



Blackburn College **Annual Report**

2019 / 2020

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Welcome from the Chair of the Corporation Board

Welcome to Blackburn College's Annual Report for the 2019/2020 academic year on behalf of the College's Corporation Board.

There is no doubt that the challenges brought about by COVID-19 have sent a shockwave through the world of education in the UK; not least here at Blackburn College and Blackburn University Centre.

Despite this, I am proud to report that the College has still celebrated an overall 90% pass rate across all the Further Education courses through the 2019/20 academic year, while 1 in 6 undergraduate students gained First Class Honours degrees from our University Centre.

Unprecedented is the frequently used adjective to describe the turmoil caused by the Coronavirus. There has been no blueprint to follow. It has been hard for staff, students and their families alike. It has needed good communication, drive, energy, creative thinking, determination and a positive outlook in order to make progress and succeed.

As Chair, I am proud of the way that staff at Blackburn College have embraced the necessary changes and new ways of working, as well as the way that our students have responded so positively. All of their work has been recognised by Ofsted – **please see pages 8 and 9.**

Through care, enthusiasm and a clear focus on teaching and learning, we remain passionate and excited about providing the very best all-round education for our students. This is done to equip them with the skills, knowledge and self-confidence they need to embark on successful careers in this ever-changing world.

Lillian Croston
Chair of the Corporation Board



Welcome from the Principal and Chief Executive

As we reflect on the academic year 2019/2020, Blackburn College can be proud of how it has dealt with the challenges that COVID-19 has thrown our way.

The first national lockdown forced us to rethink our delivery strategy, moving all teaching online and adapting to staff's working from home processes.

Despite the remote working for staff and the remote learning for students, the College saw some incredibly inspiring initiative from staff and students during tough times. We celebrate our lockdown heroes on **pages 18 to 21.**

Even though 2020 was a demanding year for education in general, Blackburn College achieved outstanding results with an overall 91% Achievement Rate across all Further Education courses, a 100% Pass Rate in 21 A-Level Subjects and an overall 99.7% A-Level Pass Rate for the 2019/20 academic year; this included a 3.4% increase in A* grades and an 8.6% increase in A grades.

This success means that students have progressed to top Universities across the country such as Lancaster University, The University of Manchester and The University of Leeds.

After being rated 'Good' by Ofsted, our Apprenticeship provision continues to go from strength to strength.

Blackburn College is Top 10 in England when it comes to 16-18 year old Advanced Apprentice Success and the College is the Best in Pennine Lancashire when it comes to All Age Apprentice Success.

Meanwhile, over 95% of degree courses delivered at Blackburn University Centre continue to be validated by UK Top 10 Lancaster University. This year graduates have gained employment in a range of sectors including Construction, Mental Wellbeing, Business Advisory, Early Years and Childcare and Primary School Teaching.

According to the 2020 National Student Survey (NSS), Blackburn University Centre has Lancashire's highest overall satisfaction increase and a higher student satisfaction than universities across the UK – ranking 3% above the national benchmark.

In 2021, Blackburn College will continue to play a critical role in enhancing the lives of thousands of students, our local community and a variety of businesses.

I hope you will enjoy reading about some of our successes from 2019/20.

Dr Fazal Dad
Principal and Chief Executive

About Blackburn College

Blackburn College is the largest Further Education College in Pennine Lancashire and one of the largest providers of Higher Education for a College in England. Since 1888, people from all over Lancashire and beyond have developed their skills, retrained and moved to higher levels of study with Blackburn College's support.

Blackburn College is at the heart of the multi-racial community of Blackburn with Darwen and aims to provide social cohesion in an area of high deprivation. The College works with a range of local partnerships to contribute to the wider prosperity and regeneration of Pennine Lancashire.

The majority of students and Apprentices are from the most economically deprived local areas. Around a third of students and Apprentices are of minority ethnic heritage and almost two thirds of Further Education students enrol at the College without having achieved five GCSEs at grades 9 - 4 (A* - C), including English and Mathematics.

Blackburn with Darwen is a 'Prevent' priority area and 14% of the local population have no qualifications. Millions of pounds have been invested in our world class, town centre campus which was developed collaboratively with employers and stakeholders to help future proof our curriculum and ensure our students are taught in industry-standard facilities.

We have successfully fostered excellent relationships with local and regional partners and employers. This results in a curriculum that meets local and regional needs and provides high quality work experience for students and Apprentices.

We deliver specialist, bespoke training as well as Apprenticeships, Traineeships and Professional Qualifications, all of which equip the workforce with job relevant skills that match the current employment market.

Blackburn University Centre also provides Higher Education to students, including Foundation Degrees, Honours Degrees, Higher Level and Degree Level Apprenticeships. Our employer engagement supports employability through enhancements to curriculum development, mentoring placements, volunteering opportunities and industry specialist speakers.

The College is a founder member of HIVE – the Blackburn with Darwen Business Leaders' Network. HIVE has already become an integral part of the area's Local Strategic Partnership, which brings together leading figures from the private, public and third sectors and is Blackburn and Darwen's largest partnership body.

The College has also been a key partner in the Blackburn Business Improvement District (BID) for the last five years, supporting many local improvements.

Our Mission, Our Vision, Our Values

With a turnover of £37 million across Further Education, Higher Education and Training, we take a lead role in transforming Pennine Lancashire into a vibrant and successful economy through education and training that enhances the skills, aspirations and potential of the local economy.

We aim to develop people through learning and achievement for the benefit of themselves, society and the economy. Our focus is on meeting national and regional education, skills and employability needs for individuals and the needs of employers in line with Government priorities.

We deliver quality education, training, employability and work-based learning solutions to thousands of organisations and learners. These include Government-funded and commercial skills training and education, bespoke professional courses, employability services and regional training contracts.

Our Mission

Transforming students' lives and our community, through excellent education, training and support.

Our Vision

Aspiring, innovating and achieving through excellence.

Our Values

Excellence

We strive for excellence to realise the potential of our students and staff.

Knowledge

We promote the value of learning in fostering curious minds and to aid the acquisition of knowledge and skills.

Empowerment

We empower our learners to change their lives through education and training.

Equality

We promote equality and diversity in our teaching, training, support and customer services.

Commitment

We are committed to the education, training and support of our students and staff.

Respect

We treat everyone equally and with respect.



Key Facts

Further Education

We believe the College's Student Support Package for School Leavers (ages 16-18) is the best in Pennine Lancashire:

- Free and Low Cost Travel Pass
- £1,000 Scholarships
- Free Breakfast
- Free Wi-Fi across the campus
- Advance Employability Programme
- Work placements
- Guaranteed progression opportunities to Blackburn University Centre

Student Success

Overall 91% Achievement Rate

across all Further Education courses in the 2019/20 academic year

100% A-Level Pass Rate

in 21 subjects
(August 2020)

99.7% Overall A-Level Pass Rate

(August 2020)

100% Pass Rate in over 100 Technical/Vocational courses

(August 2020)

Higher Education

Over 95% of Blackburn University Centre degrees are validated by UK Top 10 Lancaster University

- Our other awarding bodies include the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) and the University of South Wales

Blackburn University Centre has...

- Higher Student Satisfaction than Universities across the UK***
- Lancashire's highest Overall Student Satisfaction****

Student Success

1 in 6 Honours Graduates received a First Class Honours degree

2020



Apprenticeships

Our Apprenticeship programmes have clear progression pathways from Traineeships/ Flying Start programme, to Intermediate, Advanced, Higher and Degree Level, meaning our Apprenticeships are:

- Rated 'Good' by Ofsted
- Top 10 in England for 16-18 Year Old Advanced Apprentice Success*
- The Best in Pennine Lancashire for All Age Apprentice Success**

Blackburn College works with over 3,000 Employers including...



* Timely Success. Qualification Achievement Rates, 2018-19 Academic Year.

** Qualification Achievement Rates, 2018-19 Academic Year.

*** 2020 National Student Survey (NSS)

**** 3% above the national benchmark. 2020 National Student Survey (NSS)

Ofsted Review of Lockdown Learning

From 30th September to 1st October 2020, Ofsted made an Interim Visit to Blackburn College. On 17th March 2020, Ofsted's routine inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic.

As part of their phased return to routine inspections, they carried out 'Interim Visits' to Further Education and skills providers. Interim Visits were to help learners, parents, employers and Government understand how providers met the needs of learners and Apprentices in this period, including learners with high needs and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Here's what Blackburn College implemented and the positive feedback we received for our COVID-19 response...

Clear Leadership

Early in the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic, Blackburn College Leadership Team set up a crisis steering group to support the continued delivery of the curriculum by moving learning online. They ensured that learners had access to computer equipment, learning resources and tutor support.

As soon as it was safe, managers arranged for learners on practical courses, such as Hairdressing and Construction, to return to College to complete training and assessments to prepare them for their next year of study. Blackburn College has made sure it is COVID compliant and adapted to the new normal by putting measures in place for the return to full face-to-face learning in September 2020.

What Ofsted said:



"Where necessary, leaders have adapted the curriculum to meet changing circumstances. For example, Health and Social Care learners on Cadet programmes who have not been able to access a work placement received virtual talks from ophthalmic and physiotherapy specialists, explaining what it is like to work in these sectors.

"Senior leaders worked with a range of stakeholders and partners, including the local authority, Jobcentre Plus, schools and employers to ensure that learners and Apprentices had frequent contact and support during the COVID-19 restrictions.

"Employers feel that their staff had been appropriately trained by College staff to be able to observe and video record Apprentices demonstrating their skills in the workplace. The local authority was very appreciative of the support it received from College leaders, particularly the Principal, to identify vulnerable learners in the Borough who needed additional support."

Adapting Existing Processes

Leaders and managers explained how they responded as soon as the COVID-19 restrictions were announced to adapt existing processes in order to ensure that they met, and continue to meet, the needs of learners and Apprentices. Leaders and managers carried out virtual and actual learning walks in their continued efforts to assure the quality of the curriculum.

Revolutionising Safeguarding and Student Health Support

Given the limitations on face-to-face communication during the COVID-19 restrictions, staff have extended the use of the Safeguarding and Mental Health Hub and have ensured that learners know how to work safely online.

Staff know which learners need additional support from them and/or external agencies. Teachers communicate with parents and carers to check the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable students.

What Ofsted said:



"Adult learners on English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses received translated instructions to help them understand how to access online learning from home.

"Learners with high needs accessed learning online with the presence of learning support officers to help them. Key contact staff worked closely with parents of learners with high needs to ensure that they made progress towards their targets during the COVID-19 restrictions. Work was also sent home for those who struggled with online learning."

What Ofsted said:



"Those learners and Apprentices who we spoke to said that they felt safe and know who to contact at the College if they have a concern for their safety. They all reported high levels of support from College staff. They say that they understand the importance of keeping themselves safe when working online.

"As part of their induction, new learners have received training on key Safeguarding themes. Leaders told us that where learners have disclosed Safeguarding issues, staff work with their previous school to offer them the right support."

Meet Our Further Education Stars

Blackburn College achieved a 90% Overall Pass Rate across all Further Education courses in the 2019/20 academic year.

A-Levels

The College achieved a 100% Pass Rate in 21 A-Level subjects and a 99.7% Overall A-Level Pass Rate in the 2019/20 academic year.



Merle Walmsley

Progressing to: University of Leeds to study Languages, Cultures and English

School: Ribblesdale High School

Achieved: (A*) Media Studies, (A) English Language and (A) History

“The main appeal of studying at Blackburn College for me was the courses, including the fact I couldn’t do Media Studies anywhere else near me. Also, it’s only a short bus journey from where I live, making the campus easily accessible at all times.

“The best part of the courses for me was the breadth of knowledge that you gain from each subject, which in turn showed me what I would want to study after progressing from A-Levels. I also got to study subjects I was genuinely interested in, meaning that I felt engaged in the lessons.

“The staff were very encouraging about getting work experience placements. Mine was at BBC Radio Lancashire and this was valuable for me in terms of teaching me about how the world of media and journalism works.

“In tutorial, we did a lot of research about universities and careers, and this has made me think more deeply about what I want to do in the future.

“The tutors have been really helpful in answering any questions I had and, at some points, there were a lot! They solved any problems I had, whether it was with the course content, exams or my future beyond Blackburn College. This all encouraged me to apply to a top University.”

Finlay Shaw-Mackay

Progressing to: Creative Writing degree in 2021

School: Darwen Vale High School

Achieved: (A*) Biology, (A) Chemistry and (A) Mathematics

“I chose Blackburn College after spending a year at Runshaw College. I needed a change and a different approach and Blackburn was definitely the best choice for me.

“The thing I have enjoyed the most about studying at the College is the freedom you have; there is a good balance between your timetable and the extra work you do outside of class.

“Before coming to Blackburn College my education felt very restricted and I felt I was struggling for time. Here I have enjoyed the flexibility and have definitely felt more relaxed with my studies.

“The College has not only improved me academically, but personally as well. I feel more confident and easy-going and my people skills and communication skills are also much better.

“The tutors have supported me really well, they always pushed me to do more but never over-burdened me. I have had great balance between work and social aspects.”



Laraib Raza

Progressing to: Accounting and Finance degree

Achieved: Three A*s – Biology, Chemistry and Psychology

“I chose to study my A-Levels at Blackburn College straight after I completed my GCSEs with the College. They were brilliant in supporting me to achievement with my GCSEs, especially with me moving from Italy, and the staff also helped me pick the A-Level subjects that were personally suitable.

“I also chose Blackburn College because it was so close to where I lived at the time. The locality was perfect.

“The thing I have enjoyed the most about the College is that everyone was friendly and helpful. The overall experience was amazing, not just the learning side of things, but how to communicate with other people as well. You make new friends and learn so many new things.

“Blackburn College has been really great in preparing me for the future, particularly the tutors. They supported me with my Personal Statement and even helped me when I decided on an aspiring career change from Medicine to Accounting.

“They are there for you throughout application processes and show you the best pathways. I had plenty of options available to me just in case I didn’t go to University – things like Apprenticeships.”



Technical/Vocational

Blackburn College achieved a 100% Pass Rate in over 100 Technical and Vocational courses throughout the 2019/20 academic year.



Olivia Farrington

Progressing to: Project Management Degree Apprenticeship at BAE Systems

School: Ribblesdale High School

Achieved: Triple Distinction Star in Business with Law Level 3 Extended Diploma

"I chose to study at Blackburn College after attending one of the Open Events. There I met the Business tutors who explained the course content to me and made me feel very comfortable.

"What I have enjoyed the most about my course is developing my skills and learning a variety of information that the Business with Law course offers.

"Blackburn College has helped prepare me for the future because it supported me to get involved in my work placement at Manchester Royal Infirmary's Learning and Development Team. This experience made me look in to Degree Apprenticeships for after College.

"My tutors supported me to achieve my goals through their constant communication and advice, as well as making the time and effort to help me and the rest of the class in any way."



Luqman Dar

Progressing to: BSc (Hons) Product Design Engineering at Liverpool John Moores University

School: Witton Park High School

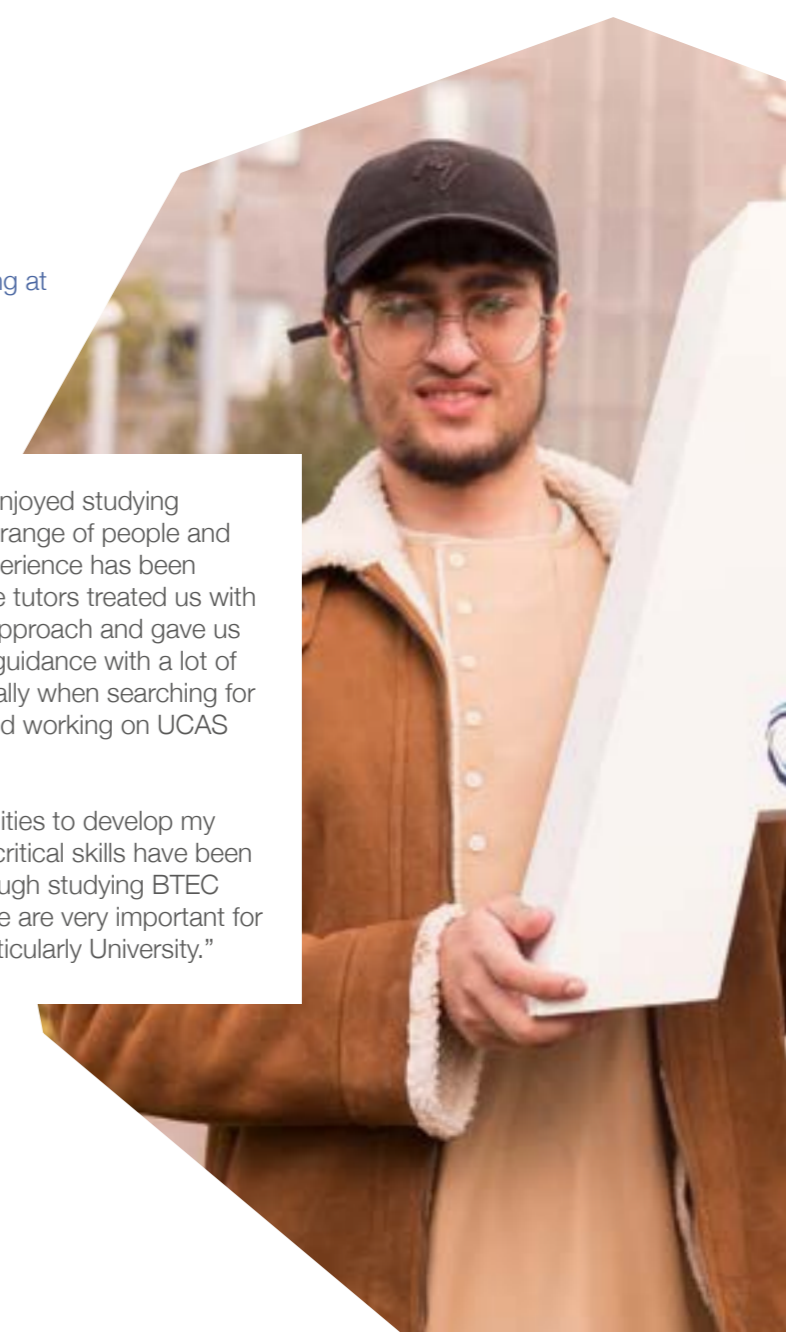
Achieved: D*D*D in BTEC Science Level 3 Extended Diploma and A in Level 3 Mathematics

"I chose to study at Blackburn College mainly because of the positive reviews and recommendations I had heard, but also because of its locality.

"During my time at the College I have overcome challenges to receive results I am really proud of. I was diagnosed with ADHD and initially studied A-Levels which I struggled with, so I switched to BTEC and Vocational studies and I haven't looked back.

"I have really enjoyed studying with a diverse range of people and my overall experience has been wonderful. The tutors treated us with an individual approach and gave us direction and guidance with a lot of things, especially when searching for Universities and working on UCAS applications.

"The opportunities to develop my research and critical skills have been abundant through studying BTEC courses. These are very important for the future, particularly University."



Oliver Wheatcroft

Progressing to: BSc (Hons) Professional Policing at Edge Hill University

School: St Augustine's RC High School

Achieved: Triple Distinction Star in Public Services Level 3 Extended Diploma

"I chose to study at Blackburn College because the Public Services course looked very interesting, but fun at the same time. It also provided the foundations for my chosen career and helped me learn more about it.

"The thing I enjoyed the most about the course was being able to learn in a practical way. I also really enjoyed going on the residentials with class mates.

"I am more prepared for the future having studied at Blackburn College. It has given me information and knowledge about the services I am interested in, as certain topics covered Police-related work and entry requirements. I have also developed leadership skills which are vital for the future.

"The tutors were always there if you needed one-to-one support. If I was stuck, I was never afraid to ask for advice or help. They also helped with our University applications, which was great!"

Apprenticeships

Blackburn College's Apprenticeship programmes are rated 'Good' by Ofsted and we are Top 10 in England when it comes to 16-18 Year Old Advanced Apprentice Success.

The College is also the Best in Pennine Lancashire when it comes to All Age Apprentice Success and we work with over 3,000 Employers including Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, Bowker BMW, Capita plc, East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust, Forbes Solicitors, PM+M Accountants and Senator International.

James Cocker

Progressing to: AAT Level 4 Advanced Diploma in Accounting with Blackburn College and PM+M Accountants

School: St Mary's Brownedge Catholic High School

Achieved: First Blackburn College Apprentice to achieve Distinction in the AAT Level 3 Advanced Diploma in Accounting End Point Assessment (EPA)

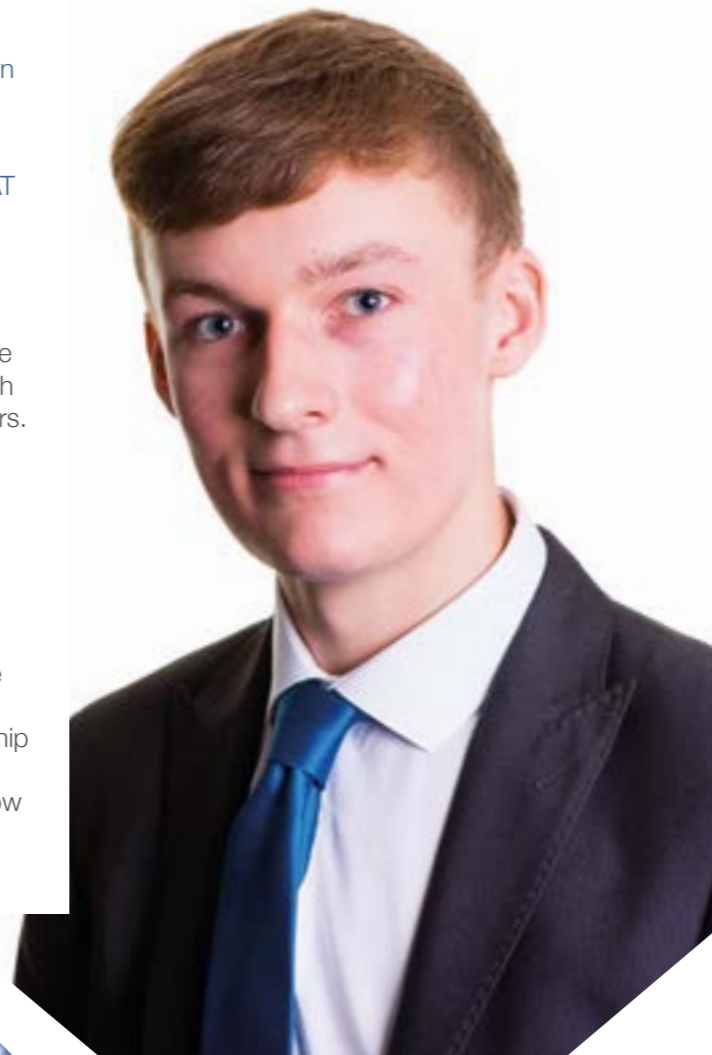
"Despite achieving A, A, B in A-Level Accounting, Mathematics and Physics, I decided to go down the route of an Apprenticeship rather than the 'traditional' route of University, as I wanted to embark on a challenging and compelling career in Accounting and Finance.

"I am incredibly proud to be the first Blackburn College student who passed the course with a Distinction, as it is a globally recognised qualification that I know is highly valued within the accountancy industry.

"I am very grateful for the support and encouragement that I have received from everyone at Blackburn College and PM+M and I am looking forward to putting what I have learned into practice.

"Since starting my Apprenticeship, my understanding has developed immensely through gaining invaluable on the job experience of working with numerous clients from various sectors. I have developed my technical knowledge and skills such as using accounting software, team working, professional communication, time management and leadership.

"My Apprenticeship has impacted on me greatly, as my ambitions have grown since embarking on it. Hands on learning through the Apprenticeship has ignited my passion for detailed work and I have been able to see how my learning is applicable in the real world."



Elliot Caffrey

Progressing to: Owner and Manager of his own hair salon business – Elliot Caffrey Hair

School: St Bede's RC High School

Achieved: Level 2 and Level 3 Qualifications – Hairdressing Apprenticeships

"I chose to attend Blackburn College because I knew they had the best Hairdressing course and facilities, good opportunities and it was local to me. I really enjoyed the hands on learning approach, especially being able to work in a salon whilst gaining my qualification.

"The College helped prepare me for the future by teaching me key skills, not only hairdressing techniques but also how to run and manage a salon. I would like to say thank you to the tutors who were always on hand whenever I needed any guidance.

"Hopefully the Apprentices who are currently working at Elliot Caffrey Hair are going to take a similar journey to me after they finish their studies."

Jackson Ward

Progressing to: Working with his dad in their family-run salon - David Ward's Barbers Shop in Chorley

School: Southlands High School

Achieved: Distinction grade in Barbering Level 3, becoming the first College Apprentice to complete an End Point Assessment (EPA) in this Apprenticeship

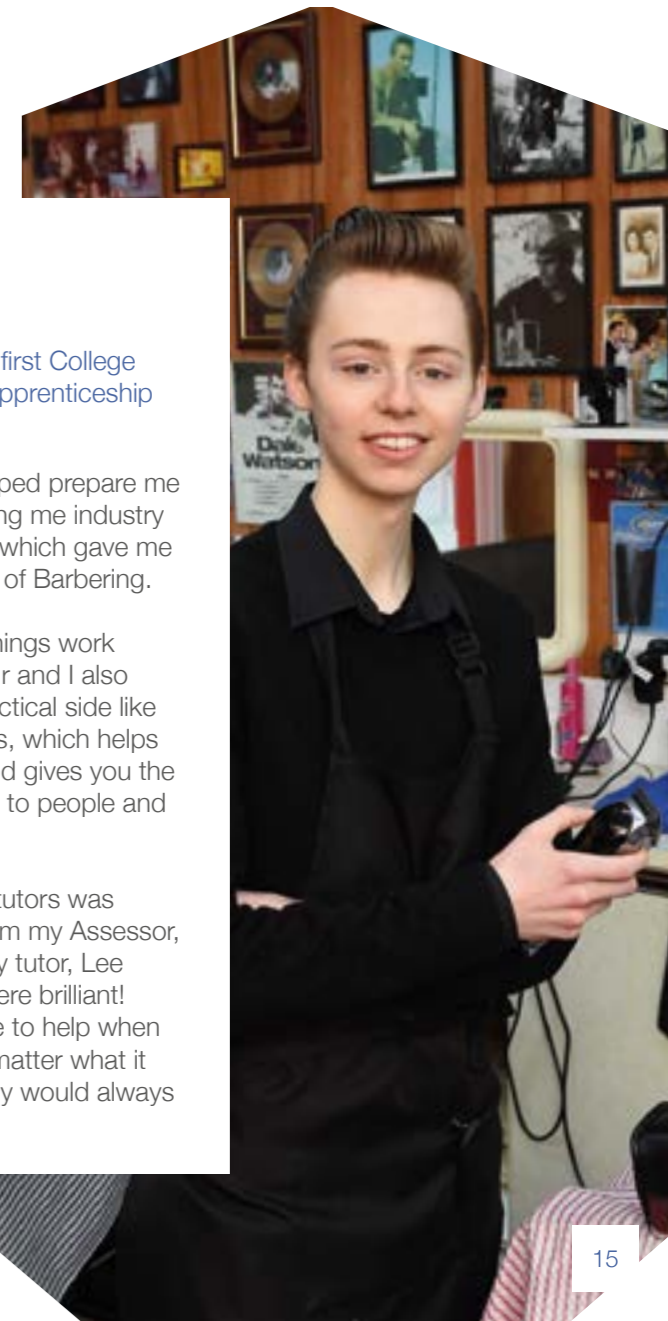
"I chose to study at Blackburn College because it was the only College in the local area that delivered a Barbering course for my age group. The campus wasn't too far from my home in Chorley, my Dad had attended the College as well and recommended it and the course sounded good – everything seemed right, it was the perfect fit.

"I enjoyed all of my course to be honest. I loved learning a new trade and new skills, the teachers were great and I met loads of new people who were interested in Barbering. Everyone on my course shared lots of interesting knowledge and ideas.

"Blackburn College helped prepare me for the future by teaching me industry techniques and theory which gave me a better understanding of Barbering.

"I learned about how things work and the structure of hair and I also benefitted from the practical side like shaving on mannequins, which helps you trust your ability and gives you the confidence to move on to people and cut clients' hair.

"The support from my tutors was excellent, especially from my Assessor, Tammy Woods, and my tutor, Lee Thistlethwaite – they were brilliant! They were always there to help when you needed them, no matter what it was or when it was they would always provide advice."



Higher Education – Blackburn University Centre’s Great Graduates

1 in 6 Honours Graduates received a First Class Honours degree from Blackburn University Centre in 2020.



Michelle Priestman

Progressed to: Work as a Building Surveyor and studying MSc Building Surveying at the University College of Estates Management (UCEM)

Achieved: First Class Honours in BSc (Hons) Construction

“I chose to study at Blackburn University Centre because of the volume of mature students and the classroom-style learning rather than large lecture theatre-style teaching offered at other Universities, which I much preferred. This meant that I had more opportunities to have direct support from the tutors.

“The campus was also in close proximity to my home in Chorley and I had previously studied my Construction and the Built Environment HNC at the University Centre.

“I have enjoyed absolutely everything about my course, but I have especially enjoyed the variety of modules and the industry relevant content.

“My tutors have supported me to achieve my goals by being on hand to give advice and support with both course related content and job applications. If anyone is looking to make changes to their future career I would highly recommend studying at Blackburn University Centre. It is absolutely fantastic!”



Lauren Miller

Progressed to: Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council as a Teaching Assistant in a variety of local schools and doing a Masters in Childhood and Youth Studies with the Open University

School: Darwen Vale High School

Achieved: First Class Honours in BA (Hons) Teaching and Learning Support (Primary)

“I chose to study at Blackburn University Centre because the campus is close to where I live in Darwen and I did not want to move away from home to do my Degree.

“On the course I have really enjoyed gaining more knowledge of the education field and also gaining more confidence.

“My tutors are the ones who have helped me gain in confidence and helped me become the person I have always wanted to become. They have also supported my preparation for the future by increasing my knowledge and understanding of the education sector, which is valuable.

“My tutors got me believing that I am capable of completing the course to a high standard, which is why I am so delighted to have achieved First Class Honours. I now know I can work in the industry I want to have a career in and they even encouraged me to do a Masters. My ultimate goal is to become a Play Therapist or a Teacher.”



Eram Latif

Progressed to: Promotion to Senior Team Leader and Wellbeing Lead at BT

Achieved: First Class Honours in BSc (Hons) Psychology

“I chose to study at Blackburn University Centre because of the enhanced support from tutors and staff members due to the smaller class sizes. Also, the location of the campus was local to me and close to my home.

“What have I enjoyed about my course? Absolutely everything! I love Psychology and feel like I understand the human mind and human behaviour so much better after completing my degree at Blackburn University Centre.

“I have also enjoyed working with the staff and the positive engagement between myself and my peers and classmates.

“My tutors have fully supported me to achieve my goals by providing lots of advice and guidance. Blackburn University Centre has helped shape and prepare me for my future career by helping me get involved in beneficial local projects and voluntary work at relevant organisations.

“As Wellbeing Lead at work, I support agents and staff with any mental health issues they may have and I promote positive mental health throughout the workplace.”



Kieran Worrall

Progressed to: Full-time Room Leader position at TicTots Nursery in Preston

Achieved: BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies

“It’s been a long seven years, but I made it to where I want to be! I didn’t do well in school and Blackburn College brought the best out in me, I can’t fault them, especially Kathryn Waqar-Uddin (Care Health Public Services & Childhood Studies).

“I met Kathryn during my Apprenticeship course and her support was phenomenal, she was 100% committed to myself and all the students. Because of Kathryn, I took on and completed my Foundation Degree which led me to study my BA (Hons) and secure a job.

“Being a male in a childcare environment can often be challenging, but I pushed on because I wanted to see it through. If you’re passionate about this industry like I am then pursue it, I can’t recommend Blackburn College and Blackburn University Centre highly enough to everyone.”

Heroes of Lockdown

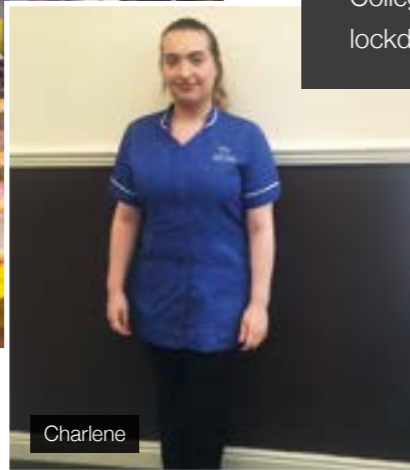
Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular the initial national lockdown, Blackburn College and Blackburn University Centre students and staff went above and beyond to offer their skilled support where possible.



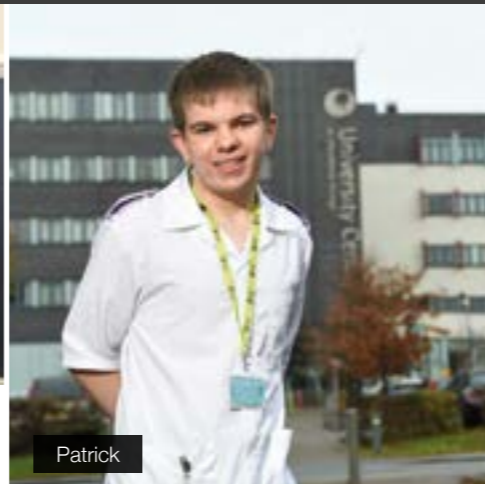
Athena



Lily



Charlene



Patrick

College Health and Social Care Students Go Above and Beyond

Four Blackburn College Level 3 Health and Social Care students went above and beyond during the country's Coronavirus pandemic.

Blackburn's Patrick Maynard, Lily Reedy and Charlene Brady, as well as Accrington's Athena Smith, were all students on the College's Cadet programme, which involves over 700 hours of practical experience in a health care environment such as hospital wards.

Patrick is currently a nursing Cadet who works part-time at Branch Court Care Home. He usually works around one shift a week but was doing three to four shifts to help with the demand.

Charlene was a nursing Cadet and worked as a Health Care Assistant for a care agency. As part of her work, she was attached to a Dementia Care Home in Clayton-le-Moors where she spent more time to look after the vulnerable residents.

Lily was also a nursing Cadet and worked as a Sales Advisor in a local Superdrug store. The store was classed as essential as it includes a Pharmacy, so she worked more shifts than usual to help upkeep service.

In addition, Athena was a Cadet who worked on the checkouts at her local Tesco store and, again, worked extra to support the public's needs for necessities.

Lockdown Student Support

Blackburn College supported **154 students** already accessing free College meals with a financial package over the summer period, ensuring they could purchase meals off campus.

The College loaned **140 laptops** to students during the first national lockdown.

Free School Meals money was paid directly to students and their families by the College throughout the whole national lockdown period.

University Centre's Rachel Goes the Extra Mile During Coronavirus Pandemic

Blackburn University Centre student Rachel White went the extra mile during the Coronavirus pandemic.

Alongside her studies, Rachel, who is completing the BA (Hons) Contemporary Fashion course, used her skills to create free of charge face masks for family, friends, people with underlying health conditions and key workers.

Working with equipment and materials from her home, she initially created face masks at the start of lockdown for family members who have underlying health conditions.

Rachel, from Blackburn, is also one of many people in the area who signed up as an NHS volunteer; helping to deliver shopping and prescriptions to vulnerable people.

Rachel said: "I was worried about members of my family, so I made them face masks from fabrics suited to them. I wasn't sure if anybody would wear them, but they love them and still wear them now - that made me smile."

"I know they aren't medical masks, but I didn't make them for that reason. I made them so that people who are worried about their health can have some comfort in these strange times."

Rachel added: "I then joined Facebook groups to learn how to create scrubs and masks for the NHS. I still wanted to help other key workers, so I contacted Wm. Alty & Sons Funeral Services, asked if they needed any face masks and explained that they weren't medical. They responded almost immediately and were so thankful."



"They ordered over 30 masks whilst waiting for a delayed order they had made from elsewhere. Their response was that they loved them and felt more confident at work. In every email, they offered to pay, but I said it wasn't about the money - it's about trying to keep people safe."

Blackburn College Staff Create PPE for Key Care Workers

Blackburn College staff worked to support the national effort to stop the country's PPE shortages.

The College's Fashion and Textiles Technicians and Facilitators, Gwyneth Clarkson and Andrew Mathison, created scrub washbags and PPE button bands to help support key care workers.

The duo used the professional pattern cutting and sewing workshops at the Blackburn College campus, whilst adhering to social distancing guidelines.

Gwyneth and Andrew both received positive feedback! Molly, who is a nurse at Burnley General Hospital, said: "They're amazing! I love the button band that goes at the back of my head."

"The headbands are also great. I've always found headbands slide backwards and end up nearly falling off, but the one that you clip behind your head is brilliant! I love my scrubs bag too, it's so convenient. Thank you very much."

Andrew said: "With the College's workshops and materials, it is the least we can do. Key workers are putting their health at risk on a daily basis whilst they continue their incredible work. We're just doing a small part in helping to ensure their safety."



Tutor Mo Lorgat Volunteers Vital Time During Coronavirus Pandemic



BTEC IT Level 3 Extended Diploma Programme Leader Mohamed-Yusuf Lorgat has been weekend volunteering for Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service during the Coronavirus pandemic.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Area Manager Tony Crook told Mo: "During this difficult time, it is very nice to recognise your volunteering by highlighting your achievements and commitments through supporting LFRS in completing VP visits and giving up hours of your free time on weekends during this pandemic."

"In particular, I know you offered your time during Ramadan, which must have been testing. To recognise this hard work and support please accept my praise and a thank you on behalf of LFRS."

Published Book for Former Blackburn University Centre Art and Design Student Matilde

Former Blackburn University Centre student Matilde Tomat has seen her book 'A Thousand Names' published.

Matilde studied the Art and Design Foundation Diploma (UAL) at Blackburn University Centre and has previously written five books. However, 'A Thousand Names' was also used as part of Matilde's Final Major Project.

Speaking about her new book, Matilde said: "This book is the story of a grieving woman who decides to leave everything and everybody to move to a large house by the sea and wait for her life to end.

"When even death snubs her, the only thing left for her to do is to use her pain to grow and understand what really matters in her life. The book is, of course, intense and I wrote it on purpose as an almost internal monologue.

"I touch on existential topics such as death and purpose in life, but I am also an existential psychotherapist by vocation, so this work allowed me to merge art with therapy."

A thousand names
matilde tomat
dall'oglio

Night Class Success Leads to Photography Degree for Determined Rachel

Adult student Rachel Milbourn will study Blackburn University Centre's Photography Degree after success in Blackburn College's Photography Night Classes.

Rachel will study the UK Top 10 Lancaster University-approved BA (Hons) Photography and Moving Image course after completing the College's Certificate in Photography Level 2 (UAL) and Level 3 evening classes.

Despite being a single mum and losing her job due to the COVID-19 pandemic, she has remained determined to not only pass her course, but to also progress on to University.

Rachel, who lives in Blackburn, said: "I am so happy to be moving on to Blackburn University Centre to study my Photography Degree.

"Completing both my Level 2 and Level 3 Certificates has been great, but seeing all the hard work pay-off is even better. I can't wait to get started!"

Apprentice Annalise Represents Blackburn College on Parliament Live TV

Business Administration Apprentice Annalise Bartley represented Blackburn College on the Parliament Live TV podcast.

Joined by a Committee of MPs and three other Apprentices from across the country, Annalise spoke about her experience as an Apprentice during the COVID-19 pandemic and how she has been supported by the College.

The discussion came as part of the House of Commons Education Committee's inquiry into the impact of COVID-19 on Education and Children's Services.

The section which Annalise featured on specifically focused on Further Education and Apprenticeships and how these can be promoted moving forward.

Annalise has completed the College's Level 2 Business Administration Apprenticeship and is currently employed by Rinus Roofing Supplies in Darwen, where she has progressed to the Level 3 Business Administrator Apprenticeship (Standard) with Blackburn College.

Annalise, from Blackburn, said: "During the COVID-19 period, Blackburn College have supported me with regular one-to-ones over video calls to make sure I am on track with my Apprenticeship.



"This was a whole new experience for me as I had never used Zoom before! But the calls were helpful and they definitely kept me motivated.

"Obviously, the video call practice was handy for when I took part on Parliament Live TV. It was great to be put forward by the College and to be part of the discussion."

University Centre's Fine Art Features on BBC North West Tonight

Blackburn University Centre appeared on BBC North West Tonight's feature about how the Arts industry has been impacted by COVID-19.

The BBC feature included an interview with Lecturer in Fine Art Steven Baldwin, as well as conversations with BA (Hons) Fine Art graduates Susan Brazendale, Christian Bell and Lydia McCaig.

Both Susan and Christian were instrumental in supporting Blackburn College's 2020 Digital Creative Arts Show and went on to apply for the Creative Accelerator, a six-month programme which is designed to help new creatives into tutoring and mentoring opportunities.

Lydia, who achieved a First Class Fine Art degree, is focusing on her Kick Down the Barriers online project led by Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery.

Abby Jones conducted the socially distanced interviews on behalf of the BBC at the Prism Gallery in Blackburn, which is a gallery space where students can exhibit their work.

The College appeared alongside Liverpool Philharmonic, the Tate Gallery and a Theatre Production group during the feature.



Working with Our Community



Outstanding Alumni Saima Ashraf Recognised as Community Champion

Blackburn College is proud that Alumni Saima Ashraf received the One Voice Outstanding Achievement Award at the recent 1V Community Champion Awards.

Saima, who was born in Blackburn and still lives in the town, currently works as a Senior Auditor at Merseyside Police – she is the only registered blind auditor in the UK and has kindly spoken about Blackburn College’s support as part of her remarkable journey.

Saima began losing her sight when she was a child but continued her education, including her Accounting, Business Studies and English Language A-Levels at Blackburn College.

Today, alongside her work for Merseyside Police, she is also a governor at St Vincent’s School for the Visually Impaired and hosts a radio show in Pendle, Lancashire which looks at health issues which are of concern to the Asian community. She has also committed her time to raising money for Blackburn and East Lancashire-based charities.

In light of her success, Saima still looks back on her time at Blackburn College with fondness: “When I was ready for starting college I was still coming to terms with losing my sight. I chose Blackburn College because I knew they had some of the best support networks in the North West.

“Without the College, I wouldn’t be the same person and I wouldn’t be where I am today. They encouraged me to learn, built my confidence and helped me overcome barriers to learning, particularly Ann Harwood, who went above and beyond to make sure lessons were suitable for blind students and that I didn’t fall behind with any work.

“Sadly, Ann has since passed away, but she was a big influence on me and I can’t thank her enough. The College even provided a support network for me when I left to go to University.”

Blackburn College Supports Refugees with National Lottery Funding

Blackburn College supported refugees in the local community using National Lottery funding; helping them use cooking to build social networks, end isolation, improve their English and increase wellbeing.

‘Friendship Feast’ saw participants study for a Food Hygiene Certificate at Blackburn College, with each woman learning how to make cheap nutritious meals using locally available ingredients. Participants then created a menu inspired by their country of origin and worked together to cook the meal.

Moroccan-born participant Batoul Zahri described the moment the women sat to eat her dish as “the happiest moment” and explained “working together, chatting and getting to know each other is the part which really makes a difference in the project.”

Participant Nabila Khavas – originally from Afghanistan – added: “Making friends and more confidence speaking in English” was a real gain for her.





Blackburn College Delighted to Launch Exciting WWII National Lottery Heritage Fund Project

May 2020 marked the 75th anniversary of VE Day and Blackburn University Centre was delighted to launch the World War II East Lancashire Childhoods: Sharing Stories, Making Memories project, thanks to a £15,000 grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund.

The focus of the project was to give older residents and children of East Lancashire opportunities to talk about growing up during WWII, creating a digital archive preserving memories of childhood.

Residents of EACHSTEP care home, students and staff from the University Centre and pupils from Blackburn Children's University, supported by Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery and Blackburn Library, have all worked together to create an exciting programme of activities.

The aim was to preserve the rich cultural histories from this period and to bring those experiences to life for a new generation. By inviting older residents to share their experiences we hope that children and younger people have developed a deeper awareness and understanding of what growing up during the war was like for the people who lived through it.

Project Leads Sandra Nichol and Dr Valerie Jessop said: "We have seen the enjoyment gained from the interaction between the children and older residents. Witnessing the conversations has been a joyful experience."

Sara Burton, Blackburn Children's University Manager, said: "The children have enjoyed visiting EACHSTEP and interacting with the older residents. This was a new experience for them and they have been able to talk with and learn from the residents, whilst doing many fun activities with them. It is something they will remember and being able to see these interactions has been wonderful."

College Art Student Tackles Mental Health Stigma Through His Work

Blackburn College Level 3 Art and Design student Lawrence Silcock is using his art to help bring an end to the stigma surrounding mental health.

Lawrence goes by his artist alias The Lone Artist – Lawlife Meledictus. He has autism and is portraying his experiences with mental health through impactful, graphic art.

Lawrence, who lives in Accrington, has also created commission-based art which was inspired by other people sharing their mental health experiences with him.

Speaking at his art exhibition at Blackburn's Bureau Arts Centre, he said: "I chose Blackburn College after I moved house and was looking for a place of education to study. I have enjoyed absolutely everything about my course, the people I have met, the tutors, everything!"

"The tutors are great, they have helped me every step of the way and coming to the College has helped me become a better artist. The experience has encouraged me to plan going to University in the future."



Advancing Our Curriculum



College to Use AR/VR to Train the Future Textile Workforce

Blackburn College will use Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) in order to train the future textile workforce through the Tech for Textiles project.

The Tech for Textiles project will work in partnership with employers and learners to create AR and VR resources to support adult learners into employment within the textiles industry.

The VR resource will enable learners to experience a virtual factory environment, helping to dispel myths about the sector and the working environment.

The AR resources will enable learners to upskill in the basics of a sewing machine and particular stitch patterns, based on industry standard equipment any place any time using a tablet/ smart phone.

The project responds to research from UKFT (Fashion & Textiles Sector Skills body) and includes the development of a lab space at the College. It has been funded by the Ufi VocTech Seed project with support from employers such as AMRC, Beagle Orthopaedics and Herbert Parkinson.

Tech for Textiles will support 30 learners with fast track skills for entry level job roles within the industry, as well as providing entry routes into the industry for under-represented groups. It aims to improve the image of the sector in the eyes of young people, in order to help compliment an ageing workforce, while adding value to employers through new expertise, techniques and technologies.

Annie Kerfoot, Head of School (Creative and Digital) at Blackburn College, said: "Blackburn College is playing a key role in developing the VR and AR skills for students alongside their specific qualifications. In turn the students will need these skills as their future employers harness the commercial potential of these technologies.

"Companies are already embedding VR and AR into their business but they will need new skills as these technologies evolve. The lab we've developed is designed to address current skills gaps and is also flexible enough to be adapted to suit the future needs of this vitally important sector."

Blackburn College Launches New Dance Academy with Rossendale Dance and Drama Centre

Blackburn College has launched a new dance academy, The Mill, aimed at 16-18 year olds.

Working in partnership with Rossendale Dance and Drama Centre, The Mill is aimed at young people who are interested in performing, competing and choreographing dance – or studying these subjects at University.

Students can come to Blackburn College to learn in industry-standard studios and to access new classes covering a range of dance topics. Through work with Creative and Cultural Skills, Blackburn College has secured work experience and enrichment activities for students starting these courses with top West-End show, Wicked, and Music students having gone behind the scenes on a production day with The 1975.

Head of School (Creative and Digital), Annie Kerfoot, said: "We created The Mill as we wanted to get more young people into dance and inspire the next generation of talented performers, whilst also providing a progression route to Universities.

"Blackburn College already had a range of top class facilities ideal for this provision including ballet and dance studio and performance lab as part of Blackburn Sports and Leisure Centre and a TV and screening area as part of our Futures Centre.

"Future generations will now be able to harness these top-end facilities, coupled with tuition from Rossendale Dance and Drama Centre."

Students studying the programme will gain a University of the Arts London * (UAL) Diploma or Extended Diploma in Performing and Production Arts.

The courses are designed to provide students with the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to access and progress to degree level study or employment in the performing arts.

They provide an opportunity for those who have an interest in the performing arts to explore, develop and test their creativity within a qualification structure which is stimulating, demanding and provides a supportive transition from GCSE level to more specialised study on an A-Level-equivalent course.

Rossendale Dance and Drama Centre (RDDC), established in 1980, is a leading provider of dance, drama, musical theatre and fitness training for children and adults.



Improving Employability Prospects



Student Entrepreneurs Pitch their Ideas at Dragons' Den

Blackburn College in partnership with Boost and Enterprise4All challenged second year Business students to devise, develop and pitch their business ideas to the Dragons' Den.

The students took part in a two-day event hosted at Enterprise4All to give them the opportunity to experience the working environment.

Yusuf Musa, Business Advisor, said: "It's great to work in partnership with Blackburn College to develop our future entrepreneurs, supporting the students with the growth tools for their business ideas."

Over the two days the students started to understand the process of establishing their business idea through a series of workshops including: Business Model Canvas, Selling Sells, Visioning Orbit and Digital Marketing.

Blackburn College student Rachel Whalley said: "I've enjoyed meeting the Boost team and learning how I am going to improve my business plan."

The challenge culminated in students presenting their business ideas to the Dragons - a panel of academics, business advisors and business owners.



Industry Week Supports Student Employability

Students from across Blackburn University Centre have benefited from a week focussed on industry and employability.

Featuring a range of keynote speakers, Industry Week provided students with an opportunity to hear directly from pre-eminent professionals and academics.

Amongst the special guests were Lancaster University Professor Sandra-Ilona Sunram-Lea, Counsellor Nicola Benyahia, Managing Director of James' Places Chris Sullivan and Nick Whittaker of NW Recruitment Services.

Student Asad Mahmood said: "I have really enjoyed the talks, the speakers were truly inspirational."

Nicola Benyahia – Founder of Families for Life – delivered a talk to Counselling and Psychology students on counselling and counter-terrorism. Personally affected by the impact of radicalisation, she now works with families to maintain good relationships with their children.

Student Shania Evans said: "I've never considered counter-terrorism as a potential career path. However, I now feel really inspired to pursue something along these lines."

University Centre Construction Students Finish Second at Novus Student Challenge

A team of Blackburn University Centre Construction students celebrated finishing as runners up at the 2020 Chartered Institute of Building Novus Student Challenge.

The team of Richard Bulcock, Michelle Priestman, Rebecca Salter and Brent Eastwood, who were all Level 6 undergraduates, finished second and their project was also highly commended. Each member received £25 worth of vouchers.

The College also entered a second team which consisted of Level 5 and 6 undergraduates Ieva Olehno, Karl Calsen, Craig Armitage and Mike Williams. This group's project was also commended by the judging panel.

Hosted at Blackburn University Centre, the challenge event saw teams from multiple North West Further Education establishments pitch projects to a panel. The College's University Centre teams went head-to-head with students from the University of Central Lancashire, Liverpool John Moores University and the University of Salford.

Each team was tasked with the brief of creating a multi-functional place at Paddington Village in Liverpool's Knowledge Quarter to support Education, Skills, Employment and Knowledge Share.



The groups were asked to submit a bid proposal for the design and creation of a temporary, multi-functional facility within Morgan Sindall's live site at Paddington Village that will enable the delivery of its social impact activities.

Caroline Bracewell, Head of School: Higher Education at Blackburn University Centre, said: "It was an honour to host the 2020 CIOB Novus Student Challenge and to welcome all the teams involved. I would like to congratulate everyone on their phenomenal projects and pitches. Well done to our teams in particular, both of whom were highly commended."

Looking Ahead to 2021

Plans for Redeveloped Blackburn Sixth Form

A newly, redeveloped Sixth Form is due to open in Blackburn in September 2021.

The unveiled A-Level study centre will form part of Blackburn College but will see the redevelopment project and an extension added to a building that opened in 2007 – and the creation of Blackburn Sixth Form.

Blackburn Sixth Form will be an environment with a uniquely academic ethos, however, there will also be new enrichment activities, an enhanced tutorial model, work experience weeks linking in with major employers and support for parents.

The announcement follows a successful year of A-Level recruitment and significant increases in A-Level grades achieved in 2019/20.

Alongside the launch of Blackburn Sixth Form will be the launch of three new professional pathways of study – Law, Business and Science – which will allow students to combine A-Levels and an industry-relevant qualification.

Dr Fazal Dad, Principal and Chief Executive at Blackburn College, said: “This is an exciting redevelopment that will transform A-Level and Academic Studies in Blackburn and give A-Level students a truly dedicated, academic Sixth Form study experience.

“The expansion of our A-Level delivery with the introduction of new A-Level subjects including Music and the new A-Level pathways highlight our determination to be a Further Education leader in Lancashire for A-Levels.

“The College is investing in providing the best possible education resources for future students. There will be a large-scale building project that will see the creation of new study spaces resulting in a new, impressive Sixth Form for Blackburn.

“This news follows our 100% A-Level Pass Rate in 21 subjects, our overall 99.7% A-Level Pass Rate and our increase in A*, A and B grades in 2019/20.”

BLACKBURN SIXTH FORM

**100% A-Level
Pass Rate**
in 21 subjects*

**New Professional
Services
Academies**

**Increase in A*,
A & B grades***

**NEW
SIXTH FORM**
Opening
September
2021



*Blackburn College Results August 2020

Income and Expenditure Summary

Income by Type

	£'000s
Funding Body Grants Further Education	18,674
Funding Body Grants Higher Education	575
Tuition Fees & Education Contracts Further Education	560
Apprenticeships	1,568
Tuition Fees & Education Contracts Higher Education	10,994
Research Grants & Contracts	844
Commercial Income	1,016
International Income	1
Capital Grant Releases	988
Other Income	1,196
Total Income	36,416

Expenditure by Type

	£'000s
Staff Costs	24,722
Other Operating Expenses	7,683
Depreciation	3,141
Interest & Other Finance Costs	1,135
Total Income	36,681

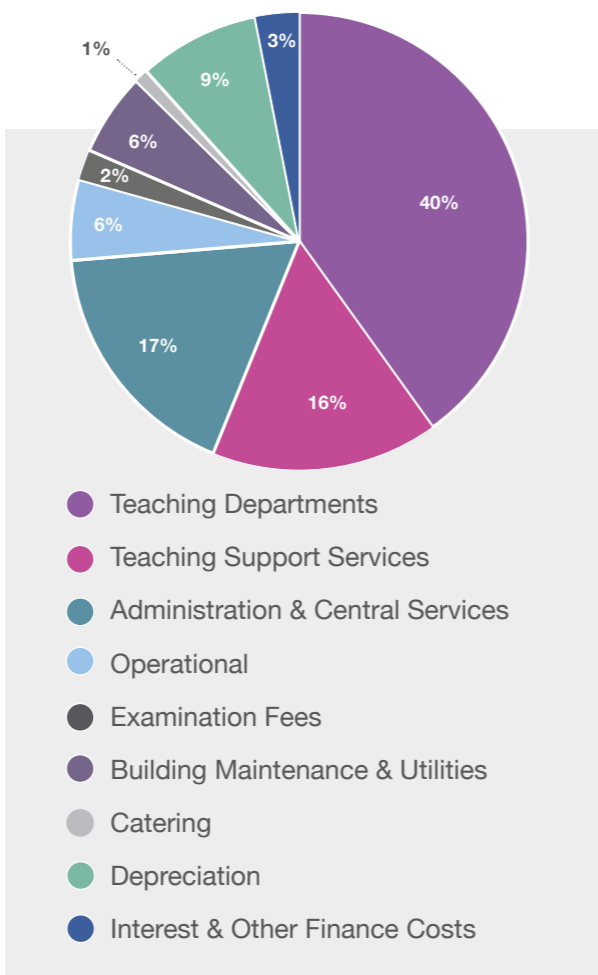
Capital Investment

During the year we spent a further £320,000 on capital investments to support the improvement of resources and buildings for our students.

What we spent our money on in 2019/20

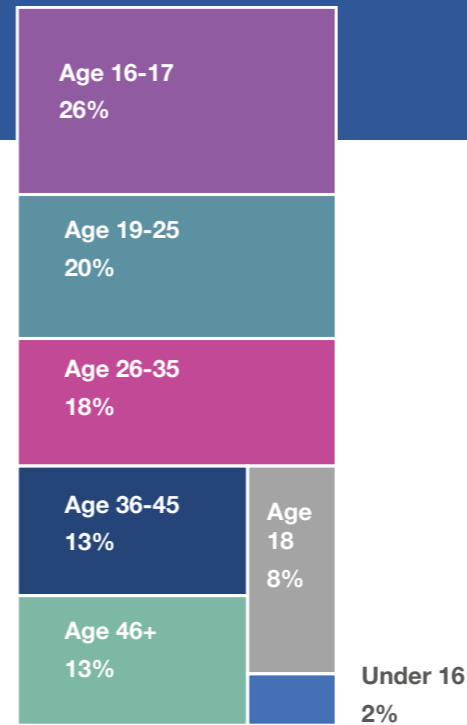
	£'000s
Teaching Departments	14,705
Teaching Support Services	5,887
Administration & Central Services	6,427
Operational	2,088
Examination Fees	791
Building Maintenance & Utilities	2,144
Catering	363
Depreciation	3,141
Interest & Other Finance Costs	1,135
Total	36,681

What we spent our money on in 2019/20 as a percentage

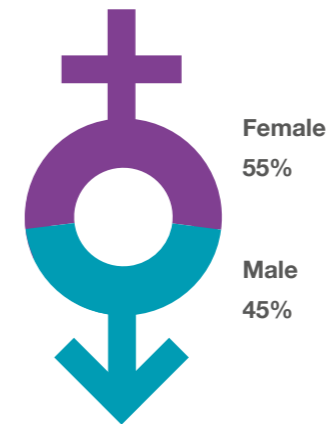


Student Population by Gender, Ethnicity and Age

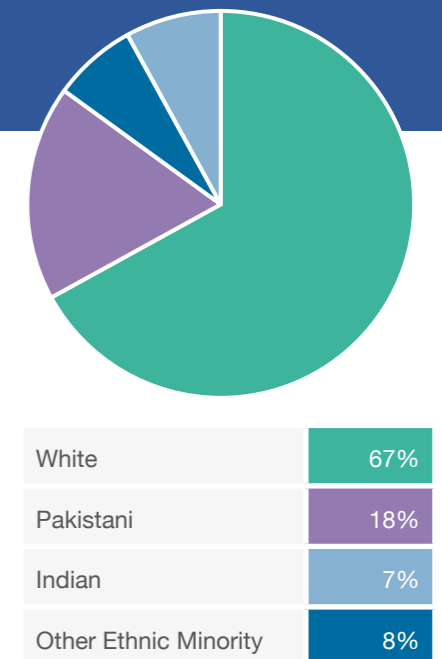
Age



Gender



Ethnicity



Students from Postcodes classed as Deprived

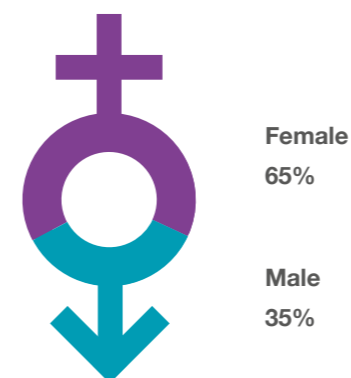


Students with a Learning Difficulty/Disability

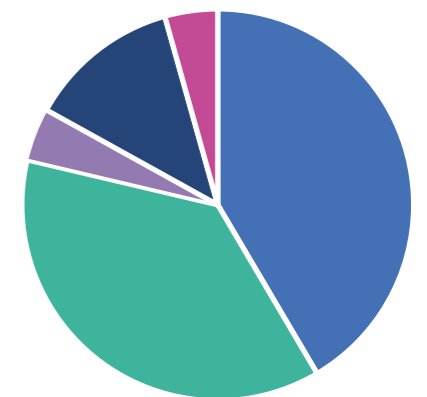


Staff Breakdown

802 people employed by the College in 2019/20



Academic	41.52%
Business Support	37.16%
Management	4.36%
Student Support & Engagement	12.59%
Apprenticeships	4.36%



Corporation Board

Corporation Board Member	Committee Membership
Lillian Croston – Chair of the Corporation Board	Remuneration, Learning and Quality, Chair of Governance Panel, Student Voice Governor Champion: Teaching, Learning and Assessment
Paul Levett – Vice Chair of the Corporation Board	Chair of Policy and Resources, Governance Panel, Chair of Remuneration
Dr Fazal Dad – Principal and Chief Executive	Policy and Resources, Learning and Quality, Governance Panel
Professor Waqar Ahmed	Policy and Resources
Mark Allanson	Chair of Learning and Quality, Governance Panel
Geoff Disley	Learning and Quality
Paul Fleming (appointed from 18 October 2019)	Student Voice
Catherine Hill OBE BSc (appointed from 18 October 2019)	Student Voice, Learning and Quality
Chris Johnson	Chair of Audit
Michael Lee	Policy and Resources
Kathryn Lord	Policy and Resources
Paul Morris (appointed from 1 April 2020)	Policy and Resources Governor Champion: Health, Safety and Staff Welfare
Shru Morris (appointed from 1 April 2020)	Audit
Glenys Pashley-Crawford (appointed from 1 April 2020)	Learning and Quality
Arif Patel	Policy and Resources
Roger Spensley	Policy and Resources, Remuneration
Steve Waggott	Policy and Resources
Don Lennon	HE Student Governor, Learning and Quality
Sajeela Mahmud	FE Student Governor, Audit
Professor Mike Wright	Learning and Quality Member up until 31 March 2020
Les Stove	Policy and Resources Member up until 31 March 2020



Blackburn College
Feilden Street
Blackburn
BB2 1LH

01254 292929

thehub@blackburn.ac.uk

www.blackburn.ac.uk

Associate College of Lancaster University

