



CITY AND ISLINGTON COLLEGE

Strategic Plan 2008-II



CITY AND ISLINGTON
COLLEGE

“To be a successful economy in the 21st century, we must ensure that everyone’s skills and talents are developed throughout their lives so that we have a world-beating workforce. But the nation’s skill levels are also crucial to building a society where no-one is left behind, and where everyone is given a greater stake in the community in the form of higher wages, higher aspirations and more stable and secure lives. Further education (FE) is critical to our long-term ambitions for economic and social success.”

Bill Rammell, Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Higher and Further Education
Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills
Further Education Colleges – Models for Success, September 2008



THIS DOCUMENT SETS OUT OUR STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS

As this document goes to press we are in the eye of a financial storm. Many commentators argue that the UK and world economies face the biggest downturn since the great depression. It is too early to predict how this will play out. It is, however, clear that the need to address the challenges laid out below becomes even more critical to the long term prosperity of our country.

How do we make the UK a workforce for the future?

The UK is the world's sixth largest economy by GDP. However, as a nation we face some profound challenges in the years ahead – our workforce is not equipped to enable us to compete in the global economy.

5.2 million adults of working age lack basic literacy skills, 15 million lack basic numeracy skills

20% of adults do not possess a Level 2 qualification (equivalent GCSE grade A-C)

By 2020, unskilled jobs in the UK will have dropped by 1.9m, to just 600,000

In terms of productivity, the UK is in the bottom 50% of the OECD

How can we ensure learners achieve the right high-level skills?

The Leitch report sets clear targets for 2020 – our young people's skills in areas like science and maths need to improve, otherwise they will be unable to progress.

By 2020, it is expected that 50% of all jobs in London will be for graduates

What can we do to enable all Londoners to benefit from their city's success?

London has one of the highest productivity rates in the country but has the highest unemployment rates per head of population. Many Londoners are unable to prosper and progress because they cannot enter the local workforce.

Almost 30% of adults in London are workless

Lack of work and inequality results in child poverty – one in two children in inner London live in poverty

Islington has the second-highest level of child poverty in Britain

Our role is to collaborate, to innovate, to break new ground and to find sustainable answers.

Our response

City and Islington College has set a standard for success as one of the country's largest and most successful providers of Further Education. The leading-edge facilities in our five specialist Centres provide aspirational environments for learning. We believe we are well placed to take on the challenges faced in education in London and the UK and our strategies to do this are explored in this plan. Our confidence in our ability to deliver in the future is based on our track record:

City and Islington College is the only London College judged as outstanding on all measures by Ofsted

The Learning and Skills Council awarded us Beacon status

We are the only Further Education college in the country to twice win the Queen's Anniversary Prize

Every year more than 3,500 young people and 10,000 adults successfully learn with us, enabling them to go on to further studies and employment

Our success rates are among the best in the UK

96% of our students tell us that they are satisfied with our teaching and training (2007)

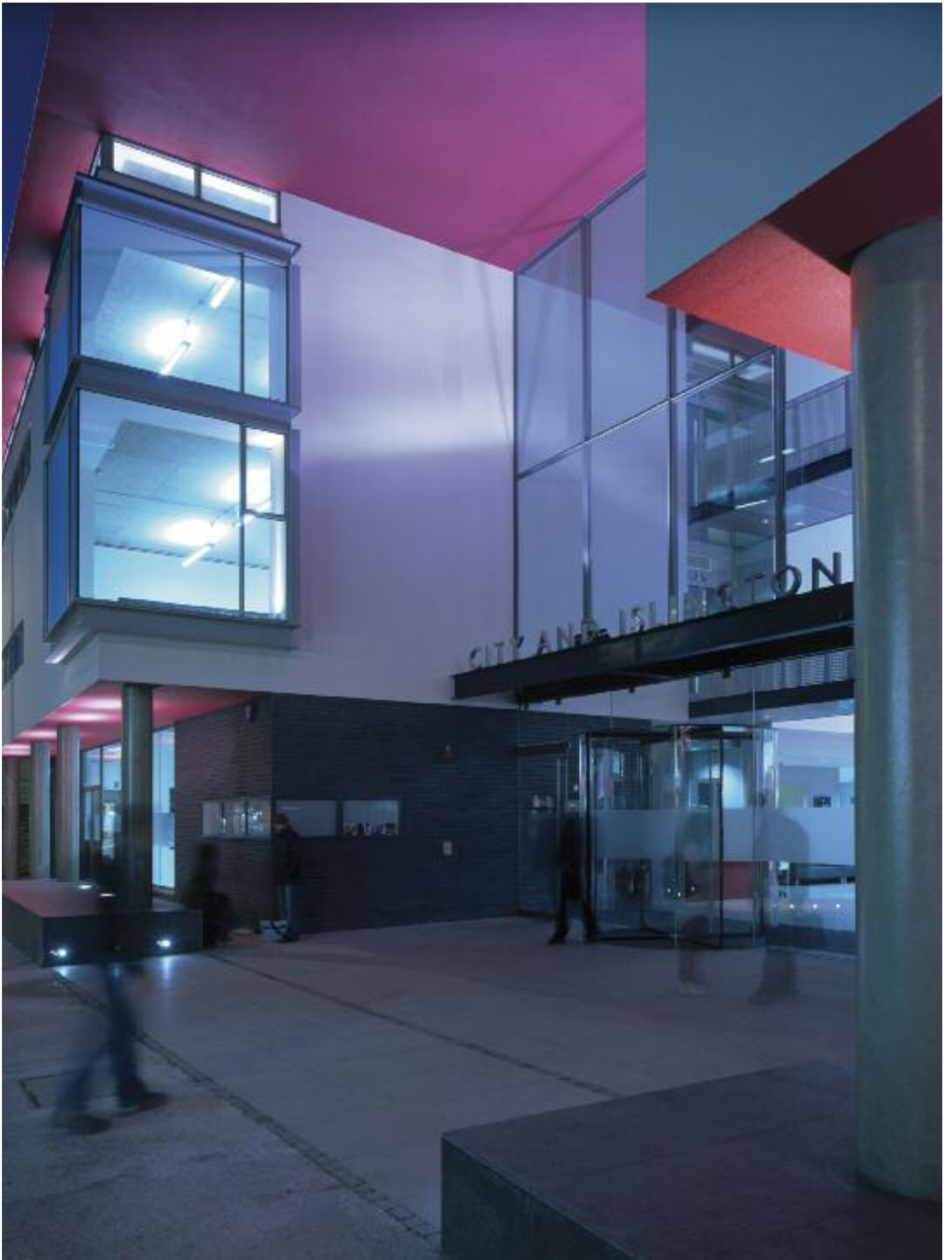
We send more students to higher education than any other learning provider in the UK – over 1,100 in 2008

Over a period of two years we met and worked as a team of staff and governors to produce our plan. We were guided by the aspirations articulated in the college document 'Vision2016'.

While planning for the next three years, we have had to look beyond the immediate horizon of 2012. Our sights are also set on a future where learning is truly international, while also being individual to each learner. A future where our College continues to be at the heart of our local community while also playing a role nationally and internationally, to improve the life chances of young people and adults. Technology will aid and enable achievement. Whoever they are, students, staff or our employer partners, we as a college will do our best to support them to fulfil their potential.

“In considering the future, we have to be visionary yet we also have to be realistic. Our goal is to operate more efficiently, performing successfully and sustainably for the long-term. The plans for the next three years are underpinned by our desire to continually improve and innovate – we will continue to learn together.”

**Frank McLoughlin, Principal
Jack Morris OBE, Chair of Governors
November 2008**



“What makes the staff here different is that they want to listen and make us part of the team... I want to make this College an even better place to learn and spend time, even if I’m not here to directly benefit.”

Maxine Adesina, Student Union President



Our strategic plan for 2008-2011

Our seven objectives summarise our plan and vision for City and Islington College, its students, staff and partners for the next three years.

OBJECTIVE

IMPROVE THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE OF STUDENTS IN A GLOBAL SOCIETY

We want our students to play their roles as global citizens, to compete, interact and progress in a changing world. They need sophisticated skills in the right areas and the ability to solve problems in order to benefit from the life choices available to them. Whatever their backgrounds, they need to be equipped for the challenges of the workplace.

The quality of the learning experience offered is critical to the College's continued success – it is also vital for our students as individuals. Our aim is to ensure that each student plays a part in how they learn and that they are empowered to influence and shape what the College offers. The College will be at the forefront of developments which seek to shift influence and decision-making away from the institution to its students.

New and improved means of communication will be used so that the feedback we get from our students is routinely frequent and routinely listened to and responded to. The Learner Engagement Strategy provides the structures and processes which will enable students to be involved in key decision-making. To this end, we are

considering the involvement of students in a range of quality improvement measures, such as classroom observations and involvement in the staff recruitment process.

We will help and support our students to become active and responsible citizens at home and in the world. To achieve this goal we will continue to identify volunteering opportunities in our local community and engage in relevant and meaningful opportunities with the world of work. Abroad, we are now working with Raleigh International, Action Aid and a number of NGOs in underdeveloped countries. We want our students to feel that they are part of a global citizenry and to understand and accept their responsibilities as part of this citizenry, as well as sharing their skills with those who have less access to education and training.

We celebrate and learn from the rich diversity of our students and this same diversity prepares them for life in a global society and work in a global economy. We have demonstrated that inner city education can be outstanding – the inner city is a context not an excuse!



OBJECTIVE 2

ACHIEVE AND MAINTAIN WORLD-CLASS TEACHING AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Teaching and learning of the highest professional standard have always been at the heart of the College's activity. We believe that all our students deserve the best and that every individual should be able to realise their goals. To make this a reality means that we must aspire to achieve near 100% success rates across our provision – an increase of 10-15% over the next three years.

Our students will be driving the improvement of the learning and development they undertake. Learning will become a more personalised experience, informed by thorough assessment of skills and underpinned by close tutorial support. We are already able to tailor learning to the needs of the student and provide additional learning support where it is needed. We will continue to improve the tutorial system as the key mechanism of individual support for students.

Our objective will be achieved by drawing on expertise from industry and working closely with employers, as well as by understanding the past and present experiences our students bring with them to their learning.

We know we can learn from others. Therefore we will continue collaborative activities such as peer review with our FE colleagues. With our HE partners we will continue sharing good pedagogic practice, widening participation initiatives and progression opportunities. We will ensure our staff are supported in the acquisition of new skills that will help them deliver new curriculums such as the International Baccalaureate.

City and Islington College will be at the forefront of eLearning, constantly improving our use of technology and never being afraid to innovate. We will



continue developing our virtual learning environment and focussing on e-portfolio activities, e-assessment and reflective learning. By exploiting the technologies available to us, we will enable our students to access their learning in many different ways, including remote and flexible learning. Students will be able to access information relevant to them online and, through new media, work together online. New ways of learning will be supported by old ways of learning, in which the skills of the traditional teacher as motivator will be utilised.

Teaching and learning that are consistently outstanding across the whole college remains our primary goal. We believe this will happen as we ensure uniformity of high standards and high expectations.

“The overall quality of provision is outstanding and highly skilled teachers motivate and bring out the best in their students through outstanding teaching and learning.”

Ofsted Inspection report, June 2008

“Overall success rates for long courses are high, particularly for students aged 16-18.”

Ofsted Inspection report, June 2008

OBJECTIVE 3

PROVIDE REGIONAL LEADERSHIP IN PROVISION FOR 14-19 YEAR OLDS

All young people deserve a learning experience of the highest quality regardless of the nature of the qualification being studied. Whether a young person is studying A Levels or is on an Apprenticeship programme, we strive, always, to ensure that what is offered and what is learnt have parity of esteem and are outstanding in their quality. We send more than 650 young people to university each year, more than 140 of whom are black male students from our sixth form. Building on our track record of delivering success rates above the national benchmark for 15 years, we believe we can offer leadership in Islington and across London - improving outcomes, ensuring planned progression for all our students from school, through college, onto higher education and employment.

To achieve our objective, we recognise that we need to build new and more effective partnerships with schools and other providers. We will continue to work closely with the London Borough of Islington, University College London, City University and London Metropolitan University. We need to increase the involvement of employers, ensuring that where possible, learning experiences have a work-related element. Work-related learning may take a variety of forms including internships, work placements, master classes, employer visits and, as with

our employer partners in the Foundation Degree, offer an input into the design of curriculum delivery to ensure what is taught has relevance to the world of work.

We intend to enrich our students' lives by offering them opportunities to broaden their current horizons. We will encourage them academically, culturally and personally.

We plan to offer the International Baccalaureate from 2010. We believe studying for the IB encourages active learning and would connect our students with a global community of over 2,000 education establishments in more than 125 countries. We will continue to develop diplomas and improve our delivery of them in conjunction with our partners. Ultimately, our aim is through our leadership and partnerships, to construct a curriculum offer which fulfils the needs and different aspirations of all young people across Islington and the region.

Walking around North London, you will continue to see our young students wearing their red City and Islington College lanyards with a sense of pride. We want to build and sustain that pride so that the maximum number of young people acquire the skills and qualifications needed for their future lives.





“When I joined the College I was out of work and had very low esteem. City and Islington helped me get what I most needed, a job. Being able to learn, progress and earn a wage has given me confidence. The College has given me much more than my skills. Now, I’m training here because I want a better job and I know I am capable of it.”

Mariam Jama, Office Practice student

OBJECTIVE 4

DEVELOP AND DELIVER SKILLS THAT ENABLE INDIVIDUALS TO THRIVE IN THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

As one of the largest colleges in the UK, we need to drive the skills agenda so that all students acquire and extend their knowledge and skills. In particular we will support our students into employment, better employment or a route towards employment.

We are dedicated to empowering all learners to get the best chances and have the best choices in life, by creating learning that inspires engagement with employers and aids learners’ employment.

In our course provision there is something for everyone in our local community which will enable them to be equipped to meet the challenges and opportunities of the world of work. Thus, adults will find opportunities to improve their

employability through gaining relevant skills and qualifications – bite sized or full NVQs. The focus of language and numeracy acquisition will, increasingly, be on skills for work alongside skills for life. Younger learners will be offered a widening range of Apprenticeship programmes as well as the new Diplomas. Like Apprenticeships, our ever-expanding Foundation Degree offer will allow students to learn as they earn.

Employability skills will be embedded across the curriculum. We will use and expand on our employer links to support students into jobs and deliver training to them once they are employed. We will establish an employability centre where students can spend time improving the skills they need to gain to become, and stay employed. In partnership with Job

Centre Plus and the Local Employers’ Partnership the centre will be the place where they get to hear about job opportunities.

Our five specialist Centres provide a specialist curriculum to key target groups – 16-18 year olds, adult learners and employers in areas such as A Levels, vocational qualifications, Apprenticeships, Skills for Life, Foundation Degrees, Train to Gain, Employability skills, Offender Learning and Teacher Training.

Our learning community has its origins in every part of the world. We will continue to offer new chances to people of all ages to develop skills they didn’t know they had. We enable our students to change their lives.



OBJECTIVE 5

CHAMPION AND MODEL A SELF-REGULATING FUTURE

We are a large, well run and financially stable College and we are on a journey of self-improvement. Part of this is our journey towards self-regulation.

We believe that a well-established culture of self-criticism, vigilance as to the maintenance of high standards and our maturity as an organisation has put the College in a position to claim greater independence and freedom in how we operate. Another facet of this journey of self-improvement and self-regulation is more collaboration with other colleges through peer review and benchmarking.

We believe that our standing in the local and national communities provides us with an opportunity to change perceptions about our sector; making it more valued and respected. The recognition we achieve

will enable us to improve still further and to be better able to engage with employers and opinion-formers.

We will seek to diversify our sources of income, making us stronger for the long-term. We will aim to expand our Higher Education portfolio year on year and to investigate whether or not we should seek awarding powers for both vocational qualifications and degrees.

Our goal is to ensure that by further improving the reputation of our college, we will contribute to raising the standing of the whole Further Education sector. We will enable our College, and others like ours, to operate even more successfully on a larger scale, on a national and international stage.



“There is a strong need for articulate FE college principals to be explaining the services they give to society and how colleges can make a significant contribution to the economy and to developing fulfilled citizens.”

Sir Andrew Foster

Realising the Potential

A review of the future role of Further Education Colleges



“When I joined the City and Islington College team I was immediately aware that this College is somewhere I could develop, grow and learn. The drive to continually improve is something we really do all share, and it’s no cliché to say it’s actually a very happy place to work...”

Penny Seal, Head of Registry and Administration

OBJECTIVE
6

ENSURE EFFECTIVE AND INNOVATIVE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF ALL STAFF GROUPS

An organisation is only as effective and successful as its people. We are proud of our development of an inclusive, innovative and developmental work culture. We recruit and retain the right staff with the appropriate skills and abilities to meet the needs of our students. We value the diversity and professionalism of all our staff. We seek to develop them through personal development planning, training and a management style that supports and nurtures progress.

We will continue to prioritise professional qualifications, ensuring that teaching standards are consistently improved. Like

any successful business, we will prioritise the development of our talent management processes, ensuring an effective succession planning strategy is in place. We will continue to develop our management behaviour framework that underpins our teamwork and, where appropriate, we will use e-systems and self-service options to enable our staff to access what they need.

We want to be a ‘first choice employer’, an organisation that reflects our community in terms of diversity and stands tall as an example of how a large team, spread over five centres, can work effectively towards a shared goal.



OBJECTIVE 7

RUN AN INNOVATIVE, EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE ORGANISATION

The College is already at the leading edge of management and business innovation – we try at all times to innovate and benchmark our performance internationally. We have a stable financial footing and an organisation structure that delivers “outstanding value for money” (Ofsted 2008).

Our challenge is to continue to innovate and excel. As the world economy proves increasingly volatile, we must successfully adapt and anticipate change.

We must ensure that we balance the competing demands of growth in numbers of students and staff with those of specialisation and deliverability. We will continue to invest in improving our infrastructure and the learning experience. We will take advantage of e-enabled

management systems and achieve more transparency in what we do. We will use Key Performance Indicators and a balanced scorecard approach to assess our own performance. We will improve the management information available to us.

Our accommodation – already world-class – will continue to be developed to offer more facilities, more space and increased flexibility of use, while offering access to the best in technology. We will ensure our carbon footprint is reduced year on year to contribute to tackling global warming and our students will assist us on this journey.

As a management team our efforts are directed wholeheartedly towards improving the teaching and learning we provide.



“Financial management is highly effective and the College provides outstanding value for money.”

Ofsted Inspection report, June 2008

Our progress to reaching our objectives for 2011 will only be met through working in partnership, sharing knowledge, motivating professional staff groups and collaborating with those in business, education and in local and national government.

Thank you for reading this document and please do let us know if you would like to be more involved, if you would like to comment, or have questions or if you would like to be kept up to date with City and Islington College.

Our success

The only London College judged as outstanding on all measures by Ofsted (2008)

Awarded Beacon Status by the Learning and Skills Council

The only Further Education College in the country to twice win the Queen's Anniversary Prize

Awarded Exemplar Status by BECTA, in the Technology Exemplar Network, for leading the way in the effective use of technology for learning

Our A Level pass rate in 2008 was 98%, above the national average

Our strengths

96% of our students tell us that they are satisfied with our teaching and training (2007)

Every year more than 3,500 young people and 10,000 adults successfully learn with us, enabling them to go on to further studies and employment

We are one of the first providers in the UK to offer the New Diploma courses for 14-19 year olds

We offer unique Foundation Degree courses in Crime Scene and Forensic Investigation, Dance, Digital Media Design and Ophthalmic Dispensing

City and Islington College

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