Personal Development Operational Framework

2025-2027

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Contents

1. Purpose and Scope

This operational framework outlines the implementation of the Personal Development Strategy 2025–2027 at Wirral Met College. It defines the structures, responsibilities, delivery models, and monitoring systems required to embed high-quality personal development across all curriculum areas. The framework ensures that every learner, regardless of age, programme, or background, benefits from consistent, inclusive, and purposeful personal development that prepares them for life, learning, and work.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

Strategic oversight of personal development is held by the Vice Principal for Curriculum and Student Experience, who ensures that personal development remains a core priority within the College's strategic vision. The Director of Personal Development provides leadership on both strategic and operational aspects, including the development and review of key documents, stakeholder engagement, and cross-departmental alignment.

The Head of Personal Development is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day implementation of tutorial and enrichment programmes. This includes managing the Pastoral Coach team, conducting daily quality assurance checks on tutorial delivery, and ensuring consistency across campuses. The Student Enrichment and Engagement Manager leads the delivery of the College's enrichment offer, ensuring it aligns with weekly tutorial themes and provides opportunities to build career portfolios and life experiences.

The Head of Careers and Pathways ensures that learners have access to high-quality, impartial careers guidance and progression planning, while working closely with admissions, curriculum teams, and pastoral staff to create clear and responsive referral pathways.

Dedicated staff are responsible for delivering tutorial content, supporting learners' personal development journeys, and signposting students to appropriate services when needed.

3. Delivery Model by Provision Type

Personal development is delivered in an adapted and inclusive way across the College, tailored to the needs of specific learner groups. Each delivery model draws on evidence-based practices and is aligned with the overarching Personal Development Strategy.

Study Programme Students

For Study Programme students aged 16–18, including those enrolled on the Aspiring Professionals programme, a weekly 1.5-hour Thrive tutorial is delivered by dedicated Pastoral Coaches. The curriculum is mapped to the twelve core employability skills and includes a thematic approach that links to enrichment, careers education, and student voice activities. Aspiring Professionals also receive an additional 1.5 hours of focused personal development, exploring the five core transferable skills of Confidence, Resilience, Independence, Organisation, and Communication. These sessions change focus each half term and incorporate discussion-based activities, project work, and skill application exercises.

ESOL learners (16-18)

For ESOL students aged 16–18, personal development is embedded within their main study programme, typically delivered as a 1.5-hour weekly session by the course tutor. They are also supported by a dedicated pastoral coach who provides information and guidance on housing, finances, well-being, safeguarding, careers and future pathways. This model provides a highly structured and supportive environment where learners build key skills in emotional literacy, well-being, cultural awareness, rights and responsibilities, and future planning. Sessions are differentiated and trauma-informed, ensuring safe and inclusive participation.

Specialist Support Provision

Learners in Specialist Support provision, including those in the Routes and Prep for Life programmes, receive bespoke personal development within their

course delivery. Routes learners follow a trauma-informed approach that builds trust, emotional regulation, and communication. Prep for Life learners benefit from a nationally recognised sensory-based personal development curriculum, awarded the AoC Beacon Award for Specialist Support in 2024. This provision centres on independence, communication, emotional understanding, and preparing for adulthood, with personalised targets reviewed regularly.

Adult learners

Adult learners (19+) receive personal development support through both their course tutors and designated well-being staff. Core themes include mental health and well-being, career progression, digital literacy, and community engagement. Adult learners can access centralised resources through the Virtual Campus and WMC Connected App. Additional workshops and signposting are available throughout the year, supporting their diverse needs including upskilling, reskilling, and progression to higher education or employment.

Apprentices

Apprentices engage with personal development through their Individual Learning Plan, guided by their trainer-assessor. Key themes include employability, professional behaviours, career planning, and well-being. Apprentices also complete independent e-learning modules and are offered enrichment opportunities such as guest speaker sessions and masterclasses with industry leaders to broaden their awareness and aspirations.

Higher Education

Higher Education students receive group tutorials and developmental workshops as part of their wider tutorial entitlement. These cover topics such as identity, self-advocacy, academic resilience, time management, and mental well-being. Students are also supported by a dedicated Well-being Coordinator and benefit from access to their awarding university's personal development offer, in addition to college support services.

4. Tools and Platforms

To support the delivery and monitoring of personal development across all provision types, the College uses a range of digital tools and systems. UniFrog is used for learners on Study Programmes to track the development of twelve core skills. These are recorded at key points throughout the year, with learners receiving digital and physical badges as recognition.

Virtual Campus is used to support adult learners by providing easy access to personal development content, signposting, and progress logs.

ProMonitor is used for all learners to document progress, targets, 1:1 reviews, and tutorial outcomes.

The WMC Connected App, for our adult learners and apprentices, brings together information, advice, and guidance resources, accessible to learners outside of scheduled sessions.

5. Curriculum and Enrichment Integration

Personal development at Wirral Met College is fully embedded within the curriculum and enrichment planning cycle. The Thrive tutorial programme, which forms the backbone of Study Programme delivery, follows a structured scheme of learning where each weekly theme links directly to course-relevant skills, employability development, and the personal growth outlined in the College's Personal Development Strategy.

These themes are sequenced to respond to the academic calendar and key learner milestones, including induction, exam preparation, careers weeks, and end-of-year transitions.

Each tutorial theme is accompanied by enrichment opportunities designed to enhance learners' cultural capital and career readiness. These include guest speaker sessions, employer engagement panels, creative workshops, volunteering activities, and college-wide events. Enrichment is planned in collaboration with the Student Union and Enrichment Team to ensure it is inclusive, engaging, and accessible to all learners.

This integrated approach reflects national best practice. According to the Education Endowment Foundation (2021), structured co-curricular enrichment significantly enhances learners' non-cognitive skills, including self-confidence, motivation, and resilience. Additionally, the Skills Builder Universal Framework (2020) supports explicitly linking enrichment to core transferable skills development.

6. Work Experience and International Opportunities

Work experience is a cornerstone of the College's Personal Development offer, providing all learners with meaningful, high-quality opportunities to apply their skills in real-world contexts. Every student on a Study Programme has access to structured work experience placements relevant to their course, career aspirations, and skill set. For adult learners, apprentices, and higher education students, work experience is embedded into programme planning and is designed to be flexible, ensuring it complements existing work commitments or professional roles.

The College also offers unique international opportunities through Turing-funded projects, enabling learners to gain invaluable experience in global contexts. These placements allow participants to broaden their cultural awareness, enhance language skills, and develop a global outlook, all while building resilience, independence, and adaptability. These competencies are increasingly valued by employers. The international strand is closely aligned to the Gatsby Benchmark on encounters with employers and experiences of workplaces, ensuring parity in the quality and structure of provision whether the placement takes place locally, nationally, or abroad.

Our work experience offer is coordinated through the Work Experience Team in collaboration with curriculum staff and employer partners, ensuring every learner can access placements that are safe, relevant, and impactful. All placements are supported by pre-placement preparation sessions and post-placement reflection activities, allowing learners to capture their achievements and evidence their progress in personal and professional skills through UniFrog, Virtual Campus, or ProMonitor.

7. Careers and Pathways

Wirral Met College is committed to delivering a world-class Careers Education, Information, Advice, and Guidance (CEIAG) service, enabling every learner to make informed, ambitious, and achievable decisions about their future. The College holds Matrix Standard accreditation, demonstrating our commitment to providing impartial, high-quality careers guidance that meets nationally recognised quality standards.

Our careers provision is fully aligned with the Gatsby Benchmarks for Good Career Guidance, ensuring that all learners:

- Have access to a stable careers programme

- Experience encounters with employers and employees

- Access experiences of workplaces

- Receive personal guidance from qualified careers professionals

- Have opportunities to link curriculum learning to careers

- Receive targeted support for specific needs, such as SEND and care-experienced learners

The Careers Team works in close partnership with external organisations, including through the Careers and Enterprise Hub within the Liverpool City Region. This partnership strengthens our employer links, increases opportunities for learners to engage with the labour market, and ensures our provision reflects local economic priorities and skills demands.

We are also an active participant in the Careers Impact Review, working collaboratively with other education providers to review, benchmark, and continuously improve careers provision across the region. This peer-led process ensures our offer remains dynamic, evidence-based, and responsive to both learner needs and labour market trends.

Careers and pathways guidance is integrated throughout the learner journey, from induction through to progression, and is embedded into Thrive tutorials, one-to-one sessions, enrichment activities, and work experience preparation. Careers advisers deliver tailored interventions for every learner cohort, while tutors and pastoral coaches are trained to recognise and respond to careers-related needs, ensuring a whole-college approach to career development.

All learners have access to careers resources, tools, and external links via centralised platforms such as UniFrog and Virtual Campus, making it easy to research opportunities, track progress, and record achievements. This integrated model ensures that every learner, regardless of background or starting point, can make informed decisions and take confident steps towards their future career or study goals.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

A robust quality assurance process ensures that personal development provision is consistent, effective, and responsive to learner needs. Daily oversight is provided by the Head of Personal Development, who reviews 1:1 sessions, samples learner engagement, and supports Pastoral Coaches with immediate quality improvement actions. The Director of Personal Development conducts weekly reviews of delivery data, learner feedback, and progression indicators to ensure strategic consistency and impact.

Quantitative data includes tutorial attendance, one-to-one meeting completion rates, enrichment participation, and referrals to CEIAG or wellbeing services. These are reviewed monthly and feed into college-wide KPI dashboards. Qualitative measures include learner voice surveys, tutor reflections, and observation reports.

The approach aligns with the Gatsby Benchmarks for good career guidance (2018) and the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (2019), which both stress the importance of systematic monitoring and evidence of sustained impact. Evaluation also reflects insights from the Careers & Enterprise Company's 'What Works' reports, which recommend data-led and learner-informed planning.

9. Safeguarding and Inclusivity

Safeguarding underpins every aspect of personal development at Wirral Met College. Tutorial content is designed with a trauma-informed lens, ensuring that sensitive topics such as relationships, exploitation, online safety, and mental health are delivered in ways that are appropriate, inclusive, and

supportive. All personal development staff receive safeguarding training and are confident in how to identify and escalate concerns.

Inclusive practice is fundamental to the operational delivery model. For learners with high needs, personal development is delivered through differentiated sensory-based modules, using visual and accessible formats. Routes learners follow a trauma-informed curriculum focused on trust-building, emotional regulation, and communication. Adult learners access resources and sessions that are scheduled flexibly to accommodate work, caring responsibilities, and accessibility needs.

This approach draws on best practice identified by the Anna Freud Centre (2022), which highlights the benefits of strength-based, emotionally literate tutorial delivery. Additionally, research from the Education Endowment Foundation (2022) shows that inclusive, relational approaches significantly increase engagement, especially for learners who have previously experienced educational disadvantage.

10. Impact Metrics and Key Priorities

The Personal Development Operational Framework is underpinned by clear, measurable priorities that apply across every aspect of the learner experience, from tutorials and enrichment to careers and employability, to skills development and well-being. These priorities ensure that provision is purposeful, high-quality, and responsive to learner needs, while remaining fully aligned with both national expectations and the College's strategic priorities. By combining robust data analysis, learner voice, staff development, and strong partnerships with parents, carers, employers, and community organisations, we will continue to drive improvement and maximise learner outcomes.

1. Improve earlier career and skills insights

- Use the Future Skills Questionnaire (FSQ) at induction or transition points to identify learner strengths, skills gaps, and preferred career pathways.

- Provide targeted experiences of work, enrichment activities, collaborative events, case studies, and virtual/employer links to connect learning to the world of work.

- Embed business start-up learning opportunities to foster entrepreneurial thinking, confidence, and innovation skills.

- Offer opportunities for learners to meet role models with similar backgrounds and aspirations to inspire ambition.

- Engage employers to enrich the curriculum and student experience through talks, workplace visits, apprenticeships, and project-based learning.

- Fully integrate the BeMore Careers platform and other tracking tools (UniFrog, Virtual Campus, ProMonitor) into the Personal Development offer.

2. Engage, inform, and listen to parents and carers

- Provide clear, accessible information about the full range of post-16 and post-18 opportunities from induction onwards.

- Embed careers and personal development updates into parents' evenings, SEND-specific events, and targeted briefings.

- Host joint activities for parents and learners, such as evening information sessions, networking events, and skills workshops.

- Share case studies, good news stories, and local labour market insights through multiple channels to strengthen parental engagement and understanding.

3. Engage, inform, and listen to learners

- Enable students to shape their own learning, tutorial, and enrichment offer through focus groups, learner talks, forums, and ambassador roles.

- Ensure CEIAG, skills development, and well-being support are embedded within both Personal Development and vocational delivery.

- Use learner feedback to refine resources, session delivery, and the enrichment guide, ensuring provision reflects what inspires and motivates students.

- Adopt a "Switch, don't Ditch" approach, supporting learners to remain in education or training if they change direction.

4. Improve staff training and support

- Provide targeted CPD for all teaching staff, trainer-assessors, pastoral coaches, and customer-facing teams to strengthen their role in supporting personal development.

- Ensure CEIAG and pastoral teams access professional accreditation and peer review to standardise and improve practice.

- Encourage staff shadowing, collaboration, and sharing of best practice across departments.

- Recognise and celebrate staff who make an exceptional difference to learner progression, personal growth, and enrichment.

Measuring Success

Progress will be measured through:

- Improved well-being, motivation, and self-confidence (learner surveys).

- Positive destination and progression data.

- Increased engagement in enrichment, skills, and careers activities.

- High tutorial attendance and retention rates.

- CEIAG participation and referral metrics.

- Engagement data from UniFrog, BeMore, and Virtual Campus.

- Case studies evidencing personal growth and achievement.

- Learner and parent/carer satisfaction scores.

The framework will be reviewed annually by SLT, with monthly monitoring reports to track impact against these metrics. This approach ensures ongoing alignment with college priorities and national expectations, while allowing for responsive adaptation to learner needs and feedback.