



DEFINING FUTURES

CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

/// FEBRUARY 2025

Welcome to the latest edition of the Defining Futures newsletter which covers the period from when college re-opened after the Christmas holiday until the February half-term break.

What's in this issue?

This issue contains the latest on the construction of the new campus in the City Learning Quarter in the centre of Wolverhampton, details of the opening of the third Transport and Rail Infrastructure Training Academy site in Aston, and an overview of January's open day, as well as a round-up from curriculum areas and the activities that students have been involved in during the term.

Enjoy the issue!

CITY LEARNING QUARTER

Construction of the college's brand new, purpose-built, four-storey campus in the centre of Wolverhampton is continuing apace.

With the roof completed in December - as reported in the last newsletter - all levels, waterproof boarding and insulation have been installed and the contractor McLaughlin & Harvey is currently working on the next stage of the build which includes external cladding, further glazing and the internal fit-out.

The state-of-the-art campus - which is phase two of City of Wolverhampton Council's transformational City Learning Quarter (CLQ) - remains on course to open in the autumn of the 2025/26 academic year.

Read more about the new campus and the answers to frequently asked questions [here](#).



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THIRD TRANSPORT AND RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE TRAINING ACADEMY OPENS IN BIRMINGHAM

In partnership with training provider NIS Group, the college opened its third Transport and Rail Infrastructure Training Academy (TRIA) training site in Aston, Birmingham, in February.

The site, at the Urban Express Park, features a 15-metre high-speed slab track, 30 metres of conventional track, a high-speed set of points and a level crossing barrier.

Peter Merry, deputy principal and chief executive at the college, said: "Alongside the existing TRIA sites in Wolverhampton and Dudley, the opening of the third site in Aston is fantastic news as it will enable even more people from across the region to access high-quality, specialist industry-specific training to enable them to work in this priority sector."



Read more [here](#).

JANUARY OPEN DAY

The first open day of 2025 took place on Saturday 11 January with 409 people attending the event.

On arrival, visitors attended a welcome presentation giving an overview of college life and details of the new CLQ campus, before going on to speak to tutors in their chosen curriculum area about courses and qualifications available.

Around 90 prospective students submitted applications for courses while at the event and, of the visitors who completed a post-event survey, 100% said they received all the information they required and that they would recommend the college to friends and family after their experience.



The next open event is on Wednesday, 30 April, 4pm-7pm - find out more information and book a place [here](#).

COLLEGE IN THE COMMUNITY

Warinder Juss, MP for Wolverhampton West, paid a visit to the Wellington Road campus.

He met with Louise Fall, principal and chief executive, had a tour of the new Advanced

Technology and Automotive Centre which opened in September, and met students from a range of courses to find out more about what studying at the college is like.



Organisations from across the region were invited to the college to hear about its strategy for addressing youth unemployment and the actions that will underpin it.

The event was also an opportunity for attendees to engage with each other and establish links to work together to tackle the challenges facing the city.



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SUPPORTING EMPLOYERS

Representatives from businesses across the region found out how the college can support them with recruitment, training and staff development at a business breakfast during National Apprenticeship Week.

Attendees heard from Daniel Degg, head of employer engagement and business development, about its specialist training facilities - including the Polymer Training and Innovation Centre, Drinks Dispense Academy, Electric Vehicle and Green Technologies Centre, Advanced Technology and Automotive Centre, Transport, Rail and Infrastructure Academy - as well as the latest on the new CLQ campus in the city centre.

Guests were also told about a range of sponsorship opportunities available to local businesses and heard from Adam Vasco, director of equality, diversity and inclusion at the University of Wolverhampton, who spoke about the importance of widening participation and diversifying apprenticeship provision in the region.



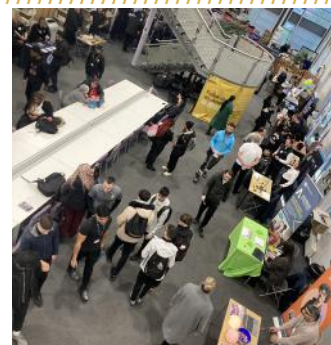
Employers who want to upskill their staff to take on a management roles can take advantage of a range of qualifications including apprenticeships in business, customer service, human resources support, operational/departmental management or team leader supervisor, as well as a free 12-week leadership and management programme.

For more details email employerenquiries@wolvcoll.ac.uk or call 01902 317541.

PROMOTING CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

During National Apprenticeship Week, employers from around 20 local, regional and national organisations promoted apprenticeship opportunities during a careers fair at the Wellington Road campus.

Employers - including the Army, Budweiser Brewing Group UK&I, Britvic, Jaguar Land Rover, Midwest Mechanical and Electrical Services, The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust and West Midlands Police - spoke to over 500 student about apprenticeships available, the qualities they require their workforce to have and career opportunities within their companies.



Participants in a free Into Employment course for those who want to work in health and social care roles had cause for celebration when they not only successfully completed the programme, but were all offered jobs with a local company too.

The course - which gives an overview of working in the sector and the skills and knowledge needed - includes a guaranteed interview with an employer with vacancies and everyone in the group was offered a role as a home care support worker.



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CURRICULUM ROUND UP

A LEVELS

Students doing an A Level in English literature have launched their own newspaper, with the first edition featuring articles on film adaptations of the novel *Little Women*, the complexities of motherhood in fiction and history, non-verbal communication, and a review of *The Importance of Being Earnest*.



- 1994 vs. 2019: How *Little Women* reflects its time
- Complexities of Motherhood: Through the eyes of Reality and Fiction
- A sociological study on the commodity of non-verbal communication
- The National Theatre's 'The Importance of Being Earnest': A Review of the 'trivial comedy for serious people.'
- Do you want to join?

Read the January edition [here](#).

APPRENTICESHIPS

During National Apprenticeship Week (10-14 February) the college's social media channels featured interview with employers about how companies can benefit from apprenticeships, as well as interviews with apprentices talking about what they're learning.

One of the apprentices featured was Alex Chapman, a property maintenance apprentice at Midlands Air Ambulance Charity.



Read more [here](#).

Take a look at what Alex had to say about his apprenticeship [here](#).

AUTOMOTIVE

Students on automotive courses gained a first-hand view of working in the industry during a visit from Andy Wells from Auto Works, a Birmingham-based service centre.

He shared his personal career journey, discussed the challenges of running his own business and offered insights into what it takes to be a successful repair technician.



ESOL

Speakers of other languages who enrolled on courses to improve their English skills put their new skills into practice during a week of enrichment activities.



They took part in a scavenger hunt around the city centre, visited the art gallery, central library and



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St Peter's Church, found out about training courses and job opportunities at a careers fair at the Paget Road campus, and got experience of interviews in virtual reality sessions.

The students also benefited from a visit by Maya Patel, from Reinvntd CIC, who shared her insights on sustainable fashion, offered marketing advice, and talked about how she set up her own business.

Following the talk, the students took part in a hands-on workshop, where they transformed old items into new products to sell.



FUTURES FOUNDATION LEARNING

Students from the Futures Foundation Learning programme took part in a 'Design a Railway Station for 2030' challenge which was an opportunity for them to show their creativity, learn new skills and link their classroom lessons to a real project.

As part of the project, they benefited from a visit by Jade Masuh, Project Engineer at SLC Rail, who gave advice on improving their 3D models and also told them about what her job entails.



Students also spent a day volunteering at Wildside Activity Centre and worked as a team as they walked along the canal collecting litter on the way.

HAIR AND BEAUTY

Students doing hairdressing qualifications helped a local man's fundraising efforts when they cut his waist-length hair in aid of the Little Princess Trust which provides real-hair wigs free of charge to children and young people who have lost their hair due to cancer treatment or conditions such as alopecia.



HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Students enrolled on the new health and social care T Level programme got an insight into one of the many roles in the NHS during a visit from Sheelagh Bickerton from The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust.

Sheelagh, who is the lead clinical nurse specialist for acute kidney injury (AKI), spoke about the structure and function of the renal system and the importance of understanding and recognising AKI.



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MATHS

Maths students took part in a further education maths challenge organised by the MEI (Mathematics Education Innovation) charity committed to improving lives through advances in maths education.

Students progressed to the final round of the competition and competed against other colleges in a Kahoot quiz and Tarsia jigsaw puzzles where they were required to arrange geometric shapes or cards to form a coherent pattern or solution.



MEDIA

A talented media student showcased his creative skills in an interview he recorded with one of his classmates.

Joel Luemba, who is studying for a UAL Level 2 diploma in creative media production and technology, interviewed fellow student Freddie Mintah who is studying for a UAL Level 3 diploma in music performance and production about his course and what he's learning.



PERFORMING ARTS

Students on performing arts courses took part in an interactive workshop facilitated by Holly Parry, artistic director of Wolverhampton's Central Youth Theatre.

The session focused on building skills in theatre facilitation, direction and backstage roles and was funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, as part of the First Steps on the Ladder project.

And, former performing arts student, Cory McClane will be appearing on TV screens after landing the role of Ashton Stone in the popular BBC series Waterloo Road.



PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography students took part in a practical workshop exploring how longer camera exposures can produce a range of creative and exciting effects.

They headed into the grounds at the Paget Road campus and used their new-found skills, combined with torches and sparklers to produce the image shown on the right.



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SPORTS AND FITNESS

Students from the Wolves Foundation Football Academy were victorious in a match against Rotherham United in the Community & Education Football Alliance (CEFA) English Football League (EFL) cup, with their 2-1 win guaranteeing them a place in the last 16 of the national competition.



STUDENT STORIES

Take a look at what students Hari and Quinn - who are both studying for UAL Level 2 Award and Diploma in Music Performance and Production (Music Technology and Studio Sound Production) - have to say about their course.



Hari -



Quinn -

Read more student stories **here**.




Read more apprentice stories **here**.

Thank you for reading.



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