

Rt Hon Sir Keir Starmer KCB KC MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA
Sent via email

Tuesday 27 May 2025

Dear Prime Minister,

On becoming Prime Minister last July, you set out your government's commitment to growth and extending opportunities for people right across the nations of the UK. As the leaders of every single college within these four nations, we are clear that our institutions have a vital role to play in delivering on that – and indeed across all five of the missions you have set out. This is something we are fundamentally committed to. As your mission plans and the Chancellor's spending review develop, we therefore urge you to ensure that the roles we play for people, employers and communities – and our potential to do so much more – are front and centre in your thinking and that we are given the space and investment to deliver our shared ambitions.

As you know, colleges are a critical part of our national infrastructure, and key anchor institutions at the heart of their communities and local economies. That includes three particular elements key to delivering on your government's agenda.

1. Colleges are central to providing opportunities for young people to get the education, skills and wider enrichment that allow them to make the best start in life and secure meaningful employment.
2. Colleges are also central to delivering the industrial strategy, providing the skills needed across the growth sectors (and for the NHS and construction), whilst supporting skilled pathways across the wider economy in a changing labour market. This will require nothing less than a revolution in adult education and training, as we seek to upskill and retrain hundreds of thousands of adults over the coming decade to fill the skills gaps and adapt to a technology-rich future.
3. Finally, colleges have a key role to play in ensuring that adults with poor basic skills are not left behind in life and in work – people who want to contribute fully to the economy and their communities but who need support in literacy, maths and digital skills in order to do so.

All of these three elements of college activity – for young people, in growth sectors and in adult community learning - will be key both to boosting productivity and to unlocking opportunities for all. Without adequate investment into our sector, the UK risks falling behind in global competitiveness, unable to meet the demands of both emerging and traditional industries – and we will also be failing to capitalise on the role colleges can play more broadly too, including in driving the green transition, breaking down barriers to opportunity for all and supporting healthy, safe and cohesive communities.

We want your plans for growth and opportunity to place colleges as solutions and partners where investment has clear returns. It was therefore particularly promising to see the Chancellor's announcement at the Spring Statement regarding investment in the skills needed

to support the government's house-building and retrofit ambitions – and we hope that this is replicated for other key sectors and for all of your missions to support your plan for growth.

Of course, education and skills policy and funding is a devolved matter, so spending decisions made in the spending review are only directly relevant to colleges across England - but we are clear as college leaders across the four nations that investment focussed on further education and skills in the spending review will be a powerful statement of intent, and equip devolved administrations with the funding they need to resource colleges. Those of us in the devolved nations are similarly calling on our national governments to respond to the spending review with an absolute commitment to further education and skills so that renewed growth and opportunities truly do benefit us all.

Yours sincerely,

David Hughes CBE, Chief Executive, Association of Colleges
David Hagendyk, Chief Executive, Colleges Wales/Colegau Cymru
Dr Graeme Jackson, Interim CEO, Colleges Scotland
Jacqui Canton, Principal & CEO, Abingdon & Witney College
Gary Headland, CEO, Activate Learning
Mark Smith, CEO, Ada, National College for Digital Skills
Kathryn Robson, Chief Executive, Adult Learning Wales
Danny Pearson, Principal, Aquinas
Dr Tim Whitaker, Principal and Chief Executive, Askham Bryan College
Angela Cox, Principal and Chief Executive, Ayrshire College
Natalie Davison, Principal & Chief Executive, Barking & Dagenham College
Neil Coker, Chief Executive Officer & Principal, Barnet & Southgate College
David Akeroyd, Principal & Chief Executive Officer, Barnsley College
Anthony Bravo, Principal, Basingstoke College of Technology
Kevin Hamblin, Principal and CEO, Bath College
Damian Duffy, Interim Chief Executive & Principal, Belfast Metropolitan College
Karen Hucker, Principal, Bexhill College
Pat Carvalho, Principal and CEO, Birmingham Metropolitan College
Shaun Hope, Principal and CEO, Bishop Auckland College Group
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Alun Francis, Chief Executive, Blackpool and the Fylde College
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Pete Smith, Principal & CEO, Borders College
Claire Helen Foster, Principal and CEO, Boston College
Phil Sayles, Principal and Chief Executive, Bournemouth and Poole College
Chris Webb, CEO, Bradford College
Viv Buckley, Principal and Chief Executive, Bridgend College
Andy Berry, Principal & CEO, Bridgwater & Taunton College
William Baldwin, Principal, Brighton Hove and Sussex Sixth Form College (BHASVIC)
Christine Ricketts, Principal & CEO, Brooklands Technical College
Jenny Craig, Principal and CEO, Buckinghamshire College Group

John Beaty, Principal and CEO, Burton and South Derbyshire College
David Malone, Principal & Chief Executive Officer, Calderdale College
Mark Robertson, Principal and Chief Executive, Cambridge Regional College
Peter Brammall, Principal & CEO, Capel Manor College
Angela Joyce, Chief Executive Officer, Capital City College Group
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Nick Burnham, Principal, Cardinal Newman College
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Jasbir Dhesi OBE, Principal & CEO, Cheshire College South & West
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Andrew Green, CEO, Chichester College Group
Andrew Green, Chief Executive, Chichester College Group
Shireen Razey, Executive Principal & CEO, Christ the King Sixth Form College
Jerry White, Principal and CEO, City College Norwich
Jacqueline Grubb, City College Plymouth
Mark Malcomson CBE, Principal and Chief Executive, City Lit
Julia Gray, Principal and CEO, City of Bristol College
Paul Little CBE, Principal and Chief Executive, City of Glasgow College
Katy Quinn, Principal and CEO, City of Portsmouth College
Louise Fall, Principal and Chief Executive, City of Wolverhampton College
Alison Andreas, Principal and Chief Executive, Colchester Institute
Yana Williams, Chief Executive, Coleg Cambria
Nicola Gamlin, Principal and Chief Executive, Coleg Gwent
Andrew Cornish, Principal and Chief Executive, Coleg Sir Gâr and Coleg Ceredigion
Jonathan Morgan, Principal & Chief Executive, Coleg y Cymoedd
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Carol Thomas, Principal and CEO, Coventry College
Anita Lall, Principal & CEO, Craven College
Caireen Mitchell, Principal and CEO, Croydon College
David Gartland, Principal and CEO, Darlington College
Mandie Stravino OBE, CEO, DCG (Derby College Group)
Meryl Green, Principal and CEO, Derwen College
Chris Todd, Principal and CEO, Derwentside College
John Rees, Chief Executive Officer, DN Colleges Group
Diana Martin, Principal and Chief Executive, Dudley College of Technology
Douglas Dickson, Principal and Chief Executive, Dumfries and Galloway College
Simon Hewitt, Principal, Dundee and Angus College
Paul Padda, Principal and CEO, East Coast College
Scott Bullock, Principal and CEO, East Durham College
Rebecca Conroy, CEO & Principal, East Sussex College
Audrey Cumberford MBE, Principal and Chief Executive, Edinburgh College
Grant Glendinning, Chief Executive and Group Principal, Education Training Collective
Lucy McLeod, CEO, EKC Group
John Laramy CBE, Principal & CEO, Exeter College
Virginia Barrett OBE, Principal CEO, Farnborough College of Technology
Jim Metcalfe, Principal, Fife College

Melanie Lenehan, Principal and CEO, Fircroft College
Kenny MacInnes, Principal and Chief Executive, Forth Valley College
Nicola Cove, Principal & CEO, Furness College
David Alexander, Principal & Chief Executive, Gateshead College
Jon Vincent, Principal and Chief Executive, Glasgow Clyde College
Joanna Campbell, Principal and Chief Executive, Glasgow Kelvin College
Matthew Burgess, Principal and CEO, Gloucestershire College
Kelly Fountain, Principal, Gower College Swansea
Paul Deane, Principal and Chief Executive, Grantham College
Aled Griffiths Jones, Chief Executive, Grŵp Llandrillo Menai
Jacquie Carman, Principal and CEO, Halesowen College
Karen Spencer, Principal and CEO, Harlow College and Stansted Airport College
Danny Wild, Principal, Harrogate College
Keith Smith, CEO, Harrow, Richmond & Uxbridge Colleges (HRUC)
Darren Hankey, Principal / CEO, Hartlepool College of FE
Professor Andy Collop, Vice-Chancellor, Principal & CEO, Hartpury University & College
Emma Clark, Executive Principal, Heart of Birmingham Vocational College
Michelle Dowse, Principal and Chief Executive, Heart of Worcestershire College
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Rachel Nicholls, Principal and CEO, Inspire Education Group
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Leon Riley, Principal and CEO, John Leggott College
Kelvin Nash, Principal and CEO, Kendal College
Cat Lewis, Principal, Kidderminster College NCG
Palvinder Singh, Principal & CEO, Kirklees College
Chris Nattress, Principal and Chief Executive Officer, Lakes College
Daniel Braithwaite, Principal and CEO, Lancaster & Morecambe College
Nikki Davis, Principal and CEO, Leeds College of Building
Shabir Ismail, Acting Principal and CEO, Leicester College
Asfa Sohail, Principal, Lewisham College
Jamie Stevenson, Principal, Lewisham College - NCG
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Wes Johnson, CEO & Principal, Myerscough College and University Centre
Joanne Kingsbury-Elia, Principal, National Star
Liz Bromley, CEO, NCG
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Andrew Broadbent, Principal and Chief Executive, New College Durham
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Roddy Henry, Principal and Chief Executive, Newbattle Abbey College
Lee Probert, Principal and Chief Executive, Newbury College
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David Gleed, Chief Executive and Executive Principal, North Kent College
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Leo Murphy, Chief Executive & Principal, North West Regional College
Jason David Lancaster, Principal and CEO, Northampton College
Emma Beal, Principal / CEO, Northern College for Adults
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Kurt Hintz, CEO and Principal, Petroc
Jeremy Kerswell, Principal and CEO, Plumpton College
Dr Mark Dale, Principal & CEO, Portland College
Simon Nixon, Principal and Chief Executive, Preston College
Bev Jessop, Principal and Chief Executive, Queen Alexandra Charity, Birmingham
Marcus Clinton, Principal and CEO, Reaseheath College
Marcus Clinton, Principal and Chief Executive, Reaseheath College and University Centre
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David Withey, Principal & CEO, South Gloucestershire and Stroud College
Andrew Kaye, Chief Executive, South Hampshire College Group
Stella McManus, Principal and Chief Executive, South Lanarkshire College
Claire Boliver, Principal & CEO, South Staffordshire College
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Celine McCartan, Chief Executive & Principal, South West College
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Geraint Williams, Principal, St Davids Sixth Form College
Graham Thompson, Principal, St. Francis Xavier Sixth Form College
Annette Cast, Principal/ CEO, Stanmore College
Hassan Rizvi, Principal and CEO, Stoke on Trent College
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Angela Foulkes, Chief Executive & Principal, The Sheffield College
Dawn Whitemore, Chief Executive, The SMB Group
Gillian May, Group Principal & CEO, The Windsor Forest Colleges Group
James Scott, Chief Executive Officer, Trafford and Stockport College Group

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Joe Wright, Principal and Chief Executive Officer, UHI Argyll
David Patterson, Principal and Chief Executive, UHI Moray
Seonaidh McDonald, Principal, UHI Orkney
Jane Lewis, Principal and CEO, UHI Shetland
Stephen Davis, Chief Executive & Group Principal, United Colleges Group
Daniel Pearson, CEO USP College, USP College
Donna-Marie Janson, Principal and CEO, Varndean College
Jatinder Sharma, Principal & Chief Executive, Walsall College
Janet Gardner, Principal & CEO, Waltham Forest College
Nichola Newton, Principal & Chief Executive, Warrington & Vale Royal College
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Tracy Aust, CEO & Principal, West Thames College
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Paul Wilson, Principal and CEO, WQE and Regent College Group
Philip Grant, Principal, Writtle College
Tony Knowles, Principal, Xaverian College
Mark Bolton, CEO & Principal, Yeovil College
Ken Merry, Principal & Chief Executive, York College