



PLUMPTON
COLLEGE

Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality

Candidate Information Pack



INTRODUCTION

Welcome, and thank you for considering a career with **Plumpton College**. We are excited to invite applications for the position of **Vice Principal** at our vibrant and progressive college. This is an excellent opportunity for an experienced leader to contribute to the continued success and growth of our institution.

Plumpton College is renowned for its strong academic offerings, commitment to student success, and focus on developing skills for future employment. We are looking for a dynamic and strategic leader to join our Senior Management Team (SMT) and help us achieve our ambitious goals.



ABOUT PLUMPTON COLLEGE

Plumpton College is a leading provider of land and environmental education in the UK, situated in the heart of the South Downs National Park. We offer a wide range of vocational and academic courses for students of all ages studying from level 1 to Masters degree and across nineteen subject areas including agriculture, animal management, veterinary sciences, horticulture, equine studies, wine, and environmental studies.

As one of only eleven independent land and environmental colleges remaining nationally, we are proud of our specialist educational provision that meets the needs of industries facing their greatest skills gap in a generation. With increasing demand from employers, and many of our offerings being regionally unique, we are non-selective in our entry, enabling learners from all backgrounds and abilities to study with us. In 2024/25, we will have reached more students than ever (>5000) coming from all over the country to study full time, apprenticeship, higher education and part time courses. We also have our own residential accommodation for 200.

The College has a strong reputation for delivering high-quality learning experiences and maintains exceptional links with the industries it supports and trains. With a diverse student body and a commitment to inclusive education, Plumpton College fosters an environment where both students and staff are encouraged to thrive.

In the past seven years, the College has experienced significant growth, attracting nearly 50% more learners across various study types, levels, and subjects. This is reflected in our financial growth, with the College expecting to turnover in excess of £28 million in 2025-26. We've recently completed an impressive £25 million investment programme as part of our site master plan, investing in new buildings, facilities, and resources.

At the heart of this transformation has been a cultural shift driven by higher expectations, higher standards of education, and an ethos of continuous improvement, embodied by our core values.

Our 300 dedicated staff with industry-leading skills support the development of our students, offering expert knowledge, guidance, and encouragement to help them thrive both academically and personally. This committed team is central to the College's success and growth, helping our students gain the expertise and experience needed for a successful career in land and environmental based industries.

OUR IMPACT

NEARLY **£300,000** OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY INVESTMENTS FOR 24/25

MET OUR **5% REDUCTION TARGET** FOR ELECTRICITY USAGE

92%

PASS RATES FOR VARIOUS L1-3 AGRIC, EQUINE, MOTOR VEHICLE & COUNTRYSIDE MANAGEMENT COURSES

HIGHEST NUMBER OF RESIDENTIAL STUDENTS BY AUG '23 IN

8+ YEARS

25%

INCREASE IN 16-18 COURSE APPLICATIONS

18%

INCREASE IN CAREERS SESSIONS

THE LAUNCH OF

15

HE PROGRAMMES IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF GREENWICH

100% STUDENT RETENTION

IN AGRICULTURE, MOTOR VEHICLE & SUPPORTED INTERNSHIPS

HIGHEST LEVEL OF **STAFF RETENTION** IN 10 YEARS

HIGHEST STAFF SATISFACTION

RATES TO DATE AT PLUMPTON COLLEGE

27%

INCREASE IN APPLICATIONS TO UNIVERSITY



WELCOME

I am delighted to welcome your interest in the role of Vice Principal, Curriculum and Quality at Plumpton College and thank you for considering this exciting opportunity to join our Senior Management Team.

Since joining the College in October 2015, I've had the privilege of being part of a transformative chapter in our journey. We have made significant strides in advancing our curriculum, strengthening academic offerings, and improving the student experience. As part of our ongoing commitment to achieving the very highest standards, we are now looking for a dynamic leader to build upon these achievements and drive the continued development of our curriculum alongside an excellent student experience and outcomes.

As Principal, I am deeply passionate about the transformative power of further education. I believe in creating an environment where both students and staff are inspired to excel, innovate, and reach their full potential. I am committed to fostering a culture of continuous improvement and ensuring our curriculum remains relevant and of the highest quality. This role offers a unique opportunity for someone who shares this passion and is eager to lead our curriculum vision forward.

As Vice Principal, you will lead the development and delivery of a curriculum that meets the evolving needs of both our students and industries. You will champion quality, drive innovation, and ensure our educational offerings stay relevant and inspiring. Your leadership will be crucial in ensuring Plumpton College maintains its position at the forefront of land and environmental education locally, regionally and nationally.

Plumpton College is a vibrant, diverse community, renowned for providing high-quality education in land and environmental disciplines. We are proud of our reputation as one of the leading providers in this field, grounded in our ethos of inclusion, innovation, and student success. The impact of our work has been increasingly recognised in the past year with multiple Ofsted outstanding outcomes in our latest inspection alongside winning the highly prestigious Queen's Anniversary Prize and being National Apprenticeship award winners too.

We are deeply committed to the professional growth and well-being of our staff, fostering a collaborative, supportive environment with diversity and inclusion central to our values.

This is an exciting time for Plumpton College, and we are looking for a leader who shares our vision for the future. If you thrive in a dynamic and challenging environment and are eager to make a real difference in the lives of our students and communities, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Please review the information pack and submit your application. Should you have any questions or wish to discuss the role in more detail, don't hesitate to contact me.

Thank you again for your interest, and I look forward to receiving your application.

With best wishes,



Jeremy Kerswell
Principal and CEO



OUR VISION

To be the leader of land and environmental education and training in the South-East, renowned for our cutting-edge practice.

The land and environmental sectors require more people than ever before to be trained and educated, and to a higher level than ever before. Therefore, at the heart of our vision is an ambition to achieve targeted growth in the following areas:

- 16-19 land and environment study programmes
- Adult provision
- Higher Education programmes

Our direct work with employers, including apprenticeships, professional industry training, and operating as a hub for knowledge exchange and sharing practice

As part of this and to improve our educational reach, new and existing programmes will be developed to provide far greater accessibility through the provision of blended and online delivery models and credit-based frameworks.

Further increased reach is anticipated in those areas of regional or national strategic importance to the college including Agri-Food and Environment, Horticulture, Viticulture and Oenology, and Veterinary and Animal Sciences.



OUR CULTURE & STRUCTURE

We aspire to be a diverse and vibrant community in which staff and students embody our values, have a strong sense of belonging, and flourish.

This is underpinned by our college values which we will ensure are embedded in our daily practices.

Implicit within our strategy is our recognition of the importance of looking after our staff and students' mental health, wellbeing, and safety.

We also value every student and member of staff as an equal and important part of our college community and want everyone to be able to reach their potential whilst here.

This means creating a learning and working environment where everyone is heard, included, treated with respect, and valued for what they bring.



PROGRESSIVE



SUPPORTIVE



AMBITIOUS



ENTERPRISING

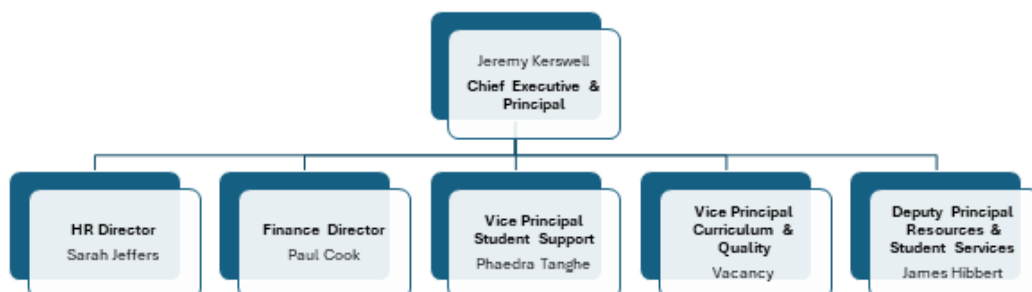


PASSIONATE

OUR STRUCTURE

Plumpton College has a well-established and supportive staff structure, with a dedicated team of academic and support staff who are committed to delivering high-quality education. As Vice Principal, you will work closely with the Principal and other senior leaders to oversee the academic and operational functions of the college, ensuring effective collaboration and communication across all departments.

Our Senior Management Team:



CHAIR OF CORPORATION & GOVERNING BODY

Led by Julie Dougill, the Governing Body at Plumpton College plays a crucial role in shaping the strategic direction of the institution. Committed to ensuring the College remains accountable, transparent, and focused on its goals, the governing body provides strong oversight and support for the College's leadership team.

We are lucky to have such an informed, invested, and committed board that brings a wealth of experience from diverse sectors. Their involvement is integral to fostering a culture of excellence, continuous improvement, and innovation. A great, yet robust and challenging relationship exists between the governing body and the senior management team, with governors providing valuable insight and strategic guidance to ensure that the College's mission, values, and objectives are consistently met, benefiting both students and staff.



ROLE OVERVIEW

As Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) you will lead and manage all the College's curriculum delivery teams to effectively plan, implement and evaluate a high quality and industry relevant curriculum across all provision types (including FE, apprenticeships, HE, schools, and part time).

In doing so, the Vice Principal will provide outstanding leadership and management to a team of Curriculum Managers and Directors to ensure that all policies, professional development and aligned strategies enable staff to fulfil their potential and deliver the best possible experience to our students.

As a member of the College's Senior Management Team (SMT) the post holder will also play an active and integral role in the overall management and strategic direction of the college.

At the heart of our curriculum strategy is a commitment to raising aspirations and promoting clear, high-quality long-term career opportunities to all our students. You will lead the implementation of our three-year curriculum plans, with a strong focus on growing our T Level offer, expanding our suite of Degree programmes, and strengthening our provision at higher technical levels.

You will be expected to respond with agility to evolving sector needs, ensuring we deliver a curriculum that is innovative, evidence-based, and aligned with the Skills and Post-16 Education Act, as well as other key national and regional priorities.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

LEADERSHIP & STRATEGY:

- Determine the relevant strategic priorities which enable the college to achieve 'excellence for all students' and lead the development of the necessary policies, processes, and people to achieve this.
- Contribute to the annual review of the College's Strategic Plan and its implementation through the development and ownership of operational development priorities. Set and review associated KPI targets accordingly.
- To determine and manage the setting and review of whole College and divisional level targets and key performance indicators to meet recruitment, retention, pass, value added and progression targets.
- Liaise effectively with relevant external agencies, sector groups, industry leads, and other relevant stakeholders to ensure that college strategy and particularly curriculum development aligns with sector priorities and employer demand.
- Utilise the annual review process to inform updates to the college's three-year curriculum development plan in response to internal and external business information and influence associated resource development and enhancement across college sites.
- Lead the whole college approach to quality review and improvement, resulting in well-informed, accurate judgements which drive standards and experience for all.
- Act as College nominee for Ofsted and other associated inspections.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE & CURRICULUM DELIVERY:

- Lead the strategic development of the College's curriculum with a focus on establishing high performing technical pathways including apprenticeships and technical qualifications.
- Ensure that the curriculum intent meets regional and local priorities and provides meaningful progression pathways from foundation to higher levels.

- Inform and adopt the use of curriculum planning tools and protocols to ensure that provision is sufficiently planned and resourced to enable outstanding student outcomes and achieve annual financial KPIs such as wide college contribution rates, academic income, and budgetary targets.
- Ensure that the annual curriculum plan within your teams is agile and able to be adapted accordingly to respond to changes in context.

STAFF MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT:

- Effectively manage, motivate, and empower curriculum and academic cross-college managers to deliver excellent results in accordance with annual targets.
- Ensure all curriculum staff set consistently high expectations of students, apprentices, and fellow staff across all provisions to enable them to be the best they can be.
- Inspire and set the vision for your teams as part of the college vision and strategic objectives, demonstrating ownership, accountability, and utilisation of team members' strengths, skills, and knowledge. Establish clear purpose, direction, and objectives for each curriculum division.
- To establish excellent working relationships with Governors and Senior Management Team colleagues and to provide regular reports, advice, analysis, interpretation, and recommendations to the SMT and College Corporation.

QUALITY AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE:

- Oversee the design and development of the college's approach to annual self-assessment and ensure that all managers produce evidence-rich annual Self-Assessment Reports and which for curriculum teams are reviewed regularly to inform Quality Improvement Plans.
- Ensure that the college's quality cycle provides a regular and effective means of quality monitoring and drives continuous improvement across the curriculum, encompassing all provision types and forming an accountability framework for all programme, curriculum, and cross college academic managers.
- Set the strategic direction of the quality and teaching and learning team in the development and delivery of a range of appropriate professional development activities which result in high quality and innovative teaching, learning, assessment.
- Ensure the fair and consistent management of student's discipline/grievance and academic appeals processes in line with College policies and procedures, resulting in high expectations of student performance and behaviour across the College.

CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

- Participate in staff development activities to support Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and keep a Professional Development Portfolio (PDP) to evidence personal development and impact on practice.

- Actively participate in the college performance management processes, including appraisals, to support personal and professional development and enhance the student experience.

FINANCIAL CONTROLS & OPERATIONAL ASSURANCE:

- Work with the Director of Finance to ensure the proactive management of budgets by all managers in line with financial regulations and budgetary control and monitoring processes
- Ensure that the College's assurance framework is implemented and conduct frequent monitoring and audit activities across curriculum teams.
- Ensure compliance with contractual and audit (internal and external) requirements for all areas of responsibility.
- Ensure all relevant managers are fully trained and compliant with college policies relating to HR, safeguarding, and health and safety.
- Attend and represent the college at sector specific groups to maintain sector knowledge and professional awareness of developments surround learner information management.
- Work with marketing and others to lead on extra curriculum events to ensure success, e.g. interview days.
- Ensure equality of opportunity among all protected characteristic groups and vulnerable student groups and seek to promote diversity in all aspects of college life.
- Undertake any further duties commensurate with the grade and responsibilities of the post as allocated by the Senior Management Team.

CANDIDATE PROFILE

We are looking for a candidate who possesses the following:

ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE:

- Proven experience in a leadership role within a further education setting, be that specialist land-based, sixth form or general FE.
- Hold a degree and / or a professional qualification.
- Proven experience of effective curriculum development and quality enhancement at both strategic and operational levels.
- Expertise in managing curriculum development and ensuring high-quality teaching and learning.
- Proven experience of effectively managing, developing, and supporting staff to deliver consistently high standards.
- Sound understanding of educational legislation, policies, and procedures.
- In-depth awareness and understanding of current and future trends and developments in post-16 education and training.

SKILLS & ATTRIBUTES:

- Excellent communication skills with a proven ability to negotiate, influence, and present to a wide range of audiences, presenting complex scenarios in plain simple language.
- Ability to take difficult decisions and to instigate change in a positive and realistic way.
- Strategic thinker with the ability to implement change effectively.
- Strong problem-solving abilities and capacity to make data-driven decisions.
- Capacity to work under pressure whilst retaining a calm disposition and a track record of managing and prioritising a substantial workload and meeting deadlines.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence necessary to lead and motivate a committed and highly skilled team of staff.
- A deep commitment to inclusion, diversity, and student success.

- Ability to work collaboratively with internal and external stakeholders.
- Demonstrate flexibility, reliability, and a passion for the college ethos.

WHY WORK AT PLUMPTON COLLEGE?

1. *Leading Provider:* We are one of the UK's leading providers of land and environmental education.
2. *Impactful Role:* As Vice Principal, you will have a significant impact on the future direction of the college, shaping the educational experience for thousands of students. You will be working within an ambitious Senior Management Team that prioritises impact, innovation, and integrity.
3. *Professional Development:* We provide opportunities for staff to continue their professional development through training, conferences, and leadership programs. This is a unique opportunity to shape a progressive, land and environmental curriculum offer in a college that is values-led and learner-centred. You will have access to state-of-the-art campus facilities, industry links, and work alongside passionate, dedicated staff.
4. *Supportive Environment:* At Plumpton College, we foster a supportive working environment where everyone is encouraged to reach their full potential. We operate a programme of 1:1 meetings and team meetings, and all our staff have access to an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP).
5. *Stunning Location:* Located in the South Downs National Park, Plumpton College offers a beautiful rural setting with easy access to nearby towns, transport links, and a range of outdoor activities.
6. *Collaborative Leadership:* You will work alongside a passionate and dedicated Senior Management Team, who are committed to creating the best possible learning environment for both staff and students.
7. *Perks:* including membership of the Teacher's Pension scheme; generous annual leave allowance; free onsite parking; discounts on Plumpton wine, produce, and short courses; ongoing professional development; and an inclusive working environment.

APPLICATION PROCESS

This is a critical role within the College, and we also welcome expressions of interest from internal candidates who are ready to step into a strategic, high-impact position.

To apply, please send your CV and a supporting statement (maximum two A4 pages) outlining how your skills, experience, and leadership approach aligns with the responsibilities of the role and our strategic priorities to recruitment@plumpton.ac.uk

The closing date for applications is 1st May 2025 at 12 noon. Interviews will take place on 12th & 13th May 2025 and shortlisted candidates should expect to attend both days.

We reserve the right to call candidates to interview/withdraw this vacancy at any time if there is a good level of response. Therefore, we recommend you submit your application as soon as possible.

Plumpton College is committed to the promotion of equal opportunities and is dedicated to pursuing non-discriminatory policies and practices and eliminating unfair discrimination on any basis.

Plumpton College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.