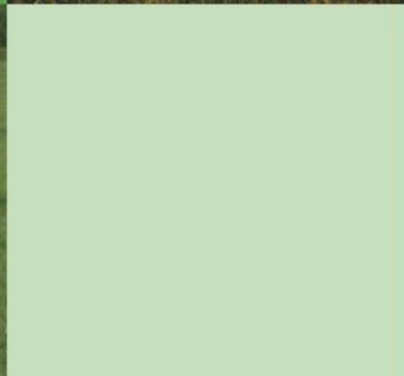




# The Rural Enterprise Academy

South Staffordshire College Bid



## Foreword

██████████, ██████████ of The Rural Enterprise Academy

As the ██████████ for the proposed **The Rural Enterprise Academy** I am delighted to have this opportunity to share our vision and plans for the Academy.

The Rural Enterprise Academy will be the first dedicated Land-based Technical Academy in England. Based in the ██████████, it will offer a unique learning experience for students wishing to undertake rural enterprise, environmental sustainability and land-based studies. We propose to open the doors for our first cohort of students in September 2012.

South Staffordshire College is joined by the National Farmers Union (NFU) and Veolia as partners in The Rural Enterprise Academy. All partners understand, and are passionate about, the key role that environmental sustainability, rural enterprise and land-based industries play locally, regionally, and across the world.

We will work together to encourage sponsorship through our local, national and international connections and will ensure meaningful work based experience is available for our learners from the age of 16 to enhance their employability and life chances, as well as to better serve the needs of employers and communities in developing the skills needed for the challenges and opportunities which lie ahead.

We will ensure that the curriculum provided at the Academy is 'state of the art' and will inspire and motivate young people to achieve success in the environmental sustainability, rural enterprise and land-based industries. The academy will provide clear progression routes to apprenticeships, higher

education and employment.

The academy will ensure that the great majority of learners aged 14-16 develop the skills and knowledge required to achieve the English Baccalaureate. We aim to ensure that all learners in this age group achieve at least five good GCSE grades, including English and Mathematics.

At age 16 and above the academy will build upon the expertise of South Staffordshire College and its industry partners to ensure that learners have the opportunity, through continued academic study, combined with highly relevant vocational study, to progress to Higher Education and into worthwhile and fulfilling careers, in the environmental sustainability, rural enterprise and land based sectors. The range and depth of the curriculum will also equip learners with the transferable and marketable skills needed by employers in a wide range of sectors.

The Academy will increase the skills base within the fields of rural enterprise and environmental sustainability, thus providing much needed support for their development. It will act as a catalyst and support for the continued raising of educational standards within Staffordshire, and will provide a unique and high quality learning choice for young people.

I believe that the Academy will have a positive impact on the lives of students, communities and rural industries across Staffordshire and the surrounding areas.

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## 1 Applicant details

<b>Details of Company Limited by Guarantee</b>
Name: The Rural Enterprise Academy
Company address: [REDACTED] Cannock Staffordshire [REDACTED]
Company registration number:  07652211
<b>Main contact</b>
Name: [REDACTED]
Address: The Rural Enterprise Academy  c/o South Staffordshire College [REDACTED] Cannock Staffordshire [REDACTED]
Email address: [REDACTED]
Telephone number: [REDACTED]
<b>Members and Directors</b>
Please confirm the total number of (a) Company Directors = four and (b) any other members of the Governing Body = four appointed to date, listed below. Please also confirm who the proposed Chair of the Governing Body is.
Name: [REDACTED]

Position: Chair of the Board
Name: [REDACTED] Position: Director
Name: [REDACTED] Position: Director
Name: [REDACTED] Position: Director
<b>Related organisations</b>
Does the Company Limited by Guarantee have any links (through the members, directors or otherwise) with any other charitable or commercial organisation? Yes
If Y please provide their name and Charity Commission number and describe the role that it is envisaged to play in relation to the Free School:  The Directors are currently: one Senior Post holders and Governor of South Staffordshire College [REDACTED], one Senior Post holder of South Staffordshire College [REDACTED] and two Governors of South Staffordshire College [REDACTED]
If your organisation is an existing independent school, please provide your six digit unique reference number:  N/A

**Declaration to be signed by a Company Director**

I confirm that the information provided in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge and that if the application is successful the Company will operate a Free School in accordance with the requirements outlined above and the requirements of the Independent Schools Standards\* and the Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State.

Signed:



Print Name:



Date:

31<sup>st</sup> May 2011

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## 2 Outline of the Academy

### The Rural Enterprise Academy

Proposed Academy name:	The Rural Enterprise Academy							
Age range:	14-19							
<p>Proposed numbers in each year group at point of opening and explanation of how pupil numbers will expand to fill the school over time.</p> <p>If your application includes nursery provision, please add additional rows as appropriate.</p>		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
	Year 10	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
	Year 11	0	90	90	90	90	90	90
	Year 12	30	30	60	60	60	60	60
	Year 13	0	30	30	60	60	60	60
<p>If an existing independent school, provide details of your latest inspection (including the report), current numbers on roll and total capacity of school.</p>	Not Applicable							
<p>Will your school have a religious character (i.e. be a faith school)?</p> <p>If Y, please specify which faith. Please see notes below (at the end of this table).</p>	No							



<p>Is this an application for a single-sex school? If so, please tick the relevant box.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Local authority area in which the school would be situated (and if near to a LA boundary please include names of neighbouring LAs).</p>	<p>Staffordshire</p>

### **3 Educational vision**

#### **3.1 Rationale**

The sponsors and partners of The Rural Enterprise Academy believe that the development of this new Technical Academy will have a positive impact on the lives of students, the rural communities and the rural and environmental industries across Staffordshire and the surrounding areas. The new Academy will be a catalyst and support for the raising of standards in surrounding schools, at all levels, through the sharing of outstanding practice and access to specialist curriculum. The academy will make a significant contribution, through its partnerships with land based and environmental industries, to the raising of awareness of the sustainability issues affecting this country and throughout the world.

Land-based<sup>1</sup> industries are a key sector in Staffordshire which currently produces more food per acre than any other county in England. However, the average age of those working in the industry is 58 years old, and young people are currently not being attracted into the industry in sufficient numbers, due to it being perceived as offering poor career prospects. This perception reflects a common misunderstanding that fails to recognise the diverse, often challenging and technical, nature of employment opportunities in the sector. Employers report that land based education often does not adequately prepare young people with the skills and experience required to meet their needs. If these issues are not addressed it is likely that this will threaten the economic vibrancy of the County in future years.

We believe that the development of The Rural Enterprise Academy will serve to address the skills gaps identified by employers within the sector and help to arrest the decline in interest in pursuing a land based career.

The academy will:

- Have a positive effect on young people in Staffordshire and the surrounding areas through the development of a strategic plan for the delivery of land-based education and training;
- Serve to develop skills in entrepreneurship within a rural context;

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<sup>1</sup> The term Land-based is used to collectively describe 17 sector industries including Agriculture, Animal Health & Welfare, Environmental Industries and Land Management & Production

- Develop skills and knowledge in sustainable development and renewable technologies;
- Ensure that all learners engage in vocational relevant, meaningful work experience from the age of 16;
- Provide a curriculum which combines key academic learning with land based, environmental sustainability, and business enterprise skills;
- Deliver the English Baccalaureate at Key Stage 4;
- Combine academic and skills based learning from the age of 16 to enhance progression to Higher Education and employment; and
- Ensure that the needs of disadvantaged learners and potential learners are addressed to improve their life chances and to enhance social mobility.

The development of The Rural Enterprise Academy will provide opportunities for students to access high quality learning programmes through the development of a wide range of contextualised land-based and academic provision, enhanced by close links, including partnerships, with employers and stakeholders within the rural, land based and environmental sustainability communities.

The Rural Enterprise Academy presents a significant opportunity to re-brand and reposition land-based provision across Staffordshire. It will also present the opportunity to develop a joined-up strategy for the development of:

- 11-19 provision, with full progression routes, working in true partnership with key stakeholders, and linking into the strategies developed by Staffordshire County Council in order to engage the NEET group;
- Core Skills in English and Mathematics, and the transferable skills sought by employers; and
- Vocational skills for students from the age of 14 with a focus towards a contextualised occupational curriculum in the land based and environmental sectors.

Learner success at GCSE and “A” level across the County is improving, with the percentage of learners in Staffordshire achieving 5 GCSE’s, including English and Maths, rising to 54% in 2010, compared with 53.4% nationally. However, there remains room for improvement at Key Stage 4. Within Cannock Chase District, which would be a key area of recruitment for the Academy, success rates were much lower at 45.3% by this measure.

In addition, learners who wish to access a Land-based curriculum have limited opportunity to do so before the age of 16. South Staffordshire College is the only educational institution within the county which offers a full range of land based learning beyond the age of 16, with some opportunities also being provided for vocational learning to young people aged from 14 to 16 through the increased flexibility programme. However this, as part of existing secondary school curriculum offer, is limited in scope.

The Rural Enterprise Academy will address areas of educational underperformance and lack of learning opportunities through the provision of learning programmes which combine core academic subjects with vocational learning, linked to progression and real employment opportunities, in a learning environment which fosters and supports aspiration and entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviours.

The Academy will deliver a curriculum which is contextualised to provide both academic and land-based foci, with key industry partners being involved in curriculum design and delivery and in providing employment experience to ensure that the learning programmes address effectively the needs of key employment sectors.

A comprehensive career progression map will enable all learners to choose appropriate routes to higher qualifications, apprenticeships and employment.

It is intended that the Academy will be further enhanced by the development of a new Sustainability & Environment Centre, located nearby on the same site. This development is intended to create an innovative learning and visitor centre focusing around sustainable food production, renewable technologies and resource management practices in education and industry which will enable good practice to be shared across all primary and secondary schools within Southern Staffordshire.

### **3.2 Our Vision for the Rural Enterprise Academy**

***‘Our vision is for a dynamic, innovative, rural community centred Technical Academy that will raise aspirations and achievement, transform learning, deliver excellence, and make a significant contribution to the regeneration of the regional land-based industries and will support the development of emerging new technologies in the environmental sector.’***

The Rural Enterprise Academy will offer a full range of academic and vocational subjects including GCSEs, A Levels, and Vocational Learning. This curriculum model is underpinned by the clear recognition of the fundamental importance of a high quality core curriculum offer in Maths, English and Science, in accordance with the recently published Wolfe Report.

The Academy will deliver transformational learning including the transferable skills which are central to employability, lifelong learning, personal fulfilment and social and economic prosperity. The Rural Enterprise Academy will embed elements of health, citizenship, entrepreneurship and employability through close links with local employers and land-based community groups. The NFU and Veolia Environment, as partners in the Academy, and as members of the Board of Governors and the steering group, will have an important role in providing the focus for the development of skills and knowledge necessary to enhance employability.

The Rural Enterprise Academy will support learners to achieve their full potential through clear progression pathways into further and higher education, apprenticeships and employment with training.

“Respect for all” will be one of the key objectives of the Academy where integrity will be non-negotiable. Learners will be supported to exceed expectations and to maximise their life chances. The Academy will provide inspiration, capture aspiration and will consistently encourage ambition whilst ensuring that learners are supported appropriately in achieving, and surpassing, their aims.

### **3.3 Strategic Aims**

The proposed Strategic Aims for The Rural Enterprise Academy are to:

- 1 Pursue excellence in everything we do.

- 2 Provide high quality curriculum opportunities which combine key academic learning with vocational skills development to develop transferable skills.
- 3 Develop skills in enterprise and entrepreneurship.
- 4 Develop and provide an inclusive and supportive culture that is safe, effective, friendly and stimulating.
- 5 Provide a high quality, inspiring and sustainable learning environment, making the most effective use of the Academy and College estate.
- 6 Develop and enhance effective external partnerships.
- 7 Attract, develop and retain a highly qualified, skilled and professional workforce that will work together to be outstanding in all that we do.
- 8 Ensure the financial health and solvency of The Rural Enterprise Academy, enabling investment in the vision through effective utilisation of resources and the sharing of support services.
- 9 Provide a curriculum that is both responsive to local industry needs and proactive in providing opportunities that stimulate and build local capacity and progression.

### **3.4 Corporate Values**

The Rural Enterprise Academy will adopt a range of core values by which the organisation will be managed and operated. In delivering its vision the Corporate Values which the Academy will be guided by are a commitment to:

- Strive for excellence in all we do.
- Put learners and learning at the heart of all activities.
- Respect and promote diversity and equality of opportunity.
- Work together to be outstanding.
- Develop outstanding learning and practice in sustainability.
- Set and exceed high standards.
- Provide outstanding customer service.

These Corporate Values will be enshrined under eleven key headings of:

<b>Excellence</b>	Relentless pursuit of excellence in everything we do to ensure that every learner who passes through the Academy can realise their full potential
<b>Integrity</b>	Striving to ensure decency, fairness and honesty at all times in order that the positive relationships between students and staff reinforce a culture of excellent behaviour
<b>Commitment</b>	Having a commitment to learning and to being the best we can (students, staff, governors) with loyalty and pride
<b>Respect</b>	Demonstrating exemplary behaviour and respect towards people and property
<b>Effectiveness</b>	Investing in the Vision through efficient use of resources and ensuring financial solvency and through the success for our students
<b>Enterprise</b>	Forward looking, entrepreneurial and innovative in our approach to all Academy activities, promoting positive attitudes and values
<b>Responsiveness</b>	Responding flexibly to the needs of the internal and external environment
<b>Standards</b>	Setting high standards and exceeding them in all we do
<b>Sustainability</b>	Working to achieve the best in sustainable practice and learning
<b>Togetherness</b>	Working together to support each other in exceeding our expectations and being outstanding in all that we do

<b>Customer Service</b>	Providing an environment that is safe, healthy, friendly and welcoming, whilst exceeding the expectations of learners, stakeholders and communities
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Realisation of these corporate values would represent a step change improvement in the delivery of land-based education for young people within Staffordshire and the surrounding areas.

The Rural Enterprise Academy has an ambition to create an infrastructure of provision that is distinctive and meets the needs of individual customers whether they are students, parents and carers, employers or other key partners and stakeholders.

Overall the Academy aims to ensure that students who wish to follow a land-based/environmental curriculum are given the opportunity to make the best of their individual life chances.



## **4 Educational Plan**

### **4.1 Admissions**

The Rural Enterprise Academy will comply with all relevant provisions of the statutory codes of practice (the School Admissions Code of Practice and the School Admission Appeals Code of Practice) as they apply at any given time to maintained schools and with the law on admissions as it applies to maintained schools. Reference in the codes to admission authorities shall be deemed to be references to the governing body of the Academy. In particular, the Academy will take part in the Admissions Forum set up by the Local Authority and have regard to its advice; and will participate in the co-ordinated admission arrangements operated by Staffordshire County Council.

Notwithstanding these arrangements, the Secretary of State, having consulted the academy, may direct the Academy to admit a named pupil on application from any local authority.

The admission arrangements for the Academy for the year 2011/2012 and, subject to any changes approved by the Secretary of State, for subsequent years will be:

- a) The Academy has an agreed admission number of 120 students. The Academy will accordingly admit at least 90 students in year 10 and 30 students in year 13 in 2012 if sufficient applications are received.
- b) The Academy may set a higher admission number as its Published Admission Number for any specific year. Before setting an admission number higher than its agreed admission number, the Academy will consult those listed at paragraphs 18-19 below. Students will not be admitted above the Published Admission Number unless exceptional circumstances apply and such circumstances shall be reported to the Secretary of State.

### **4.2 Process of application**

Applications for places at the Rural Enterprise Academy will be made in accordance with the Staffordshire County Council's co-ordinated admission arrangements and will be made on the Local Authorities Common Application Form ("the CAF"). The Academy will use the following timetable for applications each year (exact dates within the months may vary from year to year) which, whenever possible, will fit in with the common timetable agreed by the Staffordshire County Council Admissions Forum:

- a) September - The Academy will publish in its prospectus information about the arrangements for admission, including oversubscription criteria, for the following September (e.g. in September 2011 for admission in September 2012). This will include details of open evenings and other opportunities for prospective students and their parents to discuss the Academy. The Academy will also provide information to the Learning Trust for inclusion in the composite prospectus, as required;
- b) September (after 2012) - The Academy will provide opportunities for parents to visit the Academy;
- c) October – the CAF to be completed and returned to the home Local Authority to administer;
- d) November – Local Authority sends applicants’ details to Academy;
- e) December – January – Applicants considered by the Academy and a list of applicants ranked in accordance with the Academy’s oversubscription criteria sent to the Local Authority;
- f) February – Local Authority applies agreed scheme for own schools, informing other LA’s of offers to be made to their residents.
- g) 1st March offers made to parents.

### **4.3 Consideration of applications**

All children applying to the Academy will be required to take a verbal and non-verbal reasoning test. Apart from children with statements of SEN and looked after children, children who do not sit the test will be considered after those who sit the test.

- Applicants will be placed in one of five bands, based on their performance in the non-verbal reasoning test.
- Approximately the same number of children will be admitted in each of the five bands so that each band represents 20% of the applicants.
- Children admitted with Special Needs Statements are included in the band allocations. If they are unable to take the tests their allocation to a band will be based on primary school teacher assessments.

- Children admitted who are looked after are also included in the band allocations based on their last school's assessment, if they are not able to take the test.

The Academy will consider all applications for places. Where fewer than 120 applications are received, the Academy will offer places to all those who have applied.

#### **4.4 Procedures where the Academy is oversubscribed**

Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admissions number, applications will be considered within each band against the criteria set out below.

- Students with statements of Special Educational Needs where the Academy is named on the statement;
- Children in public care;
- Students whose siblings<sup>2</sup> currently attend the Academy and will continue to do so on the date of admission; and
- Students will then be offered places on the basis of the proximity<sup>3</sup> of their home (permanent residence) to the main entrance of the Academy measured in a straight line on a map or using a GIS system.

#### **4.5 Operation of waiting lists**

Subject to any provisions regarding waiting lists in the Local Authority's co-ordinated admission scheme, the Academy will operate a waiting list. Where in any year the Academy receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate. This will be maintained by the Academy and it will be open to any parent to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application.

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<sup>2</sup> Brothers and sisters must live permanently at the same address as the child for whom the application is being made. This includes half brothers and sisters, step brothers and sisters and foster brothers and sisters who live permanently as a family unit at the same address.

<sup>3</sup> Proximity is measured using straight line measurement from the main entrance of the Academy to the main entrance of the child's home

The position of children on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria agreed by the Governing Body. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

#### **4.6 Arrangements for appeals panels**

Parents will have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel if they are dissatisfied with an admission decision of the Academy.

The Appeal Panel will be independent of the Academy. The arrangements for appeals will be in line with the Code of Practice on School Admission Appeals published by the Department for Education as it applies to Academies and Free Schools. The determination of the appeal panel will be made in accordance with the Code of Practice on School Admission Appeals and is binding on all parties. The Academy will prepare guidance for parents about how the appeals process will work and provide parents with a named contact who can answer any enquiries parents may have about the process.

#### **4.7 Arrangements for admitting students to other year groups, including to replace any students who have left the Academy**

Subject to any provisions in the Local Authority's co-ordinated admission arrangements relating to applications submitted for years other than the normal year of entry, the Academy will consider all such applications and if the year group applied for has a place available in the appropriate band, admit the child. If more applications are received than there are places available, the oversubscription criteria agreed by the Governing Body will apply. Parents whose application is turned down are entitled to appeal and parents may ask that their child be placed on an application list.

#### **4.8 Arrangements for admission of students as the Academy builds to its full capacity**

The Academy will open on 1 September 2012 with a Published Admission Number of 120 relating to students in Year 10 and Year 12. It will build capacity by admitting 90 students in year 10 each year from 2009 to 2013 and 30 students in year 12 in 2012 and 2013 rising to 60 in 2013.

#### **4.9 Arrangements for admission to post 16 provision**

The Academy will publish specific criteria in relation to minimum entrance requirements for the range of courses available based upon GCSE grades or other measures of prior attainment. There will be a right of appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel for unsuccessful applicants.

### **ANNUAL PROCEDURES FOR DETERMINING ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS**

#### **4.10 Consultation**

The Academy will consult each year on its proposed admission arrangements.

The Academy will consult by 1 March:

- a) The Local Authority;
- b) Any other admission authorities for relevant secondary pupils;
- c) Schools located within the relevant area for consultation set by the Local Authority;
- d) Any other governing body for secondary schools not falling within paragraph (b) located within the relevant area for consultation; and
- e) The Admission Forum set up by the Local Authority.

#### **4.11 Determination and publication of admission arrangements**

Following consultation, the Academy will consider comments made by those consulted. The Academy will then determine its admission arrangements by 15 April of the relevant year and notify those consulted of what has been determined.

#### **4.12 Publication of admission arrangements**

The Academy will publish its admission arrangements each year once these have been determined, by:

- a) Copies being sent to primary and secondary schools in the county;
- b) Copies being sent to the offices of the Local Authority;

- c) Copies being made available without charge on request from the Academy; and
- d) Copies being sent to public libraries in the area of the Local Authority for the purposes of being made available at such libraries for reference by parents and other persons.

The published arrangements will set out:

- a) The name and address of the Academy and contact details;
- b) A summary of the admissions policy, including oversubscription criteria;
- c) A statement of any religious affiliation;
- d) Numbers of places and applications for those places in the previous year; and
- e) Arrangements for hearing appeals.

#### **4.13 Representations about admission arrangements**

Where any of those bodies that were consulted, or that should have been consulted, make representations to The Rural Enterprise Academy about its admission arrangements, the Academy will consider such representations before determining the admission arrangements. Where the Academy has determined its admission arrangements and notified all those bodies that it has consulted and any of those bodies object to the Academy's admission arrangements they can make representations to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State will consider the representation and in so doing will consult the Academy. Where it is judged appropriate, the Secretary of State may direct the Academy to amend its admission arrangements.

Those consulted have the right to ask the Academy to increase its proposed Published Admissions Number for any year. Where such a request is made, but agreement cannot be reached locally, they may ask the Secretary of State to direct the Academy to increase its proposed Published Admissions Number. The Secretary of State will consult the Academy and will then determine the Published Admission Number.

In addition to the provisions set out above, the Secretary of State may direct changes to the Academy's proposed admission arrangements and, in addition to the provisions above, the Secretary of State may direct changes to the proposed Published Admissions Number.

#### **4.14 Proposed changes to admission arrangements by the Academy after arrangements have been published**

Once the admission arrangements have been determined for a particular year and published, the Academy will propose changes only if there is a major change of circumstances. In such cases, the Academy must notify those consulted as set out above, of the proposed variation and must then apply to the Secretary of State setting out:

- a) The proposed changes;
- b) Reasons for wishing to make such changes; and
- c) Any comments or objections from those entitled to object.

#### **4.15 The need to secure Secretary of State's approval for changes to admission arrangements**

The Secretary of State will consider applications from the Academy to change its admission arrangements only when the Academy has notified and consulted the proposed changes as outlined above.

Where the Academy has consulted on proposed changes the Academy must secure the agreement of the Secretary of State before any such changes can be implemented. The Academy must seek the Secretary of State's approval in writing, setting out the reasons for the proposed changes and providing any comments or objections from other admission authorities/other persons.

The Secretary of State can approve, modify or reject proposals from the Academy to change its admission arrangements.

Records of applications and admissions shall be kept by the Academy for a minimum period of ten years and shall be open for inspection by the Secretary of State.

#### **4.16 Curriculum and organisation of learning**

##### ***Overview of Curriculum Design***

The principles which underpin the approach to curriculum design are:

- The provision of curriculum which will develop learners' skills and knowledge within the context of entrepreneurship in rural economies and sustainable development, together with a clear focus on academic learning and high standards;

- The importance of a strong essential skills core curriculum;
- A high quality curriculum with a good range of academic and vocational learning pathways which are aligned to the Mission of the Academy;
- The centrality of Rural and Environmental Enterprise as foci for the context and approach to the curriculum;
- The curriculum should prepare learners effectively for further study and equip them with the skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours to meet the needs of employers;
- A clear focus upon the individual student through the setting of challenging targets and the effective monitoring of every individual's progress. supported by meaningful liaison with parents/guardians to support achievement and progression into further study and/or employment; and
- A consistent approach to the planning of learning and teaching through the effective use of such development tools as Curriculum Maps, Tutor Guides, Student Guides, Assessment Plans, and Individual Learning Plans.

Learning areas will include generic teaching areas and specialist facilities, including well resourced areas for practical learning. A learning resource centre will provide excellent access to electronic and printed learning materials to afford all learners the opportunity for independent research, revision and further study.

### ***Key Stage Four***

The majority of students will follow a curriculum that facilitates the delivery of the English Baccalaureate group of GCSEs. This will include English, Mathematics, Geography, a modern foreign language and a double award in Science. A minority of students will follow a curriculum that, whilst not enabling the achievement of the English Baccalaureate, will provide a strong focus on the development of essential skills, including those most valued by employers, and which will best facilitate progression to further study. This group of learners would not study Geography or a modern foreign language but will instead devote additional time to English and Maths to enable them to achieve at least five GCSEs.



All learners will undertake relevant vocational study around the core themes of the rural environment, sustainability and enterprise. This will facilitate progression at age 16 to choice of a programme of A Levels, or a programme of A levels combined with appropriate vocational study at level 3, or entry into apprenticeship, or full time vocational study according to the needs of the individual learners.

All learning routes will offer learning contextualised to the Rural Enterprise and Environmental sustainability sectors of employment, whilst developing essential skills, and affording clear progression routes.

### ***Key Stage Five (post 16)***

The academy will provide learners with the facility to progress to Higher Education programmes (either full time or part time) including those relevant to the rural enterprise and sustainability themes. This might include, land based studies, entrepreneurship, environmental sustainability or more traditional degree routes. The core of the curriculum offer will be built around A levels in relevant subjects, contextualised around the rural enterprise and the environmental sustainability sectors and supported by a programme of relevant vocational qualifications at Level Three.

### ***Detailed Curriculum Statements***

Detailed curriculum statements will be developed for all areas of learning and subjects in due course. These will be developed in consultation with appropriate stakeholders, including the college's partners in the academy, Veolia and the NFU, and will draw on the expertise of the Academy Principal and senior team. In all cases the statements will build on the values and approaches articulated in this document.

### ***Approach to Learning and Teaching***

The development of outstanding learning and teaching is a key priority for the academy. The academy will ensure that all learners benefit from excellent learning opportunities and facilities, and from effective behaviour management to ensure the maintenance of an environment conducive to learning at all times. To enable this priority the academy will provide:

- A clear recognition by all of the importance of developing learning skills and a learning culture within the Academy;
- A consistent approach to high quality learning and teaching across the whole curriculum;

- A highly effective programme of Continuing Professional Development and Quality Assurance to ensure that all staff provide the highest quality of learning experiences and are appropriately supported to continuously improve their practice;
- Advanced practitioners, peer mentoring, and a comprehensive staff induction programme to facilitate excellence;
- Highly effective practices in the assessment of learning to improve both learning and achievement;
- The development of the strong use of technology to facilitate learning both within the learning spaces and to provide opportunity for remote access to further study, revision and extension activity; and
- Clear channels of communication for learners and parents/guardians and other stakeholders to provide feedback to facilitate continuous improvements in learning and teaching, and in the wider learning experience.

### ***Overview of ICT***

The role of ICT in the academy is seen as pivotal in supporting outstanding learning and teaching. Our vision for ICT in the Academy is that it should serve the following purposes:

- Support excellent teaching;
- Reinforce and extend students' learning;
- Build technological literacy;
- Support rapid and effective assessment;
- Help to develop a personalised learning experience;
- Assist with special needs provision;
- Enable learners to monitor and evaluate their own performance including progress toward individual learning plans, attendance, punctuality, and assessment through the use of state of the art dash board technology;
- Enable effective monitoring of each individual learner's progress towards targets and the tracking of assessments, using state of the art

dashboard technology, and facilitate effective communication with parents/guardians; and

- Facilitate gathering of learner satisfaction feedback to inform quality improvement.

The Academy will provide full wireless networking access for learners and staff and will ensure that all learners have easy access to the latest technologies to assist their learning.

#### **4.17 Implementation of the ICT Policy**

During the Implementation phase the Academy will develop its policy on the use of ICT and develop appropriate infrastructure and technological solutions to enable the policy to be delivered. Since the Academy will have a range of options in terms of procurement and partnership arrangements it is seen as important that these are assessed professionally during the next phase of development. Wherever possible, in order to provide best value for money and the sharing of best practice, the systems and expertise within South Staffordshire College will be shared and utilised within the academy, particularly those relating to support functions and the monitoring of learners' progress.

#### **4.18 Curriculum Model**

It is anticipated that student numbers will grow from 120 in 2012/13 to 300 in 2015/16. The table below shows how these numbers will be built up over this planning period.

	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>
Year 10	90	90	90	90
Year 11		90	90	90
Year 12	30	30	60	60
Year 13		30	30	60
<b>Total</b>	120	240	270	300

#### **4.19 The Rural Enterprise Academy Curriculum Proposal**

##### **14-16**

The majority of students will follow a curriculum that facilitates the delivery of the English Baccalaureate group of GCSEs. This will include English, Maths, Geography, a modern foreign language and a double award in Science.

All learners will undertake relevant vocational study around the core themes of the rural environment sustainability and enterprise. This will facilitate ease of progression at age 16.

***Stream 1 -30 hours per week***

<b>GCSE</b>	<b>Hours per week</b>
English	4
Maths	4
Double Science (Biology and Chemistry)	4
Geography	2
ICT	2
Language	3
Business Enterprise	3
Sociology	2
Design & Technology	2
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>26</b>

In addition learners will also study the following:

<b>Subject area</b>	<b>Hours per week</b>
Health, citizenship, beliefs and careers	1
Personal fitness	1
Environmental Sustainability	1
Progression Coaching (Tutorial)	1
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>4</b>

***Stream 2 – 30 hours per week***

A minority of students will follow a curriculum that, whilst not enabling the achievement of the English Baccalaureate, will provide a strong focus on learning the core skills and competencies. This group of learners would not study Geography or a modern foreign language but instead will devote additional time to English and Maths to enable them to achieve at least five GCSEs at Grades A\* to C.

<b>GCSE</b>	<b>Hours per week</b>
English	5
Maths	5
BTEC Science	3
ICT	2
Business Enterprise	3
Design & Technology	2
Land-based voc dip	6
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>26</b>

In addition learners will also study the following:

<b>Subject area</b>	<b>Hours per week</b>
Health, citizenship, beliefs and careers	1
Personal fitness	1
Environmental Sustainability	1
Progression Coaching (Tutorial)	1
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>4</b>

### ***Post 16***

The academy will provide learners with the facility to progress to Higher Education programmes (either full time or part time) including those relevant to the rural enterprise and sustainability themes. Progression to Higher Education will be available in a wide range of disciplines including land based studies, business entrepreneurship, science, environmental sustainability, or more traditional degree routes.

The core of the curriculum offer will be built around A levels in relevant subjects contextualised to develop skills and knowledge relating to the rural enterprise and sustainability sectors, whilst creating a rounded curriculum experience which develops the skills vital to a wide range of employment opportunities.

As a key part of the curriculum students will also undertake accredited vocational learning related to the rural enterprise curriculum at level 3.

<b>AS/A2</b>	<b>Hours per week</b>
English	4
Maths	4
Biology	4
Chemistry	4
Geography	4
Language	4
Business Enterprise	4
Sociology	4
Design & Technology	4
Environmental Science	4
Diploma in land-based (2 A Level equivalent)	8
Progression Coaching ( Tutorial)	1

The curriculum model has been built up to provide for flexibility to meet individual student's needs and aspirations whilst retaining a broad and balanced learning experience which is both affordable and manageable.

Each pathway is tailored to meet individual needs and abilities and provides a focus around the rural enterprise, environmental, and/or land based industries.

It is anticipated that each learner would study for between 3 and 5 A levels or the equivalent, according to their individual needs and aspirations. Full guidance and support will be provided to enable learners, and their parents or carers, to make an informed choice of subjects

#### **4.20 Organisation of pupils**

##### ***Organisation of Learning***

At ages 14-16 each cohort will be divided into three 'communities' of approximately 30 students. This configuration will enable learner groups to be timetabled into a range of group sizes according to curriculum needs.

##### ***Tutorial Support***

The Academy will operate vertical Progression Coaching (tutorial) groups. In other words, a Progression Coach will have responsibility for a small number of students in each year group. The mixed age group will act as mentors for one another and can make it much easier for the ethos of the

Academy to be inculcated. Those schools and colleges which use it suggest that it also has a positive influence on reducing bullying and creating an equal status organisation.

In addition to what might be perceived as “normal” tutorial activities the Progression Coaches will coach individual learners throughout their time at the Academy. This coaching will ensure that every learner is set individual stretching targets and is consistently supported to achieve and where possible exceed these targets. Progression Coaches will also have a clear responsibility to support learners in developing the vital attitudes and behaviours identified by employers as key to employment opportunity and progression.

### ***Pupil development, progression and achievement***

The academy will use National Curriculum levels and sub-levels and GCSE grades to track student progress. This will ensure that there is consistency with external standards being applied to academy students, and provide comparability with other UK schools. This will support teacher familiarity and the use of available teaching and testing materials.

All students will be set progression targets across all areas of study. These will be designed to ensure that students have clear expectations of their anticipated achievements based on their starting point at the time of joining the academy. These targets will be monitored closely by a personal advisor, to be known within the academy as a 'Progression Coach'. Students not making the expected levels of progress will be supported through a rigorous programme of mentoring and support to enable them to get back on track.

The role of the Progression Coach is key to ensuring that students understand their targets, are clear about the Academies' expectations and have the appropriate support to maximise their individual potential. Appropriately trained staff in the Academy will take on the role of a Progression Coach for a small group of learners. All students will have a one-to-one session with their Progression Coach every three weeks. Students with the greatest support needs will be provided with appropriate and, where necessary, intensive support, to enable them to overcome any barriers to learning and to achieve.

The progression targets set a specific attainment level for each student in each curriculum area. These targets will be defined by their baseline assessments and are designed to ensure that:

- Each student will have a stretching, yet achievable, target based on their prior attainment. Targets will be reassessed with each learner in light of their individual progress;
- Each student will achieve at least a grade C at GCSE or equivalent; and
- Each student will achieve at least a grade C at A Level or equivalent.

Targets will be set for each learner based on their individual levels of attainment – in some cases, for example in setting targets with learners who suffer from learning difficulties, lower targets may be set, but appropriate support will be provided to maximise each such learner's progress.



## **4.21 Behaviour and attendance**

### **Overview**

- “Respect for all” will be one of the key objectives of the Academy where integrity will be non-negotiable. Learners will be supported to exceed expectations and to maximise their life chances. The Academy will provide inspiration, capture aspiration and will consistently encourage ambition whilst ensuring that learners are supported appropriately in achieving and surpassing their aims;
- The academy will set clear expectations of behaviour and will establish a clear framework to manage and support these expectations;
- The development of the self-esteem and self-confidence of learners will be built into the curriculum in order to support aspirational behaviour;
- Good attendance will be a clear expectation. Attendance will be closely monitored, targets will be set and monitored, and there will be clear communications with parents/guardians; and
- The academy will establish a reward system to encourage hard work, support good behaviour and celebrate success.

## **4.22 The Learner Voice**

The Academy will develop a learner engagement strategy which will recognise the role of students in a partnership for learning with teachers, parents/guardians and others in the wider community. The Academy will develop mechanisms to seek and respond to feedback from learners. This is likely to include a representative student body and both formal and informal student feedback mechanisms relating to all aspects of Academy life.

## **4.23 Student Incentive Scheme**

The Academy will develop a reward system to encourage hard work, support good behaviour and to reward success.

## **4.24 Student Behaviour**

The Academy will set and maintain standards for behaviour which will be based on the values of the Academy. These will be articulated clearly through a student behaviour policy which will be developed during the implementation phase.

#### **4.25 Special Educational Needs**

The Rural Enterprise Academy's vision is to develop high aspirations, high motivation and high achievement for all its students, irrespective of their start in life. This vision applies equally to students with any kind of special educational need.

Our philosophy is to include students as far as possible within the normal provision of the Academy, which includes a strong teaching model and early intervention embedding additional support and individual attention for learners who are having difficulty reaching their targets. Support will be put in place as soon as it is identified that there is a need. All teachers will be trained and prepared to teach students with special needs.

The Academy will aim to be fully inclusive in its sporting, cultural, social, recreational and community activities.

Inevitably, there will be students who have needs requiring additional or special provision of various kinds, in class or in other school-related activities. For these students the Academy will have regard to the SEN Code of Practice (2001) and any guidance issued by the Secretary of State relating to the sections 316 and 316A of the Education Act 1996, including the new rights and duties introduced by the SEN and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001 and Regulations. It will also have regard to the guidance set out in DfES Circular 6/94 and any subsequent guidance.

#### ***Definition***

For the purposes of the policy, a child is deemed to have special educational needs if he/she:

- Has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of students of the same age, either temporarily because of medical or social or emotional difficulties, or permanently; and
- Has a disability which either prevents or hinders her/him from making use of the educational facilities of a kind usually provided for students of the same age.

## ***Purpose***

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that:

- The needs of those students with SEN are identified early through rigorous assessment and appropriate provision made to meet their needs;
- Those students with SEN receive their full entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum and appropriate inclusion in all school activities;
- Students with SEN are valued equally with all other students and will be enabled and encouraged to develop their potential to the full; and
- The organisation of the Academy will ensure an appropriate support framework to respond to students' identified needs.

## ***Principles***

All teachers will be responsible for identifying and meeting the needs of students with SEN and all curriculum areas and all aspects of learning and teaching will take account of students' SEN. However, the Academy also recognises the need for specialist support and teaching to address the often substantial additional learning needs of a significant minority of students.

In common with its approach to monitoring student attainment and progress through the curriculum and pastoral structures, the special needs policy is committed to the early identification of students with special educational needs in order that immediate intervention can take place and will work with other schools and external agencies to support early identification. The views of students, parents and carers will be considered when seeking to meet the needs of students with SEN.

All students are valued equally and are entitled to full access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, including the National Curriculum, the Academy's specialism and the enrichment programme. Therefore, all students with SEN will be taught together with their peers for as much time as possible. Students will sometimes be withdrawn from the mainstream curriculum to be given special and separate support but more normally will be given the support they require alongside the usual learning activities.

All students are entitled to have their particular needs recognised and met, so that all students can achieve success. Given that all teachers are also teachers of special educational needs and that all learning support assistants and special needs specialists work within the curriculum framework, each will be given the appropriate training to support them in this role and to develop a high level of expertise. This ensures that:

- Students do not suffer the perceived stigma of having their need singled out, which could inhibit their learning;
- Students with special needs have the opportunity to achieve success in the context of the mainstream curriculum, which increases motivation and thus enhances their learning; and
- The curriculum which the student with special needs follows is appropriate and relevant, which stimulates learning.

Closely targeted additional support will be provided, where necessary, as part of the enrichment programme, during other enrichment activities and during other programmes such as school journeys and residential visits.

The provision for students with special educational needs at the Academy will be co-ordinated by a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO).

### ***Organisation and facilities***

As recommended by BB94, BB98 and BB99 (Building Framework for School Projects) multi-purpose areas will be created to support the access and inclusion of students with SEN and disabilities. These will have good quality acoustics, lighting, ramps and steps. These areas will provide:

- SEN resource base for learning, behaviour, therapy support and case conferences.
- Appropriate ICT equipment and programmes.
- Access arrangements for Key Stage tests and public examinations.
- Office space for staff, administration and records.
- Storage space for educational and mobility equipment.

## ***Training***

As part of its wider training programme, The Rural Enterprise Academy will train its staff in teaching and meeting other needs of SEN children. All teachers and teaching assistants will be familiar with the SEN Code of Practice, the four areas of SEN, the graduated approach to assessment and provision and multi-agency working. The Academy will also encourage staff to earn further relevant qualifications where appropriate.

### **4.26 Community Engagement**

The Rural Enterprise Academy will be an outward facing school. It will work closely with local secondary and primary schools, and other Academies and educational providers on a national and international basis. The Rural Enterprise Academy will work very closely with its sponsor, South Staffordshire College, and will benefit from the many links and close relationships developed by the College with other training and education providers including other colleges, universities and private training providers.

The Rural Enterprise Academy will be part of its local community and will continue to develop further relationships with community groups and employers. The Academy will be very effectively supported in this endeavour by its partners, Veolia, and the NFU.

Links with employers will be a key strength of the academy's educational offer. All learners from age 16 will undertake meaningful work experience as part of their learning programme and all learners from the age of 14 will enjoy a range of involvement with employers within the environmental sustainability, rural enterprise and land based sectors.

The aim of collaboration in every case will be to raise standards of achievement of students and to provide them with the skills, attitudes and behaviours to prepare them for success in further study and their future employment.

### ***Primary Schools and Secondary Schools***

The Rural Enterprise Academy will form strong links with local primary and secondary schools in order to foster collaborative working and enable seamless transition for those students who wish to embark on a rural enterprise and environmental sustainability education programme. It is regarded as a key tenant of the overall philosophy of The Rural Enterprise Academy that it will work with its partners to build on the experience of students to ensure that there is continuity of progression for all.

The Academy will be an active member of the relevant schools clusters and support each of the partner schools where possible. This may include making facilities of the Academy available to individual schools to facilitate curriculum extension activities where this is appropriate and providing professional development opportunities for staff. It is envisaged that this will be a two way process whereby The Rural Enterprise Academy and schools will work together to meet the needs of students more effectively.

### ***Other Schools and Academies***

The Rural Enterprise Academy will be part of the Staffordshire County 14-19 partnership and will play an active role in working with others within that partnership. It will also be part of any wider group of Technical Academies set up to develop the rural enterprise and environmental sustainability pathways for learners. It will develop joint approaches and solutions with groupings where these are seen to be in the best interest of The Rural Enterprise Academy's students and its communities.

### ***Business and Community Links***

The Partners believe that they can make a unique contribution to the work of The Rural Enterprise Academy through their expertise and their national and international networks. The Rural Enterprise Academy will have an international approach to all its work. Exchanges and international curriculum links will be developed. The Partners will support curriculum development to ensure that the skills learned are relevant to industry and employment needs.

The Partners are keen to promote the employability prospects of the learners attending The Rural Enterprise Academy through a range of activities, including developing the skills required by the rural enterprise, environmental sustainability and land-based industries and by making effective use of the partners' skills and resources to enhance the learning experience. The academy will strive to ensure that all learning programmes support the work related learning curriculum and serve to develop and embed a culture of rural enterprise. The Academy aims to work with employers and community groups in projects such as structured mentoring, visits and work placements for students and staff. The Partners have significant experience in working with local communities and would mobilise community and corporate contacts to enhance the students' learning experiences and life chances.

### ***Community use of facilities***

The use by the community of the facilities of The Rural Enterprise Academy will be an important design consideration. The ambition is for this to include both leisure and adult education programmes during the evening, at weekends and during holiday periods. This ambition however is tempered by the current rules relating to VAT which restrict such use.

As the plans for the Academy mature and develop during the Implementation phase a manageable and realistic programme of community use will be developed.

## 5 Evidence of demand and marketing

### 5.1 Evidence of Parental Demand

To evidence parental demand for The Rural Enterprise Academy, a telephone survey was carried out in the local area over a period of 5 days/evenings. This secured 331 responses from parents, who between them had 556 children. Of the 331 responses, 129 respondents had children aged between 12 and 15.

Parents were given a short description of the proposed academy and were asked:

***“Without any commitment, if such a school were to exist, would you consider it as a possible choice for your child’s/children’s education?”***

Responses were as follows:

<b>Total responses</b>	<b>331</b>	
Positive	278	83.99%
Negative	53	16.01%

Responses by age of child are detailed below:

	<b>Positive</b>	<b>% Pos.</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>% Neg.</b>	<b>Total</b>
Respondents children aged <11	24	96.00%	1	4.00%	25
Respondents children aged 11	14	100.00%	0	0.00%	14



	<b>Positive</b>	<b>% Pos.</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>% Neg.</b>	<b>Total</b>
Respondents children aged 12	23	92.00%	2	8.00%	25
Respondents children aged 13	31	86.11%	5	13.89%	36
Respondents children aged 14	33	91.67%	3	8.33%	36
Respondents children aged 15	30	90.91%	3	9.09%	33
Respondents children aged 16	34	69.39%	15	30.61%	49
Respondents children aged 17	88	84.62%	16	15.38%	104
Respondents children aged 18	83	84.69%	15	15.31%	98

	Positive	% Pos.	Negative	% Neg.	Total
Respondents children aged 19	58	89.23%	7	10.77%	65
Respondents children aged 20	23	95.83%	1	4.17%	24
Respondent children aged >20	58	86.57%	9	13.43%	67

(Note: 556 children from 331 respondents)

The respondents have also been allocated by postcode to assess where the catchment area would be for the Academy. Details are as follows:

Postal Area	Primary Locations(s)	Total Respondents	Positive	% Pos	Negative	% Neg
B	Birmingham	35	28	80.00%	7	20.00%
CV	Coventry	1	1	100.00%	0	0.00%
CW	Crewe	1	1	100.00%	0	0.00%
DE	Swadlincote, Burton-on-Trent	24	19	79.17%	5	20.83%
DY	Dudley	11	10	90.91%	1	9.09%

Postal Area	Primary Locations(s)	Total Respondents	Positive	% Pos	Negative	% Neg
LE	Leicester	1	1	100.00%	0	0.00%
ST	Stafford	73	65	89.04%	8	10.96%
TF	Telford, Shropshire	21	16	76.19%	5	23.81%
WV	Wolverhampton	55	48	16.33%	7	2.38%
WS	Cannock, Lichfield, Walsall	109	89	81.65%	20	18.35%

In addition to this, a paper based questionnaire was undertaken which secured 103 responses from people who had children between the ages of 11 and 15.

Responses were as follows:

Total responses	103	
Positive	77	74.76%
Negative	26	25.24%

The table below sets out details of the positive responses from the survey:

Age of Children	No of positive responses	Post al Area
12	31	B77,CW2,ST9, ST16 x4,ST17 x5,ST19 x 2,WS6 x2, WS7, WS11 x 4, WS12 x6, WS14, WS15, WV10 x2
13	23	B77 x 2, WS11 x 2, WV13, WS13 x2, ST19 x7, ST17 x5, ST16 x 4
14	8	B77,WS7,WS11, WS12 x 2,WS15, WV12, ST16
15	15	B77 x 2, DE6, ST3, ST11, ST17,WS3, WS7 x3, WS11, WS12 x2, WS13, WV5
TOTAL	77	

(Source: South Staffordshire College analysis of survey results)

The above analysis shows clear parental demand that is evidence that there is over 50% of the expected enrolments to The Rural Enterprise Academy in the first two years.

Age	Telephone	Paper	Year Group	No. of positive responses	50% of Demand
12	23	31	Year 10 in 2013	54	45
13	31	23	Year 10 in 2012	54	45
14	33	8	Year 12 in 2013	41	15
15	30	15	Year 12 in 2012	45	15

Age	Telephone	Paper	Year Group	No. of positive responses	50% of Demand
				<b>129</b>	<b>120</b>

In addition to the surveys, current Rodbaston learner surveys were carried out to gauge the level of interest there would have been if The Rural Enterprise Academy was offered to these learners. The survey asked learners if there had been an Academy when they were younger, would they have been interested in attending at 14, at 16 or not at all. 443 learners, mainly aged 16 – 19 participated in this survey and returned completed questionnaires.

	Number	Percentage
No. of learners who would have been interested in attending the Academy at 14	185	41.76%
No. of learners who would have been interested in attending the Academy at 16	205	46.28%
No. of learners who would not have been interested in attending the Academy	53	11.96%

This clearly shows that there is demand from learners for Land-based provision at The Rural Enterprise Academy.

Section 5.3 sets out current levels of applications for Land-based subjects within South Staffordshire College.

## 5.2 Demographics and Current Learner Applications

### Socio-economic Characteristics of the West Midlands

The West Midlands has a population of 5,431,000 of which 63.7% are of working age, compared with 65% nationally. Overall 75% of the working age population is economically active and the employment rate is 68% - again lower than nationally.

There has been growth in unemployment across the area as a result of the economic downturn. This is a particular issue in some of the immediate areas served by the Rodbaston Campus such as Cannock Chase where there are concentrations of deprivation and associated low education participation. For example in some wards within Cannock Chase the percentage of 16-18 yr olds not in education, employment or training is in excess of 10%.

### Socio-economic Characteristics (2010)

Characteristics	West Midlands	England
	%	%
Economically active	75%	76%
In employment	68%	70%
Employees	60%	61%
Self employed	8%	9%
Unemployed	8.9%	8%

Source: NOMIS

### Land-based and Environmental Industry employment in the West Midlands

Lantra estimates that there are approximately 18,200 land-based and environmental sector businesses in the West Midlands region employing approximately 100,000 people.

The sector in the region is dominated by micro businesses. 97% of businesses in the sector in the West Midlands have a workforce of ten staff or fewer, compared with 82% across all sectors in the West Midlands.

Lantra estimates that in the West Midlands over the period 2010 to 2014 the sector will require 14,000 more people, of which 50% would require skills at level 3 or above.

Regional information on skills issues is not available, however nationally 7% of employers in the land-based and environmental sector had vacancies. The most common reason cited for a vacancy was a skills shortage. In addition, 15% of employers reported a skills gap (i.e. the extent to which existing employees were not work ready).

The sector has changed in recent years leading to an increase in demand for highly skilled staff. Current skills employers feel are important to the sector include:

- Technical skills (e.g. animal handling and care; disease identification and control; implementing new technology including genetic engineering);
- ICT skills (e.g. robotics);
- Leadership/management skills (e.g. succession planning; entrepreneurial skills); and
- Essential skills (e.g. literacy, numeracy and communication).

*Source: Lantra West Midlands Factsheet 2010-11*

### **5.3 South Staffordshire College – Learner Recruitment**

#### **Rodbaston Campus: Learner Recruitment 2010/11**

Learners at the Rodbaston Campus are recruited from South Staffordshire and neighbouring Local Authority areas as well as from the wider West Midlands region. The map presented below shows that a high number of learners are recruited from South Staffordshire as well as Cannock, Lichfield, Walsall and Wolverhampton.

## **Learners aged under 19 years old: Rodbaston Campus**

Further analysis of learner recruitment data for 2010/11 shows that there are 14 Local Authority areas from which 20 or more learners at the Rodbaston Campus are recruited.



**Rodbaston Campus: Learners by Resident Local Authority Area 2010/11**

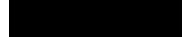
<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Learners</b>
Cannock Chase	153
Lichfield	119
Walsall	115
South Staffordshire	108
Wolverhampton	99
Stafford	78
Tamworth	53
East Staffordshire	47
Staffordshire Moorlands	33
Dudley	32
Stoke-on-Trent	28
Shropshire	26
Telford and Wrekin	25
Birmingham	20
Other	73
<b>Total</b>	<b>1009</b>

*Source: South Staffordshire College data*

**Rodbaston Campus Applications 2011/12**

The map below shows the applications for the South Staffordshire College Rodbaston Campus 2011/12. In keeping with recruitment patterns for 2010/11 the college has attracted applications from South Staffordshire as well as neighbouring Local Authority areas and the wider West Midlands region.

### **Applications 2011/12: Rodbaston Campus**



Further detail is provided below on the number of applications received for the Rodbaston Campus. The highest number of applications has come from residents of Cannock Chase, followed by Walsall, Lichfield, Tamworth and then South Staffordshire. This data shows the level of applications at May 2011, these numbers are expected to increase with three months to go before the start of the 2011/12 academic year.

### **Rodbaston Campus: Applications 2011/12**

<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Learner Applicants</b>
Cannock Chase	93
Walsall	80
Lichfield	74
Tamworth	65
South Staffordshire	63
Wolverhampton	46
Stafford	41
Dudley	33
East Staffordshire	30
Shropshire	27
Birmingham	25
Telford and Wrekin	20
Other	63
<b>Total</b>	<b>660</b>

Further evidence of demand for 2011/12 is demonstrated by the feedback received from College Open Events (from October 2010 to March 2011) which showed the areas of high interest from prospective learners included Animal Care, Veterinary Nursing and Equine Studies.

#### **5.4 Statutory Public Consultation**

As set out in the Section 10 of the Academies Act, a full consultation exercise organised by the Governing Body, and with the support of the Department for Education, will take place once the Academy proposal has been approved. The following section sets out the plan for statutory consultation for The Rural Enterprise Academy.

## **The Rural Enterprise Academy – Statutory Public Consultation Plan**

A full statutory consultation will take place over a period of 30 days (excluding weekends, school and bank holidays).

A consultation document will be produced clearly stating the vision and values of The Rural Enterprise Academy and how it will benefit local and regional communities. The consultation document will set out The Rural Enterprise Academy's offer in terms of curriculum, age range, admissions policy and the Academy set up timeline.

The consultation document will be made available on The Department for Education, South Staffordshire College, NFU and Veolia websites, and key stakeholders, which could include those listed below, will be sent hard copy or digital copies of the document.

Parents and carers of current learners	Parish Councils
Members of Parliament and MEPs	Local Universities
Local Councillors	Ofsted
Local Authorities	Voluntary Organisations
Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA)	Faith Organisation Representatives
Employers	Sector Skills Councils
Chamber of Commerce	Exam Boards
Local Sixth Forms	Connexions Service
Local Further Education Colleges	Jobcentre Plus
Local and regional Secondary potential feeder schools	Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire
Local Academies	Local Enterprise Partnership
College Staff	Government Offices
College Students	Local Hospitals
Association of Colleges (AoC)	Emergency Services
Trade Unions	NFU members
Other land-based organisations	Community groups
	Young Farmers
	LANTRA

In addition to the consultation document, notices and press articles will go out into all local and one regional newspaper and be displayed in public buildings e.g. libraries and local government offices. Local and regional events will be held by the Academy partners to ensure a fair and transparent approach has been taken.

The public consultation will ask respondents to comment on the opening of a land based Technical Academy. All responses to the consultation will be considered fully.

## **5.5 Strategy**

The Rural Enterprise Academy's marketing and communications strategy will derive directly from the mission, vision and broad objectives of the Academy. The strategy prior to operation will gain support from key stakeholders and potential students and will demonstrate new and improved opportunities as a result of the Academy.

The strategy will take into account relevant catchment areas, differing community needs and associated local, sub-regional and national agendas. The strategy will be delivered and monitored through the creation of a marketing and communication plan that is shared and adopted by all involved.

Key elements of the strategy will be:

- To develop and launch the new brand to maximise awareness to key target audiences;
- To explore collaborative and innovative opportunities to engage with the target audience;
- To develop Academy Ambassadors through communications with current South Staffordshire College students;
- To implement a strong internal communications campaign to engage and gain the support of staff from the sponsors and to inspire and motivate Academy staff;
- To ensure marketing messages are clearly focused on potential students and demonstrate the features, advantages and benefits of the Academy;
- To engage external influencers such as parents and carers, local schools and Connexions advisors and deliver high quality informative materials to assist in the Information Advice and Guidance process; and
- To utilise land based market research to influence the existing and future strategy. The marketing and communications strategy will be monitored through key stakeholder feedback and recruitment and enrolment statistics.

## **Analysing Market Opportunities and Product Portfolio Development**

The Rural Enterprise Academy and partner organisations are committed to exploring and analysing all opportunities for the Academy. Market analysis carried out by South Staffordshire College will focus on rural enterprise, land-based and environmental sustainability provision within the local, regional and national context, for example:

- Needs Analysis – information regarding demographics, lifestyle, employment status, ethnicity, skills levels using secondary data including economic reports, census information, and neighbourhood analysis will be utilised to influence the marketing strategy. Local intelligence will also be gathered from staff and students, as well as local area research from community groups, schools, and employers to develop a full understanding of local needs;
- Labour Market Intelligence – will enable the Academy to tailor offerings to meet employers needs;
- Sector Skills Council information – will be used by curriculum staff to identify skills and employment opportunities and to ensure courses planned meet local and national needs;
- Competitor analysis – will be used to assess courses, facilities and services offered by other academies, colleges and private training providers;
- Applications and enrolments - analysed by age, ethnicity and location to build a picture of student profiles;
- Student surveys and focus groups - feedback will be used to assess the effectiveness and suitability of marketing messages and materials;
- Product offerings – will be reviewed before each new course is offered and carried out in conjunction with curriculum planning; and
- School links - Co-ordinators will work with schools/organisations to understand the needs and motivations of their learners as well as issues of NEETs in order to offer courses in the right subjects and format to be attractive to them.

The product portfolio will be clearly segmented to meet the needs of a variety of stakeholders. Key audiences addressed include:

- Potential learners and their parents or carers with a particular interest in following a rural enterprise and environmental sustainability curriculum;

- The employers in key regional employment growth areas, within the land-based and environmental sustainability sectors;
- Potential learners for post 16 provision;
- NEETs;
- Universities;
- Employers; and
- Land-based groups.

### **Communications**

The Marketing team within South Staffordshire College is tasked with ensuring clear and consistent key messages are communicated regarding the proposed Academy, to all staff, students, potential students, employers and stakeholders.

Communication objectives include:

- Ensuring an effective launch which develops brand awareness and reputation. It is recognised that this is a unique opportunity to promote The Rural Enterprise Academy and consequently a comprehensive launch programme will be delivered involving carefully structured public relations activities in the local, regional and national areas;
- Achieving recruitment targets through the delivery of outstanding marketing materials and the selection of appropriate marketing channels;
- Producing and analysing market intelligence which continually informs new product development and future marketing campaigns; and
- Co-ordinating and supplying consistent information to both internal and external audiences on a regular basis.

### **Promotional Campaigns**

Promotion of the curriculum offer is key to the launch of The Rural Enterprise Academy. The campaign will cover all appropriate media channels and may include:

- Launch advertising in traditional press advertising, local media across the local, regional and national geographic areas;
- Direct mail to parents;

- Open days and careers events held at South Staffordshire College, and at schools within Staffordshire and wider areas;
- Land-based events e.g. county and agricultural shows;
- Outdoor advertising e.g. buses, train stations etc;
- Digital media, The Rural Enterprise Academy's website and the partners websites prior to the opening of the Academy, text campaigns and social networking sites;
- Networking and speaking opportunities at Land-based and environmental sustainability events;
- Public Relations activities;
- Trade press advertising e.g. Young Farmers; and
- Academy information in the current South Staffordshire College prospectus and on the College's website.

These campaigns will be evaluated and adapted both prior to the opening of the Academy and on an on-going basis to ensure that messages are clear and consistent and to measure effectiveness.

### **Evaluation**

Evaluation will be built into all marketing activities. For example the use of Google analytics, feedback provided by student and tutor satisfaction questionnaires, feedback surveys from prospective students; induction surveys, focus groups and student representative outputs will be analysed and fed back into future marketing plans.



## **6 Organisational capacity and capability**

### **6.1 Capacity and capability of the Company**

#### ***Partnerships for Delivery***

**South Staffordshire College** is the lead partner of The Rural Enterprise Academy. South Staffordshire College was created in January 2009 from the merger of three established colleges: Cannock, Tamworth & Lichfield and Rodbaston. These colleges have over 200 years collective experience of successfully delivering high quality education to local communities. Currently around 20,000 full and part time student are enrolled on College programmes including around 9,000 adult learners and 5,500 learners aged 16 – 18. Courses are delivered from entry level to level 5, including 800+ learners currently undertaking higher education programmes.

Rodbaston campus is set in 160 hectares of rural Staffordshire, close to the M54 and M6 motorways. The campus specialises in providing further and higher education courses for construction-related industries and Land-based activities such as fisheries and aquaculture, animal care, agriculture and horticulture. It also offers a range of training services that support land-based businesses.

South Staffordshire College is one of only two Colleges in the UK to achieve the environmental standard ISO 14001. Additionally the College is the only such institution in England to have been awarded both Eco Campus Bronze and Silver for its work in sustainable practices. During 2010 and 2011 every member of college staff completed a formal qualification in sustainability.

The Rodbaston campus is taking a leading role in the development and education of the best sustainable business practices by generating and managing the resources necessary to ensure a sustainable, world class learning environment. South Staffordshire College is planning sustainable development initiatives in areas such as energy production, water conservation and recycling, waste minimisation and waste management and is developing programmes to link to the delivery of training and educational. This work will be strongly supported by the proposed Environment and Sustainability Centre which will be located at Rodbaston and will provide a hands-on education experience for all the young people of the region.

The **National Farmers Union (NFU)** and **Veolia** will partner South Staffordshire College in establishing and overseeing The Rural Enterprise Academy once approved by the Department for Education.

The NFU trade association is the largest farming organisation in the UK providing a strong and respected voice for the industry and employing a team of 500 staff supporting the needs of its members locally, nationally and internationally. The NFU, founded in 1908, champions British farming and provides professional representation and services to its Farmer and Grower members.

Veolia has had a presence in the UK since the mid-1960s. They are one of the only companies to offer the entire range of environmental services and offer customers comprehensive and tailored solutions in the following areas:

Veolia Environmental Services is the UK's leading recycling and waste management company.

Veolia Water provides water and wastewater management services throughout the UK and is part of the world's leading water company.

Dalkia (Veolia Energy Globally) is one of the UK's specialists in energy and utilities management for industry, healthcare, district heating, public and commercial sector clients.

Veolia Transport carries more than 2 billion passengers per year in 25 countries, Veolia Transport is one of Europe's leading private passenger transport operations.

All partner organisations have established relationships and share a joint vision for The Rural Enterprise Academy. The partners, as Governors on the Academy Board, and members of the Steering Group, will work together to develop strategies, to broker links to employers and to influence curriculum development.

Letters of commitment from the Partners are located in Appendix1.

In addition we have gathered support from a number of key stakeholders including:

- [REDACTED];
- [REDACTED];
- [REDACTED];
- Staffordshire County Council;
- South Staffordshire Council;

- Wind Prospect Group Limited;
- Carbon Control; and
- REpower UK Limited.

Copies of letters of support are attached as Appendix 2.

If the initial submission is successful the partners anticipate receiving an endorsement from the Sector Skills Councils LANTRA and IMPROVE, NEF, CLA, Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Food North-West, NWRAF, the Rural Partnership and Derbyshire County Council amongst others.

## **6.2 Company Limited by Guarantee (The Academy Trust)**

As lead partner of The Rural Enterprise Academy, South Staffordshire College has formed a Company Limited by Guarantee. This company will convert to charitable trust status on receipt of Department for Education approval and funding.

The Company Limited by Guarantee will consist of four directors, these are: [REDACTED].

The Directors of the Company Limited by Guarantee (Trust) bring a wealth of experience and expertise in the overall management of a large Further Education college, curriculum delivery, financial management and merger and restructuring exercises. The expertise and experience that all four directors bring will effectively oversee the contracting out of activities and ensure that the educational vision and value for money are maintained both through the set up period and into the smooth operation of The Rural Enterprise Academy.

The experience and expertise is set out below for each member of the Company Limited by Guarantee:

[REDACTED] – [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] – [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] – [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] – [REDACTED].

The four directors are completely committed to the vision of The Rural Enterprise Academy and the opportunities it will bring for learners within the Staffordshire and wider areas. They have identified the time and resources required in the pre-opening stages of The Rural Enterprise Academy and are fully committed to working with the Steering Group identifying and resourcing any skills gaps where appropriate. On an on-going basis once The Rural Enterprise Academy is open, they will work

closely with the Governing Body to delegate appropriate funding to the Academy.

The role of Company Secretary for The Rural Enterprise Academy will be undertaken by [REDACTED] and will play a key role in ensuring that the Academy complies with the Financial Memorandum and that value for money is maintained.

Where any additional skills gaps are identified, these will either be filled through the current infrastructure support provided by South Staffordshire College, through other partners on the Steering Group, or through hiring in expertise or through the development of a volunteering or internship programme.

### **6.3 Project Steering Group**

A Project Steering Group has been identified to oversee the pre-opening phase of The Rural Enterprise Academy through to the successful opening and through the first academic year of operation, ensuring that any issues identified after the first day of operation are dealt with by appropriately experienced individuals.

The aim is to keep the Project Steering Group to a small number and to bring individuals on an ad-hoc basis when areas of expertise are required, for example project management (both academic and buildings), estates, Human Resources (HR), legal and ICT.

South Staffordshire College have all these areas of expertise available within their own staffing structure. These individuals have been involved in the development of the proposal for The Rural Enterprise Academy so are best placed to join the Project Steering Group when required and have capacity to dedicate the time required to the project.

The core members of the Project Steering Group will be:

Four Directors of the Academy Trust – who will ensure that all decisions are communicated and agreed by the new Governing Body and appropriate resources are engaged in the pre-opening stages of The Rural Enterprise Academy. Within this team there are individuals with appropriate financial expertise to oversee this area.

The Principal Designate – who will have overall responsibility for the development of the model of delivery for The Rural Enterprise Academy and recruitment of the academic and non-academic members of staff.

A representative from the Department of Education, who will be allocated on the successful completion of this application.

If it is felt to be appropriate the Project Steering Group will identify a representative from the Local Authority to provide advice and guidance to the group.

The Project Steering Group will carry out the following activities in the pre-opening stage of The Rural Enterprise Academy, they will:

- Agree the project scope and resource requirements within the deadlines, format and frequency of meetings and updates to ensure the project meets all deadlines;
- Develop and oversee delivery of strategies for the smooth running of the Academy;
- Ensure that finances are allocated appropriately;
- Agree the curriculum model and any future requirements to develop this delivery;

- Oversee the estates development for any new build project associated with the new Academy;
- Design the Academy staffing structure and recruit the academic and non-academic staff for opening; and
- Ensure all project deadlines are met and any issues are dealt with in a timely manner.

#### **6.4 Hiring the Principal Designate**

The Rural Enterprise Academy has a clearly defined vision, values culture and ethos which can be communicated easily as the Directors identify a suitable individual to recruit into the post of Principal Designate.

The Principal Designate will be required to be able to translate The Rural Enterprise Academy's vision into operational reality ensuring that the values and culture are aligned and communicated to the students, staff and parents.

The Principal Designate will have a strong educational background, having Qualified Teacher status and holding a Head Teacher Qualification.

To ensure the recruitment of the strongest possible candidate for the post of Principal Designate, through a fair and transparent process, advertisements will be placed in the national press. Particular focus will be placed upon the skills and experience required to ensure an outstanding educational experience for learners. Relevant experience of academy development and of the land based sector would be advantageous.

The Academy Trust and newly formed Governing Body of The Rural Enterprise Academy will focus on the National Standards for Head Teachers framework when considering the knowledge, professional qualities and actions of the Principal Designate. The competencies of the individual including, for example, integrity, analytical thinking and impact will also be considered when recruiting for this post. All recruitment criteria will be closely linked to The Rural Enterprise Academy's vision and values.

The timing of the recruitment of the Principal Designate will be timed to correspond with any notice periods that need to be considered, for example a Head Teacher must give a notice period of one term where other staff would need to give at least a half terms notice. The recruitment will also be timed to ensure that the appointment of the Principal designate will enable the post holder to have the opportunity to develop the

operational plan for the Academy, shape the curriculum and appoint key staff for the 2012/13 academic year.

The Principal Designate will sit on the Governing Body of The Rural Enterprise Academy and the Project Steering Group tasked with setting up the Academy. The Principal Designate will be accountable to the Governing Body for all strategic, financial and curriculum decisions made by The Rural Enterprise Academy.

## **6.5 Governance**

As set out in The Articles of Association for the Academy Trust, the Governing Body is attached to the Academy Trust with the Directors of the Trust sitting on the Governing Body. The role of the Governing Body prior to opening will be to provide guidance and expertise on specific issues relating to the establishment of the Academy. After opening the Governing Body will be responsible for the strategic direction of the Academy, and will monitor and evaluate performance and set strategies and policies.

All Governors will be expected to demonstrate a high level of involvement and engagement with The Rural Enterprise Academy through regular attendance and active engagement in meetings and events, and through the relevant use of ICT.

It is envisaged that the Governing Body of The Rural Enterprise Academy would comprise of 15 members who would be appointed by the Academy Trust. South Staffordshire College as lead partner would appoint 9 Governors. The full Governing Body would be made up of the following members:

Four Directors of the Academy Trust (Company Limited by Guarantee).

Five other trustees appointed by the lead Partner, for example the NFU, and to include 2 College Governors.

There would be six partner appointed Governors, these would be:

The Principal Designate;

Local Authority Governor;

One Support Staff Governor;

One Teaching Staff Governor; and

Two Parent Governors.

██████████ will become ██████████

The Academy Trust and Partners will seek to recruit Governors with a wide range of business expertise and who will bring networks and connections at local, regional and national level to benefit The Rural Enterprise Academy's specialist land-based curriculum. In addition the Academy Trust will ensure that there is local and voluntary third sector representation on the Governing Body.

Recruitment of Governors will be carried out through local connections, press and through the School Governors One Stop Shop. Training for the Academy Governors will utilise the expertise already within South Staffordshire College and will extend this training to all Academy staff, linked to targets for training and development.

## **6.6 Endowment Trust Fund**

The Partners/Academy Trust will endeavour to raise funds to support the Academy's students and the local community. These funds would be used to promote equality of access and to ensure that all students were able to take part in extended and enrichment activities.

## **6.7 Financial Oversight**

### ***Corporate structure and responsibilities of the Trust***

The Academy Trust will exist as a Limited Company with (exempt) charitable status. The Trust will be responsible for notifying Companies House with changes of circumstances, for example changes to Directors. The Trust will also be responsible for submitting annual accounts to Companies House.

The Trust will operate as a separate legal entity but wholly controlled and therefore accounted for as a subsidiary of South Staffordshire College ('the College'). Initially the directors of the Academy will be the South Staffordshire College's Principal and Deputy Principal, Chair of the Board of Governors and a College Governor with financial expertise.

The College will be responsible for appointing internal and external auditors for the Academy.

The Trust will be responsible for submitting audited financial statements to Companies House on an annual basis.



### ***Oversight – process and documentation***

The Academy will adopt the financial regulations of the College. The financial regulations were last approved by the College's Board in October 2010. The financial regulations cover all aspects of Corporate Governance and Financial Management and Control.

The Academy will undertake the following tasks to ensure good financial management:

- Compile a 3-5 year financial plan forecasting income, expenditure and reserves;
- Carrying out annual budget compilation and management - The control of income and expenditure within an agreed budget will be the responsibility of a designated principal budget holder, who will ensure that day-to-day monitoring is undertaken effectively. Initially this role will be undertaken by the Deputy Principal in the Academy but will transfer to the senior administrator. Any anticipated significant departures (10% or £1k (whichever is the lower) from agreed individual budgetary targets will be reported to the Company Secretary and, if necessary, corrective action taken;
- The Academy will prepare management accounts to be considered by the Board on a monthly basis. The management accounts will show performance for the month, year to date results against budget and forecast outturn for the full year; and
- The Academy will liaise with the College to arrange an annual audit of the financial statements and to set the Academy's internal audit plan for the year. Both internal and external reports will be considered by the College's audit committee and the Board of the Trust.

### ***Oversight – roles of the leadership team***

The Principal will be accountable to the Governing Body for effective financial management of the Academy. Responsibility for managing the budget on an operational level will be delegated to the Deputy Principal/business manager.

The Deputy Principal will draw on the financial expertise of the College's finance function to ensure that transactions relating to the Academy are processed effectively. The Deputy Principal will also ensure that month end and year end procedures are adhered to, for example timely preparation of the Academy's management and statutory accounts.

As the Academy' student numbers increase, the role of the Deputy Principal is anticipated to change with an increased focus on the curriculum. Budget responsibilities will transfer to the senior administrator over a transition period.

## **6.8 Leadership and Staffing**

The development of leadership and management within the Academy is seen as an essential and important early role for the Governing body and the Principal Designate. The Academy will have an agreed management style and approach which will be based on a values led approach. These values are articulated in the principles below:

- Shared vision for the Academy with purposeful and common sense approach to leadership & management;
- Clear expectations and accountability;
- Recruit, retain and develop high quality staff;
- Recognise and reward success;
- Tackle underperformance;
- Effective systems for support, monitoring and evaluation and for self evaluation;
- Systematic corporate approach to key aspects of work and efficient and effective use of resources;
- Robust financial controls and administrative systems; and
- Leadership & management actions clearly aligned with objectives.

The Academy's Principal and leadership team will be able to draw on support and challenge provided by all three partners' leadership teams.

The staff of The Rural Enterprise Academy will be encouraged and supported to develop high level skills. This will be supported by the Senior Leadership team ensuring that each individual is aware of the accountability on them for their individual learners.

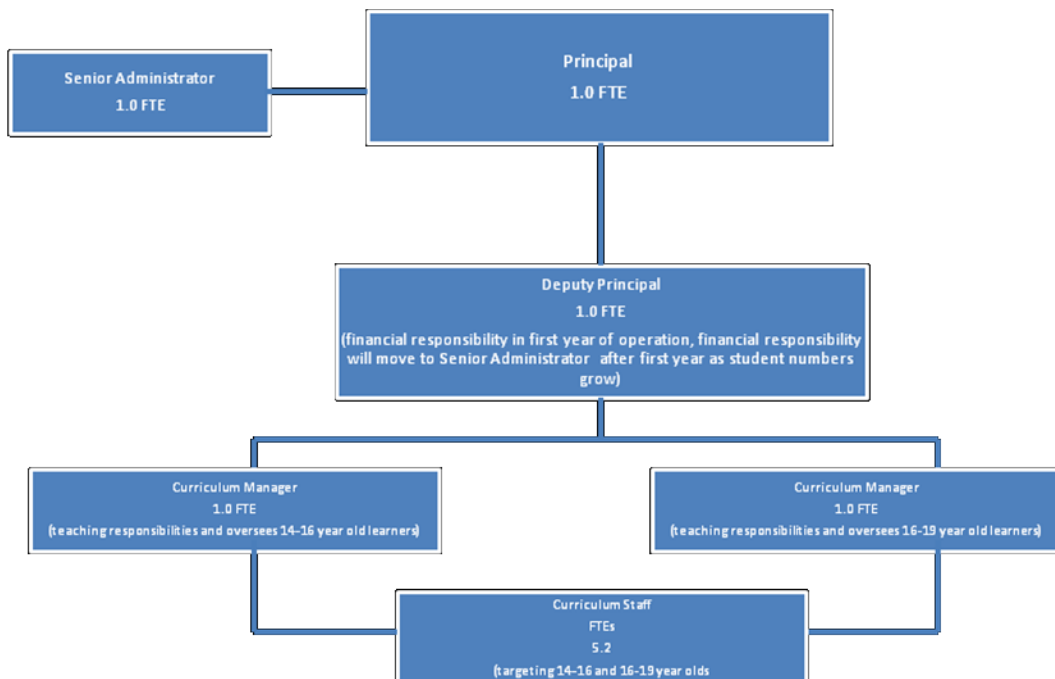
The Academy will encourage staff to develop and to deliver training to support other members of staff in their continuing professional development. Academy staff would also have access to refresher courses,

postgraduate studies and collaborative projects, linked to skills and expertise available within the South Staffordshire College staff.

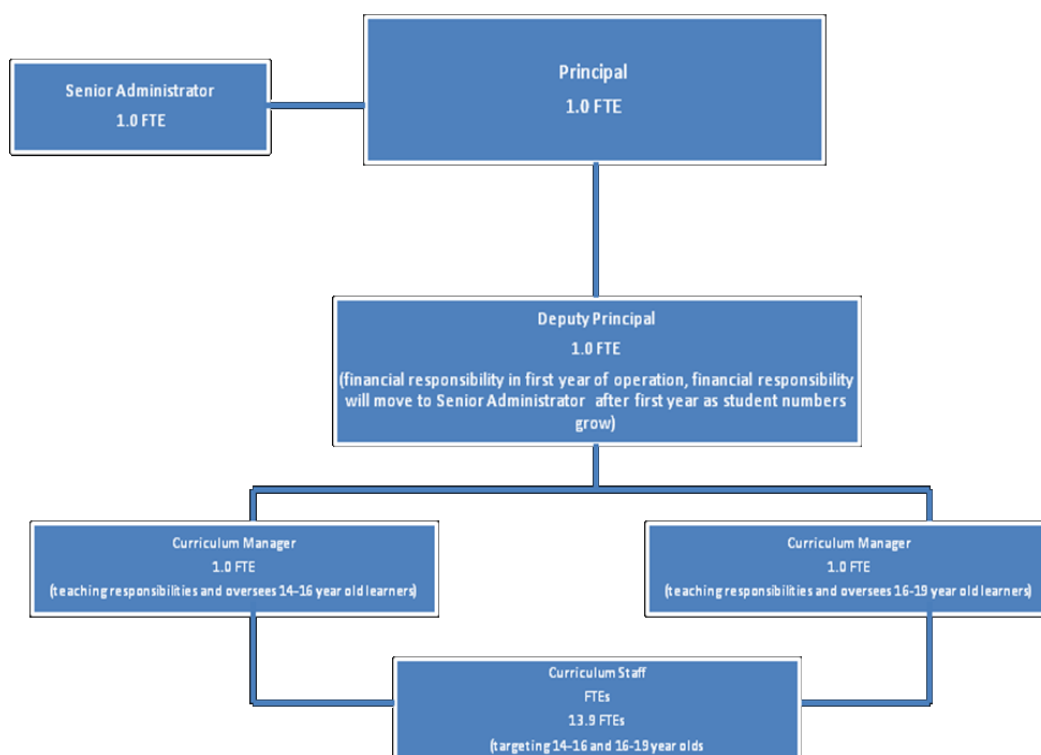
This section sets out the proposed structure of The Rural Enterprise Academy. Numbers of academic staff are aligned to the curriculum plan, vision and finances in Sections 3, 4 and 8 of this proposal. The non-academic structures are also based on the curriculum plan and vision to ensure that there is primary focus on the delivery element of The Rural Enterprise Academy.

Below are suggested staffing structures for The Rural Enterprise Academy, the first shows the structure for the first year of operation, the second one when it is at full capacity.

### ***The Rural Enterprise Academy – Year One***



## ***The Rural Enterprise Academy – Full Capacity***



The structure will be flexible as the Academy grows until it reaches full capacity.

As set out in Section 6.3, the Principal will have fully accountability for the strategic and financial operation of The Rural Enterprise Academy. The Principal Designate will be a member of the Governing Body and the Steering Group tasked with setting up The Rural Enterprise Academy.

The post of Deputy Principal will report directly to the Principal and will have responsibility for the finances for the first year of operations, this responsibility will move to the Senior Administrator after the first year as student numbers grow.

The Senior Administrator post will report directly into the Principal and will provide day to day administrative duties, taking over the monitoring of finances after the first year of operation. From the second year onwards this post will incorporate the Business Manager role.

Reporting to the Deputy Principal will be two Curriculum Managers. Each Curriculum Manager will have a responsibility for overseeing specific

groups of learners: 14 -16 year olds and 16 – 19 year olds. Academic staff will report to the Curriculum Managers, allowing for flexibility regarding staffing levels in the future.

The Rural Enterprise Academy will have a shared services model with South Staffordshire College providing all 'back-office' functions and technical support for the Academy, for example: HR, finance, payroll, IT, facilities and technician support. As both South Staffordshire College and The Rural Enterprise Academy will be co-located on the Rodbaston site, this will ensure that any issues can be dealt with in a prompt and efficient manner.

The table below sets out the numbers of academic staff, in addition to the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) posts, staff will be available from South Staffordshire College to ensure that The Rural Enterprise Academy has a smooth transition and be fully operational from day one.

	Hours per week	FTE Staff	Rounded
English	36	1.44	1.50
Maths	35	1.4	1.40
IT	12	0.48	0.50
Science	40	1.6	1.60
Technology	41	1.64	1.70
Geography	8	0.32	0.40
2nd Language	12	0.48	0.50
Personal Fitness	12	0.48	0.50
Environmental Studies	41	1.64	1.70
Rural Studies	62	2.48	2.50
Tutorial	39	1.56	1.60
Total	338	13.52	13.9

All posts in The Rural Enterprise Academy will have clear job descriptions and specifications ensuring that all candidates will fully understand their areas of accountability and roles within the structure.

All posts will be advertised in the local, regional and national press ensuring that South Staffordshire College staff and others are able to apply for posts within the new Academy, within a transparent and fair recruitment process.

Academy staff may have the opportunity to teach on some college based programmes when this would be of mutual benefit, although it is clear that

the primary focus of their work would be the success of Academy learners. Any such collaborative delivery would be considered primarily on its potential benefits to the learners.

## 7 Premises

### 7.1 Site Options

The Lead Partner in this application, South Staffordshire College, has identified a number of options within its existing estates portfolio which could be used for the development of The Rural Enterprise Academy.

South Staffordshire College currently operates on four main sites in [REDACTED]. These sites are all currently used for the delivery of further education and training, and are therefore zoned for educational use within the Local Development Plan.

The Options which the partners have therefore identified are:

- Option 1 – To operate on a dispersed curriculum model across the [REDACTED]; or
- Option 2 – To operate in a dedicated part of the [REDACTED].

#### ***Option 1 - Operate on a dispersed curriculum model across the [REDACTED]***

Under this model, South Staffordshire College would identify a section of each of the sites which would be given over to The Rural Enterprise Academy.

The curriculum would then be organised in such a way as the students would move around the sites in order to receive their teaching and support, with timetables being arranged so that where possible students were on one site for a whole day.

The strengths of this model is that it would be very different from a “traditional” school model, and would make students feel that they were being treated as more mature individuals. It would also mean that students may find it easier to integrate within a larger institution once they have completed their studies at the Academy.

The weaknesses of this model are that it may be more difficult and more costly to create discrete areas of each campus for the use of The Rural Enterprise Academy. Some parents may also not find this to be an attractive option as it would involve complicated travel to study patterns, and they may not want their children to be as fully integrated within a further education and training environment at such a young age. In addition, it may present the partners with greater safeguarding issues if students are moving across sites, and are more fully integrated within a post 16 environment.

**Option 2 – Operate on a dedicated part of the [REDACTED]**

[REDACTED] is set in 160 hectares of rural Staffordshire. For over 80 years the Campus has been recognised as a centre of excellence for the provision of education and training to support the needs of land-based industries.

The Campus specialises in providing further and higher education courses for land-based activities such as fisheries and aquaculture, animal care and equestrian pursuits, and offers a range of training services that support the rural enterprise economy.

Extensive investment in recent years has enabled the development of an extensive range of state-of-the-art learning centre facilities, equipment and buildings.

South Staffordshire College has identified two stand-alone buildings (Circa 1200m<sup>2</sup>) and a courtyard area on a separate part of the campus which could be given over for the use of The Rural Enterprise Academy (see attached plan Appendix 3).

These building will be vacant from September 2011 when the new [REDACTED].

One of these buildings [REDACTED] was completed in Autumn 2008 and provides a modern learning environment that would require little, if any, refurbishment. The other building, [REDACTED], has been developed and extended over a number of years and currently accommodates mixed use facilities including; refectory, catering kitchens, toilets, gym, classroom and atrium space. It is proposed that this space requires minor refurbishment to provide an outstanding learning environment and incorporate classrooms, a resource area, refectory, IT laboratories and Sixth Form social space. It is proposed that an additional 1,800m<sup>2</sup> of new accommodation is built to include science laboratories, technology, classrooms, activity studio and a sports hall.



The proposed site is at one end of the existing campus will form a distinct and discrete learning environment and will allow a safe coach drop off facility and safe pedestrian access and egress.

Positioning of the sports facilities will also enable separate access for community use in the evening and weekends with ample car parking which could bring in a revenue stream to support the Academy's core purpose if so desired.

The major benefits of this location are that the students would also have ready access to the other facilities at [REDACTED], which could be used to support specialist elements of the core curriculum, and the vocational elements of the programme including:

- [REDACTED]

Please find site location plan detailing the above areas at Appendix 3.

## **7.2 Sustainability & Environmental technologies at [REDACTED]**

South Staffordshire College are working with industry partners to further develop facilities that lead in Low Carbon and Renewable technologies including the following.

### **7.3 Wind Energy scheme**

Planning consent is in place for installation of two industrial scale wind turbines which are programmed to be installed on the Campus in 2012. Once online they will supply “green” electricity direct to the Campus including The Rural Enterprise Academy at a competitive cost. Excess energy will also be exported directly to the National Grid. Learners will have access to real wind and energy data and opportunities for talks from industry experts and site visits to the turbines.

### **7.4 [REDACTED] project (proposed 2012 completion)**

South Staffordshire College are developing plans with a renewables industry partner to build a low energy demonstration [REDACTED] on the Campus which will incorporate new construction methods and renewable technologies including; Heat pump, Solar, small scale wind and Structural insulated panel(SIPS) technologies.

Once completed pupils will have access to these facilities and real energy data from Smart meters which can support their studies and projects.

### **7.5 [REDACTED]**

This project is nearing completion for September 2011, this “BREEAM excellent” building is also an educational tool demonstrating new technologies including; Wood chip biomass heating system, rainwater harvesting and re use, thermal massing etc.

Once this is completed the buildings identified for Academy use will be vacant.

### **7.6 [REDACTED]**

South Staffordshire College is developing plans to create the SEC at the [REDACTED] in a partly disused Granary building.

The college has gained support from industry partners to develop this centre which will demonstrate renewable technologies through working interactive models/manufacturers display rigs and exhibitions.

It is planned that real energy data from smart meters interfaced to wind turbines, solar panels and various buildings on the campus will be accessible through interactive displays in the centre.

The strengths of this model are that the Academy would have a separate Site for the whole of its teaching operation, which would be based on a recognised national centre of excellence for the delivery of rural and land-based education and training. This option is likely to prove to be attractive to both young people and their parents as [REDACTED] is currently seen as being at the heart of education and training for the land-based economy both locally and regionally, and would be seen as a first step into higher education or employment in a related field.

The [REDACTED] is perfectly located in the centre of the county and is close to main motorway networks, major towns and cities. This will enable access to Land-based facilities for students from wider inner city communities who would not normally have access to these facilities as many Land-based Campuses are located in remote locations.

#### **7.7 Value for money (VFM)**

The proposal provides excellent VFM as the project will be delivered at [REDACTED] per metre, excluding fit out and fees, with a desire to achieve a BREEAM rating of (Very) Good.

The partners have in place an experienced project team with a track record of delivering projects on time and on budget.

Floor area requirements can be minimised as many of the back office and support functions can be provided cost effectively by South Staffordshire College utilising existing on site teams including;

- Caretaking, emergency call-out, maintenance, cleaning, payroll, HR function, teaching, transport, grounds maintenance;
- This will also alleviate problems associated with covering staff absence and leave;
- Wireless access throughout and staff accommodation incorporating “hot desking” facilities will minimise support space requirements still further;
- Procurement - Lifecycle efficiencies can be made by accessing the complete prices for energy and consumable supplies that South Staffordshire College can attract through its buying power and procurement strategies for multi sites locations.

## 7.8 Flexibility

The site location will easily allow for future expansion if so desired with minimal impact on Academy operations. See details on attached plan Appendix 3.

The design of the new build element of the project will allow space to be flexible with the inbuilt ability to remove or add partition walls quickly and at minimal costs.

Implementation of wireless access technologies will provide flexible internal and external space throughout the site.

### ***Evaluation of the Options***

In order to develop the preferred option for the future development of the estate of The Rural Enterprise Academy, a number of evaluation criteria have been used. In using these criteria it is our view that a preferred option will be generated which is robust and will be capable of support through the relevant funding bodies.

The criteria for the evaluation of the two options are set out below.

Ability to deliver future curriculum requirements	Will the option enable The Rural Enterprise Academy to meet the curriculum plans set out in its strategy.
Affordability	Can the Academy afford to undertake the option. This covers the capital cost of the project (and the repayment of the capital, or sources of finance e.g. grants), forecast operating and maintenance costs, and forecast future income.
Ability to meet partnership objectives	If the project is being undertaken by a partnership, are the aims of the partnership met by the option, as well as the aims of the individual partners.
Flexibility of the space	Is the space flexible? Can spaces be put to multiple uses (e.g. is there IT connectivity). Can the use of space be varied at minimum cost and with the least disruption?

Rationalisation of the use of space	Is the space that is available able to be used most effectively? Is the total space kept to a practical minimum? Is the net: gross space ratio maximised?
Level of risk to the Academy	Does the financial aspect of the project expose the Academy to risk?
Practical deliverability of the option	Does the option involve capital works that will disturb the operation of the Academy? Will the option impact on the finances of the Academy? Is the timescale suitable?
Ability to phase the development on the site(s)	Does the option allow for the development to be phased on the site. This covers both the design and phasing of the option and the amount of space available on the site to phase the development.
Accessibility to the site(s) by cars, buses and pedestrians (psychologically as well as physically)	Does the option include good accessibility to the site by all modes of transport. Does the design of the campus and the buildings encourage people to access the site.
Provision of sufficient car parking	Is there sufficient car parking on the site(s) to accommodate the forecast number of students?

Each of the two options has been evaluated against a common set of criteria. Each of the criteria has been given a score between 4 and 0, where:

- 4 Option meets criteria very well.
- 3 Option meets criteria well.
- 2 Option meets criteria, but with some weaknesses.
- 1 Option meets criteria, but with major weaknesses.
- 0 Option does not meet criteria at all.

The raw scores have been entered into the table below. A weighting has then be applied to these raw scores dependent on the significance of the criteria to derive a weighted score. This weighted score has been used as the basis for identifying the preferred option.

Ref	Criteria	Import	Weight	Option 1	Option 2	Option 1	Option 2
1	Ability to deliver future curriculum requirements	High	6	2	4	12	24
2	Affordability	High	6	3	3	18	18
3	Ability to meet Academy objectives	High	6	2	4	12	24
4	Flexibility of the space	Med	4	1	4	4	16
5	Rationalisation of the use of space	Med	4	1	3	4	12
6	Level of risk to the Organisation	Med	4	2	2	8	8
7	Practical deliverability of the option	Med	4	2	3	8	12
8	Ability to phase the development	High	6	2	3	12	18
9	Accessibility to the site by cars, buses and pedestrians (psychologically as well as physically)	Low	3	4	3	12	9
	<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>			<b>19</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>90</b>	

### ***The Preferred Option***

The options evaluation shows that the Preferred Option for the development of The Rural Enterprise Academy is Option 2 - Operate on a dedicated part of the [REDACTED].

This Option would provide the Academy with the facilities to deliver its future curriculum requirements, it would provide an affordable option as the dedicated buildings would need minimum conversion as it is already used for education and training, and it will be able to fully meet the Academy's objectives.

Given that the site is part of a 160 hectare estate, the site would provide for flexible of space for both the core curriculum, the vocational elements of the curriculum and provide sufficient space for relevant outside activities.

This Option would also represent a low level of risk to the Academy, and would provide the organisation with an option which is both practical and deliverable within the timescale for opening.

## **7.9 Details of the Preferred Site**

### ***Location***

The [REDACTED] of South Staffordshire College is situated off [REDACTED] in Penkridge, Staffs, [REDACTED]

The site is currently part of South Staffordshire College, who own the freehold of the site. South Staffordshire College as the Lead Partner have identified the [REDACTED] which they would be willing to transfer on a 125 year lease for use as The Rural Enterprise Academy.

The [REDACTED] building is a purpose built education and training facility offering some 900 square meters of space. The building was refurbished in 2006 and has been extended and developed over a number of years and has good functional suitability. The [REDACTED] offers some 300 square meters of space, and building was built in late 2008 and requires little, if any refurbishment.

### ***Rationale for Choosing the Site***

One of the strengths of the site is that it offers a purpose built facility which will require little conversion from its current use to meet the requirements of The Rural Enterprise Academy. The use of this site also means that the students within the Academy will have access to the extended specialist facilities within South Staffordshire College.

The [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] buildings together with the additional classroom and sports block and additional specialist space at the [REDACTED] would provide sufficient space for the anticipated pupil numbers, and will provide an outstanding external courtyard environment for break times and for physical recreation.

The setting of the proposed site also benefits from outstanding views of the open country side and paddocks which will further support an inspiring world class learning environment.

The site is on a number of existing bus routes taking in urban and rural Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent, Derbyshire, and Shropshire, and the Partners propose supplementing the existing transport provision. There are no parking issues on the site, thereby facilitating pick-up and drop-off for parents who would wish to make their own arrangements.

The site has no outstanding health and safety implications, there is sufficient natural light and ventilation, and the surrounding environment means that students will be able to work without any disruption for neighbouring businesses or transport.

## 7.10

### [REDACTED] 7.11

#### **Conclusion**

The Partners are committed to providing an estate for The Rural Enterprise Academy which provides inspiration to the students who attend the Academy, and aspiration to the parents and carers within Staffordshire and the surrounding areas. The vision for the estate ***'To provide a high quality, inspiring and sustainable learning environment in fit for purpose campuses serving the needs of children and young people who wish to study within a rural enterprise culture.'***

Throughout the pre and post opening period the Steering Group will work closely to establish commonality of priorities for the development of the estate to ensure that it fully meets the needs of the curriculum. The aim is to ensure that there are state of the art, fit for purpose premises which fully meet the needs of The Rural Enterprise Academy. The Group will ensure that further development of estates plans and priorities will be in line with the curriculum planning cycle for 2011/12 and beyond.



## 8 Initial Costs and financial viability

### 8.3 Assumptions

#### *Income - YPLA*

1) The student number growth assumption is illustrated in the table below:

#### *Student number growth assumptions*

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Year 10	90	90	90	90	90
Year 11	-	90	90	90	90
Under 16 years old	90	180	180	180	180
Year 12	30	30	60	60	60
Year 13	-	30	30	60	60
Over 16 years old	30	60	90	120	120
<b>Total number on site</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>300</b>

This has also been flexed in our sensitivity analysis where we have assumed that 90% of students are enrolled. In this model the student numbers are therefore:

#### *Student number growth assumptions*

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Year 10	81	81	81	81	81
Year 11	-	81	81	81	81
Under 16 years old	81	162	162	162	162
Year 12	27	27	54	54	54
Year 13	-	27	27	54	54
Over 16 years old	27	54	81	108	108
<b>Total number on site</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>270</b>





## **9 Suitability and Declaration**

Declaration information has been sent separately to the Due Diligence Department of the Department for Education.

## **Appendix 1 – Letters of Intention**



South Staffordshire College

Date

Dear Sir

The Rural Enterprise Academy – Letter of Intention

Veolia Environnement is happy to support "in principle" the proposed development of The Rural Enterprise Academy with the intention to become a partner within the South Staffordshire College led partnership.

Veolia Environnement is a multinational organisation with activities in four main service and utility areas - water supply and water management, waste management, energy and transport services, Veolia employs over 300,000 people in 74 countries.

Veolia would work across all areas of the curriculum in order to support the development of The Rural Enterprise Academy. Veolia has an excellent track record in supporting education and training for the renewable energy economy and operates a successful foundation involved in sustainable development. We will supply support to the educational vision and mission for the Academy as well as links into industry. We will also supply representatives for the Governing Body and the Steering Group which is overseeing the development of the Academy.

Kind regards,







[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
South Staffordshire College  
[REDACTED]  
Cannock  
Staffordshire  
[REDACTED]

Our ref: [REDACTED]  
Your ref:  
Email: [REDACTED]  
Direct line: [REDACTED]  
Date: 26 May 2011

Dear [REDACTED]

The Rural Enterprise Academy- Letter of Intention

The NFU is happy to support 'in principle' the proposed development of The Rural Enterprise Academy with the intention of becoming a partner in the partnership led by South Staffordshire College.

The NFU is the largest farming organisation in the UK, providing a strong and respected voice for the industry and employing a team of 500 staff to support the needs of its members locally, nationally and internationally. The NFU champions British farming and provides professional representation and services to its Farmer and Grower members.

The NFU would want to work across all relevant areas of the curriculum in order to support the development of The Rural Enterprise Academy. We have an excellent track record in supporting education and training for the rural and land-based economy. We will provide support to the educational vision and mission for the Academy as well as links into industry and the rural enterprise economy. We will also be very pleased to supply representatives for the Governing Body and the Steering Group that is overseeing the development of the Academy.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

## **Appendix 2 – Letters of Support**



GAVIN WILLIAMSON MP

Please reply to: [REDACTED]  
South Staffordshire



[REDACTED] Cannock  
Staffordshire [REDACTED]



MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE



The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP Secretary of State  
Department for Education

Sanctuary Buildings [REDACTED]  
London





[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



## **Appendix 3 – Architects Plans**

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Appendix 4 - Sustainability and Environment Centre (SEC)**

[REDACTED]

■

[REDACTED] ■ [REDACTED] ■ [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]