

# MORLEY COLLEGE LONDON Curriculum Strategy 2021-2025 "Upskill, Reskill, Enjoy"

Approved by: Governing Body through the Quality & Standards Committee

Date:

Responsibility for the Strategy: Vice Principal (Curriculum Impact)

Date of next review: January 2025

## An introduction to the Curriculum Strategy

By 2025 Morley College will be a leading provider of lifelong learning providing a wide range of exciting learning opportunities for those aged 16 and above living in the Capital and beyond.

The 2021-2025 Curriculum Strategy has been developed in accordance with the College's Strategic Plan 2021-25 to support the implementation of its strategic objectives, particularly in relation to its *strategic goal 1: create outstanding learning opportunities*.

#### **Forward on Meeting Local Needs**

The Department of Education has led the call on employers and educators to evaluate the services they offer in meeting local, regional and national priorities. This included the undertaking of a *Meeting Local Needs Review (2023)* and Morley College was one of a small number of providers nationally who were 'early adopters', contributing in the process to the initiative's roll out. Following on from the review the college is also working to ensure that the curriculum offered has taken into account the Local London Skills Improvement Plan by updating and broadening the curriculum to take into account skills and employment shortages across the capital.

The review highlights several areas for improvement and opportunities for curriculum development. It suggests expanding Essential Skills programmes, unaccredited short courses, and Community Learning to address unmet needs and enhance labour market inclusion. The report also recommends focusing on the college's strengths, such as Arts and Creative Industries, Social and Applied Sciences, and building partnerships with employers, sector bodies, civic partners, providers, and the community. The review aligns with strategic goals, particularly in providing outstanding learning opportunities and advancing equality, diversity, and inclusion.

The Local London Skills Improvement plan highlights the challenges arising from recruitment difficulties and hard-to-fill vacancies. A substantial 66% of central London businesses are grappling with the challenge of filling vacancies, and 75% of establishments report a lack of skills, qualifications, or work experience among job applicants.

Skills gaps are evident, primarily in technical skills, cross-cutting transferable skills, and basic digital skills. The evolving skill requirements emphasise the need for advanced digital skills, sector-specific digital skills, and the cultivation of soft skills such as problem-solving and communication. The priority sectors highlighted are in line with those that the college has identified within the *Meeting Local Needs Review* in health and social care and digital skills as well as financial and professional services, arts, entertainment, recreation, and hospitality and retail. The breadth of curriculum at Morley College currently and curriculum development going forward demonstrates how the college plans to effectively meet the skills and employment needs in London and further afield.

Whilst the Strategy builds on the College strengths - its longstanding expertise in arts, culture and social and applied sciences and its progressive curriculum - it also takes into account several

significant factors that will shape the future of the College provision:

- Operating from three main Centres in North Kensington, Chelsea and Waterloo, as well
  as online, the College will need to grow to meet the learning needs of an increasing
  number of students across London and beyond and to be a force for public good within
  the communities that we serve, including both adults and 16-18 year old students.
- An unprecedented state of instability in the external environment caused by the continuing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic - both socially and economically - and the end of the Brexit process impacting on the ongoing UK's relationship with the EU.
- The accelerated development of digital technologies, their impact on learning and the changing behaviours of existing and potential students.
- The College's successes in addressing the Covid-19 crisis by reframing our curriculum and developing our digital capabilities.
- The development of local and central Government skills policies such as the London Mayor's Skills for Londoners strategy (2018), the GLA London Recovery Programme (2020), the Skills for jobs: lifelong learning for opportunity and growth White Paper (2021), borough-level skills strategies in Lambeth, Southwark and Kensington & Chelsea as well as the London Local Skills Improvement Plan (2023) when sets out the capitals skills and employments needs.

In developing our curriculum offer we will ensure that we:

- 1. Continue to develop a curriculum offer that meets the aspirations of those learning for personal, academic and career development.
- 2. Take full advantage of our Specialist Designated Institute (SDI) status to further develop and grow short, specialist courses that respond to the needs of our communities interested in arts, culture and social and applied sciences.
- Encourage student progression to advanced and higher learning by investing in specialist qualifications that support the economy, are responsive to local labour market needs and promote the development of students' transferable skills. Progression opportunities will also allow students to progress through courses delivered at the different centres.
- 4. Strengthen relationships and partnerships with local employers so that our provision provides students with the best chance of securing meaningful employment.
- 5. Ensure that those young people and adults who are not yet ready for employment, and/or from areas of higher deprivation, have access to 'first step' provision (e.g. traineeships) to enable them to develop occupational skills and progress to further study or employment.
- 6. Work in partnership (e.g., local authorities, BusinessLDN, GLA) to meet local and regional skills, employment, community and cultural needs.
- 7. Ensure that we are responsive to the educational needs of our local communities close to our College Centres.
- 8. Build on our digital capabilities to create flexible learning opportunities that meet the needs of those wishing to engage with the College both remotely or within our physical centres.

#### Where are we now: progress to date

Morley College London Curriculum Strategy 2016-2020 was developed within a context of ever decreasing public funding where the College needed to adapt and develop new learning opportunities to enable a diversification of income from student fees, from employers, from available public funding, and from external contracts. All of this by building on a unique expertise in arts, culture and applied sciences which enabled the College to deliver a distinctive, creative curriculum that prioritises the interests, ambitions and needs of our local communities of location and practice and of Londoners at large.

The wide range of learning opportunities developed since 2016, with progression pathways from introductory to higher levels of study, is relevant to students who wish to join Morley whether this is for personal development and well-being, or to achieve specific qualifications that enable academic progression or career advancement. At the very top of the progression ladder Morley developed a brand new HE offer which was launched in September 2017 and included a suite of Higher National Certificate and Diploma awards in areas of study including Music Performance and Production, Fashion, Product Design, Health and Social Care and Business. 2019 saw the introduction of two Level 6 BA Hons top-up years in Fashion and Music, validated by Ravensbourne University London these were successfully revalidated in 2022-23. A fuller specialist HNC/D provision within the arts was also added to the suite of HNCs from 2020 onwards this has included ceramics, fine art, millenary and photography. Alongside this provision recent updates have seen the launch of a part-time HNC offer to provide students with the opportunity to incorporate higher study around work and life commitments.

Most of the Strategy objectives were met during the course of the 2016-2020 strategic planning period which, in the second part of the academic year 2019-20 was characterised by two key events that will significantly amplify the character, breadth and delivery of our curriculum:

- 1. In February 2020 Kensington and Chelsea College joined Morley College London through merger as we became the largest Institute of Adult Learning in London providing a very wide range of life-long learning opportunities for both adults and 16-18 year old students. During 2019-20 the combined College curriculum included approximately 500 accredited programmes and 2,000 short courses. As a result of the merger, Morley extended its footprint in the Capital from Lambeth and Southwark to the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) and now operates from three main Centres in North Kensington, Chelsea and Waterloo.
- 2. Shortly after the merger, in March 2020, the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic forced the College to swiftly move to online delivery in order to continue providing as many learning opportunities to students as possible, and the curriculum in term 3 was entirely delivered online. The College was very successful in adapting its curriculum for online delivery and this also resulted in some innovative and ingenuous practice which will form the basis for the further development of online and hybrid delivery in the future.

Towards the end of the first full academic year of operating as a merged institution, in 2020-21 Morley had the following volumes of provision (i.e. student enrolments):

- 16-19: **238**
- Access to HE and Advanced Learning: 547

Higher Education: 99

Accredited learning (entry level to level 2): 2,598

Short courses (unaccredited learning all levels): 7,410

• Community Learning: 1,445

At the end of the third full-year post merger and post-pandemic in 2022-23 enrolments totalled 22,716 compared with 12,337 in 2020-21. Three years following the merger the college has demonstrated significant growth and stability with almost 100% more enrolments. The next phase looking towards 2025-26 allows for a further 25% growth between 2023 and 2025. In Term 1 of 2022-23 Morley had the following volumes of provision (i.e. student enrolments):

16-19: 319

Access to HE and Advanced Learning: 332

• Higher Education: 94

Accredited learning (entry level to level 2): 4994

Short courses (unaccredited learning all levels): 14,041

Community Learning: 2936

#### **Delivering our Strategic Goals: objectives and outcomes**

#### Strategic Goal 1: To create outstanding learning opportunities

- Objective 1a: A demand-led, responsive, diversified and progressive curriculum
- Objective 1b: Providing experiences outside the classroom for informal learning

Objectives	Outcome of objective:	Ref. to
		Strategic Plan:
Objective 1: demand-led, responsive curriculum  To create learning opportunities that respond to national skills needs, local and central government priorities and to the needs of Morley's communities of location and practice.  • Our provision - we will seek to respond to the priorities of the 2021 'Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth' White Paper and our accredited offer will focus on qualifications that address the current national and local	In line with the 5-year merger plan, Morley's ambition is to develop a demand-led curriculum for all relevant provision types with a trajectory of growth aiming for 14,000 students accounting for over 30,000 enrolments by 2025, with indicative enrolments as follows:  • 16-19: 500 • Access to HE and Advanced Learning: 400 • Higher Education: 300 • Accredited learning (entry level to level 2): 5,000 • Short courses (unaccredited learning all levels): 21,000 • Community Learning: 3300	SG1, Obj1a

skill gaps, in particular the priorities of the *Skills for Londoners Strategy*. In line with our curriculum strengths, we will seek to enable progression to employment by providing opportunities for work-based learning and experiences through programmes of study such as Traineeships and/or Apprenticeships or T Levels.

- Our curriculum will be refined on an ongoing basis in response to indicators from students, staff and insight gained from periodic reports such as the GLA's Local Skills Report in order to adapt our offer to the changing London's skills landscape.
- Through our curriculum development, we will take advantage of additional funding streams available from time to time to meet current skills priorities, such as the Advanced Learner Loan facility, the National Skills Fund, the GLA funding flexibility etc.

# Objective 2: "Upskill, Reskill, Enjoy"

To build on our "Upskill, Reskill, Enjoy" scheme we will further enhance our direct curriculum response to the Covid-19 pandemic to meet the immediate training, employability and personal development and wellbeing needs of our local and wider communities.

From 2021-22 each curriculum strand will clearly identify courses that enable prospective student to:

- Upskill: building on their academic or professional career to achieve a higher-level qualification to progress in employment
- Reskill: starting from entry levels, develop new skills/achieve qualifications to change or enter employment.

SG1, Obj1a

Objective 3: entry level education  To develop a comprehensive Essential Skills offer in English, Maths, Digital and ESOL in each College Centre to meet the needs of local adult students with low level of language, literacy, numeracy and digital skills and encourage them to return to and progress in education.	Enjoy: fostering mental and physical well-being through short courses in a wide range of subjects that meet individual interests and personal development aspirations.  Accredited learning (entry level to level 2) to grow by 20% by 2025 to approximately 5000 enrolments per year.	SG1, Obj1a
Objective 4: community and family learning  To continue working closely with Lambeth Council and RBKC to further develop a portfolio of community and family learning opportunities to meet local needs, to take education out into our local communities and provide progression opportunities for residents.	Community and family learning provision to grow incrementally to fully utilise the funding available from Lambeth Council and RBKC year on year, aiming to have approximately 3,300 enrolments across the two boroughs by 2025.	SG1, Obj1a
Objective 5: curriculum progression To develop flexible progression opportunities from introductory to higher levels of study where students may develop interests and passions via a wide and growing range of short courses and then have the opportunity to progress to either recognised qualifications (up to degree level) or further skilled	Clearly signposted pathways across all three Centres including:  Clearly defined learning opportunities for 16-18 year olds at North Kensington and Chelsea that inspire students to achieve and progress into employment, further training or university.  Health, Education and Science; Business and IT; and Arts and Humanities programmes for adults at North Kensington	SG1, Obj1a

practitioner training and masterclasses with the College or at other institutions.

Clear, relevant and exciting progression routes, will enable more students to attain the higher-level skills that employers need (ref: Skills for Jobs white paper, paragraphs 73-75) and in line with employment growth and skills demand in London (ref: London Skills Report, March 2021, pp.12-14).

- Creative Discovery, Fine Arts, Media, Creative Technology programmes for adults at Chelsea, including short, introductory coursers to stimulate interest and progression into higher levels of study. These will include new, industry-relevant, advanced and higher-level diplomas leading to employment opportunities in the Creative Industries sector.
- Fashion, Visual and Digital Arts, Music and Performance, Health and Social Care, Humanities and Science, adult programmes at Waterloo, including progression opportunities from our local communities into on-site short courses and further into accredited provision in advanced and higher learning.

#### Objective 6: higher education

To address the needs of mature students in relation to higher education provision and develop an offer that is relevant, builds on our existing curriculum strengths and provides a credible alternative to a traditional university experience. Alongside our full-time and parttime HE programmes at level 4-6, to develop modular HE learning opportunities that allow students to acquire bite-sized knowledge and skills that might be especially relevant for those who are employed and seeking Continuing Professional Development as well as employment progression opportunities or employment in a new/alternative sector.

300 HE students enrolled on College programmes by 2025.

A range of prescribed HE programmes at levels 4-6 as the highest progression step in each Centre in line with the local curriculum.

A flexible HE offer aligned to the local curriculum that gives students opportunities to gain HE awards through HNC/Ds, HTQs and BAs.

- Each Centre to identify modular HE learning opportunities from 2021-22 to complement the local HE curricula.
- This delivery mode will be a key contributor to our growth of HE provision over the 5 years of the Strategy.

SG1, Obj1a

Objective 7: Morley Digital	Year 1-2 (21/22 to 22/23)	SG1, Obj1a & 1b
Learning We will consolidate and further develop our online learning opportunities by drawing together the various assets of the recently created Morley digital 'ecosystem', This will provide students and employers with a range of remote learning and training experiences for those who prefer to/can only engage with the college entirely	will see the consolidation and professionalisation of the existing online offer (400+ courses) which will be marketed as an additional opportunity to that delivered within the College Centres.  In Year 3-4 (23/24 to 24/25) a focused online curriculum planning framework, will promote innovation in digital learning pedagogy and efficient and effective asset utilisation.  From Year 5 (25/26) we will seek to	SG1, Obj1a & 1b
online or favour the flexibility of a mixed delivery model.	From <b>Year 5 (25/26)</b> we will seek to fully embed and grow Morley Digital Learning and define its USPs.	

# Strategic Goal 2: To deliver an exceptional student experience

- Objective 2a: Outstanding learning, teaching and assessment
- Objective 2b: Meet diverse learning needs

Objectives	Outcome of objective:	Ref. to Strategic Plan:				
Objective 8: curriculum Intent To develop and enhance the quality of our signature curriculum in arts, culture and social and applied sciences by building on our strengths and expertise to ensure our students receive exceptional learning experiences in and beyond the classroom, that encourage high levels of attendance, achievement and progression.	The Quality of Education judged 'Good' by Ofsted and, OfS TEF Gold for HE provision in recognition of an inclusive, current, ambitious, coherently planned and well sequenced curriculum allows students to develop the knowledge and skills required to fulfil their ambitions for personal growth, academic progression or career development.  Curriculum delivery will be supported by the development of library and learning resources, both physical and digital which will enrich the student journey and promote success.  The effectiveness of the curriculum Intent will be measured by:	SG1, Obj1a SG2, Obj2a & 2b				
curriculum in arts, culture and social and applied sciences by building on our strengths and expertise to ensure our students receive exceptional learning experiences in and beyond the classroom, that encourage high levels of attendance, achievement and	and well sequenced curriculum allows students to develop the knowledge and skills required to fulfil their ambitions for personal growth, academic progression or career development.  Curriculum delivery will be supported by the development of library and learning resources, both physical and digital which will enrich the student journey and promote success.  The effectiveness of the curriculum					

	<ul> <li>The quality of destinations relevant to each programme of study.</li> <li>Curriculum planning and course design will be informed by:</li> <li>Regular engagement with students through the student representation structure</li> <li>Systematic analysis of destination data.</li> </ul>	
Objective 9: widening participation	Participation rates for different ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds are in	SG1, Obj1a
To promote equality, diversity and inclusion through curriculum design and delivery that enable all students, including the most able and the most disadvantaged, or those from different ethnic groups to make progress towards their personal, academic or career goals.  Our curriculum will seek to increase participation amongst those underrepresented, non-white ethnic groups in some of the most innovative sectors of the London economy, including London's creative industries and science and technology sector (ref: London Skills Report, March 2021, p.11).	line with the ethnic and socio-economic mix of our local populations, with a particular focus on those areas of high disadvantage.	SG2, Obj2b

# Strategic Goal 3: To ensure financial sustainability

- Objective 3a: Realise the full diversity of our income
- Objective 3b: Maximise each income stream

Objectives	Outcome of objective:	Ref. to Strategic Plan:
Objective 10: curriculum sustainability  To ensure that through rigorous review and validation processes the curriculum offer is financially sustainable and delivered efficiently.	We will align our curriculum planning process and schedule to our business and budget planning and through systematic review of the curriculum performance, staff utilisation and resource investment, ensure that the College curriculum is coherent, sustainable, and deliverable in a costeffective manner.  To achieve:  Staff utilisation: 95% Curriculum delivery: 95% Contribution: 50%  Whilst acknowledging that the viability of courses is also dependent on factors not always within the College's control, such as student behaviours influenced by external events, which will ultimately impact on recruitment and attendance.	SG3, Obj.3a & 3b

# Relationship with cross-cutting themes and Centre visions

Cross-cutting themes	Areas of focus for Curriculum Strategy							
Equality, diversity and inclusion	The Curriculum Strategy directly promotes equality, diversity and inclusion in a variety of ways as described under Objective 9 and in Section 6 below.							
Digital transformation	We will continue to develop digital and remote learning by building on the online learning capabilities developed during the coronavirus pandemic by:  A. Ensuring that all our courses delivered in Centres take full advantage of digital technologies to facilitate and enhance learning through the development of high-quality digital resources from entry to higher technical levels and blended, asynchronous delivery of the learning							

	programmes.  B. Offering, as an extension to our centre-based provision, a range of opportunities for students to engage with learning and personal development entirely online.  C. Exploring the viability of targeted approaches to international recruitment for 'flagship' programmes through online delivery.
Environmental sustainability	<ul> <li>Curriculum development and delivery will be supported and informed by the College's approach to environmental sustainability through:</li> <li>Creating an awareness and encouraging the use of environmentally friendly resources to deliver the curriculum</li> <li>Embedding sustainable development in the curriculum content whenever appropriate</li> <li>Developing new courses for those who have an interest in environmental sustainability (e.g. recycling, public policy, environmental science etc.)</li> <li>Identify the generic skills relating to sustainable development that can be developed or reinforced, especially within study programmes for young people</li> </ul>
Employability and wider learning outcomes	The Curriculum Strategy intrinsically supports employability and wider learning outcomes by enabling the creation of a curriculum offer that encourages prospective and existing students to:  Gain or develop employability and transferable skills  Develop knowledge, skills and attitude that enable them to thrive in their personal and professional lives  Develop mental and physical well-being through learning

Centre vision/plan	Areas of focus for Curriculum Strategy					
The North Kensington Centre for Technical and Vocational Skills	From 2022-23, following the full refurbishment of the site, the North Kensington Centre will see a significant expansion of learning opportunities for both for adult and 16-18 year old students in:  Health, education and science Business, administration, IT and computing; Creative arts, humanities and social sciences					
The Chelsea Centre for the Creative Industries	The Chelsea Centre will develop its ambition of becoming a centre of excellence for the creative industries and creative learning through building on its successful provision, with a					

realignment of curriculum offer that enables the introduction of:

- Whole centre learning model
- New, industry-relevant, advanced and higher-level diplomas
- Short, introductory courses in areas such as creative arts, design and media
- Unique study programmes for 16-18 year old students.
- A BA 'Top Up' year supporting the whole centre
- An enhanced creative technologies curriculum.

# The Waterloo Centre for Adult Education

The Waterloo Centre will continue to offer an adult education focussed curriculum portfolio that is attractive to those who wish to study for personal development and well-being, academic progression or career advancement. Its distinctive curriculum offer in Arts, Culture and Social and Applied Sciences will include:

- A wide range of unaccredited provision
- Accredited progression routes from entry level to higher education.

As a centre for lifelong learning for over 130 years, the Waterloo centre will also continue to develop its three distinct types of progression networks:

- Community progression, enabling residents from communities of location and communities of practice to cross the threshold into the Waterloo centre
- Centre progression, with a curriculum designed to facilitate progress for students from course to course within the Waterloo centre and across Morley College London
- Onwards progression, enabling students to access opportunities in employment and further training beyond the Waterloo centre

# **Implementation**

The objectives of the Curriculum Strategy will be achieved through the College's well-established Curriculum Planning, Review and Validation cycle led by the Vice Principal (Curriculum Impact) and supported by the Chief Planning and Data Officer (CPDO).

Every year, curriculum managers at each College Centre, led by the respective Centre Principal, review the performance of the current year's programme against their curriculum plan, its targets and metrics and relevant KPIs, and by using performance reports, market intelligence, emerging

market trends, central and local government priorities, as well as student feedback, build the curriculum for the following year in line with the objectives of the Curriculum Strategy.

The planning cycle typically begins 18 months ahead of the start of course delivery for long, accredited courses to provide sufficient lead-in time for marketing and recruitment campaigns. Planning of short unaccredited courses and Essential Skills programmes begins 10 months ahead their start date. The diagram below provides an illustration of the planning schedule for the 2022-23 curriculum.

	APRIL		MAY			JUN	E			JULY		SEPTEMBER
Higher Education	Curriculum Planning & Development Sub- committee meets -	New HE programme and existing quals changes approvals to Programme Approval Panel (PAP) via approval form	mme and g quals ss and als to feedback to mme curriculum all Panel areas	Curriculum areas implement PAP's recommendatio ns	PAP reviews submissions	Course approvals to HE Subcommittee	CRV Meeting 1 (lead by CPs in Centres)	Q&S Team upload provision on UCAS website	eam pload rovision n UCAS	MIS set up courses on UNIT-E. Curriculum	HE and long courses curriculum offer launch	
Long accredited courses (24+ weeks)	planning launched to start in September 2024			New long courses and existing quals changes approvals to Course Approval Panel (CAP) via approval form	CAP meet and feedback to curriculum areas	Curriculum areas implement CAP's recommendati ons	CAP reviews submission	to confirm HE and long accredited provisions		4CAST.	areas complete course outlines	and applications open for

The Curriculum Planning Subcommittee oversees the planning process and reports, via the Academic Board, to the Curriculum & Quality Committee of the Governing Body. The Senior Leadership Team has responsibility for the approval of the curriculum. The effectiveness of curriculum planning and performance is monitored through the College's *Quality Enhancement Framework* throughout the year.

# **Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment**

There is no evidence that any student or staff in any particular group with protected characteristics will be adversely affected by the strategy. The Curriculum Strategy builds on the College's tradition of promoting educational opportunities and social justice and aims to provide outstanding learning opportunities to a wide range of adult learners and young people that:

Widen access to learning to disadvantaged or underrepresented groups enabling them to make progress towards their personal, academic or career goals.

Celebrate the diversity of the College's communities through curriculum design, delivery and choice of content.

Promote the fundamental democratic value of Democracy, Rule of Law, Respect and Tolerance, and Individual Liberty

The College, via the Academic Board and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Steering Group, monitors the impact of the Strategy on different groups of learners, in relation to recruitment, success and progression to ensure that there is no detrimental effect on such groups.

## **Risk Management**

Our Curriculum Strategy outlines many of the controls for *Risk 8. Failure to achieve student recruitment* targets identified within our Risk Register:

- The approach to planning reflects a size of curriculum which the College can deliver, in line with student demand.
- The curriculum offer is informed by the student voice and is designed to meet the changing learning needs and methods of delivery.
- Detailed curriculum planning ensures targets are ambitious but achievable and deliverable within the scope of resources available.
- Performance reporting through the College's committee structure from course level to SLT.
- Long-term Curriculum Strategy planning allows for an earlier publication of the accredited curriculum offer.
- Curriculum Review and Validation (CRV) Process is embedded in the annual curriculum planning cycle.