



# COLLEGES WEST MIDLANDS EDUCATION AND SKILLS PLEDGE

## Statement

The impact of COVID-19 on the people and businesses of the West Midlands has been unprecedented and the further education sector has been impacted significantly. As we move through the public health emergency, our next mission is to start to re-boot our regional economy. We will need new and refreshed skills in our workforce to help us move forward and re-build our economy, and Colleges West Midlands will play an essential part in this.

The Colleges West Midlands Group of 20 colleges are working collaboratively and have agreed an Education and Skills Pledge that articulates a regional package of support, tailored to the needs of businesses and individuals, whilst ensuring the protection of individuals and educational facilities.

In addition to the great programmes already offered across colleges, the colleges are committed to supporting those who are out of work to gain new employment or re-train so that we can support businesses to restart and flourish again. The colleges are also committed to offering a range of higher-level programmes for people already in work to enhance their existing skills making them more employable.

I am delighted that the Colleges West Midlands are working collaboratively to make sure the offer to all our residents is comprehensive and relevant in these unprecedented times.

Andy Street

Supported by



## COLLEGES WEST MIDLANDS 8 POINT PLEDGE

<b>1</b>	<b>All students will continue to receive online or distance learning delivery right through to the end of the summer term.</b>	Access to colleges sites from June will be prioritised for those learners needing to complete technical elements of programmes in order to progress or for some elements of transition programme delivery, subject to safe working conditions being in place.
<b>2</b>	<b>All full-time students (whether new or continuing) will receive an enhanced transition programme at the start of the new academic year to ensure they are able to successfully move on with their studies.</b>	This will include online enrolment, support with returning to learning on-site, opportunities to address gaps in technical or practical knowledge or experience, enhanced induction, Individual Advice Guidance support and taster sessions to ensure they make the right choice in next steps.
<b>3</b>	<b>The adult education provision will be reconfigured to focus on areas of need and to support more flexibilities in the way adults may wish to study.</b>	This will include blended and online delivery options, programmes to support adults through redundancy and reemployment, development linked to priority sectors of need and high-level professional updating programmes. Some to be available immediately and a fuller offer September. Adults will be able to enrol online without needing to come into a college and be able to access Individual Advice Guidance and careers support remotely.
<b>4</b>	<b>Apprentice students will continue to receive learning and reviews online until safe working arrangements at employer premises are agreed by both parties and employers will still be able to sign up new apprentices and begin their programme at any time during the period where college sites are closed.</b>	It is expected that day release students will return to their college-based programmes September. Apprentice programmes will be delivered flexibly throughout the year to allow apprentices temporarily unable to continue their programme (due to pressures on their employer) to re-join as soon as they are able. Employers will be able to complete the contract and enrolment processes remotely via online tools.
<b>5</b>	<b>Students progressing to Higher Education will be able to access an optional transition programme to support their next steps.</b>	Delivery of Higher Education programmes in colleges will begin from late September to allow students to complete this transition programme before moving onto higher study. The focus of the transition programme will be on practical / technical skills, underpinning knowledge and returning to education.
<b>6</b>	<b>Young people who are Not in Education Employment Training (NEET) or long term unemployed will be supported directly through college focussed programmes and with specialist help and referrals</b>	Support will be tailored to meet individual needs, where traditional programmes are not appropriate. The support could include: One to one mentoring and guidance, providing in college and outreach information, advice and guidance for young people and their legal guardians. This support will be increased as access to volunteering and work experience placements become available as we ease out of lockdown.
<b>7</b>	<b>Unemployed Adults, recently redundant, or long-term furloughed employees from high risk industries will have access to an expanded range of <u>Redeployment Programmes</u> to support return to employment.</b>	Delivery of programmes in colleges will begin immediately as employers ease out of lockdown and gaps in the workforce are identified.
<b>8</b>	<b>Single access point for employers looking for recruitment solutions.</b>	To simplify engagement where employers are unsure of where to access support Colleges West Midlands will provide a simple web page access point where they can log the vacancy and employment requirements/specialisms.