



**Kent Further Education
Strategic Plan
2021 - 2024**

Education | Skills | Opportunities | Careers

**LOVEOUR
COLLEGES**

Foreword

Given the current national political and economic context and national post-16 education policy direction set out in the Skills White Paper, the case for strengthening and maximising the role and influence of the Kent Further Education (KFE) partnership is clear. KFE is being recognised as a critical influencer in the education and skills landscape of Kent and Medway, the SE region as well as nationally.

2021-24 presents valuable opportunities to progress collaborative work, initiatives and projects as a KFE collective as well as with local authorities and other external partners in the county. KFE's role in a regional context has capacity to enable better communication, coordinated activities and joint strategic approaches with college partnerships in Essex and East Sussex, to the benefit of the colleges as organisations, their learners and stakeholders.

KFE equally has increased scope to engage, inform and drive activity in conjunction with other external key stakeholders, as we prepare to implement the Skills White Paper *Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth*. These include the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, Kent & Medway Economic Partnership, the regional Skills Advisory Panel and the SE Local Enterprise Partnership, as well as our regional universities, health authorities and key skills funding agencies.

Despite considerable change resulting from Brexit, local authority reorganisation, funding pressures, regional devolution, FE college transitions, competition from schools, ITPs and HEIs, Covid 19 impact and recovery, introduction of T Levels and the Skills White Paper changes; KFE will continue to evolve and articulate a cohesive, pro-active and strong Kent Further Education voice and presence.



Graham Razey OBE
Chief Executive Officer
EKC Group



Simon Cook
Chair of KFE
Principal & Chief Executive
MidKent College



David Gleed
Executive Principal
& Chief Executive
North Kent College



KENT FURTHER EDUCATION STRATEGIC & OPERATIONAL PLAN 2021-2024

Mission

Kent Further Education champions the work of the region's further education colleges that cover Kent & Medway, promoting their role in developing and building a skilled and motivated workforce and a strong local economy.

Vision

A pro-active partnership of FE Colleges respected for their quality of provision, positive impact on learners, their communities and for their contribution to the economy.

Introduction

KFE was formally launched in May 2016. KFE evolved from the Kent Association of FE Colleges (established in 1993/94), making KFE one of the country's longest standing college partnerships. Since 1993 the landscape has changed markedly. Kent & Medway has seen a reduction from seven FE colleges to three larger entities, through various mergers and transitional processes.

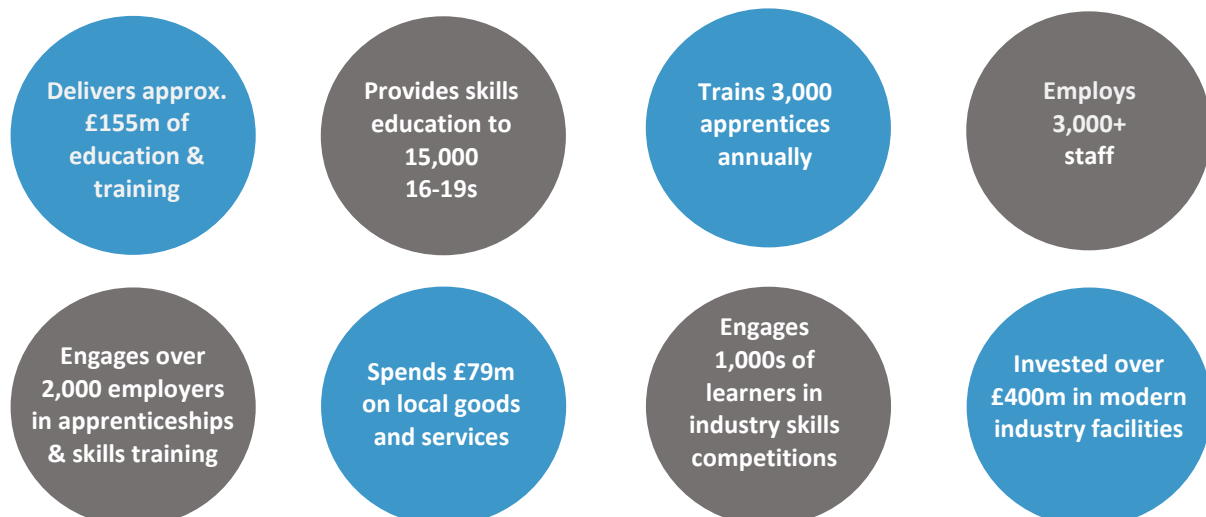
This Strategic & Operational Plan 2021-24 ensures KFE activities linked to the following *Strategic Goals*, are advanced systematically and effectively. This includes KFE's advocacy and wider collaborative work, the functions of its various network groups, sponsorship and events activities, special projects and student skills competitions and showcases.

Key Purpose

In accordance with its mission, KFE acts as a voice for the county's Further Education sector, and its colleges, to ensure it delivers the skills and training required by students, employers and the community. KFE is at the heart of helping to deliver the Government's aims and targets, for 16-18 education and training, the technical skills agenda, Apprenticeships, Higher Education and adult training in the county.

Annual Contribution & Impact

KFE colleges contribute substantially to both Kent and Medway's social and economic prosperity, demonstrating the importance of further education and skills to the county and region as a whole.



Context

KFE comprises three core member college entities: EKC Group; MidKent College and North Kent College. Collectively the three colleges operate twelve campus sites across the county in addition to various satellite or outreach centres.

The continued aim of KFE member colleges is to maintain and maximise staff engagement in partnership, collaborative and developmental activities, that benefit all college campus sites and FE college staff in Kent & Medway. KFE will also actively engage other external partners as appropriate.

KFE Working Principles, Core Values & Strategic Goals

KFE operates to key working principles or core values, which are recognised and adhered to by each member college and underpin the basis of trust between the colleges.

Whilst accepting each college is its own business with its own priorities, these are essential to enabling the partnership to function productively and effectively in each member's best interests and those of the FE college sector.

KFE Core Values

- Openness and transparency
- Mutual accountability and respect
- Collectively supportive in furtherance of common goals
- Encouraging collaborative cultures

The final value recognises and acknowledges the importance of common aims and ambitions that sustain the partners, whilst improving the focus on technical & vocational provision, across the full spectrum of the post-16 education sector.

Strategic Goals

Strategic Goal 1	Strategic Goal 2	Strategic Goal 3
To ensure Kent FE is cohesively advocated and at the forefront of education & skills strategy, development and delivery in Kent, the SE Region and nationally for post 16 learners.	To act as a facilitator of quality improvement initiatives, enhanced collaboration, collation and sharing of KPIs, benchmarking, market intelligence data, joint project opportunities and external partnership activities.	To position KFE and its colleges to become the primary driver and lead on the county's employer engagement activity, enabling the aims of the Skills White Paper, whilst informing and supporting other key agencies in delivery of the wider skills strategy agenda.

The strategic goals above are expanded upon as a series of deliverable activities in the Strategy's Annual Action Plan at Appendix 1 (available separately for online versions of this plan).

The KFE Strategy provides a clear rationale for KFE, underpinned by the annually updated *Action Plan* which sets out a range of thematic workstreams, network group activities, opportunities and practical functions, which can be progressed and developed through 2021-2024.