

Transforming Together - Response to the Consultation

Posted on 25 September 2018



In March the governing bodies of Guildford College Group and Activate Learning announced their plan to merge. This partnership will bring the three Surrey Colleges; Guildford College, Merrist Wood and Farnham Sixth Form College together alongside the existing Activate Learning colleges; Reading College, City of Oxford College, Banbury and Bicester College and Bracknell and Wokingham College, which is joining the group in Autumn 2018.

Our merger is intended to provide students, staff and employers in the area with new opportunities and choices, giving access to growth and development opportunities, made possible by being part of a larger group with national influence. By joining forces we can harness the strengths of our two organisations, bringing together successful colleges in Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Surrey, working together for the benefit of local learners and businesses.

In June and July 2018 we held a public consultation to gather the views of students, parents, staff, employers and other important stakeholders. We are grateful to all those who took the time and effort to respond and we have thanked them all personally.

We are delighted that the response was overwhelmingly in favour of the merger, particularly among our students who formed a large proportion of those who replied. Expected benefits included having a broader range of courses, improvement in quality, more resources and greater stability and therefore sustainability for the colleges. Questions were raised about the availability of finance and capacity of staff to undertake the integration, along with the call to keep the interests of students centre stage.

This feedback has been considered by representatives of both governing bodies and it remains our intention to forge ahead with our merger, which is expected to conclude in Spring 2019, subject to due diligence and the legal process.

The full consultation report is published  [here](#).

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jacki Hughes".

Jacki Hughes
Principal Guildford College Group

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sally Dicketts".

Sally Dicketts CBE
CEO Activate Learning