WEST COLLEGE SCOTLAND

Communications Strategy 2022-2025

Contents

Introduction

West College Scotland (WCS) delivers learning and vocational training to the west of Scotland region, a catchment area of 1.2 million people, which represents 23% of the resident population of Scotland. It retains an important presence in its main campus towns of Paisley, Clydebank and Greenock, but the College's learning footprint stretches north to Oban and south to Barrhead.

The College works across seven local authority boundaries and is committed with its partners and stakeholders to tackle the significant social and economic deprivation experienced by many who live locally to our three campuses (Scot Gov: No One Left Behind 2020). Greenock Town Centre, where its Finnart Street and Waterfront campuses are situated is the most deprived area in Scotland *(Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020).*

Background and Operating Context

Purpose

This Strategy sets out a roadmap towards a more innovative approach to communications that recognises the changes in student expectations and needs, and advances in technology. It will provide context and direction to West College Scotland's Board of Management, Senior Leadership Team, staff and stakeholders about our strategic approaches to College communications.

The purpose of college communications has developed significantly in the last decade and 'communications' is used here as an umbrella term for the 6 core functions of the Directorate - communications, design, marketing, engagement, events and policy.
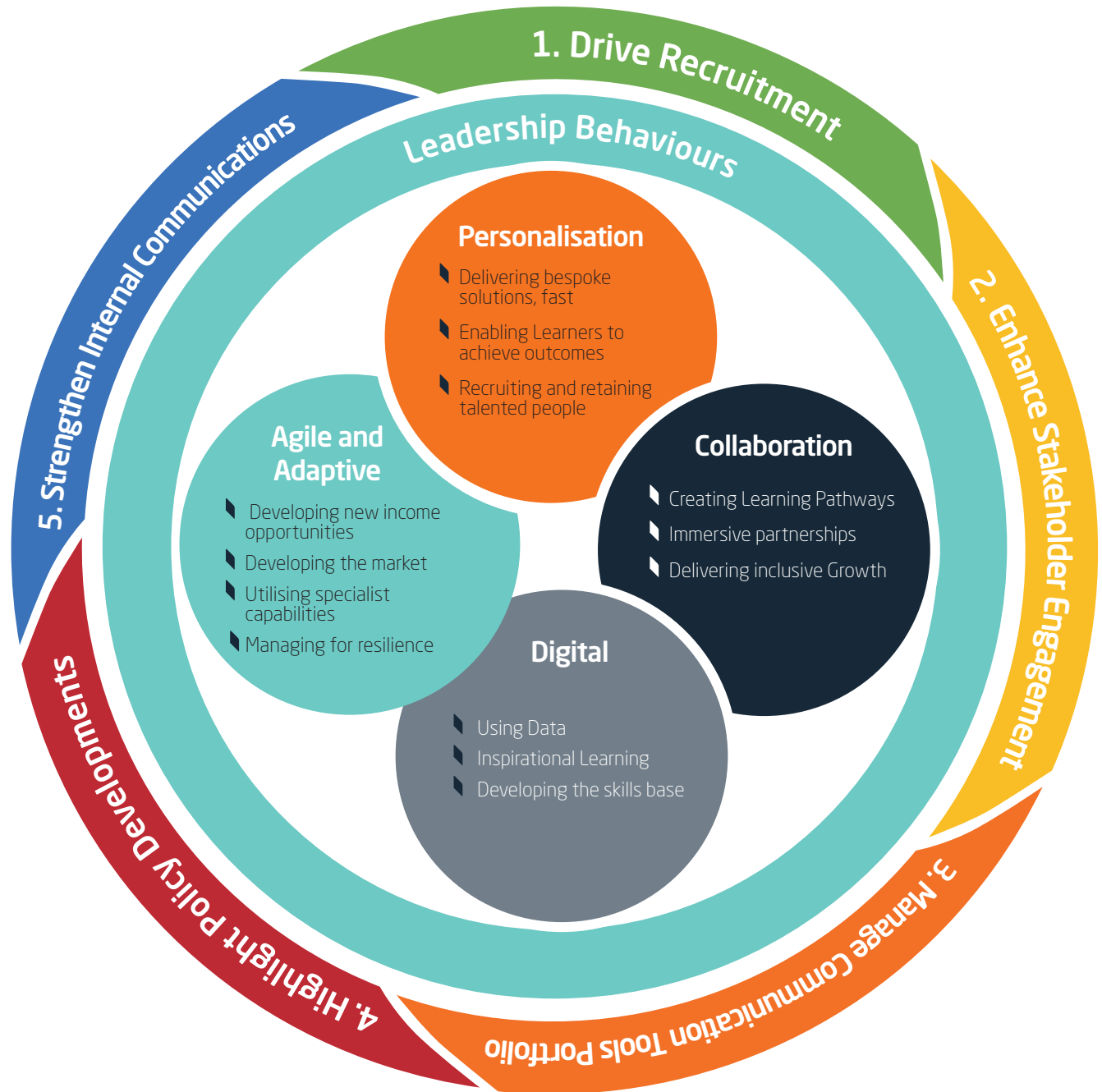
For the College to build on its distinctive brand and remain competitive in a rapidly changing learning environment we need to invest in professionalising each of these core functions.

This will enable the development of a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to communications.
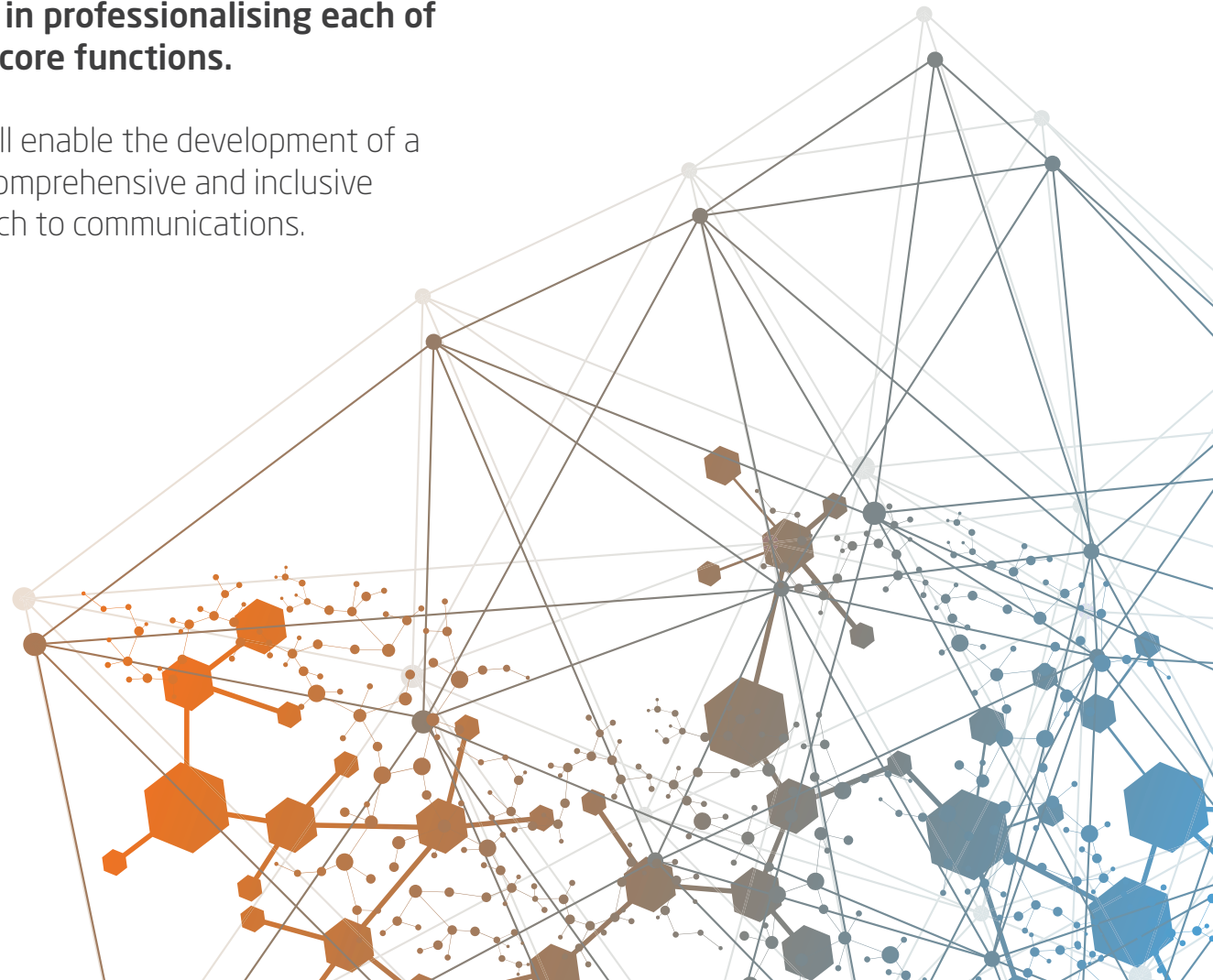
College Strategic Priorities

Communications are key to supporting West College Scotland deliver its Corporate Strategy 2019-2025 and fulfil the four strategic priorities: Personalisation, Collaboration, Agile and Adaptative and Digital.

1. Drive Recruitment

2. Enhance Stakeholder Engagement

3. Manage Communication Tools Portfolio

4. Highlight Policy Developments

5. Strengthen Internal Communications

Leadership Behaviours

Personalisation
- Delivering bespoke solutions, fast
- Enabling Learners to achieve outcomes
- Recruiting and retaining talented people

Collaboration
- Creating Learning Pathways
- Immersive partnerships
- Delivering inclusive Growth

Agile and Adaptive
- Developing new income opportunities
- Developing the market
- Utilising specialist capabilities
- Managing for resilience

Digital
- Using Data
- Inspirational Learning
- Developing the skills base

Strategic Context

Fulfilment of the five communication's strategic aims and their associated objectives, as outlined in this strategy, will be delivered through our **Annual Operating Plan** and will support the College's key priorities as it continues to adapt to the immediate challenges presented by Covid, Brexit, the cross-sector fall in student applications and the impact of rising inflationary pressures on the communities the College serves.

This Strategy has been developed through cross-campus and cross-departmental engagement. Our **vision** is aligned to the College's collective ambition and will use communications to:

- Capitalise on the opportunities of a rapidly changing digital landscape and new hybrid working and learning environment to better serve the needs of students and staff.

- Achieve greater engagement and integration with the communities WCS serves, and through shared successes ensure the college is considered vital to the regional economy.

- Ensure the College's leadership team and Board of Management have awareness of policy and guideline changes that could impact West College Scotland's operational or curriculum delivery.

- Fully support WCS' commitment to deliver innovative, sustainable learning and create a workforce able to tackle the economic, societal and technological consequences of the global climate emergency.

- Strengthen our communication's activities through agile use of traditional, digital, social and alternative media technologies, while allowing for a coherent vision of our **One College, Three Campuses approach**.

Contextual Information

This Strategy recognises and aims to complement other national, college sector, and West College Scotland strategies, creating a hierarchy from the strategic to the operational level.

Strategic

Operational

How Good is Our College
(Education Scotland Quality Framework) [Strategic]

Regional Outcome Agreement The West Region
2019-2020 [Strategic]

WCS Corporate Plan 2019-2025
[Strategic]

Communications Strategy 2021-25
[Operational]

WCS Sustainability Strategy 2021-25
[Operational]

WCS Digital Strategy 2019
[Operational]

WCS Access and Inclusion Strategy 2017
[Operational]

WCS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statutory
Report April 2021 [Operational]

WCS People Strategy 2021-22
{Operational]

Strategic Aims and Objectives

Defining the Communication Aims

The five Communication aims which form the core of this Strategy are detailed below. These will complement all aspects of the College's strategic priorities, the Education Scotland Quality Framework and other documents as set out in 2.4.

1. Drive Recruitment

- To increase student applications, conversion to enrolments and retention through dynamic communication methodologies.

Context: Through the Covid period the number of College applications declined. Of those that submitted an application but subsequently didn't enrol, or dropped out shortly after, 14.9% cited their reason as "Problems with College communication." Of those who actively withdrew their applications, 6.8% cited "Problems with College communications" as the reason for their decision.

2. Enhance Stakeholder Engagement

- To strengthen the College's local, regional and national brand and reputation in a competitive further and higher education, and skills provision environment.

Context: There are 27 FE colleges in Scotland, hundreds more independent learning providers, and numerous online courses that compete for government, business, and student time and investment. WCS is one of Scotland's largest Colleges providing education and training to over 20,000 students and managing total funds in excess of £70m per annum.

3. Manage Communication Tools Portfolio

- To develop and monitor innovative communication channels, including social, online, physical and traditional, to maximise engagement and reflect target demographics.

Context: Over 85% of UK adults spend an average of 4 hours online daily, with 80% accessing the internet via mobile devices and 78% using social media. The platforms accessed are differentiated by age e.g. over 91% of over 54s use Facebook compared to only 69% of 16–24s. With Instagram, 18% of over 54s use Instagram versus 78% of 16–24s. [Source: Ofcom, Adult Media Literacy Tracker 2020]

4. Highlight Policy Developments

- To be cognisant of the latest policy, legislation and guidance, and communicate updates to stakeholders, enabling them to respond agilely and authoritatively.

Context: Education in Scotland is a devolved power and is recognised by the Scottish government as "vital to economic growth and success." In 2020 the Government published over 40 sector specific policy and guidance documents.

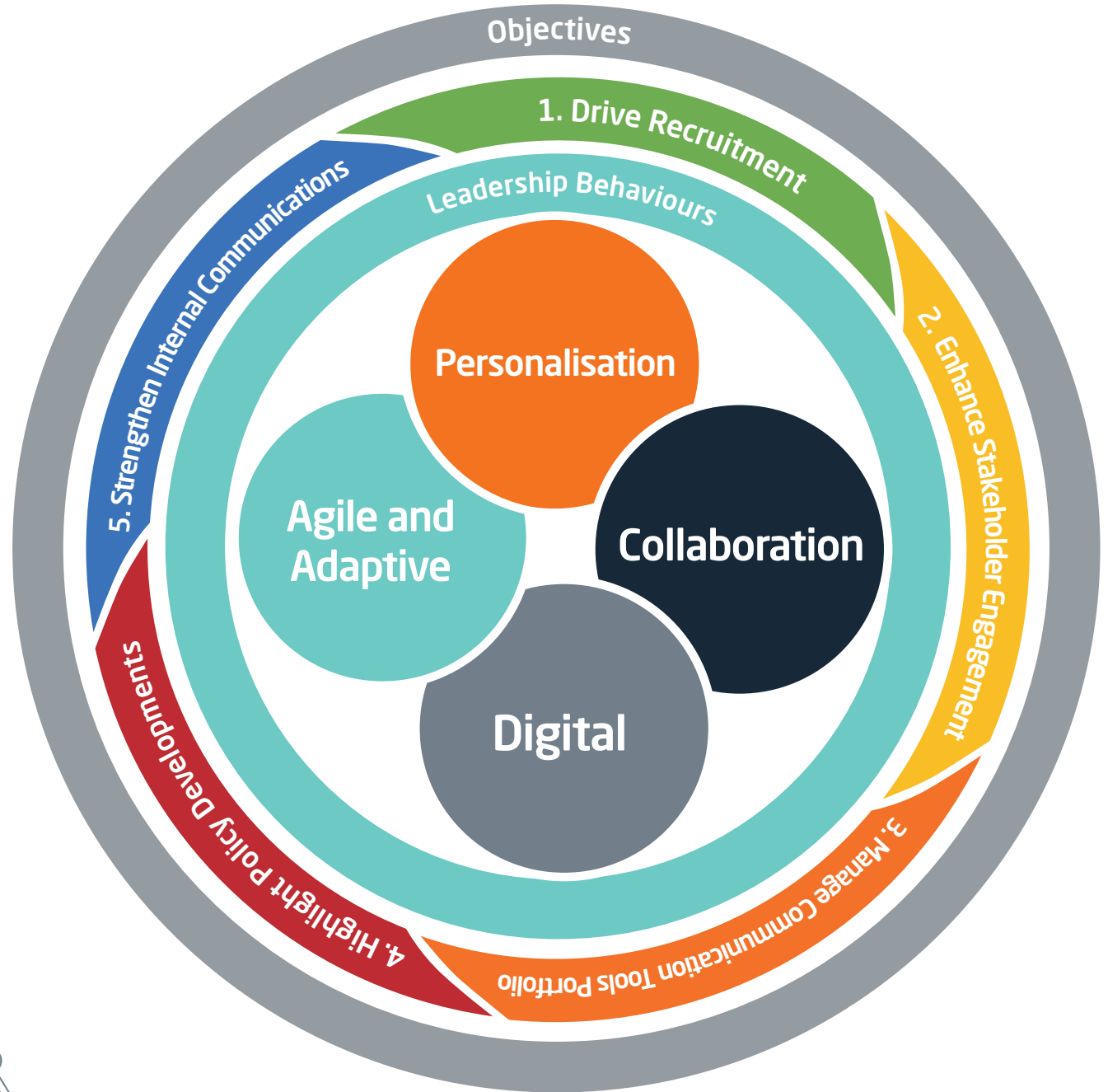## 5. Strengthen Internal Communications

- To improve the College's internal communications provision and delivery, supporting workforce recruitment and retention.

Context: WCS is a major employer in the West of Scotland region with over 1,100 staff, many of whom are working remotely or in a hybrid pattern and have faced a number of challenges since the start of the global pandemic in March 2020. As recognised in the Scottish Government's 'Coronavirus (COVID-19) Education Recovery' Strategy 2021, college workforces provide a vital service in supporting the student community and helping deliver economic recovery post-covid. It is essential they are given the support to do so.
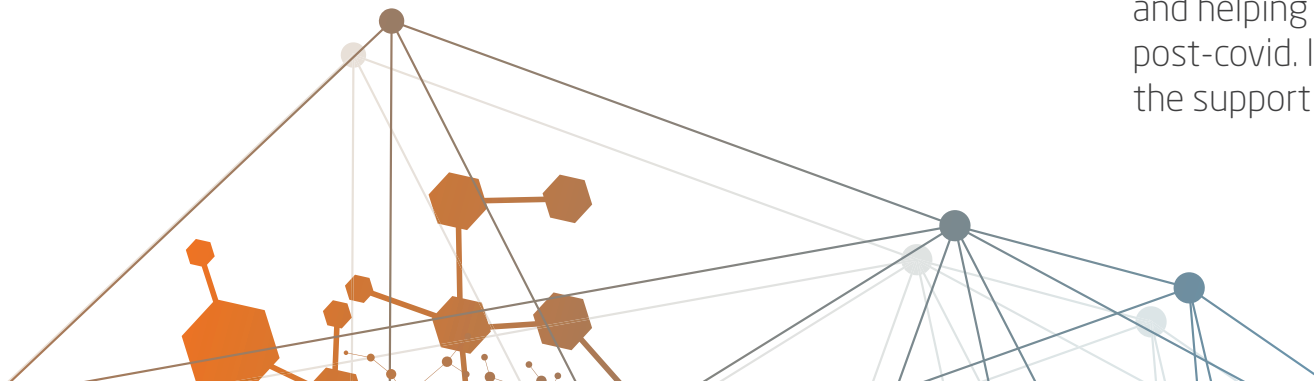
Defining the Communication Objectives

Within each of the five strategic aims, several core objectives have been defined. These aims and objectives coupled with the anticipated outcomes, will form the basis of measurement to identify what success will look like during each annual reporting cycle.

Objectives

1. Drive Recruitment

2. Enhance Stakeholder Engagement

3. Manage Communication Tools Portfolio

4. Highlight Policy Developments

5. Strengthen Internal Communications

Leadership Behaviours

Personalisation

Collaboration

Agile and Adaptive

Digital

1. Drive Recruitment
To increase student applications, conversion to enrolments and retention through dynamic communication methodologies.

Objective	Action	Anticipated Outcome
1.1 Recruitment Through Covid Promote WCS as the provider of choice for high quality further and higher education, skills provision and training in the west of Scotland region, and raise the profile of its online provision, thereby expanding its geographical reach and flexible offering. Links to: • Regional Outcome Agreement • Comms Strategy (Aim 3) • WCS Strategy (Objective 1, 7, 9 & 12)	**1.1.1** Differentiate comms and marketing materials to support campus and online delivered courses; ensuring that campus materials highlight the WCS student experience, and the online marketing emphasises lifestyle flexibility. **1.1.2** Maximise the recruitment opportunities arising from new working and learning models developed through the Covid pandemic.	• Promoted new and existing WCS course provision increasing online and on campus recruitment. • Cemented WCS position as the largest supplier of online learning in Scotland.
1.2 Recruitment Campaigns Deliver effective targeted student recruitment campaigns, and more effective communications during applications and enrolment. Links to: • Comms Strategy (Aim 3) • WCS Strategy (Objectives 1 & 7) • Regional Outcome Agreement	**1.2.1** Survey the changing landscape and challenges surrounding recruitment (caused by demographic changes, behavioural changes resulting from the Covid pandemic, and competing learning pathways). **1.2.2** Use survey results & student profiles to develop a multi-media approach to increase traffic to WCS course directories. The campaign(s), at a regional and national level, will market WCS as an attractive destination for both school-leavers and potential students. **1.2.3** Support the Central Admissions team to monitor response times during the application and enrolment process using Power BI. Determine communication interventions to limit withdrawals, such as providing regular updates to prospective students to keep them involved in their application progress.	• Achieved a 10% increase traffic to WCS site, year on year. • Increased conversion rates from website visits to application by 5%. Increased the percentage of students who proceed from application to acceptance, and from acceptance to enrolment. • Achieved a 50% increase in video views and click-through rates. • Learnings from the updated WCS Competitor Analysis will support targeted recruitment communications.

1. Drive Recruitment
To increase student applications, conversion to enrolments and retention through dynamic communication methodologies.

Objective	Action	Anticipated Outcome
	1.2.4 Trial video course profiles on YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok	
	1.2.5 Develop a new approach to delivering the Choose Your Career Days (CYCD) including a virtual option	
	1.2.6 Review and update the WCS Competitor Analysis, undertaken by the Communications Department Policy Officer (2019) to deepen understanding of our targeted communication methods and benchmark against.	
1.3 Equality, Diversity, Access and Inclusion Ensure communication materials and messaging reflect the College's commitment to equality, diversity, access and inclusion. Links to: • Access and Inclusion Strategy 2017 • Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statutory Report April 2021 (3.52) • Equality Outcomes Report 2023 (Outcome 2) • WCS Strategy (Objectives 2,4,5,6 & 12)	**1.3.1** Support HR and Enabling Services to deliver the Access and Inclusion strategy [2017] by conducting awareness raising campaigns of what support WCS can offer potential and existing students. **1.3.2** Pro-actively promote the College's anti-racist approach by highlighting the zero-tolerance approach to discrimination in key publications **1.3.3** Encourage applications from under-represented groups and people who share protected characteristics through targeted campaigns, events, partnership activities with external agencies and work with third sector organisations. **1.3.4** Review use of images in communications to ensure the college promotes equality and tackles stereotypes	• Demonstrated our commitment to creating an inclusive curriculum and campus which recognises the needs of all students studying at our College. • Demonstrable evidence in mainstream publications of our commitment to, and representation of, race equality.

2. Enhance Stakeholder Engagement

2

To strengthen the College's local, regional and national brand and reputation in a competitive further and higher education environment

Objective	Action	Anticipated Outcome
2.1 Stakeholder Relationship Building Develop the WCS brand by building relationships with key stakeholders. Links to: • Comms Strategy (Aim 3, Aim 5) • People Strategy (Aim 4.4.3) • WCS Strategy (Objectives 5,6,7 & 8)	**2.1.1** Collaborate with Business Development and Innovation to produce regular College News Updates for stakeholders including industry, regional councils, and local elected representatives. **2.1.2** Improve lobbying through targeted activities at Holyrood including presenting to Holyrood Universities & Colleges cross-party group; secure parliamentary motions referencing achievements of WCS, secure MSP events and exhibitions. **2.1.3** Develop ongoing communication and engagement plans, and revise and share brand guidelines to ensure that employees and other stakeholders understand and respect the organisation's values. **2.1.4** With Executive/SMT, introduce stakeholder lunches at Training Dining Rooms. **2.1.5** Review Executive/SMT contacts to identify all key stakeholders. The introduction of the CRM will professionalise this process (Aim 3).	• Promoted new and existing WCS course provision increasing online and on campus recruitment. • Cemented WCS position as the largest supplier of online learning in Scotland.
2.2 Major Incident and Crisis Communications Manage communications arising from major incident and/or crises Links to: • WCS Strategy (Objective 10)	**2.2.1** Produce a comprehensive major incident and crisis communication plan and ensure the SMT are aware of it and their roles in any incident. **2.2.2** Support HR to provide clear communication channels for staff and students to raise any concerns.	• Enabled appropriate responses to major incidents in accordance with stated guidelines and procedures, and ensured staff and students feel supported.

2. Enhance Stakeholder Engagement
*To strengthen the College's local, regional and national brand and reputation
in a competitive further and higher education environment*

Objective	Action	Anticipated Outcome
2.3 Student Events Deliver a programme of events that raises the college profile, engages stakeholders, and are cost-effective Links to: • WCS Strategy (Objectives 1,4,5 & 13) • Regional Outcome Agreement (Outcome 4)	**2.3.1** Organise and promote the annual graduations to maximise attendance, investigate strategic use of events management companies and prepare graduate lists for local publications **2.3.2** Develop creative cost-effective virtual events, building on successes such as the graduations necessitated during covid **2.3.3** Liaise with CQLs to understand nature and marketing input required for College Open Days and outreach events through 2022-2025	• Created memorable student and guest experiences. Enhance the reputation of the college through media coverage and students' (and their guests) response to the experience. • Assist recruitment, improve the college profile, and support cross-sector working.
2.4 Corporate Events Provide best value from hosting and attending corporate events. Links to: • WCS Strategy (Objective 5 & 11)	**2.4.1** Analyse expenditure on, and attendance at, external and hosted corporate events.	• More strategic and streamlined approach to events; better use of such events to engage business partners; engage more colleagues from diverse roles in attending events.
2.5 Corporate Sponsorship Provide best value through corporate sponsorship. Links to: • WCS Strategy (Objective 5 & 11)	**2.5.1** Conduct a qualitative and quantitative audit of all sponsorship outlay by WCS, and all the events, course, departments, and prizes WCS receive sponsorship for.	• Determined the strategic value of all sponsorship in terms of relationship building and possible income generation. • Adjust sponsorship portfolio accordingly.
2.6 Awards, Achievements, and Accreditation Support applications for, and promotion of, sector, national and international awards. Links to: • WCS Strategy (Objective 6)	**2.6.1** Build on the College's 2021 award successes by identifying further award and accreditation schemes opportunities aligned to college activities. **2.6.2** Explore the success of the Beta version of the Awards Central platform and dependent on findings launch formally. **2.6.3** Publicise achievements and accreditation of standards e.g. MoD Employer Recognition Awards	• Provided templated guidance on award submission process • Celebrated achievements within the college and through media coverage, engaging staff and stakeholders

2. Enhance Stakeholder Engagement

2

To strengthen the College's local, regional and national brand and reputation in a competitive further and higher education environment

Objective	Action	Anticipated Outcome
2.7 Corporate Social Responsibility Raise awareness of College activities that demonstrate Corporate Social Responsibility. Link to: • Sustainability Strategy (Aim 1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 3.4) • WCS Strategy (Objective 6)	**2.7.1** Support the delivery of the Sustainability Strategy commitment to net zero by 2040 by ensuring a regular flow of information to engage and inspire the College community to be more environmentally aware. **2.7.2** Create an online resource for staff and students that includes the Colleges environmental targets, latest news, and an engagement tool to facilitate the circular economy. **2.7.3** Promote College course provision that support CSR and sustainability e.g. the Renewable Training Centre facility as a centre of excellence for insulation in Scotland **2.7.4** Work with HR and CQLs to identify and promote existing CSR activity on campus and in the wider community	• By providing more than just information, the college has demonstrated its value to the community it serves and long-term commitment to CSR.
2.8 Greenock Campus Support the submission of the Outline Business Case for the Greenock Campus Links to: • WCS Greenock Campus OBC • Sustainability Strategy (Aim 3)	**2.8.1** Produce Greenock OBC Communications and Engagement Strategy to support the Estates department	• Secured stakeholder backing for the new Greenock Campus and organised media coverage

3

3. Manage Communication Tools Portfolio
To develop and monitor innovative communication channels, including social, online, physical and traditional, to maximise engagement and reflect the target demographics.

Objective	Action	Anticipated Outcome
3.1 Publications Determine best value for all major publications in terms of format and purpose Links to: • Sustainability Strategy (Aim 1.5)	**3.1.1** Review publication formats (print versus digital), and the efficacy of core publications including the Annual Report.	• Enhanced reputation through more relevant publications (e.g. alignment of the Annual Report with the academic year) • Anticipated financial savings and alignment with the College Sustainability strategy commitment to carbon reduction by reducing under-utilised print publications.
3.2 WCS Website Forefront the College's reputation as a leading provider of further education courses, and provider of higher education courses, with a best in sector user experience. Links to: • WCS Strategy (Objectives 1,3,5, 10, 11 & 12)	**3.2.1** Review the necessity for a website rebuild versus an upgrade. Consider content visibility (Comms department) and functionality (IT Department). Either option requires migration of the WCS website to another developer that provides better service. **3.2.2** To understand the technical and financial challenges involved with the transfer, and upgrade or rebuild. **3.2.3** Establish a steering group with key stakeholders including CQLs, IT, SA and the Admissions Service to understand the core functions and requirements of the website, and how can it be better developed to support ecommerce. **3.2.4** Review hosting and website support, including the potential to take this in-house.	• Determined whether an upgrade or a rebuild was needed. • Established better value for money, a higher service level provision and a more effective website from transferring to a new provider. • Identifies the USP for the website through cross-departmental support. • Taken a long-term/best value approach to the management of the website.

3   3. Manage Communication Tools Portfolio
To develop and monitor innovative communication channels, including social, online, physical and traditional, to maximise engagement and reflect the target demographics.

Objective	Action	Anticipated Outcome
3.3 Social and Online Media Maximise the WCS profile on stakeholder appropriate platforms to enhance recruitment, reputational and commercial opportunities Links to: • Comms Strategy (Aim 1) • Equality Outcome 2021–23 (Outcome 4) • WCS Strategy (Objectives 1, 3, 5, 12)	**3.3.1** Rebalance the current output to ensure the right messaging is reaching, and engaging, the right audience (e.g. Twitter is the wrong platform to reach our students, but excellent for business and political engagement). **3.3.2** Launch WCS on platforms relevant to the student demographic including TikTok and monitor trends. **3.3.3** Increase video and audio-based news stories/post delivered on student-centric platforms. Include vlogs and podcasts to represent student success, and promote awareness of digital resources which complement accessibility. **3.3.4** Work with CQLs to find appropriate case studies. Identify potential influencer partners, and position social media post accordingly. **3.3.5** Develop a base line of metrics by which success against this objective can be measured. Provide monthly analysis and evaluation of social media metrics **3.3.6** Utilise two Foundation Apprentices as social media support, 1 day a week for each academic year. **3.3.7** Present case for resourcing for a Social Media Manager. **3.3.8** Deliver social media training for SMT, Heads and Business Development and Innovation (and wider staff) to raise awareness of (i) the commercial and reputational opportunities (ii) the social media policy and WCS branding guidelines.	• Better levels of engagement with target audiences, including prospective students, commercial customers and influencers will drive recruitment and improve college reputation. • More video/audio content should improve engagement (click-throughs, sentiment, and reach), and drive traffic to our website. • Produced baseline statistics to be compared against to show significant improvement in engagement year-on-year e.g. a 50% increase in Instagram followers • Better management and maintenance of social media platforms. • Improved profile and marketing opportunities for student recruitment and commercial courses. • Greater innovation in staff use of social media platforms will build the WCS profile.

3. Manage Communication Tools Portfolio

To develop and monitor innovative communication channels, including social, online, physical and traditional, to maximise engagement and reflect the target demographics.

Objective	Action	Anticipated Outcome
3.4 Student Intranet Support the student intranet migration to the MyDay app. Links to: • Comms Strategy (Aim 5) • WCS Strategy (Objectives 1, 11 & 13)	**3.4.1** Undertake a content audit to determine relevant content to be migrated, and share information with Student Services and IT. **3.4.2** Communicate the change of platform to students and staff. **3.4.3** Review success of app including take-up and usage at annual intervals.	• The upgraded app will be launched by April 2022 improving communication between college and students; reducing the query burden on support staff and enabling instant communications to students in event of emergencies.
3.5 Physical Communication Improve the provision of cross-campus digital signage and external advertising screens and assess messaging focus. Links to: • WCS Strategy (Objectives 1, 3, 5, 7, 10 & 11)	**3.5.1** Review the number and placement of digital signage across campuses to ensure maximum visibility to students, staff and visitors **3.5.2** Review digital signage content to ensure it conveys current messaging and brand alignment **3.5.3** Work with Estates to investigate the feasibility of commercial display advertising on campus. **3.5.4** Seek agency advice on fresh approaches to external advertising and raising brand awareness **3.5.5** Investigate the costs, practicalities, and benefits of more external screen, billboard, and transport related advertising.	• Improving the visibility of digital signage and quality of information across campuses will enhance awareness of the latest WCS news. • Opportunity to increase advertising revenue from commercial clients or quid pro quo relationships. • Ensuring WCS is taking advantage of the latest development and trends in digital marketing and communications.

3. Manage Communication Tools Portfolio

3

To develop and monitor innovative communication channels, including social, online, physical and traditional, to maximise engagement and reflect the target demographics.

Objective	Action	Anticipated Outcome
3.6 Graphics Create a clear visual identity for the college utilising brand specific graphic design for all published materials, including print, audio and video across all platforms. Links to: • WCS Strategy (Objectives 6, 9, 10)	**3.6.1** Introduce Trello to better manage workflow, and distribution of projects. **3.6.2** Create graphic designed template suite for WCS staff to provide consistency **3.6.3** Enhance graphic design capability– upskill team by providing training in relevant software to accommodate changing demand for video, animation and interactives. **3.6.4** Introduce the Canva app, a templated design system–for the wider team to produce basic designed materials	• Greater visibility of design demand through utilization of a resource management tool. • Reduced demand on the design team by empowering college staff to utilise templates. • Enhanced reputation through keeping pace with stakeholder expectations of designed materials • Reduced demand on the design team from the wider Comms team.
3.7 Metrics and analysis Use metrics and analytics to better inform decision making Links to: • WCS Strategy (Objective 11)	**3.7.1** Introduce media monitoring app, Cision to provide regular insight reports (sentiment and reach) to the SMT on all WCS media coverage **3.7.2** Publish monthly Google Analytics reports on the usage of WCS websites and intranets in conjunction with Management Information Services. **3.7.3** Support the introduction of a CRM to manage external stakeholder relationships	• Used insights to inform comms and marketing decision making e.g. choosing the most effective and targeted platforms to engage students, staff, and other stakeholders. • Used metrics to drive increased traffic and engagement to the WCS site (see Objective outcome 1.2) • Improved management of relationships with key stakeholders enabled via CRM delivered metrics

4. Highlight Policy Developments

4

To be cognisant of the latest policy, legislation, and guidance, and communicate updates to stakeholders, enabling them to respond agilely and authoritatively.

Objective	Action	Anticipated Outcome
4.1 Government Policy Awareness Inform the College's curriculum sectors of Scottish and UK Government priorities, policies, and industry developments Links to: • WCS Strategy (Objectives 4, 5 & 6)	**4.1.1** Deliver an automated (via NewsDirect) monthly parliamentary and policy report highlighting areas of relevance to the eight curriculum sectors. **4.1.2** Produce annual Scottish and UK Budget briefings and insights, discuss with Finance and share with the SMT	• Supported the planning sectors in their development of the curriculum, future-proofed the College, and identified possible commercial opportunities. • Ensured SMT, curriculum planners and BoM have the necessary data to respond expeditiously to key policy developments.
4.2 Internal Policy Communications Communicate college and government policy to appropriate stakeholders Link to: • Comms Strategy (Aims 2, and Aim 4) • WCS Strategy (Objectives 1, 3, 8, 9 & 10)	**4.2.1** Use targeted email communication to inform sectors of relevant policy and guideline updates. **4.2.2** Keep Enabling Services and the HR & OD team informed of new and existing government initiatives to ensure they can connect to wider access and inclusion requirements, including Developing the Young Workforce. **4.2.3** Support the Student Services team to communicate the support available to young and adult carers as detailed in the Supporting Student Carers Policy. **4.2.4** Annually review the Social Media policy and communicate changes to staff in conjunction with HR **4.2.5** Present the case for resourcing for a Policy and Engagement Officer	• Enabled staff to keep across key developments relevant to their sector • Supported the CPD and Enabling Services team to keep informed of latest inclusivity initiatives. • Increased engagement with college support by young and adult carers studying at the College. • Mitigated the risk of inappropriate use of social media, and helped protect staff and students from online harm.

5

5. Strengthen Internal Communications
To improve the College's internal communications provision and delivery, supporting workforce recruitment and retention.

| Objective	Action	Anticipated Outcome
5.1 Proactive Internal Communications Ensure staff are fully informed of corporate strategic priorities, day-to-day operational matters, and that there are open channels of communication Links to: • Comms Strategy (Aim 3) • Draft Digital Strategy 2021 • Equality Outcome 2021–23 (Outcome 3) • WCS Strategy (Objectives 3, 8, 10 & 11) • People Strategy	**5.1.1** Review the outcomes of the 2019 all-staff Internal Comms Survey. Commission a new survey (biennially) on the efficacy of platforms for delivering messaging. **5.1.2** Use Microsoft's Power BI and Google Analytics to inform the nature and timing of internal comms **5.1.3** IT and MIS team to provide bi-monthly analytics to the Director. **5.1.4** Support the Digital Strategy by raising awareness of the Digital Virtual Hub including CoLT, and offer the WCS staff a one-stop-shop portal to access everything they need to support their digital journey. **5.1.5** Combine the analytics and survey finding to produce a monthly report to the SMT and CDC. **5.1.6** Replace the irregular WestWorld newsletter with a monthly WestWorld Update and breaking news alerts, produce fortnightly SMT updates **5.1.7** Send monthly reminders to directors and APs requesting updates on any upcoming campaigns in need of Comms support. **5.1.8** Analysis and action planning from annual Employee Opinion Survey	• Improved understanding of staff preferences. • More in-depth statistics will enable IT and Marketing to analyse the level of engagement with content, identify trends and pinpoint areas for improvement, and keep the SMT informed of progress. • Supported the cultural shift with staff embracing new ways of working in a post-covid environment • A monthly news update will better represent the college workforce and reinforce key messaging and raise awareness of CPD opportunities. • Balanced the deployment of limited Comm's resources with project requirements through advance planning.

5

5. Strengthen Internal Communications
To improve the College's internal communications provision and delivery, supporting workforce recruitment and retention.

Objective	Action	Anticipated Outcome
5.2 Partnership Working Model Review the Partnership Working Model to ensure it identifies the curriculum leads' communication and marketing needs, and that they are reciprocating with support for the Comms team with news and events to promote. Links to: • WCS Strategy (Objectives 1, 2 & 4)	**5.2.1** Conduct qualitative research with Heads and CQLs.	• Better understanding of the changing marketing needs of sectors, including possible identification of unmet demand; better informed decisions re activities and expenditure.
5.3 Healthy Working Lives Enhance staff wellbeing and improve staff retention Links to: • Equality Outcome 2021–23 (Outcome 3) • WCS Strategy (Objective 3) • Health and Wellbeing Strategy • People Strategy	**5.3.1** Utilise the monthly Westworld Update and the intranet to promote awareness of positive wellbeing and signpost support. **5.3.2** Support the Healthy Working Lives Team to deliver College-wide promotional campaigns	• Enhance staff wellbeing and improve staff retention.

Bibliography

The College will continue to use these policies, processes and procedures in delivering the Communication Strategy objectives:

- **How Good is Our College? (Education Scotland Quality Framework)**

- **Regional Outcome Agreement The West Region 2019-2020**

- **Our Workforce, Our Future (West of Scotland Skills Survey 2019)**
- **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Education Recovery strategy 2021 (Scottish Government)**

- **College Performance Indicators 2019-2020 (Scottish Funding Council)**

- **WCS Access and Inclusion Strategy 2017**

- **WCS Competitor Analysis Independent Training Providers October 2019**

- **WCS Corporate Plan 2019-2025**

- **WCS Curriculum Development Strategy [draft]**

- **WCS Digital Strategy 2019**

- **WCS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statutory Report April 2021**

- **WCS Equality Outcomes Report 2021-2023**

- **WCS Information Technology Strategy 2021-2025**
- **WCS People Strategy 2021-2022**

- **WCS Health and Wellbeing Strategy**

- **WCS Student Carers Policy 2021**

- **WCS Sustainability Strategy 2021-2025 [draft]**

- **Carbon Management Plan 2016 - 2021**
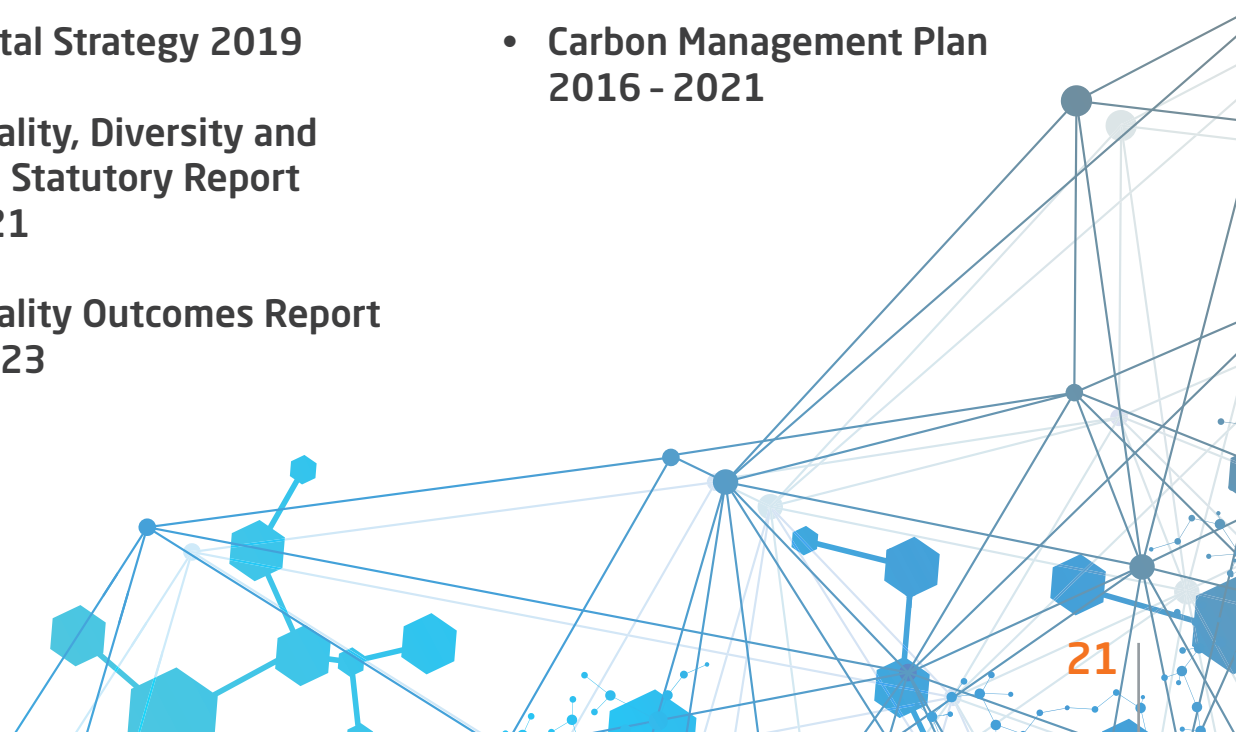
Equality Impact Assessment

Name of strategy:
Communications Strategy

Provide a brief summary of the aims of the policy and main activities:

This Strategy sets out how West College Scotland aims to improve communications performance across all business activities. It sets out operational targets, actions and lines of responsibility.

Assessed by:

Date:

This stage establishes whether a strategy, policy, procedure or decision will have a differential impact from an equality perspective on people who share protected characteristics or whether it is "equality neutral" (i.e. have no effect either positive or negative). The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

1. **Who will benefit from this?**
   Students, staff, stakeholders

2. **Is there likely to be a positive impact on people who share protected characteristics, and if so, how? Or is it clear at this stage that it will be equality "neutral"? i.e. will not have a differential impact on any equality group/s?**
   This Strategy is directly relevant to the College's statutory duty to advance equality, eliminate discrimination and promote good relations. It can be described as equality positive, that is, its anticipated benefits will not affect people differently as a result of their protected characteristics. The use of targeted social media content aims to make it easier for diverse audiences to engage with the opportunities available with the College. This strategy will encourage engagement with under-represented groups and will look to create and promote case studies featuring under-represented groups.

3. **Is there likely to be an adverse impact on people who share protected characteristics? If so, who may be affected and why? Or is it clear at this stage that it will be equality "neutral"?**
   It is not likely that there will be an adverse impact on people who share protected characteristics.

4. **What action will you take to ensure that you are monitoring the impact of this Policy?**
   The process to measure the communications' impact is contained within this strategy.

Strategy and Equality Statements

Strategy Statement

The Communication's Strategy identifies our vision and commitment to enable the achievement of the College's vision, ambitions and strategic priorities. This will be achieved through the professional and proactive management of communications, policy and engagement.

Equality Statement

The College is committed to providing equal opportunities to ensure its students, staff, customers and visitors are treated equally regardless of gender reassignment, race, religion or belief; disability; age; marriage and civil partnerships; pregnancy and maternity; sexual orientation; sex.

Please note this document will be made available in other formats, to request another format please email: **communications@wcs.ac.uk**