MAKING LEARNING WORK

Forth Valley College
Making Learning Work

| Learning and Digital Skills Academy

Ambition Document - 2021-2025

Foreword from the Principal

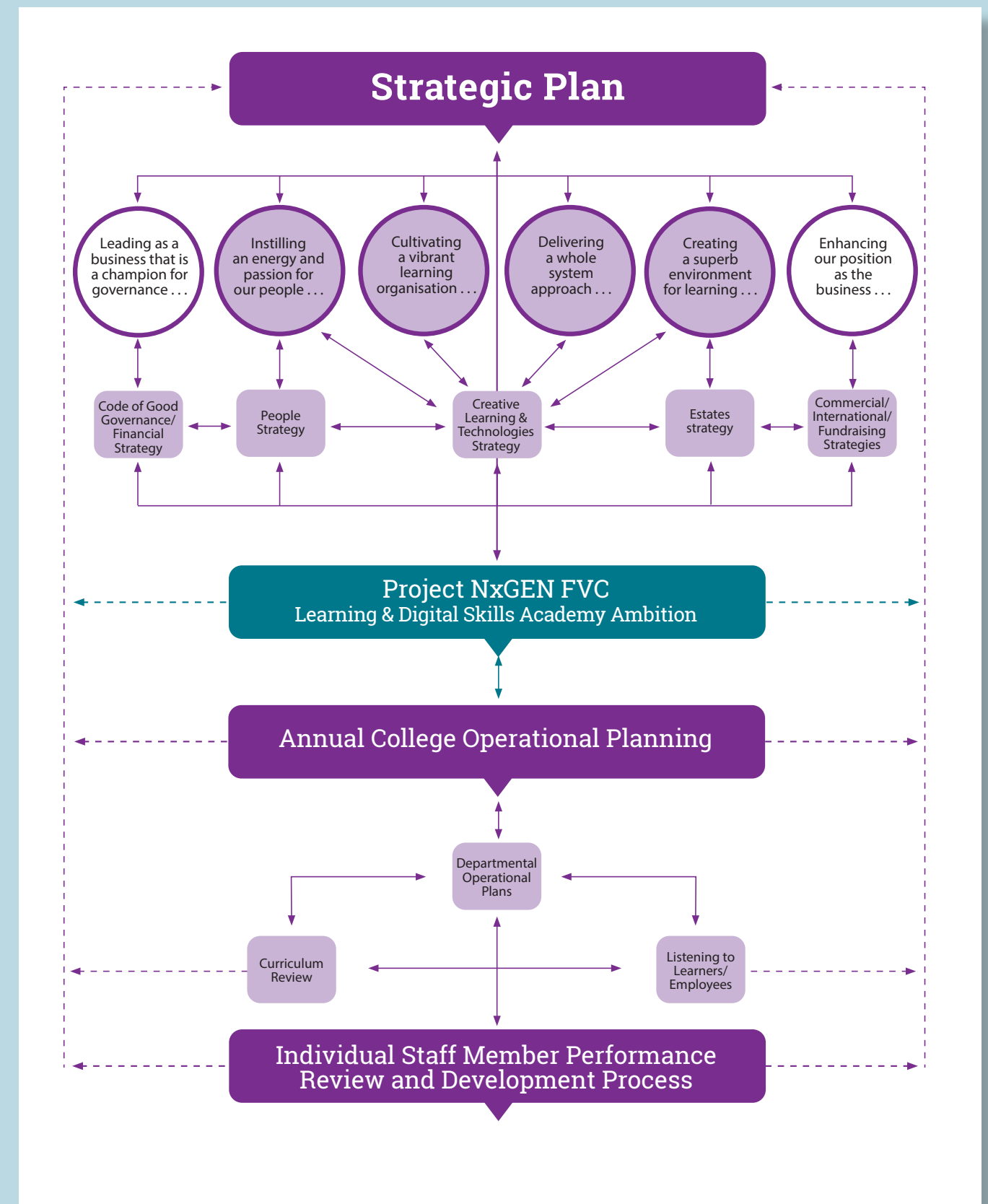Our learning and digital skills ambition is a vision that we must all play a part in.

This document forms part of our family of strategic frameworks - with its aim to connect people, encourage innovation, and harness the power of communication and working together in everything we do.

Our vision is for a whole system approach and we will all embark on this journey together, to start to navigate our pathway to 2030. Our ambition for a digital future will be led in the first instance by our new Learning and Digital Skills Academy Team. Our approach will complement the Digital Ambition of the College sector, launched in 2020.

Digital is more than just a channel at Forth Valley College; it has become a way of life. Since the pandemic struck in early 2020, we have enhanced our digital capacity at a rapid pace through the necessity to maintain our service delivery throughout the current health crisis and our progress has been impressive. We have continued with our mission for "Making Learning Work" and this ambition document ensures the best learning experience for all our students.

The past year has not come without its challenges, but I believe it has strengthened our resilience as an organisation and enabled us to find new approaches and ways of working that will enhance our student experience. However, in this fast-paced digital world, we cannot stand still, and our ambition will provide the strategic direction to help us realise our vision for our digital future.

Dr Ken Thomson OBE
Principal and Chief Executive

Our Purpose

The College Vision for 2030 has Digital Empowerment at its core and this document sets out the instrumental role that the Learning and Digital Skills (LDS) Academy will play in ensuring this vision is realised. The LDS Academy will be the central team that will bring together the FVC Creative Learning and Technologies Strategy, the Digital Ambition for Scotland's Colleges (CDN, Colleges Scotland and Jisc) and other key recommendations for the sector. This will ensure that ensure Forth Valley College is at the forefront of excellent, contemporary, digital learning and teaching practice, underpinned by an inclusive, resilient and sustainable curriculum portfolio, fit for the future.

Enable FVC project investment has been the catalyst in the development of the LDS Academy and for driving the digital ambition forward within the College. The funding has been provided for a two-year period and will build a solid foundation to achieve the College's digital vision right up to 2030.

The LDS Academy through the Enable FVC project will drive forward digital skills development for all College staff, enhance digital pedagogy, and enable an increase in online and blended learning across all modes of delivery, including commercial programmes. Not only will this widen our ability to reach new students across different regions, sectors and demographics it will allow the students to have more control over their learning. Through the project, the LDS Academy will take forward and develop the effective use of analytics that will provide intelligence to maximise student engagement and improve attainment and retention.

The LDS Academy is a fundamental pillar of Project: NXGen FVC and is integrated throughout the key tenets of the project to repurpose our next generation of curriculum. The LDS Academy will work closely with the Learning and Student Experience Committee to ensure the LDS Academy ambitions align with Project: NxGEN FVC and the College's strategic direction.
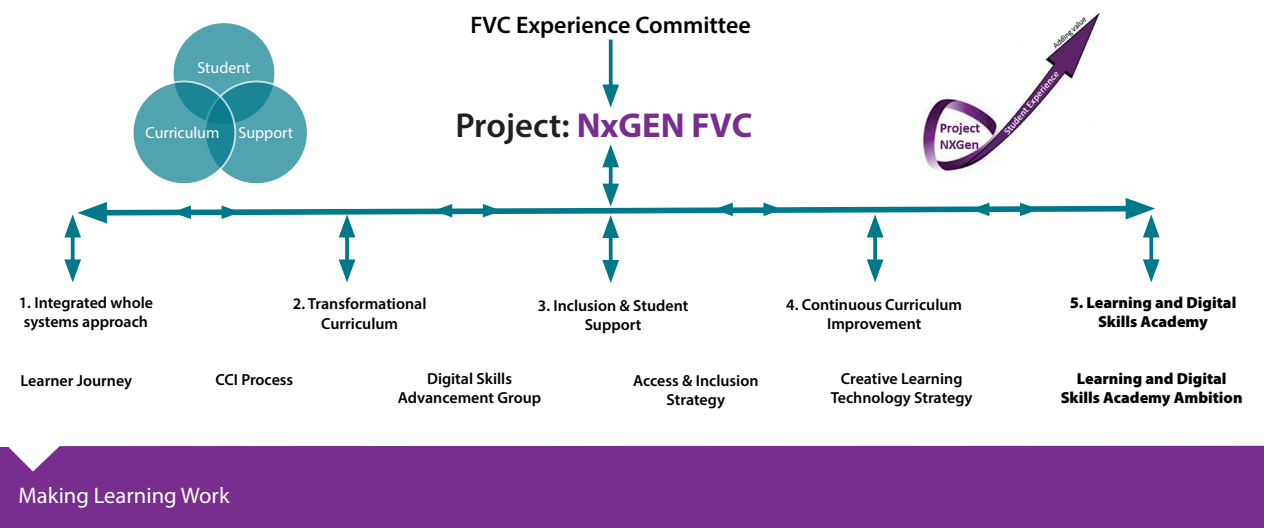
The LDS Academy will continue to build on the legacy of the Creative Learning and Technologies Strategy as this has been a major catalyst in transforming technology enhanced learning and teaching, and delivering contemporary practice across Forth Valley College over the past number of years.

The LDS Academy will take a staff centred approach, continuing to support and ensure further digital skills development through the delivery of our Creative Learning and Technology Strategy and People Strategy. The team will be accessible and available to all staff, across all campuses in a range of ways; online, face-to-face, drop-ins and through organised mentoring and training sessions.

The LDS Academy will provide the leadership for fully embedding a vibrant culture of creativity in learning and teaching throughout the whole organisation in this new digitally reliant landscape, so that staff and students routinely imagine, invent and implement creative approaches to learning. We will provide the leadership and professional input into college strategy and planning related to digital skills development, contemporary, digital learning and teaching practice, and all digital aspects of a transformational, resilient and sustainable curriculum.

Our Ambition for 2025

The Learning and Digital Skills Academy has identified 10 ambition statements to ensure we deliver our vision.

Ambition statement 1
We will drive a digital first ethos and culture that transforms our thinking, our people, our curriculum and wider services, developing transformative digital skills for all staff.

Ambition statement 2
We will develop the confidence of all teaching staff in the appropriate and effective application of digital pedagogy and use of digital technology to support learning and teaching, maximising the student experience.

Ambition statement 3
We will work with Curriculum teams and the Business Development team to enhance and introduce more on-line delivery within the curriculum and commercial portfolio.

Ambition statement 4
We will work with Equalities, Inclusion and Learner Services to improve use of digital technology for all students to ensure they are prepared to participate in a globally competitive, entrepreneurial economy, ready to transition into and become part of a thriving and innovative business.

Ambition statement 5
We will be a catalyst in driving innovation and investment in digital technology for learning and teaching, contributing curriculum alignment to Industry 4.0 standards.
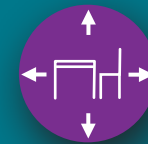
Ambition statement 6
We will ensure all staff make accessibility a key priority, fully embedded in all learning resources, our platforms used for blended and online learning and wider College systems.

Ambition statement 7
We will develop the confidence of all teaching staff in the appropriate and effective application and design of e-assessment.

Ambition statement 8
We will contribute to estates plans relevant to learning and teaching, including the design of learning spaces.

Ambition statement 9
We will develop, use and promote analytics related to learning and student engagement to help teams across the College improve the student experience, raising retention and attainment, and contributing to the overall evaluation of digital and creative learning activities.

Ambition statement 10
We will collaborate with key stakeholders, lead and contribute to strategic partnerships relating to digital pedagogy and digital skills development.

How will we achieve our ambition?

This ambition will be underpinned by a robust LDS Academy Operational Plan that will inform College and Department Plans, and Personal Review and Development (PRD) targets.

The LDS Academy will be accountable to the Leadership Management Team and the Digital Skills Steering Group.

The Learning and Digital Skills Academy look forward to working with you.

Ambition statement - 1

We will drive a digital first ethos and culture that transforms our thinking, our people, our curriculum and wider services, developing transformative digital skills for all staff.

How will we do this?

✓ A bespoke FVC Digital Skills Baseline will identify standards for all teaching staff and Corporate Service teams.

✓ All staff will engage with a dynamic FVC Digital Skills Self-Assessment Tool, linked to robust, quality assured learning resources and a system incorporating professional and College standards. The tool will link into the current FVC reflective practice platform.

✓ All new teaching staff will complete an initial digital skills self-assessment and associated training through the Learning and Teaching Enhancement mentoring process.

✓ All new Corporate Services staff will undertake initial digital skills self-assessment and training at induction to give them the digital skills necessary to fulfil their role.

✓ Providing ongoing development of digital skills within the Corporate Service teams to increase operational efficiency and performance, increase opportunities for automation of laborious tasks and improve overall collaboration within teams and across the wider College.

✓ To create an enhanced suite of digital training that will be available for all staff, with digital learning conferences held on an annual basis.

✓ Creation of a learning community in which staff and students feel that they have freedom and permission to be creative.

✓ Provide the leadership to motivate staff across the College in order to keep the momentum up on the use of digital technology and the impact it makes on curriculum and wider service delivery.

✓ The LDS Academy will celebrate and publicise successes and achievements across the College to build momentum and drive the digital culture change required for a sustainable future.

Ambition statement - 2

We will develop the confidence of all teaching staff in the appropriate and effective application of digital pedagogy and use of digital technology to support learning and teaching, maximising the student experience.

How will we do this?

✓ Ensure teaching staff have the required confidence and skills needed through the use of the FVC Digital Skills Self-Assessment Tool, supported by training and mentorship to enhance learning, and teaching and assessment practice aligned with Professional Standards.

✓ Learning and Digital Skills Mentors will drive the use of up-to-date digital technology in every learning environment, through the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Programme, adopting supportive relationships with well-defined aims.

✓ Adopt and promote current approaches in curriculum design theory to ensure technology meets the pedagogical requirements and learning outcomes of the course, module or programme of study.

✓ Continue to drive forward the Creative Learning and Technologies Strategy and the College's Enhancement Plan actions by actively nurturing and promoting a culture of creativity, supporting and mentoring individuals or groups working on creative learning projects and initiatives.

✓ All staff taking part in TQFE and PDA will be supported by a LDS Academy Mentor, providing a safe space to approach their reflective practice with creativity and up to date digital technology, which will challenge and enhance future practice.

✓ Contribute to the promotion and implementation of GTCS registration of all lecturing staff, supporting them with their professional update related to creative learning and digital pedagogy.

✓ Support the introduction of new, accredited online courses into the College and provide high quality opportunities for staff to improve their digital skills effectively in learning, teaching and assessment.

✓ Create a learning community for all staff in order to share best practice, experience, learning and research.

Ambition statement - 3

We will work with Curriculum teams and the Business Development team to enhance and introduce more on-line delivery within the curriculum and commercial portfolio.

How will we do this?

✓ The LDS Academy will continue to drive a culture, which embraces planned online delivery as part of our portfolio, with staff who will be supported with the appropriate digital skills and pedagogy, to embrace this mode of delivery.

✓ Providing the support and training to teams to drive forward the development and delivery of more online units within all courses at all levels, creating increased flexibility within the curriculum that is adaptable to the evolving needs of students.

✓ Ensuring that the shift in increased online learning within programmes leads to academic staff having the space to be able to prioritise students who are most at risk and in need of additional support.

✓ Increasing commercial and flexible learning opportunities to reach a wider audience, meeting the evolving needs of industry and increasing income into the College.

✓ Support the Business Development team when engaging with external customers and key industry stakeholders to understand future skills demands and develop on line solutions that suit their requirements.

Ambition statement - 4

We will work with Equalities, Inclusion and Learner Services (EILS) to improve use of digital technology for all students to ensure they are prepared to participate in a globally competitive, entrepreneurial economy, ready to transition into and become part of a thriving and innovative business.

How will we do this?

✓ The LDS Academy will work closely with EILS to ensure that all students will have received pre-entry information about the technologies they will need to be able to use, to learn effectively at FVC.

✓ Students will be able to complete a pre-entry digital skills survey, linked to a suite of accessible and useful learning resources for all students, including student induction material highlighting the use of technologies to enhance learning.

✓ Ensuring that students are digitally well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society by getting them off to the best start. We will do this by providing high quality digital training from the start of their journey that will be developed further with their curriculum area.

✓ Through the development of digital skills throughout their journey at FVC, help students to overcome the impact of poverty and disadvantage giving all students the right skills needed for a sustainable future in the workforce.

✓ Contribute to plans relating to Covid recovery with regards to digital technology, working with other key departments in the College to support those students most affected by Covid and digital poverty, helping to reduce the widening education gap.

Ambition statement - 5

We will be a catalyst in driving innovation and investment in digital technology for learning and teaching, contributing curriculum alignment to Industry 4.0 standards.

How will we do this?

✓ The Virtual Leaning Environment (Moodle), will be invested in and upgraded to the latest standard, fully integrated with Office 365, plagiarism tool, eportfolio, and other College systems with single sign on. The VLE will be a secure platform for on-line delivery and assessment, accessible for all, and a world leading platform for online and blended learning delivery.

✓ Work with College managers to ensure every curriculum area is at the forefront of digital technology used within their sector, with the most appropriate technology made available and the appropriate skills development for staff.

✓ Work with curriculum teams to define their current digital technology skills and areas for development, and support them to develop digital technology enhancement plans.

✓ The LDS Academy will support all academic staff to make informed choices about how they use technology to underpin the curriculum, providing solutions to overcome any barriers in using technology.

✓ The LDS Academy will help drive forward employer connections and partnerships to support curriculum teams to incorporate industry standard digital skills development into curriculum delivery.

✓ Work with industry and curriculum teams in the new digital age to maximise opportunities for students through online work experience, simulation and other innovative ways of engaging employers in curriculum delivery.

✓ Providing a test area for the trial of innovative technologies and hardware to allow for a thorough evaluation before implementation.

✓ The LDS Academy team will undertake continuous CLPL and work with College teams to introduce the best digital practice and technology into the College.

✓ Make use of national and international resources to provide digital experience data upon which to base planning and investment decisions, to ensure the most effective and efficient use of technology.

✓ Work with Business Development, curriculum teams and our economic development partners to ensure that the College are at the forefront of driving forward the digitalisation and remote delivery of a modern curriculum, accessible to more students, unlocking increased socio-economic growth in key areas such as STEM, the Green economy, social care and any other emerging sectors

Ambition statement - 6

We will ensure all staff make accessibility a key priority, fully embedded in all learning resources, our platforms used for blended and online learning and wider College systems.

How will we do this?

✓ Ensure that accessibility requirements are addressed through all aspects of digital skills training.

✓ Ensure that staff and students are trained on assistive technology where appropriate.

✓ Expected standards for online course content, activities and usage clearly communicated to staff, and all Moodle courses meet the stated FVC standard for accessibility.

✓ The LDS Academy will ensure FVC standards are continually assessed, reviewed and benchmarked against national standards.

✓ All Moodle courses will include a range of resources and activities for students to extend their learning beyond class contact time (e.g. videos for flip learning).

✓ Work with teams to make the best use of digital technology to ensure each student receives a personalised learning experience, best suited to maximise student attainment.

Ambition statement - 7

We will develop the confidence of all teaching staff in the appropriate and effective application and design of e-assessment.

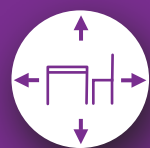**How will we do this?**

✓ All teaching staff will use digital submission and marking for essay, assignment and portfolio-based assessments and other assessments not requiring exam conditions.

✓ The LDS Academy will work alongside curriculum areas to explore specific scenarios, considering and implementing a variety of tailored solutions to embed digital assessment effectively.

✓ Linkage of online assessment submission, marking, and feedback translating to final resulting on the Enquirer system, reducing administration.

✓ The LDS Academy will work closely with the Quality team and other colleges to engage with national agencies, like SQA to develop new solutions for delivery, marking and verification of digital assessment, creating a more robust, agile assessment eco-system.

Ambition statement - 8

We will contribute to estates plans relevant to learning and teaching, including the design of learning spaces.

How will we do this?

✓ Review and monitor the learning spaces with the Curriculum teams and Estates team and maximise the effectiveness of the spaces that we have for learning and teaching.

✓ Ensure the ability to distribute content, video and audio between multiple rooms and locations in real-time to enable learning and teaching of smaller groups, spread across different spaces.

✓ Support equality and ensure students have the same access to virtual and face-to-face delivery.

✓ The LDS Academy will work with the Information Technology and Estates team to maximise the use of IT within teaching spaces.

✓ Work with the Estates Team to provide a range of physical learning spaces in order to provide a range of various modes of learning.

Ambition statement - 9

We will develop, use and promote analytics related to learning and student engagement to help teams across the College improve the student experience, raising retention and attainment, and contribute to the overall evaluation of digital and creative learning activities.

How will we do this?

✓ Use and identify the best analytical information to effectively monitor student progress and engagement; identify risks to attainment and retention; contribute data into the Continuous Curriculum Improvement process to drive quality enhancement.

✓ Forensically investigate data relating to performance across the platforms used for learning and teaching, looking for trends and patterns.

✓ The LDS Academy will help further develop a culture of continual reflection, evaluation and enhancement of practice through the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Programme and working closely with teams during the Continuous Curriculum Improvement process.

✓ Listen to feedback from students using the technologies and understand what their needs are and support the College in order to evolve the use of digital technologies accordingly.

✓ Integrate training on the effective use of analytics from the learning and teaching platforms into the FVC Digital Skills Self-Assessment Tool.

Ambition statement - 10

We will collaborate with key stakeholders, lead and contribute to strategic partnerships relating to digital pedagogy and digital skills development.

How will we do this?

✓ Lead on the development and delivery of the Forth Valley STEM Education Strategy.

✓ Strong internal partnerships with teams across the wider College, leading and contributing to relevant committees and subgroups to support a whole college approach to achieving the College Vision and Strategy, as well as this ambition.

✓ Building and influencing strategic partnerships and networks with other colleges, sharing best practice and collaboration to learn from the sector, share resources and work together on funded projects.

✓ Work with schools, universities and local authorities to make the best use of shared resources, in relation to digital training, learning, teaching and assessment.

✓ The LDS Academy will remain connected into a wide range of organisations, like CDN, Jisc, technology user groups and digital communities to ensure the best digital practice and learning is brought back into the College.

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