



Principals Report December 2019

Now in my third year in the role I feel that this is an appropriate time to reflect on what has been achieved and the exciting future that lies ahead of us. During this period, we have seen examination results improve year on year, the vast majority of our students are going onto worthwhile destinations and of course the very successful OFSTED visit last year. Attendance is now hitting national norms and exclusions are significantly down. We have created a calm and purposeful environment where students can expect to better their life chances. We have much to look forward to at the UTC with changes coming thick and fast;

- An age-range change to 11-18 has been agreed and we are now a part of the Wolverhampton coordinated admissions process which will see our first cohort of Year 7 students join us as soon as September 2020
- We are in the process of moving into the Thomas Telford Multi Academy Trust
- The UTC will be re-named as Thomas Telford University Technical College
- There are plans for a significant expansion of our building
- Staff are busy preparing an innovative new curriculum which includes the launch of an on-line curriculum and the introduction of T-levels from September 2021

Thomas Telford Multi-Academy Trust (TTMAT)

Our single academy trust, the West Midlands Construction UTC is now in the process of moving into the Thomas Telford Multi-Academy Trust. Both sides have legal representatives and we can expect to formally move into the TTMAT at some point in 2020. I believe the TTMAT will meet the conditions that our governors set out in consideration of joining a MAT. These being:

- Facilitating the sharing of effective practice across a group of schools, so that when a particular approach has been shown to improve teaching and learning, it can be implemented across the MAT
- Ensure the leader of the MAT has the levers to secure improved performance of all the schools within the MAT and are accountable for doing this
- Extend the reach of leaders and governors at all levels to support and develop teachers across a wider group of schools
- Produce a “pipeline of future leaders” by enabling a greater array of middle leadership positions
- Facilitate the recruitment and retention of staff by giving leaders the ability to point to career development paths and opportunities to specialise within a MAT
- Make it easier for teachers to support each other across a group of schools by sharing and learning from good practice, taking on increased responsibility for specialist subjects and acting as a coach and “critical friend”
- Generate economies of scale, enabling cost efficient commissioning and purchasing of goods and services and facilitating the development of in-house services for schools across the MAT
- To maintain our unique nature as a UTC which offers a STEM focus and opportunities with work with employers and offer technical qualifications

Many of these support mechanisms are already starting to take shape.

Age-Range Change

The UTC went to consultation on an 11-18 age-range in March 2019. Prospective stakeholders from across the city and beyond were contacted and all feedback received was positive. We had already ascertained that there was a basic need and had an agreement with the local authority to commit £2m towards the project. In July 2019 the DFE formally agreed to our new admissions arrangements and for an age-range change with our first cohort of Year 7s starting with us in September 2020 as well as committing to fund the project beyond the £2m pledged by the LA.

We are being re-named as Thomas Telford University Technical College, making best use of the Thomas Telford brand and we have designed a new uniform. Interestingly, this year we recruited 65 new Year 10 students, of which 50% are females, and recruitment into Year 10 for September 2020 is looking very positive. I believe that some of this increased interest is down to the improved brand and we might also be seeing the effects of the Good with Outstanding OFSTED judgement from 2018.

In preparation for Year 7 applications we have delivered an impressive marketing campaign that has included visiting virtually every primary school in the city, social media campaigns and presenting at Information Evenings to over 2000 people. This has resulted in a large number of applications for September 2020, with the vast majority of applicants having us as their first or second choice.

We have recently launched a Key Stage 3 curriculum writing project which sees staff at the UTC working in collaboration with staff from the TTMAT to prepare an innovative and exciting curriculum which will all be available on-line.

Workshops with the DFE, myself and the TTMAT are now taking place to discuss modifications of the current building and plans for a new building to allow the UTC to eventually cater for 1050 students.

University of Wolverhampton

The UTC and our current sponsor The University of Wolverhampton continue to collaborate effectively on projects such as; Sporting Pathway, MASCOT conference, Junior QSi board, careers and HE support, quality assurance, sharing of resources and master classes. A significant number of our Year 13 leavers secured places at the University of Wolverhampton.

After the move into the TTMAT, the university will no longer be our sponsor but we plan to incorporate a Memorandum of Agreement that will allow these collaborations to continue.

Examination Outcomes 18-19

We were pleased that we have maintained the improvements made in GCSE outcomes last year. Our Progress 8 score was -0.6 (up from -1 and -0.65 in previous years). Our disadvantaged and SEN students are closing the gap and achieving scores closer to the whole cohort.

Particularly high achievers with an incredible set of results include:

A** is a 9, A* an 8 etc..., some grades still appear as letters, in the interest of consistency we have presented as follows...

K A 3 A**, 4 A*, A, B

J L-H 1 A**, 3 A, 5 C

D M 1 A**, 1A*, 5 A, 2 B

A P 2 A**, 4 A, 2 B, C

N S 1 A**, 2 A*, 3 A, 2 B, C

We were extremely pleased with our Year 13 outcomes. We have continued with the trend of making year-on-year improvements.

Average UCAS points score per student	
2019	105 (B, C, C +)
2018	101
2017	83

Academic value added is +0.26 which is significantly up on last year's figure of -0.33. A-level value added is +0.20 which is above our ambitious target of +0.18 and significantly up on the 2018 figure of -0.49. We should also mention our specialist areas of Construction and Art & Design who achieved some impressive outcomes.

Congratulations to some of our very best performers who achieved the following outcomes:

A L A*, A*, A, B, C

J D A*, A*, A*

M G A*, A*, C, C

J T A, A, A

Student Destinations

Student destinations have been extremely positive for the third year running. Many of our Year 13 leavers went onto apprenticeships at various levels with virtually all other students going onto university. Nearly all leavers remained within our specialism for their next steps beyond the UTC.

These destinations are supported through site visits and employer-led projects which continue to be a very successful aspect and key feature of the UTC and one of the ways in which we are able to develop the UTC values within our young people such as resilience, accountability, aspiration and collaboration.

T-Levels

The work with the Department for Education and Awarding Organisation for T-Levels is ongoing. After a busy term of meetings, conferences and updates the UTC have now developed both a strategy proposal for piloting industry placements in 2020 and a detailed implementation plan for the Construction T-Level in 'Design, Surveying and Planning' from 2021. The UTC Employer Group are eager to support and develop T-Levels with the UTC, with an approach in most cases, where there is the potential of employment at the end of the course. Despite it being early days, the UTC have indications of a commitment for 7 places currently, from only 5 employers. We do not currently foresee it being a difficulty to reach our aspiration of 10 places. During next term, final specifications will be released for the content of our chosen T-Level which will allow mapping to be completed against current subject expertise within the staffing body and in turn this will drive CPD delivery. Contact has been made with both Dudley College and the West Midlands Combined Authority to access relevant and high quality CPD, for example in the use of GPS and Drones for land surveying activities. Currently, capacity among the staff to complete CPD and develop the course is difficult and we are awaiting the outcome of decisions regarding both CDF funding and T-Level Provider funding, payable in 2020 of approximately £50,000. It is planned to use this funding to increase staffing as required to complete our preparations. Despite the stretched capacity currently, in the first of a series of regular 'checks' the EFSA visited the UTC last week to feedback on the initial implementation plan. This feedback was really strong and the EFSA have indicated that they will now not conduct the next check in March as they are confident in our approach and capability. As we move forwards into the new year, we will need to begin briefings for Governors, wider SLT and staff about T-Levels and where they fit within our programme, as well as begin marketing to current Y10 students with the hope that it is a factor that will motivate them within their current studies.



Staffing

The UTC is currently fully staffed though we expect significant changes in preparation for September 2020 when we potentially need in the region of 13 new teachers. We are confident that with the support of the TTMAT any staffing challenges will be met.

Safeguarding

Designated Safeguarding Lead is Claire Gleeson and sits on SLT meetings each week to report on safeguarding within the UTC. Pip Shaw is currently the Deputy DSL. I am also trained at appropriate level for DDSL. There are 2 other staff who are part of the safeguarding/pastoral team – Sarah Fadian, Attendance Officer and Laura Passmore, Conduct Lead.

All staff have received safeguarding update training in September 2019 with a focus on the slightly updated DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 guidance. The DSL has completed a Level 2 Certificate in Understanding Children and Young People's Mental Health. The DSL is also the recognised Mental Health First Aider for the school to support staff wellbeing. Staff training will be delivered around this in January.

The UTC has been recognised as an Early Adopter school for the DfE statutory RSE (Relationships and Sex Education) requirements from September 2020 due to the quality of its current provision. Parental and student consultation will need to be undertaken ahead of September 2020 and the implementation of the statutory requirements. Parents and students will need to be made fully aware of the change in the right to withdraw students from relationship education. This has been started with some student groups.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all stakeholders including sponsors, employer partners, mentors and governors for their support in helping our students to achieve and to provide me with the conditions that allow decisions to be made that are in the best interests of our UTC community. I would also like to thank the teaching and support staff for going the extra mile whenever called upon.

I would also like to thank parents for their continued support of everything we are trying to achieve at the UTC.

Av Gill

Principal