North Hertfordshire College

PEOPLE STRATEGY | 2025

NORTH
HERTFORDSHIRE
COLLEGE

INTRODUCTION TO THE PEOPLE STRATEGY

At North Hertfordshire College, we recognise that our people are our most valuable asset and are essential to achieving our organisational strategic plan (2025 – 2030). Our People Strategy is designed to ensure we attract, develop, and retain high performers, while fostering a culture of continuous growth and high performance. By aligning our workforce with the organisation's current and future priorities, we aim to create an environment where employees are empowered to excel, innovate, and contribute to the long-term success of the College.

As we continue to evolve, it is crucial that our People Strategy is not only responsive to the immediate demands of our business but also anticipates the skills, capabilities, and leadership required for the future. The strategy will support the corporate ambitions of North Hertfordshire College by developing our workforce in ways that drive organisational performance and competitive advantage.

Our approach will focus on talent development, ensuring employees are equipped with the skills needed today and in the future. This includes creating tailored learning and career development programs, fostering leadership capabilities, and ensuring that we are building a pipeline of talent that will support our growth ambitions. At the same time, we will align our people practices with our organisational values and strategic plan, so that every individual's work directly contributes to our purpose, values and strategic themes.

In short, the People Strategy is more than just a plan for managing human resources- it's a critical enabler of our organisational strategic plan, ensuring that we have the right people in the right roles, equipped with the right skills, to drive our success today and tomorrow.

OUR PURPOSE

To change lives, raise aspirations and create prosperity for individuals, businesses and the communities we live and work in through the delivery of outstanding education and training.

RESPECT
AMBITION
PROFESSIONALISM
INSPIRATION
INTEGRITY
COMMUNITY
EXCELLENCE

OUR VALUES

Underpinned by our Group values, we are a forward thinking, creative and ambitious College. We have an inclusive culture and a clear determination and focus on driving improvement, raising standards for our students and ensuring the College goes from strength to strength.

Our values are really important to us. They define how we work and enable our success:

RESPECT: We value the contribution that each member of our community makes. We ensure that we are an inclusive, welcoming and open organisation that encourages and values different thinking and perspectives.

AMBITION: We have high expectations about what we, our colleagues and our learners can achieve. We are a true learning organisation that is eager to continue to improve and develop

PROFESSIONALISM: We conduct ourselves in a professional way. We commit to developing our knowledge, skills and experience to better do our jobs.

INSPIRATION: We motivate and instil a sense of belief in ourselves, our colleagues and our learners. We have a strong 'can do' ethos and believe that enjoying what we do is important.

INTEGRITY: We act in an open and honest way. We see trust as central to the way that we work - we do what we say we will do.

COMMUNITY: We are committed to building a community where everyone has a voice, feels supported and can thrive. We are committed to being an active and responsible part of our local and wider communities

EXCELLENCE: We strive for excellence in everything we do. We encourage and challenge ourselves and each other to do the very best for our learners, colleagues and community.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2025 - 2030

Our organisational strategic plan sets out five key pillars to help us achieve our mission. Each one is a vital component of our pursuit of excellence and our future success. These pillars are:

PILLAR 1
A high-quality, responsive, careers-focussed curriculum

PILLAR 2
Consistently exceptional teaching and learning across all areas of the curriculum

PILLAR 3
Culture and people development which builds ambitious, high performing individuals and teams

PILLAR 4
Strengthened financial sustainability powering reinvestment

PILLAR 5
Impactful local, regional and national engagement that celebrates our brand/ reputation and expands our portfolio

PEOPLE STRATEGY

Our People Strategy is aligned to the objectives set out within the organisational strategic plan and directly aligns with Pillar 3 providing a key focus to empower individuals to lead, innovate and deliver exceptional teaching, learner experience and outcomes. This strategy sets out the actions and drivers to meet the organisational ambitions relating to culture and people development under three key themes:

ATTRACTION AND RETENTION

ENGAGEMENT

WELLBEING.

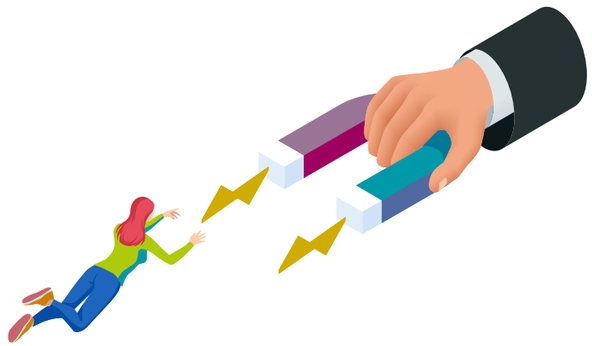
ATTRACTION AND RETENTION

We aim to attract and retain a skilled, committed and high performing workforce that aligns with our organisational values and drives long-term success through:

- Developing and promoting a strong, positive employer brand that highlights the organisation's culture, values and benefits;
- Actively showcasing employee success stories, company achievements and community involvement to build appeal for potential applicants;
- Utilising social media, career fairs and community forums to strengthen the organisations reputation as an employer of choice;
- Reducing time-to-hire and improving candidate experience through efficient and transparent recruitment processes;
- Implementing technology and best practices to identify talent expediently, ensuring candidates feel engaged throughout the process;
- Implementing a recruitment and onboarding module to provide an enhanced onboarding experience through use of technology, supporting a positive transition and launch to the organisation;
- Creating clear, well-defined job descriptions and realistic role expectations linked to organisational competencies, to attract candidates who align with organisational needs and values;
- Promoting incentive schemes and wider benefits for new and existing staff to attract and retain talent;
- Working with managers to develop and embed a comprehensive onboarding process that supports new employees to integrate smoothly into the team and understand their role in the organisation;
- Building a culture of belonging where all employees feel valued and included, promoting retention by ensuring everyone can succeed and feel supported;
- Regularly reviewing EDI metrics, actions and progress, incorporating feedback to create a continually accessible workplace for all;
- Using recruitment data, onboarding surveys and exit interviews to identify patterns, potential issues and areas for improvement;
- Proactively succession plan for future needs based on business goals, industry trends, and anticipated growth.

HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS:

- Increased number of applicants coming directly to the College based on our promotional activity reducing the reliance on agencies;
- Return on investment from direct promotion for our vacancies;
- Quality of applicants applying directly to the College based on conversion rates;
- Reduce the average time to hire from 45 days to 40 days through efficient recruitment processes;
- Measure new starters, onboarding experience through feedback channels, using this feedback to improve the onboarding experience for new starters. Increase satisfaction from 64% to 75%;
- Increase the utilisation of staff benefits in the staff survey from 72.7% to 85% by 2030;
- Reduce the turnover rate among employees with less than 2 years' service from 9% to 5% by identifying trends from exit interviews and addressing underlying issues identified;
- Analyse applicant and successful candidate data alongside workforce data to identify gaps where this does not reflect the diversity of the community in which we work.



ENGAGEMENT

We aim to foster a motivated, engaged, and committed workforce by encouraging a positive work environment, that inspires employees to actively contribute to the organisation's success, support the organisations ability to adapt to change, stay competitive and create future leaders.

- Establish a culture where employees feel encouraged to share their opinions and know that their input is valued by the organisation;
- Develop clear career progression pathways to support the upskilling and reskilling of current staff;
- Ensure that all staff have access to training, skills development, and career progression opportunities that align with their roles, support their future aspirations, and contribute to the achievement of the organisational strategic plan;
- Continue to develop the competency framework and embed this into all elements of the employee life cycle, from the recruitment process, performance development review, through to skills development and career progression;
- Ensure the College drives performance by setting clear expectations for employees, providing regular feedback and development opportunities, recognising high performers, and implementing mechanisms to address performance gaps where standards are not met.

HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS:

- Measure staff satisfaction through the annual staff survey with regards to being well informed of the College's activities and realise an increase from the current 85% positive response;
- Capture and increase the number of staff achieving internal career progression through internal promotions either within teams or across the organisation and realise an increase from 2025 to 2030 in this measure. Currently this is 5% and over the next 5 years the aim is to increase this to 10%;
- Monitor performance and uptake of continuing professional development against the skills development priorities identified each year aligned to the organisational strategic plan;
- 100% of job descriptions, person specifications and standardised interview questions to move to competency-based using the organisational competency framework to inform these;
- 100% of staff PDRs to incorporate targets relating to competency framework in place for different job types;
- Increase in staff retention and decrease staff turnover from 18% to 15%, and reduction in people leaving due to career progression external to the College from 22% to 15%, as per reasons for leaving detailed on exit interview.

WELLBEING

We aim to foster a supportive and healthy work environment that prioritises the physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing of all employees, ensuring they feel valued, engaged, and equipped to perform at their best.

- Actively support mental health in the workplace, providing access to resources such as counselling and the Togetherall online mental health support community to encourage employees to seek help as needed;
- Develop a culture that promotes employee health and wellbeing with a comprehensive annual programme of wellbeing activity;
- To provide resources, programmes and facilities that support physical health of employees, including fitness opportunities, preventative health screenings and guidance on nutrition and healthy lifestyle habits;
- Implement policies and practices that support flexible working arrangements, enabling employees to achieve a health balance between their professional and personal lives;
- To build a culture where wellbeing initiatives are accessible to all and that leaders are able to recognise and address wellbeing needs;
- To enhance financial security and literacy for employees by offering financial workshops which can reduce financial stress and improve overall wellbeing;
- Create a supportive work environment that prioritises employee digital wellbeing by promoting balanced use of technology, preventing digital burnout, and supporting healthy work-life boundaries.

HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS:

- Increase the number of employees signing up to Togetherall portal and decrease in the number of days absence relating to mental health for those accessing counselling support through MIND ;
- Develop a network of trained mental health first aiders across the organisation providing coverage across all campuses;
- Reduced sickness absence (long and short term) and recurring absence relating to mental health from 24% to 18%;
- Improved positive feedback on staff wellbeing survey questions to 95%;
- Maintain and look to increase slightly the perception that the group provides a suitable environment for people with disabilities (currently 90% of those responding positively to this staff survey question);
- All staff to have a wellbeing target within their PDR to feed into departmental action plans, addressing recurring themes;
- 100% of managers undertaken wellbeing training to equip them with the tools to implement wellbeing plans and initiatives within their teams;
- Improve percentage of staff identifying that they are able to work flexibly and have a better work life balance within staff survey (83%) worklife balance (80%);
- Assess any improvements in overall employee mental health, including improved sleep quality, better focus and energy levels as a result of a healthier relationship with technology.