



# Strategic Plan 2017-2020

Raising Aspirations  
Inspiring Achievement  
Increasing Opportunities





"I was accepted into second year of BSc Sports Coaching and Development at UWS after an amazing year at Ayrshire College which I will never forget."

Kayleigh Haggo  
HNC Sports Coaching

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## Foreword

### Our strategic plan 2017-20 signals the next stage in the development of Ayrshire College.

Over the last four years, the collective talent and commitment of our students, staff and partners has enabled us to grow and improve our performance and student outcomes.

The implementation and delivery of our ambitious Strategic Plan and Outcome Agreement for 2014-17 provided the foundation to build upon our successes, and gain a strong reputation inspired by our vision of Raising Aspirations, Inspiring Achievement, Increasing Opportunities.

The dedication, passion and professionalism of our staff, and the enthusiasm and commitment of our students is evident in all aspects of college life. This, combined with the engagement and support of our employers and stakeholders, is the cornerstone of our ambitious plans for 2017-20.

The college is recognised locally, regionally and nationally as an organisation which makes a positive difference to the lives of our students, to our community, to Ayrshire's economy and to Scotland.

This plan presents the basis of our future ambitions as we continue to drive forward, pushing boundaries and embracing opportunities.

We will continue to be proactive to changes in the external environment and flexible in our approach to the delivery of learning and services to support our students.



**Willie Mackie**  
Chair of the Board of Management

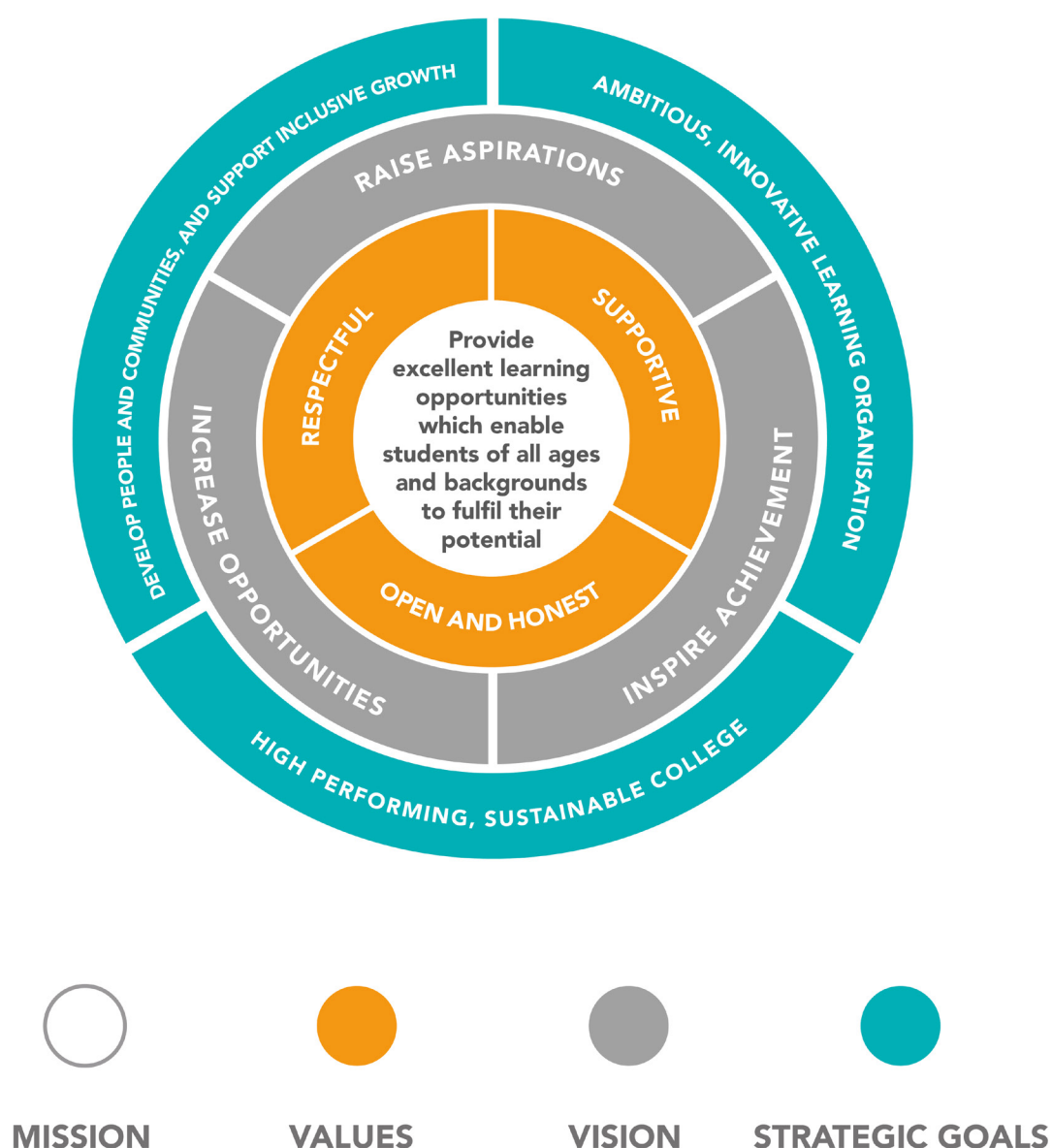


**Heather Dunk**  
Principal and Chief Executive



## Our Strategic Wheel

Our Strategic Wheel demonstrates that our values, vision and strategic goals are all centred around our mission **to provide excellent learning opportunities which enable students of all ages and backgrounds to fulfil their potential.**



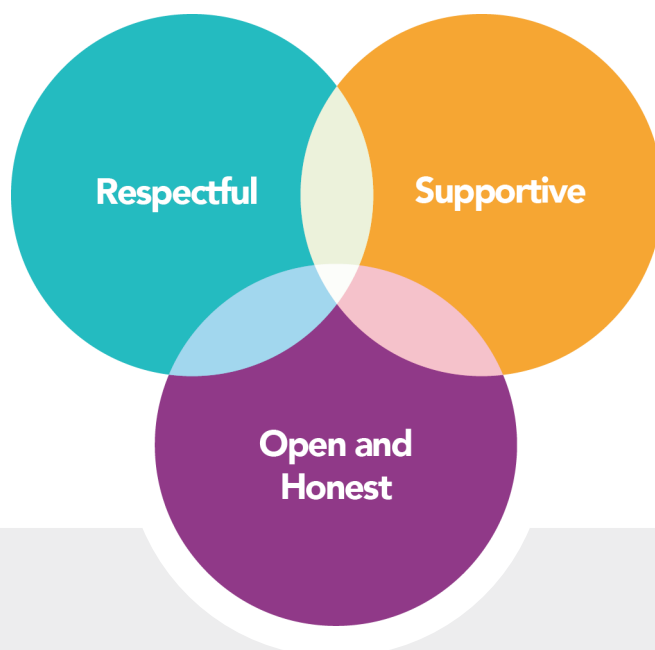
## Our Vision

Our vision is to **raise aspirations, inspire achievement and increase opportunities**. We will work with partners to fulfil this vision for individuals, communities and the regional economy.

## Our Culture and Our Values

Our students and staff have identified the values which will drive the college over the next three years. They want everyone in the college to be **respectful, supportive, and open and honest**.

Each of our strategic goals is underpinned by three cross-cutting themes which will influence how we implement the objectives set out in this Strategic Plan. These cross-cutting themes are:



### CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

**Continuous improvement in everything we do**

**Advancing equality of opportunity and promoting diversity**

**Developing and empowering our people**

Our values and cross-cutting themes underpin everything we do. They provide the foundations which will be instrumental in achieving our mission, vision and strategic goals.





## Strategic Goals

Our strategic goals for 2017-20 are:

- 1** To be an ambitious, innovative and inclusive learning and skills organisation in which students and staff thrive
- 2** To develop people and communities, and support inclusive growth, through high quality learning and skills
- 3** To be a high-performing, sustainable college recognised for excellence and integrity





## Scottish Funding Council Outcomes

This strategic plan provides the overarching framework for the College's Outcome Agreement for 2017-20, agreed with the Scottish Funding Council, which focuses on the following outcomes:

**Learning is accessible and diverse, attracting and providing more equal opportunities for people of all ages, and from all communities and backgrounds**

**An outstanding system of learning, where all students are progressing successfully and benefiting from a world-class learning experience, in the hands of expert lecturers delivered in modern facilities**

**Well prepared and skilled students progressing into jobs with the ability, ideas, and ambition to make a difference to the economy**

**High-performing, sustainable institutions with modern, transparent and accountable governance arrangements**

This Strategic Plan will provide the context for ambitions set out in other College strategies such as learning and teaching.





## Our External Environment

**BY BEING BOLD IN OUR AMBITIONS FOR THE REGION'S PEOPLE, COMMUNITIES AND ECONOMY, AND INNOVATIVE IN THE SOLUTIONS WE PROVIDE, THE COLLEGE WILL PLAY A CENTRAL ROLE IN BUILDING A STRONG, VIBRANT AND INCLUSIVE AYRSHIRE.**

The Ayrshire Growth Deal, which will be considered by the Scottish and UK governments in 2017, has the potential to be a game changer for inclusive growth in Ayrshire's economy. If approved, it presents an exciting future for our students and the employers we work with.

We will continue to meet the skills requirements of existing, new and growing companies in Ayrshire. Our work with schools, local authorities, employers, universities and national agencies will help to achieve the Scottish Government's ambitions on youth employment, attainment and access to higher education; improved productivity of the workforce; and the creation of more sustainable businesses.

Developments in digital technology will affect all sectors of the economy, requiring employers, as well as current and future employees, to adapt how they work. The college will play a critical role in supporting Ayrshire's digital future by ensuring that all students develop the skills to take advantage of opportunities.

Regionalisation is likely to remain high on the political agenda, in particular in relation to economic development and education. The outcomes of consultations on governance arrangements in schools and the review of enterprise and skills agencies could have far-reaching consequences for schools, local authorities and national agencies. These changes will require the college to be agile as we work with national and local partners to ensure that people, communities and the economy in Ayrshire grow and develop through skills.

The wider political situation in Scotland, the UK and Europe over the next three years will create uncertainty for the college and our partners, for example as the impact of BREXIT becomes clearer and new arrangements for welfare are implemented. Such changes will present challenges for the individuals, communities and employers we serve. It is vital that our ability to provide the best possible support is not hindered by financial constraints facing the wider public sector in Scotland.

**THE NEXT THREE YEARS WILL PRESENT SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL UNCERTAINTY IN THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT FACING THE COLLEGES AND OUR PARTNERS. THERE IS ALSO TREMENDOUS POTENTIAL FOR THE REGION IF THE PROPOSALS CONTAINED WITHIN THE AYRSHIRE GROWTH DEAL ARE SUPPORTED BY GOVERNMENT.**

## Goal 1: To be an ambitious, innovative and inclusive learning organisation in which students and staff thrive

The period leading to and following regionalisation in the college sector was one of seismic change. The next three years will allow the college to consolidate the progress we have made since regionalisation to further enhance the experience of our students and staff. We will deliver innovation and excellence by being an ambitious and innovative learning organisation.

### To achieve this goal, we will:

- 1 Invest in staff development to attract, recruit and retain high quality people to ensure high quality student experiences
- 2 Ensure that students access the right course at the right level so that they progress successfully to further learning or employment
- 3 Enable our students to achieve the qualifications necessary for their chosen career, as well as core skills for succeeding and coping with inevitable changes in life and work
- 4 Maintain a supportive culture in which innovation thrives, business intelligence informs decisions and ideas turn into action
- 5 Ensure that our students, the workforce of the present and the future, are proficient in current and emerging digital technologies
- 6 Inspire enterprise in our students through effective engagement with entrepreneurial initiatives at school, college and university, and those led by external partners
- 7 Increase our agility, flexibility and resilience to be able to adapt to external political, economic and social changes
- 8 Recognise and celebrate the successes of our students and staff, sharing these achievements with the wider community to raise aspirations and inspire achievement



**We will know we have been successful when:**

- Increasing numbers of staff take part in professional development
- A higher proportion of students select the right course for them, achieve their qualifications and develop core skills for success
- More students participate in enterprise activities
- Innovation is embraced by staff and students across the college, and recognised by partners and employers
- More students are able to continue on their learning journey with advanced standing on entry to higher education
- Staff are recognised widely as industry experts within their specialist field
- Our opinions are sought and actioned by those leading and influencing the college sector



## Goal 2: To develop people and communities, and support inclusive growth through learning and skills

There has been good progress in Ayrshire's labour market over the past four years with reduced unemployment, improved positive school leaver destinations and signs of improvement in the economy. However, some industry sectors continue to face uncertainty and long-term unemployment persists in some communities across the region.

Working in partnership with community planning partners and employers, we will raise the aspirations of people and communities by helping them to realise their potential through high quality learning and skills.

### To achieve this goal, we will:

- 1** Support inclusive economic growth, particularly in industry sectors important in the region and those identified as being central to the ambitions of the Ayrshire Growth Deal
- 2** Work with partners to develop skills plans for key sectors in Ayrshire and ensure that our provision aligns with economic and employment growth opportunities
- 3** Maintain a demand-led curriculum that supports both current and future skills needs of employers and communities
- 4** Help businesses in Ayrshire to be more productive by providing training in business improvement techniques, innovation and emerging digital technologies
- 5** Increase innovation and enterprise amongst our students, helping them connect with new and emerging technologies as well as developments in industry and universities
- 6** Maximise our engagement and partnerships with employers to enhance our students' learning through work experience, volunteering and live projects
- 7** Engage proactively in the localities identified by community planning partnerships to strive to enhance the employment prospects of those furthest from the labour market
- 8** Create and embed vocational pathways for senior phase pupils to support industry sectors agreed with partners



**We will know we have been successful when:**

- Decisions about education and skills provision in Ayrshire are influenced by our skills plans for industry sectors
- The number of students with a work experience opportunity increases
- The proportion of students from SIMD10 areas across Ayrshire increases
- A higher number of our students initiate new business enterprises
- Employer feedback tells us that our students add value to their business and services



## Goal 3: To be a high-performing, sustainable college recognised for excellence and integrity

In the most challenging of circumstances facing the college sector over the past four years we achieved robust governance, sound financial performance, and implemented significant developments in our infrastructure.

We will build on this progress to be a high-performing, sustainable college recognised for excellence, integrity and high quality learning.

### To achieve this goal, we will:

- 1** Build upon improving levels of student success to be the most improved college in relation to student retention, attainment and positive destinations
- 2** Maintain a safe and healthy learning and working environment which supports wellbeing of staff and students
- 3** Invest in modern, inspiring learning spaces to enhance the student experience and contribute to their success
- 4** Deliver an information infrastructure to meet the developing needs of an innovative, collaborative, intelligence-led organisation
- 5** Implement an ambitious and sustainable technology investment plan which supports staff and student needs
- 6** Deliver continued financial security and long-term sustainability through effective management of our resources
- 7** Operate best practice in governance
- 8** Embed environmental sustainability in the curriculum and across the college, and fulfil our corporate responsibilities by contributing to sustainable development

**We will know we have been successful when:**

- A higher proportion of students complete their course successfully and fewer withdraw from courses
- Our carbon footprint is reduced
- We have embedded continuous improvement techniques across the college
- Our good governance practices are widely acknowledged as amongst the best in the public sector





## Policy drivers

### National policy drivers

Government Economic Strategy  
 A Blueprint for Fairness  
 Developing the Young Workforce  
 Putting Learners at the Centre - Delivering our Ambitions for Post-16 Education  
 Empowering Teachers, Parents and Communities to Deliver Excellence and Equity for our Children  
 Realising Scotland's full potential in a digital world: a digital strategy for Scotland

### Regional policy drivers

Ayrshire Growth Deal  
 Regional Skills Assessment 2016  
 Ayrshire College Outcome Agreement 2017-20  
 Ayrshire College Gender Action Plan  
 Ayrshire College HR Strategy  
 Ayrshire College Staff Governance Standard  
 Ayrshire College Equality Outcomes

### Local policy drivers

East Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership  
 East Ayrshire invests  
 North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership  
 North Ayrshire economic strategy  
 South Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership

### Skill Investment Plans

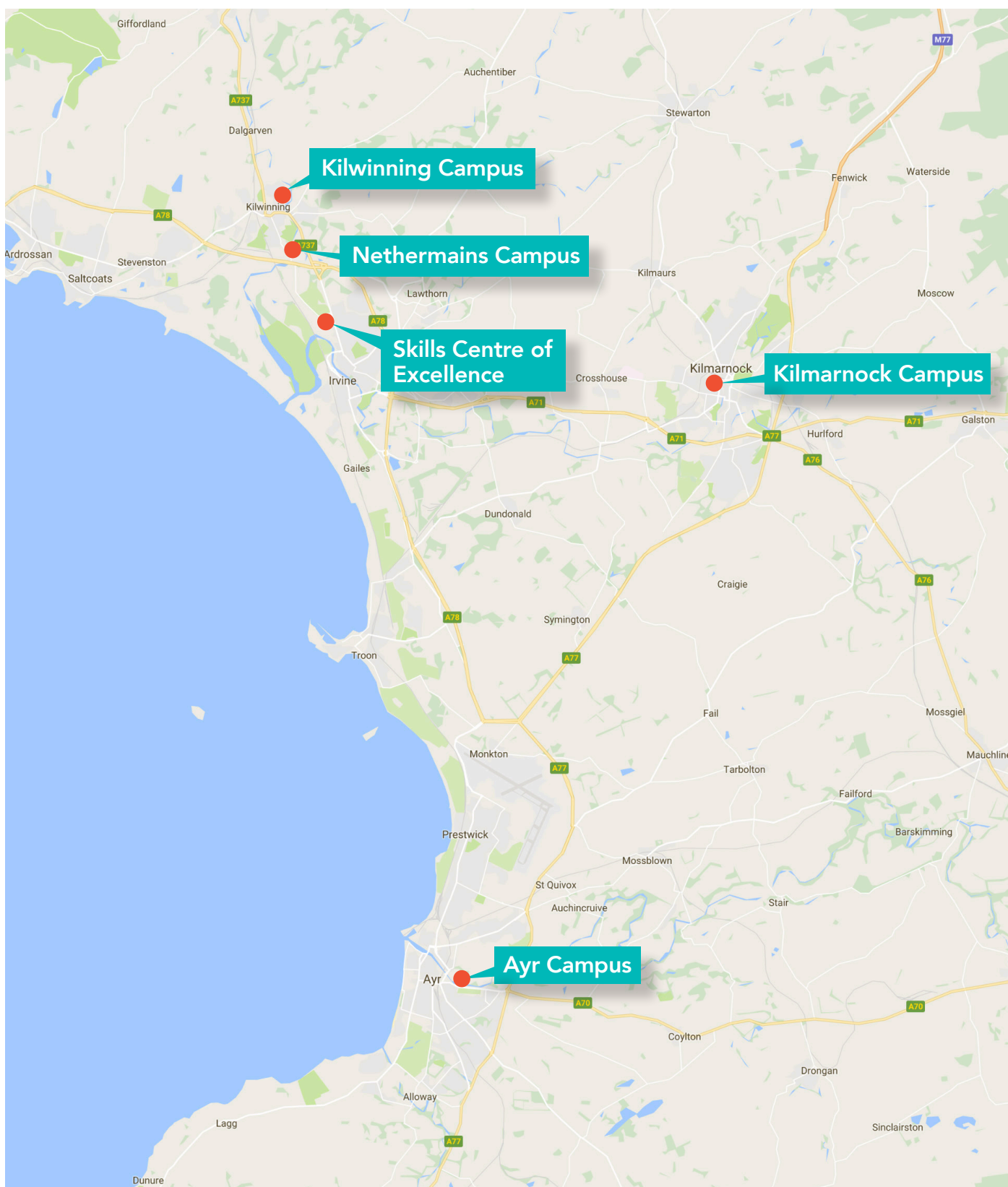
Chemical sciences sector  
 Construction sector  
 Creative industries sector  
 Early learning and childcare sector  
 Energy sector  
 Engineering and advanced manufacturing sector  
 Financial sector  
 Food and drink sector  
 ICT and digital technologies sector  
 Life sciences sector  
 Tourism sector



"More men are becoming interested in care than ever before, which is really encouraging as it's a career that can suit both males and females. It's a really challenging job where every day is different."

**Martin Ure**  
Access to Nursing

## Ayrshire College Campus Map







"I knew what I wanted to do when I left school. I wanted an engineering apprenticeship which I've now completed at Spirit Aerosystems. I learn better through hands-on experience, so the combination of learning on the job and completing my HND at Ayrshire College suited me perfectly."

**Anna Manson**  
HND Aircraft Engineering



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