

Proposed Merger between Harrow College and Uxbridge College – Frequently Asked Questions



Why a merger between Harrow College and Uxbridge College?

This merger is a positive and proactive step on the part of the governing bodies of each college to secure a strong future for further education in Harrow and Hillingdon. Individually, each College has a successful history of supporting local people to achieve their best, to train and qualify for higher level study and for work. Each has actively adapted their provision over the years, to anticipate and meet the changing needs of their communities and to make sure of a strong talent pool to meet the skills needs of west London's booming economy.

The FE sector has faced year-on-year cuts in funding over successive years, and unfortunately this has affected provision for some of our most vulnerable communities. Now, the Government is looking to rationalise further education provision across the country through its programme of 'Area Reviews'.

However, despite the current and continuing challenges within the education environment, Harrow and Uxbridge Colleges believe that the opportunities for taking a unified approach to the provision of Further Education will be of benefit locally and to west London. It is considered that this provides a compelling argument for merger.

Firstly, the adjoining boroughs of Harrow and Hillingdon share many characteristics. For example, both boroughs benefit from diverse communities, with people from different ethnicities, religions and cultures living, studying and working alongside each other. Both boroughs have high levels of small to medium sized businesses alongside major employers such as Heathrow.

Secondly, an opportunity to join forces ensures the continued future of provision through the combining of our respective strengths, the further development of specialisms, the continued and more efficient delivery of the valuable education and training that we offer to our communities with resources firmly focused on front line delivery.

This merger represents a deliberate and positive decision on the part of each of the college governing bodies to secure the future for students, businesses and communities.

Why is Uxbridge College making a big announcement about the merger?

It is a legal technical requirement that when there is a merger proposal that it is announced publicly in the way that it has been and is consulted upon. This does not change what Uxbridge College will continue to offer – its broad range of courses - now and in the future.

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Will each college retain its name and local identity after merger?

Both colleges will retain their names and identities as part of a larger college group.

How will the merger benefit students at each college?

- The 'local offer' in each borough will remain with the intention to maximise student choice across the two boroughs whilst ensuring good local provision
- Increase opportunities to gain the high level skills that are required by employers in different sectors
- Improve quality and consistent standards for similar courses across the colleges
- Increase opportunities to improve facilities
- Opportunity to enhance student enrichment through work experience, career-related activities, sport and intercollege competitions.

What do you mean by the 'local offer' for students?

This means that both colleges will continue to offer the broad range of courses for 16-18 year olds and adults that currently exist. It is important that there is a good quality offer of academic and vocational courses in both Harrow and Hillingdon and our commitment is to continue to do this. In the future, where new highly specialist provision is created this will only be offered on one campus.

I have applied or thinking of applying to Uxbridge College for next year – will the changes affect my application?

Absolutely not. It is 'business as usual' and we look forward to welcoming you to Uxbridge College. This will be the same for Harrow College too. Please, look at our websites for details of our open events or contact our careers/admission teams for advice.

Will there be changes to subjects offered, e.g. 2 year courses next year?

There will be no change to subjects offered at either college.

Will students have to travel between Uxbridge and Harrow for their classes?

No, once a student is enrolled at either Harrow or Uxbridge that is where all their classes will be.

Will staff have to travel to other campuses after the merger – don't want to lose good teachers?

As both colleges will still be offering their broad range of provision, it will be important that both colleges retain their teachers.

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Will there still be the same opportunities for students to have a voice? How will it be different?

Yes, it is important that students continue to have their voice heard at our colleges and we will always look to improve this at each college, for example, their student councils. We do hope students will share their experiences across the two colleges so that we can improve what we do.

How will the merged college ensure smaller campuses are not forgotten and quality is not lost?

The new college group will bring together the plans of both colleges and this includes all campuses. Each campus delivers specific provision to their local area and we will ensure through the advisory group which will be made up of governors, senior management, external stakeholders such as the local authority and employers, staff and students that we will retain a clear focus on all campuses and maintaining and improving provision.

How will the new college ensure fairness with resourcing across the different campuses?

Our commitment is to ensure that appropriate resources are provided for all courses and campuses within the confines of the funding that we get, as we currently do. Allocation of funding will be based on what we have delivered and agreed future plans.