

Proposed College Merger between HCUC (Harrow College & Uxbridge College) and Richmond upon Thames College

FAQs

1. Why is the merger being considered?

The merger proposal emerged from a robust Structure and Prospects Appraisal undertaken by the governing body of Richmond upon Thames College in conjunction with the Government's Further Education Commissioner. The recommendation of this appraisal was that RuTC should merge with Harrow College and Uxbridge College (HCUC) to create a sustainable college group.

We are confident that by joining forces we will be able to do more for our learners, and the delivery of a high-quality learner experience is at the centre of our proposals. Both HCUC and RuTC are committed to ensuring that the benefits to learners increase as a result of this merger, including a shared prioritising of students achieving more, progressing further and being more work ready.

Through the merger the colleges will be "Better Together – Stronger Together".

2. What are the benefits of merging?

- **Learner Experience** - Current and new students can expect a new college partnership which recognises their individuality and provides a responsive and inspiring programme of study that enables them to progress on to new learning opportunities, university, apprenticeships or employment and supports them in achieving their ambitions. There will be an enhanced offer to students across all colleges, greater learning opportunities and more progression routes.
- **Quality** - Excellent teaching and learning that delivers outstanding outcomes for our learners is at the heart of this merger proposal. By joining forces, we will have the combined strength, expertise and resources to accelerate the achievement of improved standards and we will be able to implement a programme of rapid quality improvement.
- **Partnerships** - We will work closely with regional and local employers to address skills gaps. We will be able to prioritise courses and qualifications that are valued by employers, that enable our learners to secure great jobs, and will support our economy to compete with the world's best. We will be able to work with organisations such as Chambers of Commerce to ensure we have a local skills improvement plan that ensures our offer is impactful and beneficial to learners, employers and the distinct communities we serve.
- **A Strong Local Offer** - Each college within the partnership will retain its unique brand identity and trading name and will have the freedom to develop and deliver a high-quality education and training offer that responds to local needs.

- **Robust Financial Health** - A combined income of over £70m per annum provides a robust and sustainable financial base to maximise opportunities and resources to invest in an excellent experience for learners and communities.

More information can be found in the public consultation document.

3. What is the merger process?

A merger is where one or more institutions cease to exist as a legal entity when incorporated into a new or existing institution. There are many examples of merged institutions in the education sector.

A formal consultation is required by the regulations that govern proposals for the merger of further education colleges. Governors of both colleges will be happy to respond to questions either by email or at our virtual meetings in April.

4. What is the timeframe for the public consultation process?

The public consultation runs from Thursday 25 March 2021 until Monday 3 May 2021. The results of the consultation will be published no later than 14 June 2021 on the RuTC website. (www.rutc.ac.uk)

5. How do I access the public consultation document?

The full document is available on both websites:
RuTC (www.rutc.ac.uk) and HCUC (www.hcuc.ac.uk)

6. How can I contribute to the public consultation?

You can contribute to the merger consultation process by emailing your views and comments to: sarah.connerty@rutc.ac.uk or you can attend our virtual public consultation meetings on:

- Wednesday 14 April 6-7pm
- Tuesday 27 April 6-7pm.

To register your interest in attending, please [click here](#).

7. If the merger goes ahead what date will the colleges become one organisation?

The proposed merger date is 30 July 2021.

8. Will each college keep its own name and brand identity?

Each college within the partnership will retain its unique brand identity and trading name. Each college will be member of the group and the name of the group is still to be agreed.

9. I am a student at the college, how will the merger affect me?

The colleges deliver a commitment to continuity of provision ensuring that all students will be able to complete their course(s) without any changes to location. The colleges will also deliver a commitment to run programmes in 2021/22 as advertised. Student choice across all three colleges will be enhanced by enabling students to access high quality apprenticeship provision and progress to full and part-time higher education within the group.

HCUC's leadership of a range of high profile and leading-edge initiatives such as T Levels and the new West London Institute of Technology, and RuTC's expertise in the development of new, higher-level employment focused provision, will enable innovation across the whole college partnership. Richmond upon Thames College's new, sector-leading campus will provide the resources and facilities to deliver new learning in state-of-the-art facilities.

10. Will students have to travel between different colleges for their classes?

No, students will not have to travel between colleges. All students will be timetabled for classes at their chosen college.

11. Can students access enrichment and extra-curricular activities at the other colleges?

Students could have the opportunity to enhance their student experience through enrichment activities, work experience, career-related activities, sport and intercollege competitions across all sites.

Students will continue to have their voice heard at each college and we hope students will share their experiences so that we can improve what we do.

12. Will the merger affect my application?

No, each college looks forward to welcoming you and supporting you to meet your potential.