



LEADING GROWING SUPPORTING

OUR VISION AND STRATEGY
2021 - 2026



VTCT is the UK's market-leading specialist vocational and technical awarding organisation for hair, beauty, aesthetics and complementary therapies with a growing presence in other sectors, including sports therapy and fitness, and learning and development. With more than 2,500 approved centres worldwide, VTCT has an ever-expanding list of centres throughout the UK and Ireland, with a growing international presence. VTCT continues to pioneer the establishment of professional standards and formal qualifications within the hair and beauty services sector, and provides learners with a direct line of sight to a job. VTCT's qualifications offer an accessible route to economic empowerment.

WELCOME

I am delighted to introduce our new vision and strategy for the next five years, developed with our staff, customers, and external partners, as a statement of our collective ambition for VTCT. A fundamental assumption in the previous year's strategy was that we needed to transform our services to support learning and assessment given the disruption caused by the global pandemic; this strategy builds upon the themes we set out last year.

We have tried to be the best we can be by providing as much information as possible, as soon as possible. We even offered every resource, digital and physical, we could, free or low-cost, to the whole sector, including our world-class, online digital resources and infection control qualifications. Because we put learners first, we have created an organisation that has rapidly developed an ability to be strategically agile and quick to respond to learners and centres. Driven by the needs of the pandemic to do things differently and with dynamism, we achieved more than we expected.

Our new vision and strategy focuses on building on our core purpose of advancing education, providing a direct line of sight to a job to more learners, and improving career prospects. We are acutely aware that the coronavirus will continue to threaten education and skills and, specifically, our core sector areas of hair, beauty, aesthetics, and sport- as they are often the first industries required to lockdown and amongst the very last to open.

The need for us to continue to support our learners, apprentices and centres in this initial post-pandemic recovery phase is the most significant thread of our actions. While delivering this support to the best of our ability, we are also navigating various external factors, including political reform and increasing challenges from new competitors and alternative provision. In response to these challenges, we will extend our reach to new learners by diversifying our current apprenticeship offer, championing higher-level qualifications and supporting a range of other exciting initiatives.

Further, we are delighted to have been awarded the contract to exclusively deliver the new T Level qualification in hair, beauty and aesthetics in partnership with NCFE. This win is a testament to our longstanding championing of the sector and our staff's wholehearted drive and support to learners and centres. We will support NCFE to ensure this pinnacle qualification proves a great success and provides learners with the knowledge and skills to enjoy a long, rewarding, and successful career.



Alan Woods

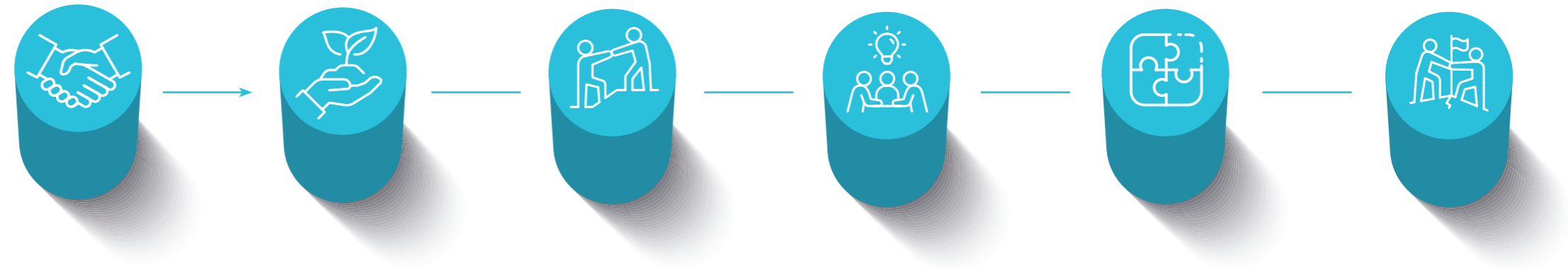
Alan Woods OBE
VTCT Chief Executive

OUR VISION

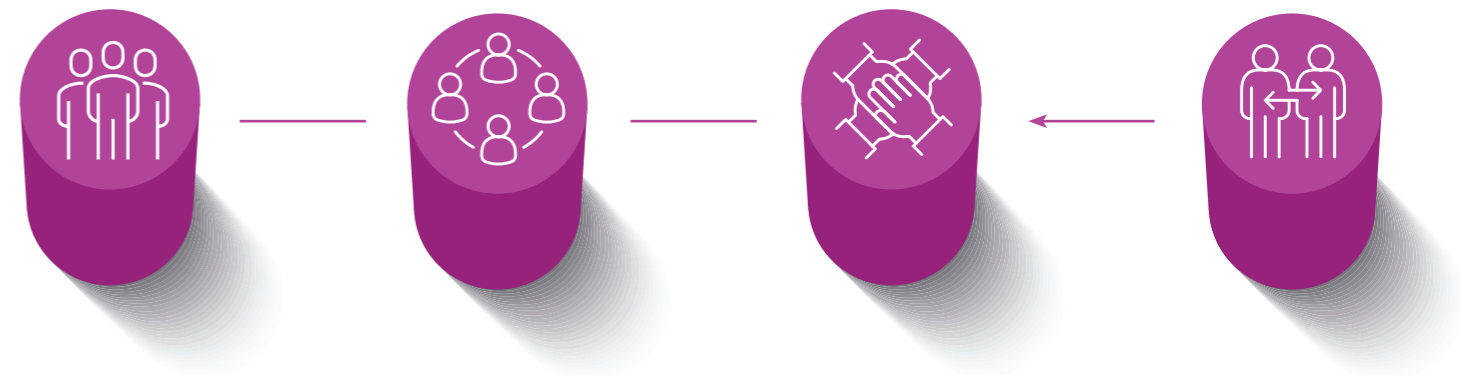
Our vision expresses our collective sense of purpose and commitment to the health and personal services sector. We aspire to be a learner-focused awarding organisation that harnesses vocational education, innovation and creativity to develop skilled, confident and competent individuals.

VTCT exists for the public benefit to advance education, providing a direct line of sight to a job, enhancing learners' knowledge and skills, and improving career prospects. Our objective is to build on this core purpose and, in doing so, provide qualifications and assessments that make a positive impact. In addition, we aim to work collaboratively with our many external partners to provide learners with real world-skills, creating brighter futures.

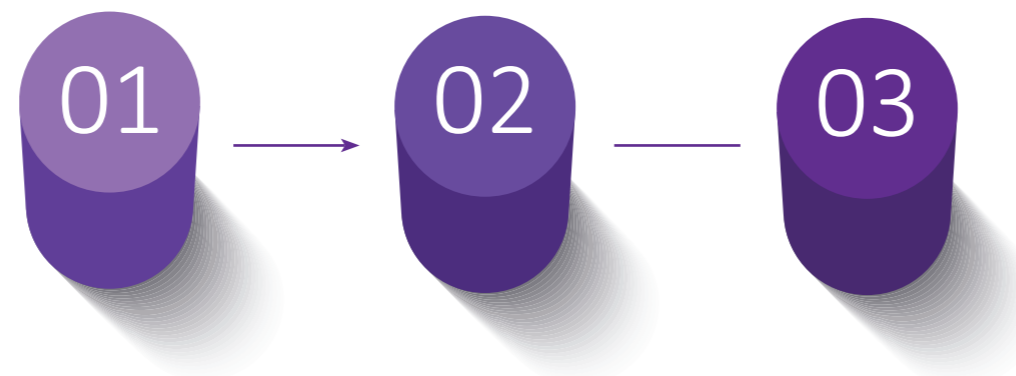
OUR VALUES



OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES



OUR STRATEGIC PILLARS



OUR VISION

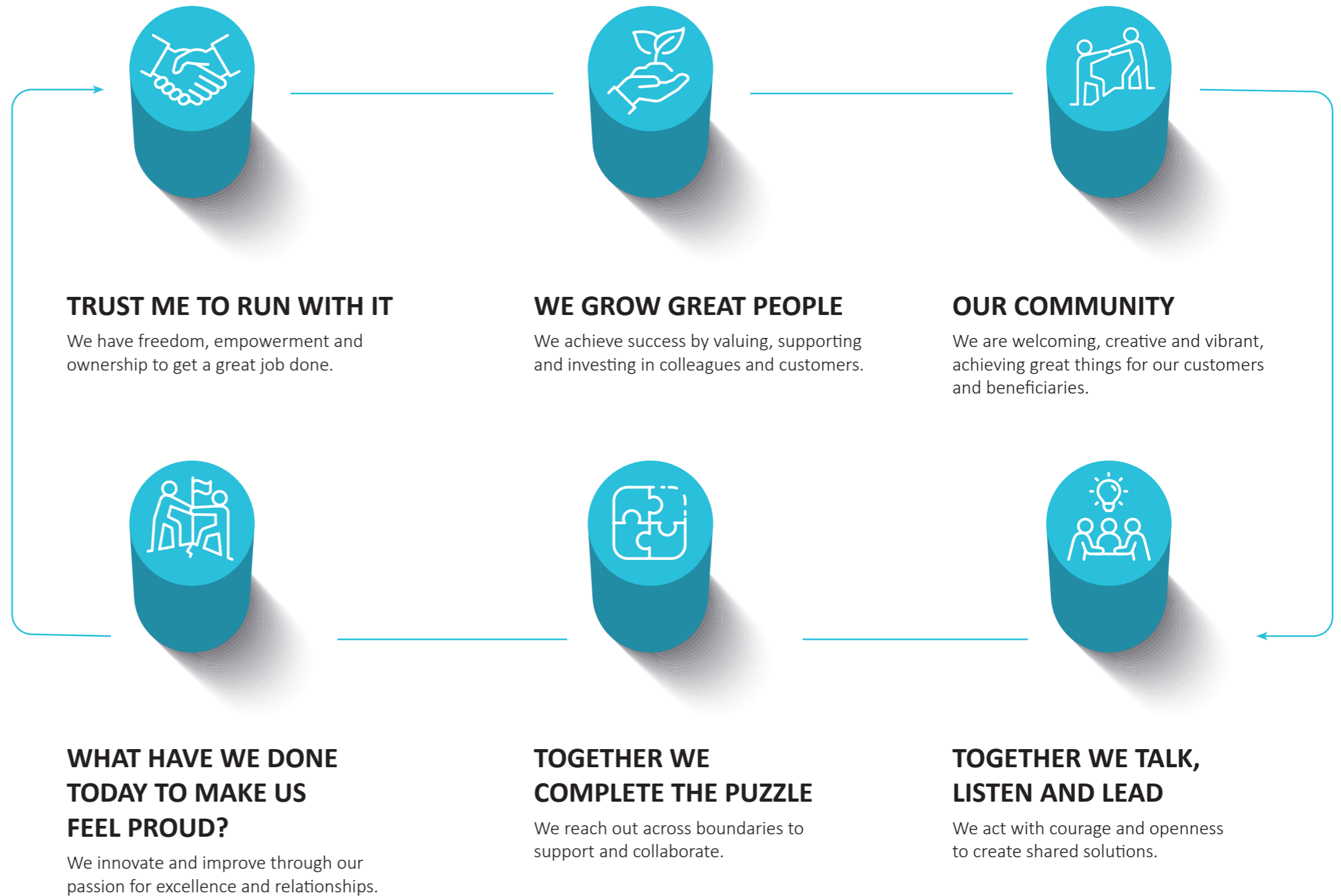
“We are a world-leading awarding organisation for health and personal services, enhancing knowledge and skills and improving career prospects”

OUR VALUES

Our core values were designed by our staff and continue to underpin our work, how we perform and how we conduct ourselves.

Our values continue to be at the organisation's heart and serve as a cultural cornerstone in an ever-changing world. These ingrained principles guide our actions and behaviours, making us distinctive and a great place to work.

Simply, our staff describe our six values as *"the way we do things around here."*



OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our guiding principles explain how we will operate as an organisation in pursuing our strategic pillars. We believe we will only realise our vision and positively impact our customers and learners if we follow these principles.

Our principles describe how we aspire to provide our people with the environment they need to grow and excel, and how we will collaborate with organisations across the assessment and awarding sector.



VISIBLY LEADING

We are recognised for many strengths, including our leading in the health and personal services sector, the quality and reputation of our brand, relationships we hold with employers and key industry stakeholders, and going the extra mile in wholeheartedly supporting our customers. We aim to promote and support these existing strengths while also facilitating emerging areas relating to our core business.



CHAMPIONING EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

We continue to lead across the awarding and assessment sector, championing inclusivity, creating opportunities and reducing barriers for everyone. Our goal is to continue attracting, recruiting, and retaining a diverse workforce and developing inclusive programmes that recognise and bring together people with different experiences and backgrounds. We hope this will make everyone's experiences richer and ultimately lead to more inclusive societies.



STRONGER TOGETHER

We work together internally and externally with our various partners, including our customers, employers, awarding organisations, professional associations and regulators. These partnerships improve the quality of our work, increase its impact and enhance our reputation.



DEVELOPING LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIPS

We are committed to long and meaningful relationships with our customers, with great emphasis on customer satisfaction. We prioritise understanding the needs and values sought by our customers and use this information to tailor our products and services accordingly, creating value for both parties.



STRATEGIC PILLARS

We exist for the benefit of society and the advancement of education. Our three strategic pillars have been developed to demonstrate how we will tackle some of the challenges we face during this unprecedented period and beyond. Our vision is to continue be a first-class assessment and awarding organisation specialising across the health and personal services sector, and excellence in these areas is central to our purpose.

We will continue to reach out to organisations in the UK and worldwide where collaboration will play an essential role in advancing knowledge and solving problems.



SUPPORTING
RECOVERY



DRIVING
GROWTH



LEADING
TECHNICAL
EDUCATION

01

SUPPORTING RECOVERY

Embracing digital, big-data and relationship marketing to develop credible insight into customer need, building loyalty and supporting centre growth and learner achievement.

The coronavirus has devastated the education and skills sector. Setting a long-term strategy at this time remains a challenge; however, we believe we have effectively responded to the immediate business shocks and must now plan for a post-crisis world.

We will continue to provide an unrivalled level of support to our customers and learners. Embracing digital and data, we will build trust and loyalty and better understand our customers' needs. We will use this information to inform and tailor our approach, customer experience and products and services.

In addition, we will empower and challenge our staff to develop authentic, long-standing relationships with customers, ensuring total customer satisfaction.

We will:

- Enhance qualification delivery and learner achievement, implementing a support programme for teachers and tutors
- Design and implement a data-driven customer retention strategy
- Develop a relationship marketing culture and deep and credible insight into customer needs, building trust and loyalty
- Create a customer experience vision, embracing digital and data, and optimising and personalising the customer journey
- Monitor and appraise market opportunities in real-time, creating tailored value propositions
- Support centres to grow their businesses by broadening and enriching their educational offer





02

DRIVING GROWTH

Co-creating new products and services with customers and key stakeholders, and strengthening our position in hairdressing and barbering.

We continue to enjoy our position as the leader in the hair and beauty qualifications market. However, despite this strong position, we are aware that we continue to operate in a shrinking market and are dependent on government funding. Further, additional threats are posed by the exclusive contracting of awarding organisations and by the rise of substitutes in the form of unregulated programmes and courses.

We will extend our reach to learners by transforming our portfolio, embracing apprenticeship diversification, higher technical qualifications and course accreditation services. Further, we will seek partnerships to support digital teaching and learning for qualifications and courses. We will also reinvigorate and reposition our offer to become the market leader in hairdressing and barbering. We will remain agile, exploring opportunities that have the potential to further strengthen our position.

We will:

- Diversify our apprenticeship and end-point assessment portfolio
- Extend our customer base and learner reach in hairdressing and barbering
- Design and launch a course accreditation scheme
- Co-create a comprehensive portfolio of higher-technical qualifications
- Partner with e-learning providers to support teaching and learning in new and existing markets
- Develop our brand and qualification offer in medical aesthetics

03

LEADING TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Exclusively innovating and leading technical education in the hair, beauty and aesthetics sector, engaging more centres and learners through high-stakes qualifications.

T Levels are central to the government's new technical education system, providing a high-quality technical option alongside an academic option for students aged 16-19. T Levels are now in their second year, and the expectation is that all colleges, over time, will deliver T Levels as part of their qualification offer.

We are proud to have been awarded the contract to deliver the T Level in Hair, Beauty and Aesthetics, in partnership with NCFE. As the sector specialist, we will support this T Level's design, development, and delivery, ensuring centres embrace this flagship qualification. Further, we will proactively support centre staff to transition their wider qualification portfolio to VTCT, ensuring a more coherent qualification offer.

In addition, we will continue to service the schools market as a feeder into post-16 technical provision.

We will:

- Design, deliver and monitor a systematic programme of stakeholder management to support the design and development of the hair, beauty and aesthetics T Level
- Design the technical qualification model for the hair, beauty and aesthetics T Level
- Develop the technical qualification specification, assessments and specimen materials for the T Level, meeting the Institute's milestones
- Design and implement a partnership marketing strategy, promoting the uptake of our wider qualification and apprenticeship offer to T Level providers, and maximising broader commercial opportunities
- Provide ongoing services to support the effective delivery of the T Level in hair, beauty and aesthetics
- Deliver a new and innovative technical award in hairdressing and beauty therapy for 14–16 year olds



STRATEGIC ENABLERS

We draw upon several strategic enablers to support our core activities.

OUR PEOPLE

We aim to provide an inspiring, engaging and exciting place to work. Our people are our greatest asset and are involved, listened to and invited to contribute their knowledge, experience, expertise and ideas to find solutions. We aim to create an environment of trust and respect where we harness this talent and inspire people to achieve even greater things.

Our people strategy, *People@VTCT*, helps us to achieve our vision. Specifically, we: attract and recruit the best people; develop and support our people so that they can deliver to a high standard, fulfil their potential and work towards achieving their career aspirations; retain and reward our people fairly; provide a best-in-class development programme; and build an inclusive culture and healthy working environment that promotes collaboration and innovation.

DATA AND DIGITAL

We implement fully interconnected digital systems, providing a streamlined customer experience and access to relevant centre information. In parallel, we provide innovative resources to support teaching, learning and assessment.

We champion data capture and analysis, utilising the latest technology to provide complex data visualisations, replacing all manual capture with a digital alternative, increasing the variety, volume and velocity of data. This innovative approach enables a deeper understanding of our customers' needs, informing decision making and the design and development of products and services.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

We are committed to making a positive impact through outstanding environmental sustainability performance. We aim to create a culture where our people are engaged, empowered, and supported to improve their personal and collective environmental sustainability practices. We will promote and facilitate positive change through embedding sustainability awareness and practices in our qualifications and assessments and maximising the impact through communication, collaboration and partnership. In parallel, we will protect and enhance the natural environment by reducing our direct environmental impact.

NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Our networks in the UK and overseas are key to the delivery of our strategy. We aim to develop these networks and partnerships, growing our customer base significantly and positioning the VTCT brand as best-in-class for quality, reputation and customer experience – as well as being the dominant player in the health and personal services, assessment and awarding sector.

We have a critical role in developing new networks and partnerships to support our growth ambition in new markets, particularly with employers and key stakeholders.

PROFESSIONALISM AND EFFECTIVENESS

As a regulated organisation, we have good governance, externally accredited systems and processes, and an effective system of risk management, internal review and monitoring. We take pride in our professionalism and continually appraise and review our effectiveness and business processes to deliver sector-leading services to meet changing needs.

We also recognise that to be effective, we must be agile and resilient while remaining committed to providing products and services that are renowned for their quality.

MONITORING OUR PROGRESS

As we work to enhance our position as a world-leading assessment and awarding organisation, we will monitor progress against each of our strategic pillars using a small set of relevant and meaningful metrics.

We will judge our progress in achieving our charitable objects, ensuring more learners are provided with a direct line of sight to a job, thereby improving their career prospects.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

We take a lead role championing the customer groups we serve and take steps to lead the broader assessment community in embedding and delivering meaningful change regarding equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI).

Much has been achieved, but we have so much further to go. At our core, we have our EDI Advisory Group led by an independent Chair. With the Board of Trustees commitment to our *EDI Road Map* to which the executive is accountable, the Group monitors and measures progress, and explores new opportunities and initiatives as part of our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.



Leading. Growing. Supporting.
Our Vision and Strategy 2021