with business planning processes to ensure we have the right people with the right skills in the right place at the right time to achieve our strategic plan, meet the needs of partners and employers and ensure financial sustainability.

We will:

- Develop and support agile workforce planning approaches including the use of asynchronous and hybrid working and digital tools and technologies to enable creativity, more efficient and effective working practices and improved collaboration.
- Develop a strategic approach to succession planning with associated development programs and improved mobility opportunities to address skills gaps and underrepresentation, including reskilling and upskilling our existing workforce.
- Embed flexibility within our workforce planning to seamlessly adapt to market opportunities, curriculum changes, local, national, or sector-level legislative/policy shifts, and adjustments to funding or local skills improvement plans.
- Explore and implement alternative models to engage staff and offer internship, project-based and consultancy work opportunities, particularly in hard to fill vacancy areas. Offer a range of opportunities for our learners to undertake work within the College, supporting the creation of a flexible approach to workforce planning and delivery of education with employment edge.
- Ensure our total reward offer is fair, relevant and benchmarked against up-to-date reward practices to enable us to meet the diverse needs of our workforce and effectively support employee retention and engagement while maintaining financial sustainability.



THEME TWO.

Attracting and Recruiting Talent

We will attract and retain great people who enjoy their jobs, live our values and share our ethos and ambition for learners.

We will:

- Develop a compelling employer brand that celebrates and showcases Gateshead College's employment edge ethos and unique culture and values.
- Provide a Talent Service approach to recruitment and selection, offering an efficient, customer focused recruitment and selection process with clear service level agreements and high-quality advice and guidance for applicants and recruiting managers.
- Develop a comprehensive recruitment strategy utilising targeted and creative materials across social media and various advertising sources to attract a diverse talent pool who share our passion for providing industry inspired education, showcase the College as an employer of choice, and build pipelines for skills gap areas and underrepresented groups.
- Design and implement inclusive, frictionless application, selection, and pre-boarding processes that leverage technology (including an Applicant Tracking System and emerging digital/AI tools) to streamline processes, provide accurate data, and enhance the candidate experience, reflecting the College culture and supporting all applicants to showcase their best selves.
- Develop a competitive and targeted set of benefits to support our employer brand regularly testing and reviewing the relevance of our reward and benefits package, seeking feedback from staff and benchmarking externally.



THEME THREE.

Developing our People

We will provide support for all staff to continually develop their skills, knowledge and talents so that they can realise their potential, effectively respond to challenges and opportunities and deliver high quality outcomes. We will develop our teachers so they can continue to provide the highest quality learning experience, keep their networks and industry skills current and deliver skills and education with employment edge.

We will:

- Establish a comprehensive learning and development plan for Gateshead College to nurture and develop talent and ensure our teachers have up to date industry knowledge and networks to deliver high quality learning and employment edge; develop clear KPIs to measure success and robust evaluation tools to ensure continuous improvement and return-on-investment.
- Conduct a learning needs analysis to identify skill gaps, particularly in digital areas and new and emerging technologies; offering targeted training and development interventions aligned with the College Strategic Plan, operational and curriculum plans, North East emerging sector requirements and local skills improvement plans.
- Expand learning interventions beyond traditional training courses to include coaching, mentoring, secondments, industry experience and job shadowing opportunities.
- Design and implement an appraisal process that supports meaningful performance and career conversations, and is integrated into the business planning cycle.
- Ensure our staff induction is inclusive, effective and supports new staff to perform to their very best in their new role, considering the diverse needs and preferences of our future workforce.
- Provide a comprehensive leadership development offer, upskilling our existing leaders, supporting our newly appointed leaders and identifying and developing aspiring leaders of the future, ensuring inclusive access to opportunities for all.
- Support our staff with career planning and communicate the progression routes and development opportunities available to them for promotion, job crafting or lateral career development.



THEME FOUR.

Engaging our People

We will engage with everyone across the College and be a place where people are listened to, respected and able to make an impact. We will create an environment where people are encouraged and empowered to be creative and implement new and better ways of doing things, listening and learning from each other will be at the core of what we do, so we can continuously adapt, improve and innovate.

We will:

- Ensure the college community understands our values and ethos, how they translate into everyday practices, and how these actions create a clear and shared sense of purpose.
- Provide meaningful engagement opportunities for our staff considering the diversity of our workforce, different preferences, needs and working patterns; equip managers with the skills to engage with their staff, actively listen, and encourage staff to contribute creative ideas.
- Design recognition schemes that reflect our values, celebrate achievements and reward creativity and innovation, both big and small.
- Utilise data from surveys, suggestion schemes, and other feedback mechanisms to continuously refine communication and engagement initiatives. Empower and develop our Staff Voice Group to ensure all voices



THEME FIVE.

An Inclusive Culture

We will ensure that Gateshead College is a place where diversity is celebrated, people feel they belong and are valued for being themselves. Our inclusive culture will promote equality and ensure people feel supported throughout their career.

We will:

- Identify and address areas where there is a lack of diversity in the staff body and equity gaps for minority and underrepresented groups; tackling barriers to progression, engagement and success. This includes acknowledging and actively addressing underrepresentation of minority groups and social deprivation, health,
- and financial inequalities within the college workforce through targeted recruitment, wellbeing initiatives, and development opportunities.
- Provide inclusive leadership training and relevant EDI awareness sessions for managers, ensuring consistent application of policies and decision making and fostering a culture of empathy, flexibility, and trust.
- Develop engaging campaigns and foster external partnerships to raise awareness of inclusion initiatives and celebrate the diversity of our people.
- Create a community of allies to offer diverse perspectives with an Inclusion Group at its core; empowering them in creating an inclusive culture and environment



THEME SIX.

Supporting Wellbeing

We will prioritise health and wellbeing, providing support, respecting work life balance and creating a culture and environment that promotes good mental health.

We will:

- Develop a college-wide culture of wellbeing, responding to staff feedback and aligning with the Gateshead Public Health Strategy. This includes promoting open communication about mental health, developing management capability, and utilising targeted campaigns and partnerships to raise awareness and engagement with wellbeing initiatives.
- Provide comprehensive data, support and training for managers dealing with health and wellbeing issues, particularly long-term health conditions; create updated policies, practices and procedures to support staff with long term health conditions in the workplace and enable managers to identify and address trends in absence within their departments.
- Identify and address workload issues that contribute to stress and burnout. Implement strategies to promote sustainable and flexible work practices across the College; considering regional commuting challenges and the requirement to put the learner first in all that we do while supporting our staff to balance their work and life to work in a way that supports them to be their best.

