



Writtle
University
College

Annual Review

**Report and
Financial Statements**
Year Ended 31 July 2021



writtle.ac.uk

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Governors and advisors

Governors and advisors

CHANCELLOR
VICE-CHANCELLOR

The Baroness Jenkin of Kennington
Professor T Middleton

Members of the Board of Governors

The members who served on the Governing Body during the year and up to the date of signing these financial statements (who are also trustees of the exempt charity) are listed below;

	Date of appointment or resignation	Committees served
Mr A Bols	Appointed 12 July 2019	Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee, Search & Governance Committee
Ms T Coop (Staff Governor)	Appointed 12 July 2019	Personnel & Remuneration Committee
Ms S Corcoran	Appointed 15 July 2021	Personnel & Remuneration Committee, Search and Governance Committee.
Mr M Dineen	Appointed 18 March 2021	Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee
Mrs C Flanagan (Staff Governor)	Appointed 22 March 2019	Finance & General Purposes Committee
Miss K Flude (SU President)	Term finished 31 July 2021	Personnel & Remuneration Committee
Mrs S Footring	Appointed 2 February 2021	Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee
Mr D Hewitt (Chair of Board)	Appointed 28 February 2020	Search & Governance Committee, Personnel & Remuneration Committee
Mr F Howie (Vice-Chair)	Re-appointed 23 March 2018	Chair Finance & General Purposes Committee
Mr P Marshall	Appointed 12 July 2019	Finance & General Purposes Committee
Professor T Middleton (Vice Chancellor)	Appointed 1 August 2017	Finance & General Purposes Committee, Search & Governance Committee
Miss E-J Murray	Appointed 12 July 2019	Finance & General Purposes Committee
Mr M Pragnell	Appointed 10 September 2019	Finance & General Purposes Committee
Mr A Radford	Term finished 30 November 2021	Chair Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee
Mrs B Rigg	Resigned 15 July 2021	Search & Governance Committee
Mr G Smith	Resigned 26 September 2021	Finance & General Purposes Committee
Mr N Spenceley	Re-appointed 25 August 2020	Chair Personnel & Remuneration Committee
Mr S Spencer (Staff Governor)	Appointed 23 November 2018	
Mr P Swan	Resigned 4 February 2022	Personnel & Remuneration Committee
Mr V Travers (SU President)	Resigned 11 February 2022	Personnel & Remuneration Committee
Ms S Walker (nee Aitkin)	Resigned 19 November 2020	
Ms S White	Re-appointed 17 October 2019	Chair Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee

Professional advisors

External auditors	Deloitte LLP, 3 Victoria Square, Victoria Street, St Albans, United Kingdom, AL1 3TF. (appointed June 2016)
Bankers	Barclays Bank plc, 40-41 High Street, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 1BE.
Internal auditors	RSM Risk Assurance Services LLP, The Pinnacle, 170 Midsummer Boulevard, Milton Keynes, MK9 1BP (appointed July 2020)
Solicitors	Birkett Long, Essex House, 42 Crouch Street, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3HH. Quantrills Solicitors, The Peninsula Business Centre, Wherstead Street, Wherstead, Ipswich, IP9 2BB. (HR Support)

University college details

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Telephone	+44 (0)1245 424200
Email	Info@writtle.ac.uk
Website	www.writtle.ac.uk

Copies of the Financial Statements can be obtained from the University College's address above, or downloaded from the website.

Achievements



**Further Education Student of the Year,
William Charity**



**Jessica Sebright and Zoe Starling at Linton
Zoo Conservation Park**

Student achievements

All our students who achieve the qualifications they set out to study are successes in their own right and the University College is proud to celebrate their work both in-person and virtually.

Every year we can cite examples of students who also achieved national distinction and in 2020/21 we celebrated the following:

- Level 3 Technical Extended Diploma in Horticulture student William Charity won the David Colegrave Foundation Scholarship in recognition of his outstanding commitment to horticulture.
- Jessica Sebright and Zoe Starling, successfully completed a joint project at Linton Zoo Conservation Park in Cambridgeshire. With the support of a range of partners, the MSc Animal Science students analysed the movement of a giant tortoise species.
- Landscape Architecture and Garden Design MSc student, Alex Pettitt, received a silver medal for his outstanding design at the RHS Flower Show Tatton Park.
- BSc (Hons) Agriculture (Regenerative Systems and Livestock) student Morgan Tasker was named a 'Kent Rural Scholar' and awarded a bursary by the Kent County Agricultural Society. The organisation promotes the study of land-based courses by supporting promising students.
- BSc (Hons) Sport & Exercise students Zachary Churn and Grace Gunn worked as assistant sports scientists at Basketball England's First Team England 3x3 Basketball Training Camp.
- Further Education sports students completed Active Essex's 'Leaders in Training' programme, a week long, multi-award training course enabling them to take a more active role in grassroots sport.
- Runner and BSc (Hons) Sport and Exercise student Khahisa Mhlanga was selected for the prestigious 2021 Athletics Futures Academy Programme.

Alumni achievements

The University College encourages graduates to stay in touch once they have completed their studies and to keep WUC informed of their ongoing achievements.

- Alumnus Samuel Moore won a silver medal at the RHS Hampton Court Flower Show for his inspirational garden design. 'Lower Barn Farm: The Bounce Back Garden' focused on relaxation, entertaining and outdoor dining.
- Former FdSc Cycling Performance degree student Simon Carr has risen to the top tier of professional cycling, and recently undertook his first Grand Tour.



Staff achievements

The University College was also pleased to recognise notable achievements from its staff, including:

- Lecturer Mark Williams contributed to the First Team England 3x3 Basketball Training Camp in his capacity as the Strength and Conditioning Coach for Basketball England.
- Dog Grooming lecturer Samantha Banks and former University College student Nicolle Paddon were awarded first place within the online Mastergroom competition. Samantha also received an individual award for her work in the Toy and Miniature Poodle intermediate category.
- Senior Lecturer Dr Roberta Ferro de Godoy delivered an international webinar on the influence of shoeing and trimming on horse biomechanics to over 150 professionals from Portugal, Spain, Mexico, Argentina, Chile and Brazil.



Lecturer Mark Williams contributed to the First Team England 3x3 Basketball Training Camp

- Peter Hobson, Professor in Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainability, delivered the keynote presentation on 'exploring the role of Biosphere Regions in a VUCA world' to Bachelors and Masters students from Ukraine, Germany, Moldova and the UK.
- Lecturer and BWRC Chair, Terri Amory, took a key role in the British Wildlife Rehabilitation Council Symposium. The charity promotes the welfare of wildlife casualties whilst in captivity and after release back into the wild.

Lordships Timeless (known as Tula) was awarded a 'Higher Gold'





Institutional achievements

- The Guardian newspaper placed Writtle University College within its top ten universities for agriculture and stated that over 90% of students expressed satisfaction with teaching.
- New outreach programme 'Taste of Sport' used online resources provided by the University College to support sport in schools. Six videos covered a range of topics developed for Year 10 upwards.
- A Writtle University College filly, Lordships Timeless (known as Tula), was awarded a 'Higher Gold' at the British Breeding Futurity on August 25 2021. The chestnut foal received favourable comments from the judges and an impressive 8.525 score for eventing.
- The Centre of Sport and Health opened successfully. The new hub supports students, athletes and members of the community, and has begun work with Mid and South Essex NHS Cardiac Rehabilitation Team.
- Writtle University College launched the UK's first bespoke, permanent 3x3 basketball facilities in a well-attended summer event. The courts feature adjustable hoops for accessibility and a show court designed by a professional artist.
- The University College welcomed Sabrina Brando as BSAS Visiting Industry Fellow. Sabrina is the director of AnimalConcepts, including the Practical Animal Welfare Science platform, and is the Prime Care Training Program Coordinator for the Pan African Sanctuary Alliance.
- The University College installed a second vertical growing unit. The innovative equipment is part of an ongoing horticultural trial in partnership with Plant Raisers Limited. The project investigates the benefits of DC-based LED lighting within a controlled growing environment.
- A free public webinar series with Liberty Produce, attracted students, academics and members of the agri-food sector. The online sessions focused on major issues facing global food production systems.
- Saracen Horse Feeds was named WUC's Official Concentrate Supplier, and Dengie Horse Feeds became the Official Fibre Provider. A tender process highlighted the excellent quality of both companies' products and their ongoing commitment to supporting students' first steps into the equine sector.
- The University College took part in a new project with global chemical solution provider, Brenntag, to research the impact sanitised water can have on animal health.

Strategic report



Strategic intent: Enabling students to fulfil their potential to shape the Animal, Environmental, Sport & Health Science industries of the future.

Strategic report

Strategic report nature, objectives and strategies

The members of the Board of Governors present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2021.

Legal status

Writtle University College (WUC) was awarded taught degree awarding powers in 2016, having gained University College title in the same year.

The University College has one wholly owned subsidiary company, Writtle College Services Ltd, which is currently dormant.

Vision and mission

The University College is in the process of completing a new Strategic Plan to 2030. This will feature a mission of “putting science into practice”.

‘One Writtle’ Values will include:

- Community
- Innovation
- Partnership
- Sustainability
- Inclusion
- Wellbeing

The Vision is:

To be a leading UK university-sector further and higher education institution. Our focus will be on applied teaching, professional development and innovation in the animal, environmental, sport and health sciences.

Financial objectives

The overall longer-term financial objective remains to achieve and to maintain a robust and stable financial position, a bedrock on which the University College can be confident of achieving its educational aspirations.

The three key strategic themes identified are:

- Revenue maximisation, predominantly through increased tuition fee income but including third-stream income from short course and conference activity.
- Quality of financial and management information.
- Cost savings and efficiencies.

These priorities were agreed for the 2019/20 year through our integrated planning exercise and the outputs were regularly monitored, although the operating performance from March 2020 onwards and during the majority of the 2020/21 financial year was significantly affected by COVID-19.

Financial position

Summary financial results

A summary of the financial results with prior year comparatives is below:

	2020/21	2019/20
	£k	£k
Income	15,277	15,257
Expenditure	(17,082)	(16,445)
Underlying operating deficit	(1,805)	(1,188)
Pension scheme accounting charges	(1,605)	(995)
Deficit before other gains and (losses)	(3,410)	(2,183)
Gain on disposal of fixed and investment assets	319	162
Unrealised surplus on revaluation of tangible assets	0	475
Deficit	(3,091)	(1,546)
Actuarial gain/(loss) in respect of pension scheme	4,460	(6,836)
Total comprehensive income/(expense) for the year	1,369	(8,382)

Total comprehensive income for the year

The University College has reported an underlying operating deficit (prior to Local Government Scheme, LGPS, accounting charges) of £1.8m in 2020/21 (2019/20: £1.2m underlying operating deficit).

The total comprehensive income for 2020/21 was a surplus of £1.4m (2019/20: total comprehensive income expense of £8.4m). The total comprehensive deficit includes: a gain on disposal of fixed assets of £0.3m (2019/20: £0.2m); and a £4.5m actuarial gain arising in respect of the Local Government Pension Scheme (2019/20: loss of £6.8m). This was mainly due to an increase in the discount rate used by the LGPS actuary to value the University College's pension liabilities at 31 July 2021. The discount rate used was equivalent to a high-quality corporate bond of equivalent currency and term at the reporting date, in accordance with financial reporting requirements, and it, therefore, reflected market conditions (including the impact of the ongoing global pandemic) at that time.

Income

Total income of £15.3m was on par with prior year, the increased Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) grant funding was offset by the impact of the ongoing pandemic resulting in cancellation of short courses, conferences and a partial refund of student accommodation fees.

Higher Education (HE) tuition fees account for 90% (2019/20: 89%) of fee income and 42% (2019/20: 42%) of total income, whereas Further Education (FE) tuition fees account for only 10% (2019/20: 11%) of fee income and 5% (2019/20: 5%) of total income, with the core 16-18 provision directly funded by the ESFA.

HE funding body grants of £1.2m (2019/20: £1.1m) account for 20% (2019/20: 21%) of government funding and 8% (2019/20: 7%) of total income, whereas FE funding body grants of £4.6m (2019/20: £4.2m) account for 80% (2019/20: 79%) of government funding and 30% (2019/20: 28%) of total income.

Expenditure

Total expenditure, excluding LGPS accounting charges, was £17.1m in 2020/21, £0.6m (4%) more than the prior year of £16.4m.

Staff costs were £12m, an increase of £1.4m (14%) from the prior year (2019/20: £10.6m). The staff costs include an LGPS pay accounting charge of £1.3m (2019/20: £0.7m). Staff costs excluding redundancy and the LGPS pay accounting charge as a proportion of the University College's total income increased to 69% in 2020/21. (2019/20: 64%). With inflationary and incremental pay and pension increases, and lean teaching and professional support services teams it remains a challenge to manage staff costs any lower without jeopardising the student experience and inhibiting our ability to achieve the University College's strategic objectives.

Non-pay operating expenses was £4.8m in 2020/21, £0.2m (3%) less than the prior year of £5.0m. Despite inflationary pressure, non-pay expenditure was managed carefully with underspends compared to budget in many areas which is partly attributable to reduced on-site operations during part of the year as a consequence of the ongoing pandemic.

Statement of financial position

Total net assets have increased by the retained surplus for the year of £1.4m (11%) to £13.7m (2019/20: £12.3m) as at 31 July 2021.

The University College invested £0.5m (2019/20: £0.4m) in fixed asset additions to improve the student experience in 2020/21. Major capital projects included refurbishment of Design 1 (£90k) and Fowlers building (£38k), fencing the site (£60k), and a Megaslam basketball hoop system (£55k).

The cash position decreased to £2.0m at 31 July 2021, compared to £3.8m for the previous year.

Total borrowing reduced to £29k at 31 July 2021 compared to £2.1m at the start of the year, this reflected the repayment of a £2.0m interest only loan in June 2021. During 2021/22, the University College will review its longer-term borrowing requirements, in accordance with the objectives outlined in its new Strategic Intent, as the pre-existing loan arrangements came to an end in August 2021 following the repayment of the remaining balance.

The University College has a Local Government Pension Scheme liability of £19.3m as at 31 July 2021, £2.9m higher than the prior year due to actuarial valuations at that date for assets (£6.3m improvement) and liabilities (£3.4m increase).

The University College has total reserves of £13.7m (2019/20: £12.3m) as at 31 July 2021 comprising an Income and Expenditure reserve deficit of £4.7m (2019/20: deficit £7.5m) and a Revaluation Reserve of £18.4m (2019/20: £19.8m).

Cash flow and liquidity

The University College's operations generated cash flows in and out of the business: inflows from fees, grants and services; outflows from payments to staff, students and suppliers. In 2020/21 this resulted in a net outflow from operating activities of £0.1m (2019/20: inflow £0.4m). The net impact of the cash inflows and outflows in 2020/21 was a £1.8m cash outflow (2019/20: £0.9m inflow), as outflows on repayments of loans exceeded the net inflows on capital investment, property and land sales.

It is the policy of the University College to obtain the best terms for all purchases, therefore supplier terms may vary according to the individual agreement. The University College's normal terms of payment are within 30 days of the end of the month in which the invoice is received.

Outlook

As a mixed further and higher education provider, the University College is dependent on strong levels of student recruitment in each area and is exposed to government funding constraints in both the HE and FE sectors.

Following the publication of the Government's (Augar) review of post-18 education and funding in May 2019 and the government spending review in October 2021, there remains some uncertainty over the future level of fees to be charged to students in the medium to long-term. The University College will adapt its financial strategy once outcomes are known. With relatively fixed costs of teaching and high estate overheads, a high proportion of the revenue generated by each additional student recruited benefits the operating position, making student numbers critical to future financial stability.

Whilst the financial health of the HE sector as a whole has been sound, the trajectory is a weakened position for many, due to the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020.

For those institutions already facing significant financial challenges, the continuing pandemic could exacerbate solvency risk. In this particularly uncertain operating environment the University College recognises that it needs to continue to respond proactively, building on its areas of expertise, expanding and modernising its curriculum offer, capitalising on the strength of its latest NSS (National Student Survey) results and delivering further improvements such as enhanced progression to professional and managerial employment.

There is a positive outlook on student numbers. Through a focus on digital marketing activity and a refreshed look and feel of marketing collateral, the University College has recruited 13% more HE students, enrolling in 2021/22 than in 2020/21.

With increased investment in the student experience, it is anticipated that strong student retention levels will be maintained.

The University College has developed a focus on animal and human applied biosciences, with a decline in traditional agriculture, horticulture and design. However, WUC is well-placed to build on its enduring reputation as a quality provider in these areas and new programmes have been validated with a clear focus on

fresh produce and sustainable agri-food. The University College is seeking to expand vocational apprenticeships and to develop higher level apprenticeships in agriculture, horticulture, garden design and landscape architecture as new standards are approved.

International students represent around 3% of HE student numbers and whilst there are pockets of International HE recruitment, this is not at the level achieved in other specialist institutions and is seen as a potential opportunity with the correct international marketing strategy in place. EU (European Union) student numbers are low and whilst this is arguably a missed opportunity, the University College is not unduly exposed in terms of Brexit. Indeed, there could be an opportunity with increased demand for a highly trained home-grown labour force to support the Government's Industrial Strategy and locally, the emerging South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) industrial strategy.

In conjunction with the requirement to increase student numbers in HE and FE, the University College must look to make further efficiency savings and to secure diversified commercial income streams. A new Strategic Intent focuses on curriculum development opportunities around a theme of "putting science into practice" and opportunities to improve teaching and learning facilities through collaborative projects with industry and professional partners.

Post balance sheet events

There are no post balance sheet events to report.

Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries and with reference to the more detailed narrative in the 'Financial Position' section, the Board of Governors considers that the University College has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, it continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements.

In assessing its ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting using FRS102, the University College has considered a period of at least twelve months from the date the financial statements are authorised for issue. Accounting guidance does not specify a maximum period that should be considered by organisations as part of this assessment, rather this is a matter for judgement.

Over the majority of the five-year period between 2010/11 to 2015/16 the University College delivered an operating surplus, except in 2012/13 when HE recruitment dipped upon the introduction of the higher tuition fee regime.

During the subsequent five-year period between 2016/17 and 2020/21 operating deficits have been generated but liquid resources have been supplemented through a programme of planned asset disposals.

During 2020/21, the University College benefited from increases in enrolments for higher education programmes and for 16-18 year olds on FE study programmes.

The University College is reviewing curriculum growth opportunities in connection with its new Strategic Intent and the development of a new estate masterplan. The University College will also be in a position to capitalise on a growing local population from extensive housing developments in and around the Chelmsford area and from an improved transport infrastructure.

However, despite successfully transitioning to new ways of delivering teaching and learning and professional support services during the final five-months of the 2019/20 financial year in response to COVID-19, the ongoing pandemic has, inevitably, had a continuing negative impact on the operating performance of the University College during 2020/21.

The University College is vigilant of the challenging external environment it operates within and regularly considers the inherent risks, in terms of both opportunities and threats, at executive level (standing item at its Leadership Group) and Board level (Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee and Board of Governors). The University College has simplified the format of its Strategic Risk Register to maximise awareness and understanding and its agility to react appropriately.

In assessing going concern, the University College has had regard to the principal risks and uncertainties that are set out, specifically in relation to the risk of breaching regulatory requirements; the risk of not achieving and managing its planned student number growth; and the risk associated with uncertainties regarding future levels of funding.

Whilst the University College considers these to be principal risks and uncertainties, it does not consider them to be material uncertainties over whether or not the University College is a going concern for the next 12 months from the date of approval of these financial statements. This is because, with net assets of £13.7m (2019/20: £12.3m) for the year ended 31 July 2021 and an extensive site, the University College is asset rich and has a planned programme of tactical asset disposals during the period up to 31 July 2022. Following the repayment of a Barclays Bank loan in June 2021, the University College had negligible bank debt at 31 July 2021 which has since been fully repaid.

During 2020/21 a £1m Trade Loan Facility was arranged with Barclays Bank. This will enable the University College to mitigate peaks and troughs in its operating cashflow and in delays in completing planned asset disposals. During 2022 the University College intends to develop a revised financial forecast in a proposal aimed at securing longer-term finance, from the funding market. This will support the delivery of the Strategic Intent enabling strategies and the new estate masterplan. At £2m at 31 July 2021 the cash position remains reasonably strong and monthly cash flow forecasts from August 2021 to 31 July 2023 indicate that with the availability of a £1m Trade Loan Facility and further planned asset disposals during 2021/22, the University College does not anticipate any issues in continuing to meet its financial commitments as they fall due within 12 months from the date of approval of these financial statements.

Risk management

Principal risks and uncertainties

The risk of being unable to re-finance the University College and thereby secure its long-term sustainability

This is the principal risk facing WUC at this point in time and, as such, it drives most of the other risks recorded on the University College's strategic risk register. Though WUC was able to successfully demonstrate its financial viability and sustainability to the regulator in 2018, the long-term sustainability of the University College's operating model remains a cause for concern. As has been the case for a number of years, the University College must increase its operating revenue through student recruitment and third-stream growth if it is to continue supporting its operating expenditure, noting that these are higher than many other institutions due to the complexity of mixed FE and HE delivery and the high costs of land-based subject delivery. As most available cost-saving measures have already been taken, the ability to mitigate this risk largely relies upon presentation and delivery of a credible growth plan to secure the borrowing needed to invest in facilities and staffing. Further risk mitigation is provided by the planned work with a strategic estate development partner. Following a procurement and due diligence process supported by the University College's land agents and advisers, Strutt & Parker, a preferred partner has been selected. Following the finalisation of a Promotion Agreement that partner will work with the University College to align a new estate masterplan with the Strategic Plan to 2030.

The WUC Board of Governors agreed the high-level strategic direction, Strategic Intent, for the University College during 2020/21. Management is now in the process of developing enabling strategies (Learning and Teaching, including Digital, People and the Estate) with a target of completing costed implementation plans by March 2022, following which an investment case will be developed for presentation to potential funders and stakeholders.

The risk of not achieving and managing planned student number growth

Along with many tertiary education providers, the University College faces uncertainty with respect to FE and HE student recruitment. This has been exacerbated by the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. Despite the additional challenges created by the pandemic, over the last year the University College has continued to professionalise this aspect of its work and is able to deliver a high-quality, responsive approach to managing recruitment from the point of enquiry through to enrolment. Online material to showcase WUC's courses and facilities, in lieu of in-person open-days and other face-to-face recruitment events which were unable to take place due to the coronavirus pandemic was successfully deployed. This included a range of well-attended subject webinars for prospective students. Core 16-18 FE enrolments for 2020/21 was up 18% on 2019/20 and HE enrolments, despite the inability to run on campus events during the pandemic held in line with 2019/20 intake which was up 21% on 2018/19. FE and HE enrolments for the 2021/22 academic year

demonstrate a further increase compared with the previous year and are in excess of internal planning targets. Another strong NSS result will assist our recruitment work during the next recruitment cycle.

As part of its strategic planning work, the University College has identified priority areas for FE and HE student number growth over the coming years, including the development and validation of new HE courses aligned to WUC's existing strengths in applied sciences where strong national demand is evidenced.

Further work to identify HE and apprenticeship curriculum growth opportunities, supported by external consultants, will be completed in autumn 2021. Planned growth and the resources required to continue to deliver effective outcomes for students will be incorporated in the Strategic Intent enabling strategies and the new estate masterplan.

The risk of the ongoing impact of the coronavirus pandemic

Like all other educational institutions, in 2020/21 the University College was forced to continue to respond to an unprecedented event which has created a range of new and complex risks to be managed. The coronavirus pandemic has created immediate risks for the health, safety and wellbeing of the WUC community and the continuity of its day-to-day business. WUC staff responded to the ongoing crisis with great creativity, flexibility and kindness, as a result of which the University College was able to continue delivery of its core business of FE and HE teaching and learning, with minimal impact on academic outcomes for students.

During 2020/21 the University College set-up an onsite testing centre as part of a process of managing the safe return of students and staff to the WUC campus. The need to respond to actual and potential outbreaks of COVID-19 on campus remains the highest priority. The University College has taken all necessary steps to protect its students and staff, whilst balancing this with efforts to protect the student experience and value for money. The coronavirus pandemic continues to pose a significant risk for the University College in multiple respects, including the management time needed to coordinate health & safety activity and respond to evolving government guidance, as well as the medium- and long-term impact of the pandemic on WUC's revenue streams and growth plans.



Higher education

Student numbers

Completing the 2020/21 year, the University College had 684.7 HE students (FTEs) (2019/20: 680). Of these, 19 FTEs (2019/20: 28) were international students. The majority were enrolled on undergraduate programmes, principally BSc, BA and Integrated Masters awards but also Foundation Degrees, HE Diplomas and Certificates.

There were 47.7 FTEs (2019/20: 43) on taught postgraduate (PGT) programmes and 4.5 FTEs (2019/20: 12) on postgraduate research programmes (PGR).

Student achievement

In academic year 2020/21 Writtle University College conferred the following awards:

- 122 Bachelor degrees
- 33 Integrated Masters degrees
- 4 Foundation degrees
- 11 Diplomas of Higher Education
- 31 Certificates of Higher Education
- 31 Masters' degrees
- 25 Other postgraduate awards

Additionally, there are 13 students having awards conferred by the University of Essex.

Curriculum developments

The 2020/21 academic year saw the launch of our new Regenerative Agriculture/Sustainable Crop Production undergraduate titles, which recruited a small (5 FTE) but enthusiastic first cohort who have already driven change in our estate management practices. Similarly a new MSc in Equine Performance Science recruited a pleasing first cohort of 12 students. The new 'chronic health' pathway in Sport has enabled the first step towards a strategically important new area for WUC, with links being made to local and regional health care providers in anticipation of an extended portfolio in health in future years.

The 2020/21 academic year included the validation of a new 'year zero' Foundation Year (Science) that underpins all of our existing science-based degree awards. It is pleasing that despite a relatively late launch and validation authorisation, this award has attracted a healthy first cohort of approximately 31 students. The inclusion of an innovative placement module provides a unique selling point for this programme. All of the entrants onto the Foundation Year have enrolled on a four-year programme that enables their transition at the end of their first year of study onto a BSc (Hons) award of their choice.

A new (modular) MBA in Regenerative Food Systems, aimed at those already employed in, or seeking, professional-level roles in agri-food businesses was validated during the latter part of the 2020/21 academic year and will be marketed for an in-year February 2022 start. The new emphasis on agri-food at Level 7 will complement the focus on regenerative agriculture now forming a central tenet of the undergraduate agriculture awards. Their collective development resonates with the passage of the Agriculture bill through the UK Parliament. This sets the legislative framework for farm, land management and payments for 'public goods', such

as environmental improvements, and synchronises with the UK's exit from the EU's Common Agricultural Policy. This work to re-frame WUC's agriculture provision in an exceptionally competitive market has resulted in considerable interest from the sector. The forthcoming academic year will see the conversion of an area of WUC's estate to a demonstration farm to showcase regenerative practices to industry. Crucially, both course and estate developments are underpinned by attention to environmental sustainability and a growing interest in circular economics.

Additionally a Level 6 top-up was validated for the BSc (Hons) Art and the Environment award to enable in-fill on the existing award whilst it is taught out.

Beyond those already mentioned, the remaining validation activity was centred on our existing partnership with USP College. The successful BSc (Hons) Animal Management course at WUC has now been validated to allow the first two years of delivery to occur at the USP site in Benfleet. This will enable a wider reach in terms of targeting level 3 USP students completing a Further Education award in Animal Studies, with the students joining their WUC counterparts in their final year, reflective of the arrangement already in place for Sport students. The Sport portfolio was also enhanced with the addition of a pathway in Education Studies; developed and delivered by USP colleagues this pathway will be on offer for all Sport students studying at either USP or WUC on a Sport award, resulting in a BSc (Hons) Sport and Exercise Science (with Education). This particular pathway links with the Mid Essex SCITT (School Centred Initial Teacher Training) to enable students to be suitably directed within the FE or school environment for placement opportunities.

The newly formed FE and HE Sport Department continues to reach out to industry partners and the move over the summer months of the sports laboratory into a recently vacated building has enabled the creation of the new Centre of Sport and Health. This space will enable GP referral schemes, NHS-funded rehabilitation programmes (e.g. cardiac rehabilitation), a sports doctor, physiotherapist, specialist strength and conditioning coaches, a gym and other community-based physical and mental health initiatives all to operate from the site. This will form the basis of a resource that will provide existing students with real-life case work and enable a platform from which health-based awards can be developed in future.

WUC also refurbished existing facilities to develop the UK's first dedicated 3x3 basketball courts. 3x3 is the world's most rapidly growing sport and WUC is now well-placed to make the most of interest increasing as a result of its inclusion in both the Tokyo Olympics and the 2022 Commonwealth Games due to be held in Birmingham. Plans are also afoot to complement the 3x3 courts with additional urban-sport facilities such as a Parkour area and BMX pump-track; all of which will also aid efforts towards achieving targets for under-represented groups outlined in the Access and Participation Plan.

Concurrent with these developments, planning consent is being sought for the use of the reservoir for educational and recreational purposes and this permission will aid considerably WUC's ability to develop those Sport awards that include an 'outdoor' element and the potential for considerable third-

stream income. The new HE and FE aligned department has seen a positive benefit in increased progression onto HE programmes. Consideration will be given during 2020/21 to replicating this structure in other areas of our provision.

COVID-19

The pandemic saw a rapid pivot to online delivery in March 2020, with staff upskilling in the use of online platforms (primarily Microsoft Teams) in a way that was largely successful and well received by students. The re-introduction of lockdown in January 2021 further delayed the planned practical instruction sessions, resulting in consultation with students and an agile shift of term dates. This delayed start to semester B enabled the post-Easter period to be largely back on site and practically focused where necessary and staff should be widely commended for their efforts to keep students engaged and the academic year on track during such turbulent times. The plan to return to face-to-face teaching in September 2021 was welcomed by students and staff alike; work continues to deliver planned content whilst simultaneously considering lessons learnt from the pandemic and the opportunities and influence of such on future strategic planning. Primarily this is likely to cause debate around the sensibility of large-cohort didactic lectures and the resultant changes to requirements for large lecture halls on campus alongside the suitability of WUC's information technology infrastructure, which was the cause for considerable concern at times. Taking a 'blended' approach to delivery in future could considerably increase WUC's ability to market some awards, particularly affording the opportunity for potential wider geographical reach, and will be something that all Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are currently debating. Addressing the shortfall in IT capability and reliability, together with the acquisition of lecture capture software and hardware systems has become a priority.

Student success team

The Student Success Team, established in 2019, worked to introduce an ever-increasing range of extra-curricular activities for students during 2020/21, with a focus on improving graduate-level outcomes. This has included the development of new Graduate Attributes, the implementation of an online skills audit, targeted careers advice, employability support, business mentoring and support for self-employment, alongside a new 'ambassador intern' scheme and the already-successful Flying Start scheme for students from non-traditional academic backgrounds and/or those enrolled on 'Other HE' (normally Certificate or Diploma) awards.

There is now a real focus on improving employability within our HE courses, which is timely given the advent of Proceed (Projected Completion and Employment from Entrant Data) as a metric being considered by government to measure success. Aided by the Student Success team's initiatives, additional mitigating action against the University College's existing poor Proceed data will include the addition of formal work placement opportunities into the entire portfolio of HE courses at WUC during the 2021/22 year. Work started on the development of the modules to enable formal placements to be integrated during 2020/21; The University College now needs to formalise their introduction into existing awards.

National Student Survey

The National Student Survey (NSS) is an externally managed questionnaire completed by undergraduate students from participating higher and further education Institutions. It provides the opportunity for students to 'rate' the institution on their level of agreement with specific and overall components of their experience, in their course of study at their enrolled institution.

The survey is completed by final-year students during their last semester of study. The 2021 NSS was completed by students finishing their course in academic year 2020/21. A total of 113 WUC-registered students completed the survey from an eligible population of 138, representing a response rate of 82.0% (a decrease of 9 percentage points compared to the NSS 2020 91.0%). During an exceptionally difficult year for all higher education institutions, the University College achieved an overall satisfaction score of 79.5% in this year's NSS, a decrease of -12.3 percentage points (pp) compared to 2020. WUC's 2021 score has exceeded the sector for a second consecutive year however and the institution remains the highest-rated university-sector provider in the East Anglian region. Nationally the University College has dropped from the No. 1 position achieved in 2020, but remains ranked 22nd of the 113 participating university-sector providers. WUC remained top of the 'others in veterinary science' group for the third consecutive year, thanks to exceptional results achieved by the veterinary physiotherapy course.

The University College believes that these high ratings reflect the ongoing hard work of academic teams, particularly the personal support provided to students, along with the wide range of co-curricular services and activities provided by the Student Success team.

The drop from the no.1 position achieved in 2020 can be attributed in large part to the concerns of students about the practical elements of our highly vocational courses. Given that students were completing the survey whilst still studying remotely, without complete certainty in terms of being able to complete their practical training, it was unsurprising to see this reflected in the scores.



Further education

The Further Education market for Writtle University College is both local and regional. Due to the University College's specialist offer, particularly in Equine, Agriculture and Horticulture, students travel regionally, with some students commuting up to around 40 miles.

Locally and regionally, the University College has a respected reputation, having been assessed as 'Good' by Ofsted in March 2018, and is seen to offer school leavers with a more independent and stimulating learning environment, through student experience and a different subject offer to that offered by school sixth forms or other general further education colleges. The provision of HE as a potential progression route also adds appeal to students and parents alike.

However, recruitment of 16-18-year olds remains extremely competitive as schools pro-actively seek to retain learners in the sixth form and other regional providers battle in these niche subject areas. This is been further impacted by Covid-19 and students deciding to remain at current schools following teacher assessed GCSE grades.

Despite this, WUC's core 16-18-year-old recruitment at the University College is very strong for 2020/21, with approximately 80 learners more than 2019/20. Aligned to competitive pressures, growth has been driven through course areas not offered at A-Level or as part of other sixth form provision, particularly in Animal and Equine programmes. The increase in Level 2 and Level 3 study programmes in Sport across local schools has impacted on recruitment and a different approach to WUC marketing positioning has needed to be adopted, focusing on point of difference through our outdoor activity and football academy programmes, range of facilities and large open campus.

In September 2021 the University College added courses in Land and Wildlife and a pathway in Animal Science to further strength it's portfolio.

The University College is updating and broadening its FE curriculum offer for 2021/22 to align more closely with a wider range of occupational pathways within the niche industries that it serves. The University College hopes to capitalise on a growing local population from extensive housing developments in and around the Chelmsford area and from an improved transport infrastructure.

For adult learners, 2021/22 enrolments are currently behind target, however 19+ enrolments are still being assessed as to whether they are funded or unfunded so this figure will continue to rise.

FE student numbers

For 2020/21 there were 1,151 FE students in total, including 591 core 16-18-year old's, 131 19+ students, 261 full cost students and 168 Apprentices.

FE quality improvement

The University College's further education provision continues to improve and was awarded a 'good' rating during the March 2018 Ofsted inspection. The report concluded that the students "receive very good support from teachers and assessors to help them be successful in their chosen subject". The report concluded with the following:

- Students and apprentices make good progress towards achieving qualifications in English and Maths;
- Students receive good quality feedback from their teachers on their work that helps them improve assignments and achieve higher grades;
- Students and apprentices develop very high standards of practical skills as a result of high-quality work experience placements or training at work; and
- Students exemplify the British values of respect, tolerance and democracy in their everyday lives at the University College.

COVID-19

During 2020/21 the FE provision adapted to follow government requirements for college students with a mixed delivery of blended learning, online learning during the full lockdown and the return to full education from 8th March 2021. All students were able to access learning throughout 2020/21 and were supported for any individual needs. The start of term in 2021/20 continues to be delivered in full with all FE students attending lessons onsite.

Resources

The University College has various resources that it can deploy in pursuit of its strategic objectives.

The estate & estate strategy

Tangible resources include the main University College campus which covers some 220 hectares, encompassing 31,000 metres squared of floor space to deliver and support its academic provision. The University College has residential accommodation on campus for 400 students, as well as a number of residential properties.

Work is ongoing during 2021/22 to review its estate masterplan. This will be developed with support from a strategic estate development partner the appointment of which was approved by the Board in January 2021 following a procurement and due diligence process facilitated by the University Colleges property advisers, Strutt and Parker.

Climate change

During 2021/22 as a key element of the work on the Strategic intent enabling strategies, the University College will be developing a phased programme of future improvements to its estate in response to the challenges posed by climate change and the need to make incremental changes to the University College's operating model to reach net zero carbon.

People

On average during 2020/21, the University College employed 242 members of staff, expressed as full-time equivalents (FTEs). This represents an increase on the previous year when there were 231 FTE's. Included within the total are 160 academic/academic support staff members (2019/20: 150).

Stakeholder relationships

In line with other Universities and Colleges, WUC has many stakeholders. These include;

- Students and their families
- Staff
- The local community and regional employers
- Local Authorities/LEP
- OfS/ ESFA
- Professional & Representative bodies (e.g. GuildHE, UCEA and Landex)
- Partner HE and FE institutions
- Trade Unions

The University College recognises the importance of these stakeholders and engages in regular communication with them.



Value for money

Further investment by the University College into our Student Success, Wellbeing and Inclusion teams has enabled further development of services provided to all students.

Initiatives in place:



Annual **Student Spotlight Awards** to recognise student achievement in extra-curricular, community and entrepreneurial success recognised at Graduation 2021.

For 2020/21 the awards extended to FE students, including a 'FE Student of the Year'



Free online programme of tailored tuition for new students ahead of the start of the academic year, targeted to increase confidence and helping ease the transition to university life.



Our **peer mentoring** provided new arrivals with support and guidance directly from 2nd and 3rd Year students. Peer mentors supported online 'Ask a Buddy' and 'Pitstop' workshop sessions facilitated by the SS team



Launched in 2020, our SSAP informs the work of the Student Success team and consults on what would make a difference to distinct groups of students within the WUC. In 2020/21 new initiatives included the 'Steps to Success' workshop series, aimed at presenting careers and employability material in a more accessible way for disabled and neuro-diverse students



Study skills support

Core 1-1 and group tuition service for Study Skills provided by the Student Success team provided to 309 individual HE students representing a reach of more than **37%** (up from 34% last year).



Careers and employability

Focus on careers and employability through a series of events and opportunities to engage with industry and the WUC alumni community.



Covid-19 response

Learning Mentors and Support teams reached out to groups impacted specifically by the pandemic to ensure we provided empathetic support and positive action through MS Teams and online workshops.



The FE quality improvement plan

Our Improvement Plan includes staff training plan and support, high grades in English and Maths, 16-18 Main Qualification achievement together with student tutorial and wider enrichment support programme to promote skills development.

Making an impact



During an exceptionally difficult year for all higher education institutions, the University College achieved an overall satisfaction score of **79.5%** in this year's National Students' Survey



WUC's 2021 score exceeds the sector for a 2nd consecutive year with the University College the highest-rated university-sector provider in the East Anglian region.



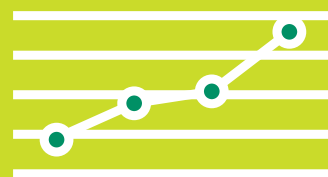
WUC position in The Guardian's **Top 10** Universities for Agriculture



Improved Further Education retention rate to **95.8%** for 2020/21 - +1.7% ahead of 2019/20 and 4.5% ahead of national average rate.



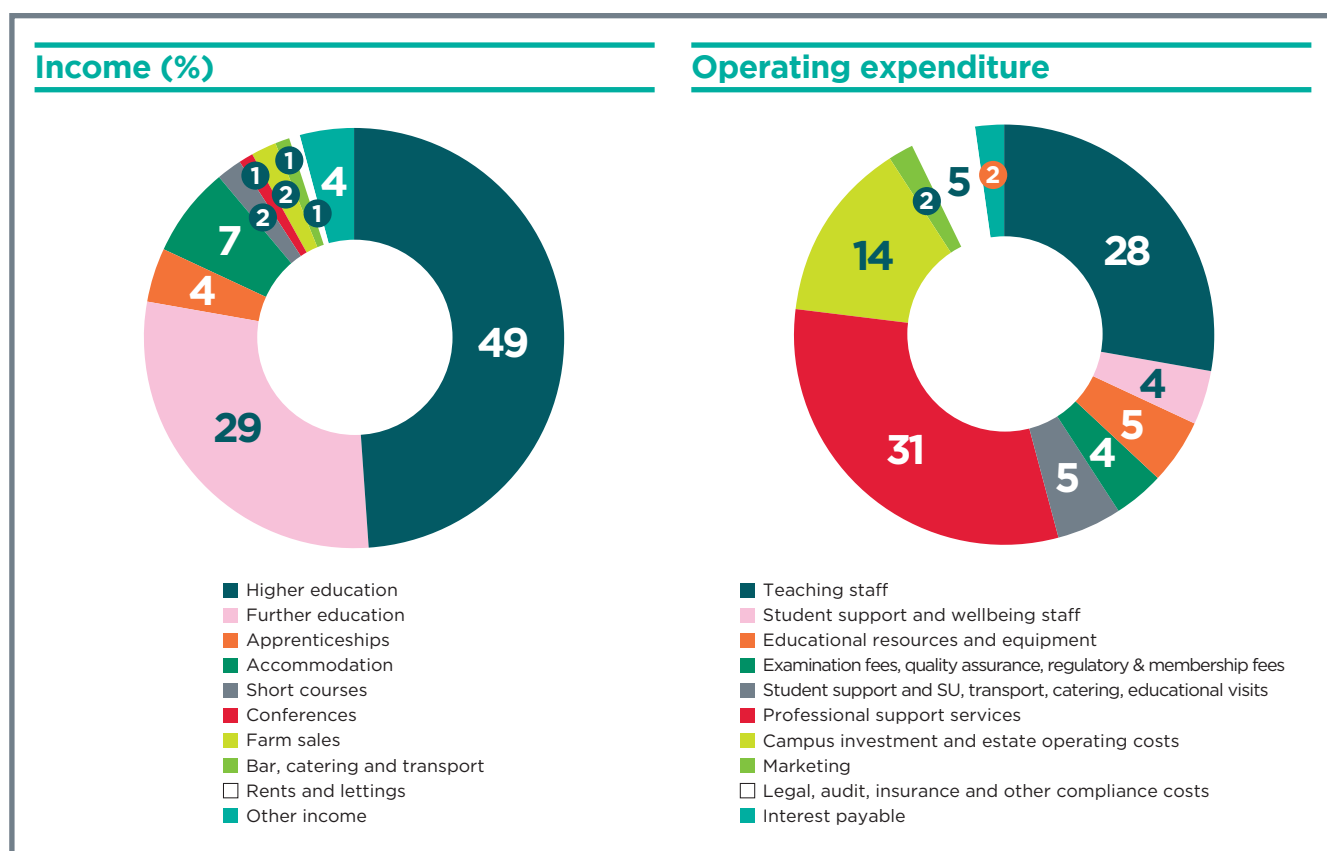
Increasing attractiveness of WUC as a place to study through growth in applications



WUC Further Education target for achievement for **2020/21 at 86%** (vs 2019/20: 84.9% and a national rate of 84.8%)

Value For money

Sources of income and the profile of University College operating expenditure for 2020/21 are illustrated in the charts below.



Key performance indicators

Throughout the year, the Board and its committees have received a range of reports which have included key performance indicators relevant to its FE and HE provision. This includes a range of externally benchmarked metrics such as student retention, satisfaction, achievement and progression rates to employment/further study, as well financial lead indicators such as applications, offers and enrolments. A new KPI scorecard is planned, which will summarise metrics relating to FE and HE outcomes, financial and staff performance. This is due to be developed during 2021/22 to reflect the objectives in the new University College Strategic Intent and associated enabling strategies.

Equality and diversity

Equality at the University College means that everyone is treated fairly. The University College believes Equality and Diversity are central to achieving its strategic objectives, whilst enhancing its cultural profile and labour demographic.

Diversity at the University College means recognising that everyone is different, respecting and encouraging these differences and valuing the benefits that diversity brings.

The University College is committed to maintaining its excellent record in teaching and learning by ensuring there is equality of opportunity for all, fostered in an environment of mutual respect and dignity. WUC recognises that the promotion of equality is the concern of all members of the University College's community.

The University College is careful to ensure that due consideration is given to the potential impacts on equality and diversity of its policies and actions. For further information, visit <https://writtle.ac.uk/Equality-and-Diversity>

Disability statement

The University College works hard to ensure that disabled people are involved in all aspects of the University College's work and life. Counselling and welfare services are made available to all students and these are widely promoted through induction, during student success initiatives and via on-going student communications. These services were successfully provided online during the coronavirus pandemic and the Wellbeing Team continues to support students through a combination of online and in-person services.

The University College's Learning Support department seeks to promote the general well-being of students, parents and staff by providing practical help and guidance and by ensuring they have access to a full range of support services which include:

- Identifying, co-ordinating and providing study support for students with learning difficulties such as dyslexia
- Co-ordinating and providing support for students with disabilities
- Providing staff and students with the necessary information and skills to ensure they foster full engagement with the curriculum
- Providing a confidential counselling service.

The University College endeavours to provide specialist equipment, such as radio aids/loops, for use by students, staff or visitors. In addition, some assistive technology is made available to those with learning difficulties/disabilities.

All University College admissions processes are non-discriminatory. Any appeals against a decision not to offer a place are dealt with through the admissions complaints and appeals procedure.

Health and safety

The University College's working procedures and practices have been progressively developed since the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the provisions in the legislation now permeate all aspects of its activities.

The University College has a full-time Health & Safety Officer to oversee and advise on all matters relating to Health and Safety across all activities. The post holder reports directly to the Vice-Chancellor.

Health and Safety matters are regularly considered in detail by the University College's Personnel and Remuneration Committee and reported through to the Board of Governors as necessary. The Board also receives an annual report on Health & Safety across the University College.

The University College's health and safety activity during the 2020/21 was understandably focused on continuing to respond to the coronavirus pandemic and ensuring that students and staff were able to safely remain on campus when it was appropriate to do so. The University College has made significant investment in health & safety equipment, adaptations to campus facilities and various new policies and guidance documents to support students, staff and campus visitors to mitigate the risks associated with the virus.

Staff and student involvement

The University College considers good communication with its staff and students to be paramount and to this end constantly reviews its communications processes.

Students are represented at all levels in the committee structure, including on the Board of Governors, Academic Board, Education Committee. Representatives from the Students' Union are also invited to the University College Leadership Forum. The University College continues to run separate FE and HE Student Councils, which allow students to raise any matters affecting their student experience.

During 2020/21 the Students' Union continued to work with the NUS and GuildHE to develop the ways in which it works to act as an effective representative body for students. The Vice-Chancellor continues to meet regularly with the SU President and Students' Union Support Officer to ensure that student needs can be reviewed and acted upon quickly.

Conclusion

The University College has again been well served during the year by its teaching and professional staff teams and well supported by its students. Relationships with external stakeholders continue to strengthen.

Whilst it is dealing with a very challenging recruitment environment, it has set in train both new courses and an enhanced recruitment process that will ensure it maximises recruitment in future years.

Statement as to disclosure of information to auditors

The members of the Board of Governors who were in office on the date of approval of these financial statements have confirmed, as far as they are aware, that there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware. Each of the members of the Board of Governors has confirmed that they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken in order to make themselves aware of any relevant information and to establish that it has been communicated to the auditor.



Mr D Hewitt

Chair of the Board of Governors

24 February 2022





Charitable status and public benefit

Charitable status and public benefit

Writtle University College (WUC) is a Higher Education Institution (HEI) and, therefore, an exempt charity under the terms of the Charities Act 2011. In setting and reviewing the University College's strategic objectives, the Governing Body has had due regard to the Charity Commission Guidance on public benefit and particularly the supplementary guidance on the advancement of education. The charitable objectives are the provision of higher and further education and the carrying out of research.

Government research attests to the enhanced social and economic benefits gained by individuals and the wider public as direct and indirect results of people engaging with further and higher education. Recognising the benefits of engagement with education beyond school leaving age, the law was amended, increasing the age of participation to 18. Anyone born on or after 1 September 1997 is now required to undertake some form of further education until their 18th birthday.

A substantial body of information shows clearly that training and research undertaken by HEIs has important and measurable regional and national economic and social benefits, evidenced by publications and research material available on the archived Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE) and the Office for Students (OfS) websites.

The wider public benefit and national economic importance of vocational training and research undertaken by institutions such as the University College was highlighted in the Government's UK Strategy for Agricultural Technologies, published July 2013. The importance of the land-based sector is acknowledged in the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) and highlighted in the Essex Rural Strategy (relaunched 2016).

Vision and mission

To be a leading UK university-sector further and higher education institution. Our focus will be on applied teaching, professional development and innovation in the animal, environmental, sport and health sciences.

The Strategic Vision Statement is that Writtle University College will be "A leading UK university-sector further and higher education institution. Focus will be on applied teaching, professional development and innovation in the animal, environmental, sport and health sciences". The Mission Statement is "Putting Science into Practice".

Public benefit

As is the case at many other modern Universities, WUC recruits from its home region, with approximately 43% of the University College's intake coming from the local area, within a 20-mile radius; this increases to approximately 66% recruited from within a 40-mile radius which is mainly north, east and west of Writtle (rather than extending into London).

Supporting this regional recruitment network WUC normally runs a programme of outreach work,

however Covid 19 restrictions impacted on our ability to provide onsite outreach and partnership activities, and indeed any travel to schools and colleges in the area. Despite this, a significant number of activities still occurred via an online 'outreach hub' designed to support teachers, parents and pupils. These included bespoke training and awareness sessions for Essex secondary school teachers, with presentations from our recent graduates, plus curriculum-based bite-sized video material for schools. During 2020/21 the University College also continued to play an active part in the 'Make Happen' collaborative outreach network, helping to encourage more young people from Essex into higher education.

The University College aspires to deliver a range of specialist and practical subjects to a diverse cohort of HE students, enabling them to contribute to the challenges facing the UK's land-based industries. Our vision is to combine specialist facilities and professional working environments with an inclusive, safe and welcoming environment for our students. Our small size allows us to provide a highly personal and supportive learning environment, contributing to the fulfilment of our mission to be a proactive partner in the success of every one of our students. In addition to providing subject-specific theoretical knowledge, understanding and practical skills, courses also address topics relevant to the development of an informed, active, and inquiring citizenry, including ethics, sustainability, and climate change. In addition to subject-specific expertise offered by lecturers, the institution provides a supportive environment in which those with a variety of learning requirements, and those with a range of disabilities, can benefit

The University College has consistently attracted high proportions of disabled students, with a general upwards trend over the last 8 years. In 2019/20 the University College had 27.3% disabled learners, which is well above the sector average at 16.6%. We support an increasingly female student population, with growth in courses that have a track record of being dominated by females, including our successful Veterinary Physiotherapy, Equine and Animal Science /Management courses, which has skewed the gender balance of the student body as a whole. To help mitigate this challenge, the University College will continue to leverage and develop its Sport course offering to increase access for male students, as well as continue efforts to address gender skew in other course areas.

In a 'normal' year, staff from the University College engage in a range of activity that creates public benefit – from talks during Essex heritage week, public lectures, contribution to industry and academic forums and engagement with regional and national business development groups. 2020/21 saw this work greatly diminish and become restricted to on-line in line with COVID restrictions.

Applied research and innovation work at the University College spans fields as diverse as conservation, genetics, studies into dog behaviour and livestock production science. During 2020/21 we worked with iGrowing which is a joint venture between Plant Raisers Ltd and Extreme Low Energy

limited to plan the implementation of a solar powered controlled growing environment solution, with support from the EIRAS network. Our animal science work benefited from a trial of specialist water systems for livestock supported by Brenntag. Our agriculture team secured support from East of England NFU for the conversion of the University College farm to regenerative methods.

WUC's new strategic intent 'putting science into practice' was formally approved by Board of Governors in Summer 2021 and focuses on growth in applied and vocational teaching, professional training, and applied innovation in the animal, environmental and human sciences over the next ten years. The underlying principle is collaboration to ensure that public health and animal health and welfare are safeguarded, that food is produced sustainably, and that the natural environment is protected. Work streams associated with developing three underpinning enabling strategies (People, Estates and Learning & Teaching) are currently being defined and will shape much of the University College's work during the early part of 2021/22.

At Further Education level, the University College offers a range of programmes in land-based and associated subjects including apprenticeships, outreach programmes for 14 to 16-year olds and full cost short courses which are often bespoke for employers.

The University College's further education curriculum includes:

- Animal and Equine
- Agriculture, Horticulture and Arboriculture
- Art & Design and Floristry
- Sport

Progression into employment or further or higher education is good and a strong emphasis is placed on providing employability skills and supporting progression within education. For example, all full-time students undertake a work placement which forms part of their programme of study and a number of 'real work environments' are effectively utilised to develop skills (such as a dog grooming parlour, animal unit and equine yard, stud duties and estate duties).

All full-time 16 to 18 year-old students participate in study programmes, which comprise a main qualification, work experience, employability training, English and Maths. This tailored package of learning provides not only academic achievement but also incorporates wider life skills which improve progression and employment potential. Examples of employability training undertaken include Certificates of Competence, fitness instructing, sustainable development, enterprise skills and coaching.

Enrichment activities based around being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, developing awareness of equality and diversity, enterprise skills and awareness of sustainability are built into all study programmes. Examples of activities include:

- Encouragement of physical activity such as participating in nature walks and undertaking yard and estate duties, plus individual and team sports, as part of the curriculum.
- Promotion of healthy eating through Horticultural students growing their own herbs and vegetables.
- Working with local organisations and facilities. For

example:

- Floristry students providing floral displays for the Harvest Festival.
- Equine students raising money for Cancer Research and World Horse Welfare. In addition, Equine work with Careers in Racing to provide industry placements for Writtle Students.
- Students are able to display their work with some participating in local and national competitions. For example:
 - Art and Design students holding a WUC Art Exhibition which is open to friends, families and the public.
 - Floristry students participating in producing a display for RHS Hyde Hall, Hylands House and the open gardens for Writtle church.
 - Horticulture students achieved the silver award at Hampton Court Palace Flower Show and representation at World Skills.

Writtle University College continues to benefit from a number of collaborations and partnerships with stakeholders, which enhance quality and efficiency, as well as developing communication and planning. Examples of these include:

- Schools – opportunities for 14 to 16-year-old students to undertake vocational programmes, taster days, special schools work, enhanced curriculum sessions.
- Colleges – collaborative funded projects, peer review, sharing good practice, shared CPD (Continuing Professional Development).

Collaborations – FEDEC (Federation of Essex Colleges), Landex (Excellence in Land-based Colleges), Food and Farming Day with Essex Agricultural Society and Essex County Council and Pets Corner in Harlow.

- Employers – provide guest speakers, host visits and work placements. The Institution provides training in the form of apprenticeships, short and bespoke courses.
- Local businesses – this includes CPD sessions for local employers in the veterinary physiotherapy industry.

Trustees

No member of the Board receives payment for the work they do as governors, or trustees, but expenses for travelling and subsistence are reimbursed.

The total expenses paid to or on behalf of 1 board members in 2020/21 was £563 (2019/20: £1,495 to 6 board members). This represents travel and subsistence expenses incurred in attending Board, Committee meetings and charity events in their official capacity.

Statement of corporate governance and internal control

A photograph of two women smiling and looking at plants in a greenhouse. The woman on the left has blonde hair and is wearing a striped shirt. The woman on the right has brown hair and is wearing a patterned scarf. They are surrounded by various green plants, including a large purple flower in the foreground. The greenhouse structure is visible in the background.

Statement of corporate governance and internal control

The following statement is provided to enable readers of the Financial Statements of the University College to obtain a better understanding of the governance, management and legal structure of the University College.

Legal status

Writtle University College is a higher education corporation established under the terms of the Education Reform Act 1988. Its objects, powers and framework of governance are set out in the Articles of Government, the current version of which were approved by the Privy Council in May 2016, when the College gained University College title.

Principles

The University College is committed to exhibiting best practice in all aspects of corporate governance, and endeavours to conduct its business in accordance with the seven Principles identified by the Nolan Committee on Standards in Public Life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership). The University College has also applied the principles set out in The Higher Education Code of Governance, first published by the Committee of University Chairs (CUC) in 2010 and revised most recently in 2018.

Statement of corporate governance

On 1 October 1994, the College transferred from the Further Education sector to the Higher Education sector upon the authority of the Secretary of State for Education and by order of the Privy Council under Section 12A (3) and (4) of the Education Act, 1988. The Board of Governors was reconstituted from the date of transfer and comprises lay and academic persons appointed under the Instrument of Government of the University College, the majority of whom are non-executive. The role of Chair of the Governing Body is separated from the role of the University College's Chief Executive, the Vice-Chancellor. The responsibilities of the Governing Body are set out in the Articles of Government of the University College and operational controls are laid down in the Office for Students 'terms and conditions of funding for higher education institutions for the period up to 31 July 2021', which from 1 April 2018 superseded the Memorandum of Assurance and Accountability issued by the Higher Education Funding Council for England.

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- the determination of the educational character and mission of the University College and for oversight of its activities;
- the effective and efficient use of resources, the solvency of the University College and for safeguarding their assets;
- approving annual estimates of income and expenditure;

- appointment, grading, suspension, dismissal and determination of the pay and conditions of service of the holders of senior posts; and
- setting a framework for the pay and conditions of service of all other staff.

The Board are also responsible for ensuring that:

- funds from whatever source administered by the University College for specific purposes have been properly applied to those purposes and managed in accordance with relevant legislation;
- funds provided by the Office for Students and Research England and the Education and Skills Funding Agency have been applied in accordance with the terms and conditions attached to them;
- ensuring that there are appropriate financial and management controls in place to safeguard public funds and funds from other sources; and
- securing the economical, efficient and effective management of the University College's resources and expenditure.

Through doing this the University College ensures regularity and propriety in the use of public funding.

The Board is responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the University College's website. Legislation in the UK governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The University College endeavours to conduct its business in accordance with accepted standards of behaviour in public life which embrace selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership, in accordance with the framework provided by the CUC (Committee of University Chairs).

The University College maintains a Register of Interests of members of the Governing Body, which may be consulted by arrangement with the Clerk of the Governing Body.

The Governing Body meets at least four times a year and has the following sub-committees: Finance and General Purposes Committee; Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee; Personnel and Remuneration Committee; and Search and Governance Committee. All these Committees are formally constituted with terms of reference and comprise mainly of independent members of the Governing Body, one of whom is the Chair. During 2020/21, the Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee included at least one qualified accountant.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee recommends to the Governing Body the University College's annual revenue and capital budgets and monitors performance in relation to the approved budgets. The Committee held the standard four meetings this year, and further additional meetings.

The Personnel and Remuneration Committee advises the Governing Body on personnel issues and determines the annual remuneration of senior staff including the Vice-Chancellor. This Committee met three times this year.

The Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee meets at least three times each year and reviews the findings of the External Auditors and the Internal Auditors, including detailed internal audit reports and recommendations for the improvement of the University College's systems of internal control, together with the University College's management response and implementation plans. The auditors meet the Committee at least once every year without management present.

The Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee receives and considers reports from relevant external bodies as they affect the University College's business and monitors adherence with the regulatory requirements. It reviews inter-alia the University College's annual financial statements, together with the accounting policies and considers and advises the Governing Body on external audit reports and management letters. In addition the Committee monitors the work of the external and internal auditors and considers that they carry out their activities in an efficient and cost-effective way. The University College senior staff attend the Committees as appropriate.

The Search and Governance Committee is responsible for all matters relating to the membership of the Board and its committees, as well as issues relating to training and evaluation of members.

The Academic Board is responsible for all matters relating to teaching, scholarship and research at the University College, subject to the overall direction of the Board of Governors, drawing its membership entirely from the staff and students of the institution. The minutes from each meeting of the Academic Board are reported to the Board of Governors.

Appointment of Governors

Governors, who are also charitable trustees, are appointed by the Governing Body. This normally follows a process of consideration by the Search & Governance Committee, an interview with members of the Board and Vice-Chancellor, and consideration of a CV and letter of application. Governors are appointed for a fixed term of office, normally four years (for independent members), at the conclusion of which they will be eligible for a further four-year term of office (subject to approval). Restrictions on the eligibility of members is as outlined in the Articles of Government (Article 15) and all members are required to complete an annual declaration of interest.

Board of Governors self-assessment

A performance self-assessment review is normally undertaken by the Board annually and the responses are collated and analysed by the Clerk and reported to each committee and the Board during the year. Following the outcome of a governance effectiveness audit that concluded in June 2019, the Board decided to defer the self-assessment for 2019/20 pending the new WUC strategic plan being finalised. Once the strategic plan is finalised the Board intends to introduce a

system of governor appraisal and evaluation, based on the new maturity matrix as a self-assessment tool.

The Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee completed a committee self-assessment in spring 2021, based on the CUC questionnaire, and the results were considered by the committees meeting in May 2021.

Full minutes of meetings, except those deemed to be confidential by the Governors, are available from the Clerk to the Governors at: Writtle University College, Lordship Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 3RR.

Management

The Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive is the head of the institution and is responsible to the Board of Governors for the organisation, direction and management of the University College. Under the Office for Students 'terms and conditions of funding for higher education institutions', the Vice-Chancellor is designated accountable officer.

The Vice-Chancellor is supported by a leadership group which meets bi-weekly and comprises HR, Finance, Registry, FE, HE and Recruitment & Marketing colleagues.

Internal control

As the Governing Body of Writtle University College, the Board of Governors has responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of policies, aims and objectives, while safeguarding the public and other funds and assets for which Board of Governors is responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to the Governing Body in the Instruments and Articles of Government and the terms and conditions of funding with the OfS.

The system of internal control is designed to manage rather than eliminate the risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.



The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify the principal risks to the achievement of policies, aims and objectives; to evaluate the nature and extent of those risks and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. This process was in place for the year ended 31 July 2021 and up to the date of approval of the financial statements. The key elements are as follows:

- the Board of Governors meets at least four times per year to consider the plans and strategic direction of the institution and to monitor performance against those plans;
- the Leadership Group maintains a strategic risk register that assesses key risks at institutional level, including an evaluation of the likelihood and impact of risks becoming a reality;
- following regular consideration by the Leadership Group and University College Leadership Forum (UCLF), the strategic risk register is presented for discussion at each meeting of the Board of Governors, at each meeting of the Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee, Finance and General Purposes Committee, Personnel & Remuneration Committee (each of which is responsible for primary monitoring of specific risks);
- the Board of Governors receives periodic reports concerning internal control, and requires regular reports from managers on the steps they are taking to manage risks in their areas of responsibility, including progress reports on key projects;
- the Vice-Chancellor has responsibility for alerting the Board to any emergent risks;
- the Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee receives regular reports from the internal audit providers, which include the internal auditor's independent opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the institution's system of internal control, together with recommendations for improvement;
- the work of the internal audit service is informed by an analysis of the operational, business and compliance risks facing the University College;
- reports are received by budget holders, department heads and project managers on internal control activities;
- the Board receives and considers an annual report from the Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee, which provides assurance on systems for:
 - risk management, control and governance;
 - economy, efficiency and effectiveness (value for money);
 - management and quality assurance of data submitted to the Higher Education Statistics Agency, the Student Loans Company, OfS and other bodies;
- the Board's review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is also informed by the work of the executive managers within the institution, who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework, and by comments made by the external auditors in their management letter and other reports

The review by the Board of Governors of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by internal audit, which operates to standards defined in the OfS Audit Code of Practice (Annex C of the 'terms and conditions of funding for higher education institutions for the period to 31 July 2021'). The internal audit providers submit regular reports which include their independent opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the institution's system of internal control, together with recommendations for improvement. This is reviewed and signed off by the Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee.

The University College ensures the role of the external audit and internal audit contributes where possible to improve the control environment and our performance of delivery of value for money, through the actions described above.

Significant control weaknesses

The University College is required, in accordance with the OfS 'Regulatory Advice 9: Accounts Direction', to set out any significant internal control weaknesses that have arisen during the financial year or after the year end and before the financial statements are signed. There were no significant control weaknesses during 2020/21.

Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries and with reference to the more detailed narrative in the 'Financial Position' section, the Board of Governors considers that the University College has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, it continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Governors



Mr D Hewitt

Chair of the Board of Governors

24 February 2022

Statement of responsibilities of the members of the governing body



Statement of responsibilities of the members of the governing body

In accordance with the University College's Instruments and Articles of Government, the Governing Body is responsible for the administration and management of the University College's affairs, including ensuring an effective system of internal control, and is required to present audited financial statements for each financial year.

The Governing Body is responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the University College and to enable it to ensure that the financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Instruments and Articles of Government, the Statement of Recommended Practice on Accounting in Education Institutions and other relevant accounting standards.

In addition, in line with the OfS 'terms and conditions of funding for higher education institutions for the period up to 31 July 2021', the Governing Body, through its designated office holder, is required to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the University College's state of affairs and of the surplus or deficit and cash flows for that year.

In causing the financial statements to be prepared, the Governing Body has ensured that:

- suitable accounting policies are selected and applied consistently;
- judgements and estimates are made that are reasonable and prudent;
- applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departure disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- financial statements are prepared on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Institution will continue in operation. The Governing Body is satisfied that it has adequate resources to continue in operation for the foreseeable future: for this reason the going concern basis continues to be adopted in the preparation of the financial statements.

The Governing Body has taken reasonable steps to:

- ensure that funds from the Office for Students are used only for the purposes for which they have been given and in accordance with the terms and conditions of funding for higher education institutions and any other conditions which the OfS may from time to time prescribe;
- ensure that there are appropriate financial and management controls in place to safeguard public funds and funds from other planning processes supplemented by detailed annual income, expenditure, capital and cash flow budgets;
- monthly reviews of financial results involving variance reporting and updating of forecast outcomes;
- comprehensive Financial Regulations, detailing financial controls and procedures, approved by the Audit Committee and the Governing Body;
- clearly defined and formalised requirements for approval and control of expenditure, with investment decisions involving capital or revenue expenditure being subject to formal detailed appraisal sources safeguard the assets of the University College and prevent and detect fraud;
- secure the economical, efficient and effective management of the University College's resources and expenditure.

The key elements of the University College's system of internal financial control, which is delegated to discharge the responsibilities set out above, include the following:

- clear definitions of the responsibilities of, and the authority delegated to, senior members of the University College staff;
- and review according to approval levels set by the Governing Body;
- appointment of professional internal auditors whose annual programme is determined by the Audit Committee and approved by the Governing Body.

The Audit Committee, on behalf of the Governing Body, continually reviews the effectiveness of aspects of the University College's system of internal control. Any system of internal financial control can, however, only provide reasonable, but not absolute, assurance against material misstatement or loss.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Governors



Mr D Hewitt

Chair of the Board of Governors

24 February 2022

Report on the audit of the Financial statements



Independent auditor's report to the governing body of Writtle University College

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion

In our opinion the financial statements of Writtle University College (the 'university college'):

- give a true and fair view of the state of the university college's affairs as at 31 July 2021 and of its income and expenditure, gains and losses and changes in reserves and cash flows for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" and the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting for Further and Higher Education.

We have audited the financial statements which comprise:

- the statement of comprehensive income and expenditure;
- the statement of changes in reserves;
- the statement of financial position;
- the cash flow;
- the statement of accounting policies; and
- the related notes 1 to 26.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting for Further and Higher Education (2019).

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs(UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report.

We are independent of the university college in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the Financial Reporting Council's (the 'FRC's') Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the governing body's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the university college's ability to

continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the governing body with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The governing body is responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in respect of these matters.

Responsibilities of the governing body

As explained more fully in the governing body's responsibilities statement, the governing body is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements that give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the governing body determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the governing body is responsible for assessing the university college's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the governing body either intends to liquidate the university college or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the FRC's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

We considered the nature of the university college's industry and its control environment, and reviewed the university college's documentation of their policies and procedures relating to fraud and compliance with laws and regulations. We also enquired of management and internal audit about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities.

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that the university college operates in, and identified the key laws and regulations that:

- had a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. These included the Office for Students "Regulatory Advice 9: Accounts Direction", the relevant provisions of the code of financial regulations relating to the supplemental schedule; and
- do not have a direct effect on the financial statements but compliance with which may be fundamental to the university college's ability to operate or to avoid a material penalty. These included the Terms and Conditions of Funding for Higher Education issued by the Office for Students.

We discussed among the audit engagement team and relevant internal specialists such as valuations, pensions, and IT specialists, regarding the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the organisation for fraud and how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements.

As a result of performing the above, we identified the greatest potential for fraud in the following area, and our specific procedures performed to address it are described below:

- There is a risk that management could misstate the surplus/deficit recorded in the financial statements by capitalising expenditure which does not meet the criteria for capitalisation. We have tested the design and implementation of controls in relation to the capitalisation of costs and have audited a sample of spend to confirm that it complies with the relevant accounting requirements and physically verified the existence of the additions.

In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override. In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluated the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

In addition to the above, our procedures to respond to the risks identified included the following:

- reviewing financial statement disclosures by testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described as having a direct effect on the financial statements;
- performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;
- enquiring of management, internal audit and external legal counsel concerning actual and potential litigation and claims, and instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations; and
- reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance, and reviewing internal audit reports, and the office for students (OfS).

Report on other legal and regulatory requirements

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Office for Students (OfS) "Regulatory Advice 9: Accounts Direction"

In our opinion, in all material respects:

- funds from whatever source administered by the university college for specific purposes have been applied to those purposes and managed in accordance with relevant legislation;
- funds provided by the OfS and UK Research and Innovation (including Research England), the Education and Skills Funding Agency and the Department for Education have been applied in accordance with the relevant terms and conditions; and
- the requirements of the OfS's accounts direction have been met.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

Under the OfS Regulatory Advice 9: Accounts Direction, we are required to report in respect of the following matters if, in our opinion:

- the provider's grant and fee income, as disclosed in the note 2.1 to the accounts, has been materially misstated; or
- the provider's expenditure on access and participation activities for the financial year, as disclosed in note 9 to the accounts, has been materially misstated.

We have nothing to report in respect of these matters.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the governing body in accordance with the Accounts Direction issued by the Office for Students dated 25 October 2019. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the governing body those matters we are required to state to it in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the board of governors as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Deloitte LLP

Deloitte LLP

Statutory Auditor

St Albans, United Kingdom

25 February 2022



Financials

Statement of comprehensive income and expenditure

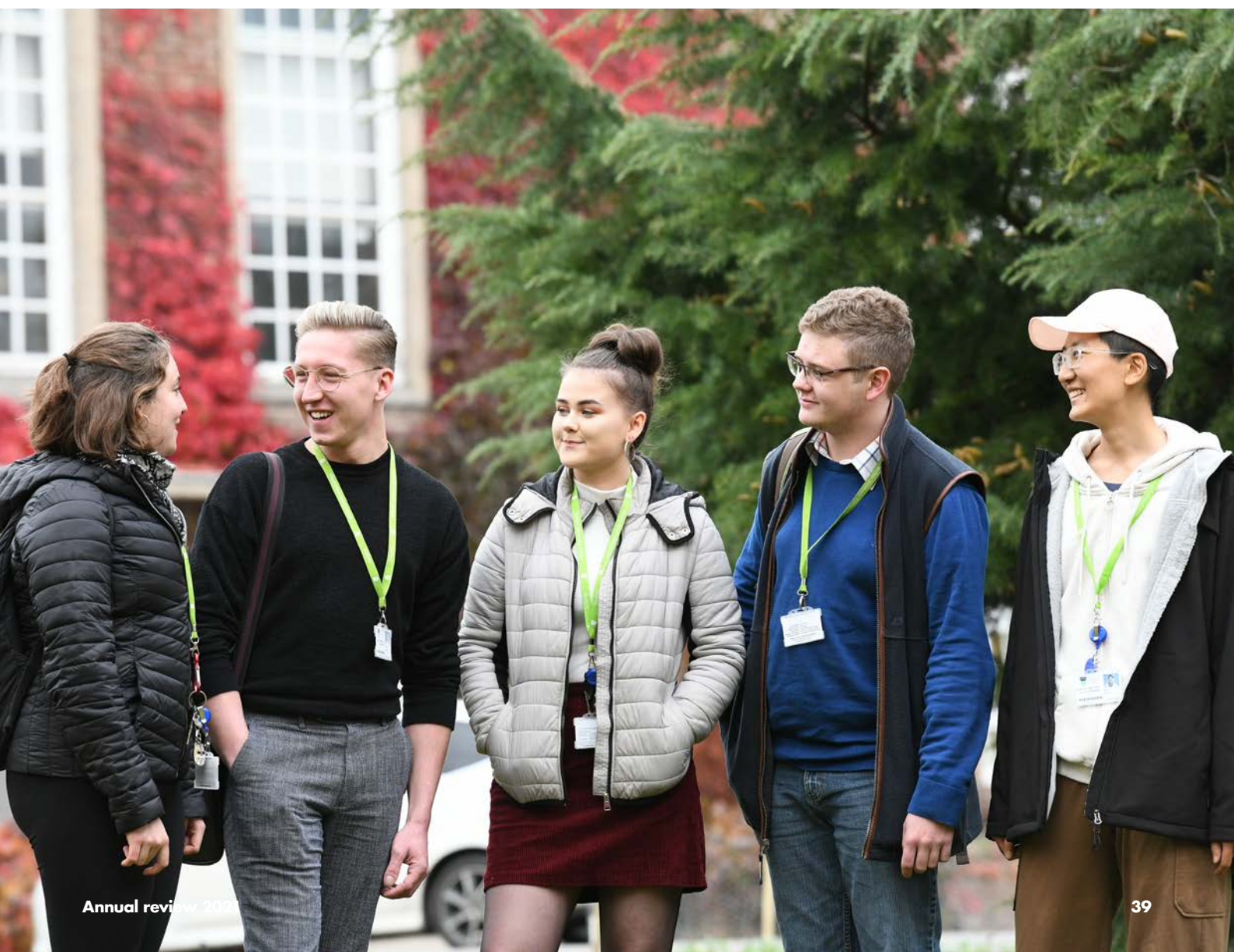
	Notes	Year ended 31 July 2021 £'000	Year ended 31 July 2020 £'000
Income			
Tuition fees and education contracts	1	7,115	7,100
Funding body grants	2	5,754	5,331
Other income	3	2,316	2,745
Investment income	4	67	80
Donations	5	25	1
Total income		15,277	15,257
Expenditure			
Staff costs	6	11,993	10,560
Other operating expenses	8	4,831	4,969
Depreciation	11,12	1,542	1,556
Interest and other finance costs	7	321	355
Total expenditure		18,687	17,440
Deficit before other gains/(losses)		(3,410)	(2,183)
Gain on disposal of fixed assets		319	162
Gain on revaluation of investment property		0	475
Deficit before tax		(3,091)	(1,546)
Taxation	10	0	0
Deficit for the year		(3,091)	(1,546)
Other comprehensive income			
Actuarial gain/(loss) in respect of pension scheme	24	4,460	(6,836)
Total comprehensive income/(expense) for the year		1,369	(8,382)
Represented by:			
Unrestricted comprehensive income/(expense) for the year		2,763	(7,165)
Revaluation reserve comprehensive expense for the year		(1,394)	(1,217)
		1,369	(8,382)
Deficit for the year attributable to:			
University College		(3,091)	(1,546)
Total comprehensive income/(expense) for the year attributable to			
University College		1,369	(8,382)

All items of income and expenditure relate to continuing activities.

The accompanying notes and policies on pages 42 to 55 form part of these financial statements.

University College statement of changes in reserves

	Notes	Income and expenditure account Unrestricted £'000	Revaluation reserve £'000	Total £'000
Balance at 1 August 2019		(311)	21,003	20,692
Deficit from the income and expenditure statement		(1,546)	0	(1,546)
Actuarial loss in respect of pension scheme	24	(6,836)	0	(6,836)
Transfers between revaluation and income and expenditure reserve		1,217	(1,217)	0
Total comprehensive expense for the year		(7,165)	(1,217)	(8,382)
Balance at 1 August 2020		(7,476)	19,786	12,310
Deficit from the income and expenditure statement		(3,091)	0	(3,091)
Actuarial gain in respect of pension scheme	24	4,460	0	4,460
Transfers between revaluation and income and expenditure reserve		1,394	(1,394)	0
Total comprehensive income/(expense) for the year		2,763	(1,394)	1,369
Balance at 31 July 2021		(4,713)	18,392	13,679



University College statement of financial position

	Notes	As at 31 July 2021 £'000	As at 31 July 2020 £'000
Non-current assets			
Fixed assets	11	31,694	33,137
Investments	12	975	997
		32,669	34,134
Current assets			
Stock	13	299	298
Trade and other receivables	14	673	645
Cash and cash equivalents	19	1,996	3,829
		2,968	4,772
Less: Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	15	(2,625)	(4,296)
Net current assets		343	476
Total assets less current liabilities		33,012	34,610
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	16	0	(112)
Provisions			
Pension provision	18	(19,333)	(22,188)
Total net assets		13,679	12,310
Income and expenditure reserve - unrestricted		(4,713)	(7,476)
Revaluation reserve		18,392	19,786
		13,679	12,310
Total Reserves		13,679	12,310

The financial statements were approved by the Governing Body on 24 February 2022 and were signed on its behalf on that date by:

Professor T Middleton
Vice-Chancellor



Mr D Hewitt
Chair of Board



University College cash flow

	Notes	As at 31 July 2021 £'000	As at 31 July 2020 £'000
Cash flow from operating activities			
Deficit for the year		(3,091)	(1,546)
Adjustment for non-cash items			
Depreciation	11, 12	1,542	1,556
Gain on revaluation of investment property		0	(475)
(Increase)/decrease in stock	13	(1)	19
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	14	(28)	191
Increase/(decrease) in creditors < 1 year	15	420	(67)
Decrease in creditors > 1 year	16	(83)	(84)
Increase in pension provision	18	1,605	995
Adjustment for investing or financing activities			
Investment income	4	(67)	(80)
Interest payable	7	27	61
Profit on the sale of fixed assets		(319)	(162)
Capital grant income	2	(91)	(55)
Net cash (outflow)/inflow from operating activities		(86)	353
Cash flows from investing activities			
Proceeds from sales of fixed assets		739	1,038
Capital grants receipts	2	91	55
Investment income	4	67	80
Payments made to acquire fixed assets	11	(497)	(419)
New non-current asset investments	12	0	0
		400	754
Cash flows from financing activities			
Interest paid	7	(27)	(61)
Repayments of amounts borrowed		(2,120)	(124)
		(2,147)	(185)
(Decrease)/Increase in cash and cash equivalents in the year		(1,833)	922
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the year	19	3,829	2,907
Cash and cash equivalents at end of the year	19	1,996	3,829



Statement of accounting policies for the year ended 31 July 2021

1. Basis of preparation

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP): Accounting for Further and Higher Education 2019 and in accordance with Financial Reporting Standards FRS 102. The University College is a public benefit entity and therefore has applied the relevant public benefit requirement of FRS 102. The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention (modified by the revaluation of fixed assets and investments).

2. Basis of consolidation

Writtle College Services Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary with net assets of £100 has not traded for a number of years and is currently dormant. The financial statements of the University College have not been prepared on a consolidated basis on the grounds of materiality.

The financial statements do not include those of Writtle University Colleges Students' Union as the University College does not exert control or dominant influence over policy decisions. The Student's Union presents its financial position to the governing body on an annual basis. Transactions between the University College and the Students' Union are disclosed under transactions with related parties (note 26).

3. Income recognition

Income from the sale of goods or services is credited to the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure when the goods or services are supplied to the external customers or the terms of the contract have been satisfied.

Fee income is stated gross of any expenditure which is not a discount and credited to the Statement of Income and Comprehensive Expenditure over the period in which students are studying. Where the amount of the tuition fee is reduced, by a discount for prompt payment, income receivable is shown net of the discount. Bursaries and scholarships are accounted for gross as expenditure and not deducted from income.

Funds the University College receives and disburses as a paying agent on behalf of a funding body are excluded from the income and expenditure of the University College where the University College is exposed to minimal risk or enjoys minimal economic benefit related to the transaction.

Grant funding

Grant funding including funding council block grant, research grants from government sources, grants (including research grants) from non-government sources are recognised as income when the University College is entitled to the income and performance related conditions have been met. Income received in

advance of performance related conditions being met is recognised as deferred income within creditors on the statement of financial position and released to income as the conditions are met.

Grants (including research grants) from non-government sources are recognised in income when the University College is entitled to the income and performance related conditions have been met. Income received in advance of performance related conditions being met is recognised as deferred income within creditors on the statement of financial position and released to income as the conditions are met.

Donations and endowments

Non exchange transactions without performance related conditions are donations and endowments. Donations and endowments with donor imposed restrictions are recognised in income when the University College is entitled to the funds. Income is retained within the restricted reserve until such time that it is utilised in line with such restrictions at which point the income is released to general reserves through a reserve transfer.

Donations with no restrictions are recognised in income when the University College is entitled to the funds.

Capital grants

Capital grants are recognised in income when the University College is entitled to the funds subject to any performance related conditions being met.

Investment income

Investment income is credited to the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure on a receivable basis.

4. Accounting for retirement benefits

Retirement benefits to employees of the University College are provided by the Teachers' Pensions Scheme (TPS) and the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). These are defined benefit schemes which are externally funded and contracted out of the State Earnings Related Pension Scheme.

Contributions to the TPS are charged to the income and expenditure so as to spread the costs of pensions over the employees' working lives with the University College in such a way that the pension cost is a substantially level percentage of current and future pensionable payroll. The contributions are determined by qualified actuaries on the basis of quinquennial valuations using a prospective benefit method.

The assets of the LGPS are measured using closing market values. LGPS liabilities are measured using the projected unit method and are discounted at the current rate of return on a high-quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liability. The increase in the present value of the liabilities of the scheme expected to arise from employee service in the period is charged to the operating surplus.

The expected return on the scheme's assets and the increase during the period in the present value of the schemes liabilities, arising from the passage of time, are included in the pension finance costs. Actuarial comprehensive income is recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.

A more detailed explanation of the arrangements for pension schemes can be found in Note 24.

5. Employment benefits

Short-term employment benefits such as salaries and compensated absences are recognised as an expense in the year in which the employees render service to the University College. Any unused benefits such as holiday pay, are accrued and measured as the additional amount the University College expects to pay as a result of the unused entitlement.

6. Finance leases

Leases in which the University College assumes substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership of the leased asset are classified as finance leases. Leased assets acquired by way of finance lease and the corresponding lease liabilities are initially recognised at an amount equal to the lower of their fair value and the present value of the minimum lease payments at inception of the lease.

Minimum lease payments are apportioned between the finance charge and the reduction of the outstanding liability. The finance charge is allocated to each period during the lease term so as to produce a constant periodic rate of interest on the remaining balance of the liability.

7. Operating leases

Costs in respect of operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the lease term. Any lease premiums or incentives are spread over the minimum lease term.

8. Foreign currency

Transactions in foreign currencies are translated to the respective functional currencies of Group entities at the foreign exchange rate ruling at the date of the transaction. Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies at the statement of financial position date are translated to the functional currency at the foreign exchange rate ruling at that date.

9. Fixed assets

Fixed assets are stated at cost or deemed cost less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Deemed cost refers to land and buildings that had been revalued to fair value on the date of transition to the 2015 FE HE SORP, being the revalued amount at the date of that revaluation.

Where parts of a fixed asset have different useful lives, they are accounted for as separate items of fixed assets. However, it is recognised that for certain historical assets held it is neither practical nor cost effective to split assets in this way. Componentisation has been adopted for assets acquired on or after 1 August 2014.

Freehold land and buildings

Costs incurred in relation to land and buildings after initial purchase or construction, and prior to valuation, are capitalised to the extent that they increase the expected future benefits to the University College.

Freehold land is not depreciated as it is considered to have an indefinite useful life. Freehold buildings are depreciated on a straight-line basis over their expected useful economic life to the University College ranging between 5-90 years.

No depreciation is charged on assets in the course of construction.

Fixtures, fittings & equipment

Equipment costing less than £1,000 per individual item is written off to the income and expenditure account in the period of acquisition. All other equipment is capitalised at cost.

Exceptionally, PCs will be considered as a capital purchase even if purchased individually at a cost of less than £1,000 (including VAT).

Capitalised equipment including computers and software is depreciated on a straight-line basis over its expected useful economic life to the University College ranging between 2-15 years.

Depreciation methods, useful lives and residual values are reviewed at the date of preparation of each statement of financial position.

Where equipment is acquired with the aid of specific grants it is capitalised and depreciated in accordance with the above policy.

Borrowing costs

Borrowing costs are recognised as expenditure in the period in which they are incurred, no borrowing costs directly attributable in the acquisition, construction or production of a qualifying asset are capitalised.

10. Investment properties

Investment property is land and buildings held for rental income or capital appreciation rather than for use in delivering services.

Investment properties were revalued initially as part of the overall valuation undertaken as at 1 August 2014

The University College utilised the services of BNP Paribas Real Estate to provide valuation for the investment portfolio as at 31 July 2021.

Also see note 12 on non-current investments.

11. Stock

Stock (standing crops, livestock and consumables) is valued at the at the lower of cost and estimated selling price less costs to complete and sell.

12. Cash and cash equivalents

Cash includes cash in hand, deposits repayable on demand and overdrafts. Deposits are repayable on demand if they are in practice available within 24 hours without penalty.

Cash equivalents are short term, highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash with insignificant risk of change in value.

13. Provisions, contingent liabilities and contingent assets

Provisions are recognised in the financial statements when:

- (a) the University College has a present obligation (legal or constructive) as a result of a past event;
- (b) it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation; and
- (c) a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

The amount recognised as a provision is determined by discounting the expected future cash flows at a pre-tax rate that reflects risks specific to the liability.

A contingent liability arises from a past event that gives the University College a possible obligation whose existence will only be confirmed by the occurrence or otherwise of uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the University. Contingent liabilities also arise in circumstances where a provision would otherwise be made but either it is not probable that an outflow of resources will be required or the amount of the obligation cannot be measured reliably.

A contingent asset arises where an event has taken place that gives the University College a possible asset whose existence will only be confirmed by the occurrence or otherwise of uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the University College.

Contingent assets and liabilities are not recognised in the statement of financial position but would be disclosed in the notes.

The University College do not have any contingent assets and liabilities as at 31 July 2021 (2019/20: nil).

14. Taxation

The University College is an exempt charity within the meaning of Part 3 of the Charities Act 2011, and, as such, is a charity within the meaning of Section 506 (1) of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988. The University College is recognised as a charity by HM Revenue & Customs.

It is therefore a charity within the meaning of Para 1 of schedule 6 to the Finance Act 2010 and accordingly, the University College is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by section 478-488 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 (CTA 2010) or section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied to exclusively charitable purposes.

The University College receives no similar exemption in respect of Value Added Tax. The University College is partially exempt for Value Added Tax as its main activity is the supply of education which is exempt. Irrecoverable VAT on inputs is included in the costs of such inputs. Any irrecoverable VAT allocated to fixed assets is included in their cost.

Should the University College's subsidiary company; Writtle College Services Ltd resume trading then it would be liable to Corporation Tax in the same way as any other commercial organisation.

15. Reserves

Reserves are classified as restricted or unrestricted. Restricted endowment reserves include balances which, through endowment to the University College, are held as a permanently restricted fund which the University must hold in perpetuity.

Other restricted reserves include balances where the donor has designated a specific purpose. The University College does not have any restricted reserves as at 31 July 2021 (2019/20: nil).

16. Financial instruments

Financial liabilities and equity are classified according to the substance of the financial instrument's contractual obligations, rather than the financial instrument's legal form. All loans, investments and short term deposits held by the University College are classified as basic financial instruments in accordance with FRS 102. These instruments are initially recorded at the transaction price less any transaction costs (historical cost). FRS 102 requires that basic instruments are subsequently measured at amortised cost, however the University College has calculated that the difference between the historical cost and amortised cost basis is not material and so these financial instruments are stated on the statement of financial position at historical cost. Loans and investments that are payable or receivable within one year are not discounted.

17. Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

In the application of the University College's accounting policies, which are described in accounting policy notes 1-17, judgements (other than those involving estimations) that have a significant impact on the amounts recognised and to make we are required to make estimates and assumptions about the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimated and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

Critical accounting judgements

There are no critical judgements, apart from those involving estimation (which are dealt with separately below).

Key source of estimation uncertainty

The key assumptions concerning the future, and other key sources of estimation at the statement of financial position date, that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year, are discussed below:

Local Government Pension Scheme

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit liability depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a variety of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost (income) for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 24, will impact the carrying amount of the pension liability. Furthermore a roll forward approach which projects results from the latest full actuarial valuation performed at 31 March 2019 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 July 2021. Any differences between these figures derived from the roll forward approach and a full actuarial valuation would impact on the carrying amount of the pension liability.



Notes to the financial statements

	Notes	Year ended 31 July 2021 £'000	Year ended 31 July 2020 £'000
1. Tuition fees and education contracts			
HE			
Full-time students' fees		5,894	5,753
Full-time students charged international fees		200	299
Part-time student fees		291	286
		6,385	6,338
FE			
Full-time students' fees		78	59
Full-time students charged international fees		10	30
Part-time student fees		213	320
Short course student fees		372	279
Other fees and support grants		57	74
		730	762
		7,115	7,100

2. Funding body grants			
Recurrent grant			
Office for Students		1,072	1,050
Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)		4,591	4,226
Capital Grant (OfS)		91	55
		5,754	5,331

2.1 Grant and fee income			
Note The source of grant and fee income, included in notes 1 to 2 is as follows:			
OfS	Grant income from the OfS	1,118	1,060
Other bodies	Grant income from other bodies	45	45
Taught	Fee income for taught awards (exclusive of VAT)	6,385	6,338
Non-qualifying	Fee income from non-qualifying courses (exclusive of VAT)	5,321	4,988
		12,869	12,431

3. Other income			
Residences, catering and conferences		1,276	1,818
Estate activities		452	515
Other income		588	412
		2,316	2,745

4. Investment income			
Income from investment properties		65	69
Interest receivable		2	11
		67	80

5. Donations and endowments			
Unrestricted donations		25	1

	Notes	Year ended 31 July 2021 £'000	Year ended 31 July 2020 £'000
6. Staff costs			
Salaries		8,172	7,638
Other taxes & social security costs		752	690
Other pension costs		2,979	2,230
Exceptional restructuring costs		90	2
Total		11,993	10,560

The total amount of any compensation for loss of office paid across the whole College was £90k (2019/20 £2k) and related to 5 (2019/20: 1) people.

Emoluments of the Vice-Chancellor:			
Salary		116	116
Benefits*		2	2
		118	118
Pension contributions		27	27
		145	145

Remuneration of higher paid staff, including that of the Vice-Chancellor and excluding employers pension contributions:

*Benefit relates to private medical insurance, this is a taxable benefit which is paid on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor.

One member of staff, other than the Vice-Chancellor was paid in excess of £100,000. In 2019/20 no member of staff, other than the Vice-Chancellor was paid in excess of £100,000.

Basic salary per annum	Number of staff (2020/21)	Number of staff (2019/20)
£100,001 – £104,999	-	-
£105,000 – £109,999	-	-
£110,001 – £114,999	1	-
£115,001 – £119,999	1	1

The head of the provider's basic salary is 4.2 (2019/20: 4.6) times the median pay of staff, where the median pay is calculated on a full-time equivalent basis for the salaries paid by the provider to its staff, excluding agency.

The head of the provider's total remuneration is 4.5 (2019/20: 5.0) times the median total remuneration of staff, where the median total remuneration is calculated on a full-time equivalent basis for the total remuneration by the provider of its staff excluding agency.

Summary justification

The Vice-Chancellor (VC), as the OfS Accountable Officer and Senior Academic, has overall responsibility for the Leadership and Management of Writtle University College (WUC), shaping the academic development and ensuring WUC remains agile within the sector. Working with the Board of Governors, the VC sets the Strategic direction for and manages the Leadership Group to develop and evolve the strategy. As the accountable officer the VC exercises general oversight of WUC's organisational structure and financial position and is held accountable in the role by the Board**, being required to ensure robust financial planning and risk management systems are in place to delivery strategic opportunities and commitment to our students.

**The VCs performance is measured through achievement of Organisational KPIs as reviewed by the Board and through relevant Committee structures, alongside an annual review of performance by the Chair of Governors. The level of remuneration has regularly been benchmarked against the industry.

Key management personnel

Key management personnel are those persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the University College. The University College has defined key management personnel as the Leadership Group (LG).

The Leadership Group members currently are

Vice Chancellor
Director of HR & Student Services
Registrar & Secretary
Chief Financial Officer

The total salary paid to LG for 2020/21 £436k, 4 posts (2019/20: £355k 4 posts)

The was compensation paid for loss of office in 2020/21 was nil (2019/20: nil)

Average staff numbers by major category:	2021 No.	2020 No.
Academic	94	88
Academic support services	66	62
Business support staff	82	81
	242	231

Board Members

The University College Board members are the trustees for charitable law purposes. Due to the nature of the University College's operations and the compositions of the Board, being drawn from local public and private sector organisations, it is inevitable that transactions will take place with organisations in which a member of the Board may have an interest. All transactions involving organisations in which a member of Board may have an interest, including those identified below, are conducted at arms length and in accordance with the University College's Financial Regulations and usual procurement procedures.

The total expenses paid to or on behalf of 1 board member was £563 (2019/20: £1,495 to 6 board members). This represents travel and subsistence expenses incurred in attending Board, Committee meetings and Charity events in their official capacity.

	Notes	Year ended 31 July 2021 £'000	Year ended 31 July 2020 £'000
7. Interest and other finance costs			
Bank loan interest		27	61
Pension scheme finance costs	24	294	294
		321	355

8. Analysis of total expenditure by activity			
Residences, catering and conferences		576	803
Consumables and laboratory expenditure		93	101
Books and periodicals		137	142
Heat, light, water and power		458	490
Repairs and general maintenance		371	255
Rents and rates		111	102
Auditors' remuneration			
Fees payable to external auditors for			
Financial statements audit		66	60
Financial statements – teachers pension scheme assurance work		2	2
Fees payable to internal auditors for			
Internal audit		49	34
Equipment operating lease rentals		4	41
Cleaning costs		227	190
Computer costs – licences & maintenance agreements		218	221
Examination fees		292	221
Printing costs		64	84
Scholarships		154	172
Insurances		181	189
Professional & consultancy		296	255
Marketing		327	390
Transport		70	83
Other expenses		600	682
Estate activities		535	452
		4,831	4,969

9. Access and Participation			
Access investment		51	48
Financial support		130	133
Disability support		92	86
Research and evaluation		88	55
(i)		361	322

(i) £192k (2019/20: £189k) of these costs are already included in the overall staff costs figures included in the financial statements, see note 6. The remaining costs are included in note 8 above.

Access investment		45	43
Financial support		17	19
Disability support (excluding expenditure included in the two categories above)		83	82
Research and evaluation		47	45
		192	189

https://writtle.ac.uk/pdfs/Access-and-Participation-Plan-2020-21_2024-2025.pdf

Access investment

Whilst not as significant as in the prior year, our Access shortfall is due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and our ability to be able to host in-person events. Some limited events of smaller scale have taken place, aligned to our APP priorities but government restrictions have reduced the number of school activities (by around 90%) both on campus and off campus. Virtual formats, such as school assemblies, careers fairs and mock interviews have taken place however the cost of running these online has been considerably lower. We have continued to build on our online resources, including the launch of a new 360 virtual tour and our Virtual Applicant Hub. Over the course of 2020/21 we have started to develop increased partnerships with local community groups and have launched our new 3x3 basketball facilities which we plan to utilise, developing relationships with an increased number of schools from lower participation neighbourhoods.

10. Taxation

UK Corporation Tax

The standard rate of tax for the year, based on the UK standard rate of corporation tax is 19% (2019/20: 19%).

The Institution is an exempt charity within the meaning of schedule 3 of the Charities Act 2011 and is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1, Schedule 6, Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation purposes. Accordingly, the Institution is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by section 287 CTA2009 and sections 471, and 478-488 CTA 2010 (formerly s505 of ICTA 1988) or section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied to exclusively charitable purposes.

11. Fixed assets

	Freehold land and buildings £'000	Fixtures, fittings and equipment £'000	Total £'000
Cost or valuation			
At 1 August 2020	36,012	11,480	47,492
Additions	190	307	497
Disposals	(454)	(205)	(659)
At 31 July 2021	35,748	11,582	47,330
Depreciation			
At 1 August 2020	5,534	8,821	14,355
Charge for the year	667	853	1,520
Disposals	(40)	(199)	(239)
At 31 July 2021	6,161	9,475	15,636
Net book value			
At 31 July 2021	29,587	2,107	31,694
At 31 July 2020	30,478	2,659	33,137

At 31 July 2021, freehold land and buildings included £3.9m (2019/20: £3.9m) in respect of freehold land and is not depreciated.

A full valuation of the University College's freehold land and buildings was carried out as at 1 August 2014 by Strutt and Parker.

12. Non-current investments

	Other fixed assets investments £'000	Total £'000
At 1 August 2020	997	997
Charge for the year	(22)	(22)
At 31 July 2021	975	975

Investment properties were revalued initially as part of the overall valuation undertaken as at 1 August 2014 and have been revalued at 31 July 2020 and 2021.

The investment properties currently totalling £975k (2019/20: £997k) were revalued on an open market basis as at 31 July 2021 by an external valuer, BNP Paribas Real Estate which is regulated by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. The valuation was performed in accordance with the RICS Valuation - Professional Standards.

The investment properties were valued by an independent valuer with a recognised and relevant professional qualification and with recent experience in the location and category of the investment property being valued, BNP Paribas Real Estate, as at 31 July 2021, on the basis of fair value in accordance with the Appraisal and Valuation Manual of The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors.

The University College owns 100% of the issued share capital of Writtle College Services Limited, a company registered in England (number 3466224). The company ceased trading with effect from 1st August 2009.

13. Stock

	Year ended 31 July 2021	Year ended 31 July 2020
Work in progress	60	49
Livestock	143	141
General consumables	96	108
	299	298

14. Trade and other receivables		
	Year ended 31 July 2021 £'000	Year ended 31 July 2020 £'000
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Other trade receivables	200	245
Prepayments and accrued income	473	400
	673	645

15. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year		
Secured loans	29	2,111
Unsecured loans	0	9
Trade payables	758	586
Social security and other taxation payable	180	185
Accruals	751	696
Deferred income and payments received on account	549	385
Other creditors	175	168
Amounts due to funding bodies	183	156
	2,625	4,296

16. Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year		
Secured loans	0	29
Amounts due to funding bodies	0	83
	0	112

Analysis of secured bank loans:		
Due within one year or on demand (Note 15)	29	2,111
Due between one and two years	0	29
Due after more than one year	0	29
Total secured bank loans	29	2,140
Analysis of unsecured OfS (HEFCE) loans:		
Due within one year or on demand (Note 15)	0	9
Total unsecured OfS (HEFCE) loans	0	9
Analysis of unsecured loans:		
Due within one year or on demand (Note 15)	0	9
Total unsecured loans	0	9
Secured loans	29	2,140
Unsecured loans	0	9

The bank loans and overdraft are secured on the freehold land and buildings

Included in the loans are the following:

Repayable	Lender	Amount £'000	Term	Interest rate %
June 2021	Barclays	0		2.32
Aug 21	Barclays	29		5.45
		29		
Nov 20	OfS	0		0.00
		29		

The University College repaid a £2m loan within the year.

The University College has 2 loans secured with Barclays Bank plc, totalling £16k and £13k as at 31 July 2021.

The loans are repayable by quarterly instalments until August 2021. These have a fixed interest rate of 5.45%.

In June 2021 a £1 million Trade Loan Facility was arranged with Barclays Bank. This is based upon the three instalments of tuition fee receipts from the Student Loan Company (SLC) in October, February and May and will enable the University College to draw down from this facility in advance of the next instalment from the SLC, thereby providing a mechanism to manage peaks and troughs in the annual cycle of cash inflows and outflows. As at 31 July 2021 this facility had not been utilised and it is anticipated that the first drawdown will take place during the second quarter of the 2021/22 financial year.

17. Reconciliation of net debt		
Net debt 1 August 2020	(1,680)	(634)
Movement in cash and cash equivalents	(1,833)	922
Other non-cash changes	1,546	(1,968)
Net debt 31 July 2021	(1,967)	(1,680)
Change in net debt	(287)	(1,046)

Analysis of net debt:		
Cash and cash equivalents	1,996	3,829
Borrowings: amounts falling due within one year		
Secured loans	29	2,111
Unsecured loans	0	9
	29	2,120
Borrowings: amounts falling due after more than one year		
Secured loans	0	29
	0	29
Net debt	(1,967)	(1,680)

18. Pension provision		
	Defined benefit obligations (note 24) £'000	Total pensions provisions £'000
At 1 August 2020	22,188	22,188
Actuarial gain	(4,460)	(4,460)
Interest costs	294	294
Employee cost of scheme	1,311	1,311
At 31 July 2021	19,333	19,333

19. Cash and cash equivalents			
	At 1 August 2020 £'000	Cash flows £'000	At 31 July 2021 £'000
Cash and cash equivalents	3,829	(1,833)	1,996

20. Capital and other commitments		
Provision has not been made for the following capital commitments at 31 July 2021:		
	31 July 2021 £'000	31 July 2020 £'000
Property	36	0
Plant and equipment	72	1
Commitments contracted for	108	1

21. Lease obligations		
Total rentals payable under operating leases:		
Payable during the year	4	41
Future minimum lease payments due:		
Not later than 1 year	3	2
Total lease payments due	3	2

22. Events after the reporting period	
There are no material post statement of financial position events to report	

23. Subsidiary undertaking

The subsidiary company is (which is registered in England & Wales), wholly owned by the University, is as follows:

Company	Status
Writtle College Services Ltd	100% owned

The company ceased trading with effect from 1st August 2009.

Registered office: Lordship Road, Writtle, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 3RR

Writtle College Services Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary with net assets of £100 has not traded for a number of years and is currently dormant.

The financial statements of the University College have not been prepared on a consolidated basis on the grounds of materiality.

24. Pension schemes

Different categories of staff were eligible to join one of two different schemes:

- Local Government Scheme (LGPS)
- Teachers Pension Scheme (TPS)

The two schemes, are both defined-benefit schemes contracted out of the State Second Pension (S2P) the assets of which are held in separate trustee administered funds.

Total pension cost for the year	Year ended 31 July 2021 £'000	Year ended 31 July 2020 £'000
TPS	847	793
LGPS*	821	736
Employee charge for scheme	1,311	701
	2,979	2,230

*LGPS contribution of £821k, includes £141k (2019/20: £142k) of pension deficit paid in year

Contributions amounting to £174k (2019/20: £168k) were payable to the scheme at 31 July 2021 and are included within creditors, this amount was subsequently paid in August 2021.

Teachers' Pension Scheme

The Teachers' Pension Scheme ("TPS") is a statutory, contributory, defined benefit scheme. The regulations under which the TPS operates are the Teachers' Pensions Regulations 2014. These regulations apply to teachers in schools and other educational establishments in England and Wales maintained by local authorities, to teachers in many independent and voluntary-aided schools, and to teachers and lecturers in establishments of further and higher education. Membership is automatic for full-time teachers and lecturers and from 1 January 2007 automatic for teachers and lecturers in part-time employment following appointment or a change of contract. Teachers and lecturers are able to opt out of the TPS.

The teachers' pension budgeting and valuation account

Although teachers and lecturers are employed by various bodies, their retirement and other pension benefits, including annual increases payable under the Pensions (Increase) Acts are, as provided for in the Superannuation Act 1972, paid out of monies provided by Parliament. Under the unfunded TPS, teachers' contributions on a 'pay-as-you-go' basis, and employers' contributions, are credited to the Exchequer under arrangements governed by the above Act.

The Teachers' Pensions Regulations 2014 require an annual account, the Teachers' Pension Budgeting and Valuation Account, to be kept of receipts and expenditure (including the cost of pensions' increases). From 1 April 2001, the Account has been credited with a real rate of return (in excess of price increases and currently set at 3.5%), which is equivalent to assuming that the balance in the Account is invested in notional investments that produce that real rate of return.

Valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme

The latest actuarial review of the TPS was carried out as at 31 March 2019 and in accordance with

The Public Service Pensions (Valuations and Employer Cost Cap) Directions 2014.

The valuation report was published by the Department for Education (the Department) on 9 June 2014. The key results of the valuation are:

- employer contribution rates were set at 16.48% for August 2019, this rose to 23.68% from September 2019 of pensionable pay
- (including a 0.08% levy for administration) total scheme liabilities for service to the effective date of £191.5 billion, and notional assets of £176.6 billion, giving a notional past service deficit of £14.9 billion; and;
- an employer cost cap of 10.9% of pensionable pay.

The new employer contribution rate for the TPS has been implemented in September 2015.

A full copy of the valuation report and supporting documentation can be found on the Teachers' Pension Scheme website at the following location: <https://www.teacherspensions.co.uk/news/employers/2014/06/publication-of-the-valuation-report.aspx>.

Scheme changes

Following the Hutton report in March 2011 and the subsequent consultations with trade unions and other representative bodies on reform of the TPS, the Department published a Proposed Final Agreement, setting out the design for a reformed TPS was implemented from 1 April 2015.

The key provisions of the reformed scheme include: a pension based on career average earnings; an accrual rate of 1/57th; and a Normal Pension Age equal to State Pension Age, but with options to enable members to retire earlier or later than their Normal Pension Age. Importantly, pension benefits built up before 1 April 2015 will be fully protected.

In addition, the Proposed Final Agreement includes a Government commitment that those within 10 years of Normal Pension Age on 1 April 2012 will see no change to the age at which they can retire, and no decrease in the amount of pension they receive when they retire. There will also be further transitional protection, tapered over a three and a half year period, for people who would fall up to three and a half years outside of the 10 year protection.

Regulations giving effect to a reformed Teachers' Pension Scheme came into force on 1 April 2014 and the reformed scheme commenced on 1 April 2015.

The pension costs paid to TPS in the year amounted to £847,000 (2019/20: £793,000)

FRS 102 (28)

Under the definitions set out in FRS 102 (28.11), the TPS is a multi-employer pension scheme. The University College is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities of the scheme.

Accordingly, the University College has taken advantage of the exemption in FRS 102 and has accounted for its contributions to the scheme as if it were a defined-contribution plan. The University College has set out above the information available on the plan and the implications for the University College in terms of the anticipated contribution rates.

Local Government Pension Scheme

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit scheme, with assets held in separate trustee administered funds.

The Total contributions, (employers and employees) made for the year ended 31 July 2021 were £925,000 (2019/20: £808,000) of which employer's contributions totalled £678,000 (2019/20: £579,000) and employees contributions totalled £247,000 (2019/20: £229,000)

The contribution rates were 17% from April 2020 for employers and range from 5.5% to 12.5% for employees, depending on salary.

In addition, an annual employers contribution of £141,006 (2020: £142,095) is made to meet past service deficiencies.

The following information is based upon a full actuarial valuation of the fund as at 31 March 2019 updated to 31 July 2021 by a qualified independent actuary.

	At 31 July 2021	At 31 July 2020
Principal actuarial assumptions		
Rate of RPI inflation	3.15%	3.05%
Rate of CPI inflation	2.80%	2.25%
Rate of increases in salaries	3.80%	3.25%
Rate of increase for pensions in payment/inflation	2.80%	2.25%
Discount rate for liabilities	1.60%	1.35%
Commutation of pensions to lump sums	50.00%	50.00%

The current mortality assumptions include sufficient allowance for future improvements in mortality rates.

The assumed life expectations on retirement age 65 are:

Retiring today		
Males	21.60	21.80
Females	23.60	23.80

Retiring in 20 years		
Males	22.90	23.20
Females	25.10	25.20

The University College's assets in the scheme and the expected rate of return were:

	Fair value at 31 July 2021	Updated fair value at 31 July 2020
Long term rate of return expected at	15%	15%

	£'000	£'000
Equities	24,876	19,765
Government bonds	979	1,363
Other bonds	1,807	1,785
Property	2,712	2,478
Cash/liquidity	1,082	867
Other	7,405	5,641
Total market value of assets	38,861	31,899

Actuarial value of scheme liabilities	(58,194)	(54,087)
Deficit in the scheme - Net pension liability	(19,333)	(22,188)

The amount included in the statement of financial position in respect of the defined benefit pension plan is as follows:

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
Fair value of plan assets	38,861	31,899
Present value of plan liabilities	(58,167)	(54,058)
Present value of unfunded liabilities	(27)	(29)
Net pensions liability (Note 18)	(19,333)	(22,188)

Amounts recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income in respect of the plan are as follows:

Amounts included in staff costs		
Current service cost	2,111	1,402
Total	2,111	1,402

Amounts included in investment income		
Net interest income	294	294
	294	294

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
Movement in net defined benefit deficit in the year:		
Deficit in the scheme at 1 August	(22,188)	(14,357)
- Current employer service costs	(2,111)	(1,402)
- Employer contributions	821	721
Gains Past service costs/curtailments or settlements	(21)	(20)
Net return on assets	(294)	(294)
Actuarial gain/(loss)	4,460	(6,836)
Deficit on scheme at 31 July	(19,333)	(22,188)

Asset & liability reconciliation

Changes in the present value of defined benefit obligations		
Liabilities at start of period	54,762	44,115
Current service cost	2,111	1,402
Interest cost on pension liabilities	732	921
Employee contributions	247	229
Experience (gain)/loss on defined benefit obligation	(1,074)	1,692
Changes in financial assumptions	3,359	7,023
Change in demographic assumptions	(691)	(521)
Benefits paid	(1,250)	(772)
Unfunded pension payments	(2)	(2)
Liabilities at end of period	58,194	54,087

Reconciliation of assets		
Assets at start of period	32,516	29,758
Interest on assets	438	627
Return on assets less interest	6,112	397
Other actuarial gains	0	961
Administration expenses	(21)	(20)
Employer contributions	821	721
Employee contributions	247	229
Benefits paid	(1,252)	(774)
Assets at end of period	38,861	31,899

The estimated value of employers contributions for the year to 31 July 2022 is £1,889k (2020/21: £1,485k), including deficit contributions.

Deficit contributions

The College has entered into an agreement with the LGPS to make additional contributions of £144,350 per annum from 1st April 2021 in addition to normal funding levels until the next full valuation at which point the situation will be reviewed again.

25. Learner support funds

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
Funding council grants	117	110
Contribution to staff administration	(5)	(4)
	112	106
Balance unspent and brought forward	21	2
Disbursement to students	(98)	(56)
To be returned to funding council	(9)	(31)
Balance unspent at 31 July	26	21

There is £26k unspent funds to be carried forward to 2021/2022 (2020/2021: £21k).
Funding Council grants are available solely for students: the University College acts only as a paying agent.
The grants and related disbursements are therefore excluded from the Income and Expenditure Accounts.

26. Related parties

Due to the nature of the University College's operations and the composition of the Board of Governors (being drawn from public and private sector organisations), it is inevitable that transactions will take place with organisations in which a member of the Board of Governors may have an interest. All transactions involving organisations in which a member of the Board of Governors may have an interest are conducted at arms length and in accordance with the University College's financial regulations and normal procurement procedures.

The Student Union is run by the students of the University College, the University College employ 2 members of staff.



