



# South Gloucestershire and Stroud College

## Corporate & Social Responsibility Statement

### **Our Mission:**

We positively change people's lives and add value to the social and economic wellbeing of our communities. We do this by providing high quality, innovative, accessible education and training in a friendly culture of mutual respect and support.

Corporate and Social Responsibility is not a function or department; it is a philosophy embedded in our operation as an integral part of the way we do business.

## **Introduction**

South Gloucestershire and Stroud College defines corporate and social responsibility as action taken which positively impacts on our stakeholders, and which includes and goes beyond our legal or regulatory obligations. As a responsible employer and provider of learning we believe that the long-term future of the institution is best served by respecting the interests of our stakeholders. We look actively for opportunities to improve the environment and to contribute to the communities in which we operate. We address CSR issues in accordance with the following principles:

- **Engaging our stakeholders**

We believe that being a responsible education institution means respecting the interests of all our stakeholders, and this involves listening to them, responding to their concerns, being honest in our expectations and fair in how we report our performance.

Typically, our stakeholders include:

Our staff

Our learners – current, future and past students

Parents/guardians

Trade Unions

Our partners inc. Schools, other training providers, Further Education/Higher Education institutions

Our supply chains

Funding and Regulatory Bodies

Local and Combined Local Authorities

Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)

Our Communities

Local Businesses/Employers

Local and Regional forums

- **Demonstrable Compliance**

As a minimum we will meet or exceed all relevant legislation. Where no legislation exists, we will seek to develop and implement our own appropriate standards.

- **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB)**

South Gloucestershire and Stroud College is committed to promote DEIB in all of its activities and between the people that represent its constituency. We value the diversity of our workforce and learner population and aim to ensure that the highest equality and diversity standards are maintained and discrimination is eliminated.

- **Environment**

We will take all reasonable steps to manage our operations so as to minimise our environmental impact and to promote good environmental practice, including recycling, minimising energy consumption and by using green energy wherever practical. We follow ESFA guidance with input from AoC best practice to inform our approach to sustainability and carbon reporting.

- **Community Engagement**

We will seek to build relationships with our learners, suppliers, partners, the local communities we are part of, and other stakeholders. We will endeavour to help shape and support economic strategies for our areas and contribute to our communities both as an institution and as individuals. We will do this by actively forging links and devoting time and energy to become more involved in the local communities in which we operate, and by sponsoring or hosting local events. We will actively encourage staff and learners to participate in volunteering.

- **Business Engagement**

We will engage with relevant employers and employer-representative organisations in order to understand the training and skills needs of local business and will endeavour to provide the appropriate learning at a time and place to suit the individual business requirements.

- **Our Staff**

We will respect our staff and encourage their development and training. We will promote equality, (as differences in responsibility permit) and consider the interests of our staff including their welfare, health and safety.

- **Business Ethics**

South Gloucestershire and Stroud College will act in all that it does with honesty, respect, responsibility and care, and to the highest standards of responsible business conduct. It aims to provide an outstanding experience for learners from all traditions and cultures from the age of 14. It will sustain its financial viability to enable it to invest in facilities to support this provision.

- **Governance**

It is the Corporation's responsibility to bring independent judgement to bear on issues of strategy, performance, resources and standards of conduct. The Corporation ensures accountability for the use of public funds by monitoring and evaluating the College's performance.

The Corporation has a strong, diverse and independent non-executive element and no individual or group dominates its decision-making process. Each of its non-executive members is independent of management and free from any business or other relationship which could materially interfere with the exercise of their independent judgement.

The Corporation endeavours to conduct its business in full accordance with:

- 1) the seven principles identified by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership);
- 2) the Association of Colleges Further Education Code of Good Governance and Senior Post Holder Remuneration Code
- 3) its own governance documents, which includes the Code of Conduct for Corporation Members

The College's system of internal controls and governance structures ensure regularity and propriety in the use of funds, including all public funds. In support of its work, the Corporation uses independent third-party auditors. The work of the internal auditors is informed by an analysis of risks to which the College is exposed, and annual internal audit plans are based on this analysis. Risk management, and its outcomes, is an embedded activity across the College and provides an established and well-understood means through which the Corporation, Executive and extended leadership of the College receive assurance that the key risks in the operating environment are identified, mitigated and, where judged appropriate, tolerated.

Further information about the work of the Corporation is detailed in its Annual Report and Financial Statements, which is published in the Governance section of the College website.

For further information on South Gloucestershire and Stroud College Policies and Procedures or for any queries on CSR issues please contact the Director of People and Organisational Culture.

Approved by the Corporation: 22 March 2012

Reviewed, revised and approved by the Corporation: 26 March 2015

Reviewed, revised and approved by the Corporation: 22 March 2018

Reviewed, revised and approved by the Corporation: 25 March 2021

Reviewed, revised and approved by the Corporation: 25 April 2024