

Young people have many options to choose from when deciding on their education, so what sets us apart from other colleges and schools in the area?

We offer a really broad range of subjects, all of which can be studied at different levels. We are a Further Education (FE) College – this refers to any education studied below university level (although we do offer a range of Higher Education (HE) university level courses as well). The versatility of FE means that your son or daughter can choose from a range of qualifications in a wide variety of subjects. Having completed a programme at college your son or daughter can progress on to a higher level Further Education (FE) course or into Higher Education (HE). Some students will go straight into work, while others will continue to study and train as an apprentice.

In addition to the main qualification your son or daughter chooses, we are also committed to ensuring all our students gain the skills they need to succeed.

Focus on Mathematics and English.

If your son or daughter comes to college and doesn't have GCSE Mathematics or English at grade C or above, we will help them to work towards these qualifications.

A small, friendly and safe campus.

We have a small, friendly and safe campus that is easy to get around.



Access to lecturers that have industry experience and strong industry links.

Most of our lecturers come from the industry they teach in, and often have close links.

International exposure.

We have international students from over 30 different countries studying here, giving your son or daughter the chance to expand their horizons.



Great facilities.

We want to make sure that our learning environment is the best it can be. We have four performance venues, excellent catering facilities, recording studios, media suites, dance studios, IT centres, a fully-equipped motor vehicle workshop, carpentry, brickwork, engineering and electrical workshops and lecture theatres.



What is college life like?

We have really high expectations of our students, just like any school. In order for our students to be successful they will need to be dedicated and hard working in the same way our lecturers are committed to them.

As there is a greater degree of freedom at college, for example, students call lecturers by their first names, there is no college uniform and students are not required to stay on-site at all times; we have high expectations of the level of maturity shown by students. College is a great stepping stone between school and university/work.

What is a college day like?

A typical college day starts at 9am and finishes at 4pm. Your son or daughter will have a timetable which will identify their taught sessions. However, we also expect them to be doing at least 3 hours independent study per day and homework will be set regularly.

How is student success recognised?

Student success is recognised in the classroom and at progress evenings. For students that show outstanding achievement we hold an Annual Awards Ceremony where over 100 students receive an award.

How do I get more information?

We have based this guide on some of the questions we have been asked by parents during the application and enrolment process. We hope we have covered everything, but if you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact our Admissions team on 01789 266 245 or email admissions@stratford.ac.uk



Become a Friend of SUAC!

One of our main aims is to enrich our community, and we'd very much like to offer our range of facilities for you to use.

We welcome you to visit our coffee shop or one of our many restaurants, and enjoy the warm and friendly atmosphere of the College. You'll be served by our catering students who go on to work at establishments such as The Ritz and Claridges.

Feel free to make use of the College wi-fi; we encourage businesses to use our spaces and, as a Friend, you can benefit from discounted room hire rates.

You'll also be kept up-to-date with exclusive news, events and offers taking place across the College.

Visit www.stratford.ac.uk for more information and to sign-up!



A guide for...

**PARENTS
and
CARERS**

**A CLEAR PICTURE OF COLLEGE
LIFE FOR PARENTS/CARERS.**



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What can my son or daughter study?

We offer a full range of subjects that can be studied at several different academic levels including:

^^ A Levels

These two year Level 3 programmes are typically classroom-based, with a large element of independent research and study. Students choose three subjects from a wide variety of A Level subjects. AS exams are taken at the end of the first year and in year two students study at A2 Level.

^^ Vocational Programmes e.g. BTECs

On the whole, vocational programmes are more practical and work-related, tending to focus on a specific occupational area. They can be studied from Levels 1-5. Level 3 qualifications such as a BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma are at the same academic level as A Levels and like A Levels allow progression to university.

For more information please visit:

www.qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications.html

^^ GCSEs

Students who have not already gained a GCSE A*-C in English or Maths will continue to study these subjects as part of their 16-19 education and will take GCSE English, GCSE Maths or Functional Skills in English and/or Maths. Xtend courses are also available and are aimed at able and motivated pupils who wish to gain additional qualifications in their own time. The main qualifications studied are either a GCSE or Level 2 BTEC.

^^ Apprenticeship

These can take between 1-4 years to complete depending on the level of study and industry chosen. With an Apprenticeship the learner gains job-specific skills while working towards a nationally-recognised qualification.

^^ Entry Level

For whatever reason, if your son or daughter has no formal qualifications, or wants to improve on what they have, then Entry is a great place to start as there are no minimum entry requirements.

Level 1
Basic or Foundation Level

Level 2
Equivalent to GCSEs or First Diploma

Level 3
A Levels or National Extended Diploma

Level 4
Higher National Certificate

Level 5
Higher National Diploma or Foundation Degree

What does Raising the Participation Age mean?

The government has increased the age to which all young people in England must continue in education or training, requiring them to continue until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17 from 2013 and until their 18th birthday from 2015.

This does not necessarily mean staying in school; young people have a choice about how they continue in education or training post-16, which could be through:

- ^^ Full-time study in a school, college or with a training provider
- ^^ Full-time work or volunteering combined with part-time education or training
- ^^ An Apprenticeship



What involvement will I have as a parent/carer?

We really value the support of parents and carers, and will involve you right from the start. As soon as your son or daughter applies, you will all be invited to an Admissions Afternoon, where you will be given a tour of the College, get the chance to meet key members of staff and ask any questions you may have.

Once your son or daughter starts college you will be invited to progress evenings and be sent termly reports on their progress. Your son or daughter will have their own Learning Mentor and we encourage you to get in touch with them if you have any issues you wish to discuss. The table below gives an overview of the interaction between college and parents/carers.

Pre-enrolment	
Open Events	<i>These happen throughout the year – typically November, February and June. It's your chance to find out what's on offer and talk to lecturers.</i>
Admissions Afternoons	<i>Once your son or daughter has applied you will both be invited to an Admissions Afternoon which typically takes place on a Friday. It is a chance to meet with the Senior Management team, an opportunity to tour the College and ask any questions you may have.</i>
Post-enrolment	
Student Reviews	<i>Written Student Reviews are sent home regularly, they are for you to read.</i>
Progress Evenings	<i>These happen at least once a year, they are a chance to attend and meet with key staff to review progress.</i>
Awards Ceremony	<i>This is an annual event celebrating the success of our students. If invited, please join us.</i>
Learning Mentor	<i>Contact Learning Mentors at any time, they are your key contact in the College.</i>

What additional learning support is on offer to students?

Ensuring our students receive the correct level of support and achieve the right level of progress is vital. As soon as we receive an application from a student, and they attend an Admissions Afternoon, a one-to-one interview will be arranged.

This interview will establish what support has already been put in place at school and what can be offered while studying here at the College. We can discuss classroom support as well as additional learning support on a one-to-one or small group basis.

We can also arrange for you and your son or daughter to come into college during the summer period to ensure a smooth transition from school. You are welcome to come and have a look around the College several times.

We offer a comprehensive baseline assessment for all students, including assessing numeracy and literacy levels, learning styles and reading age, to get a full picture of any support that is required. If you have any queries, please contact our Inclusion Manager or Additional Learning Support Co-ordinator on **01789 266 245**.

What financial help is available for my son or daughter?

The College has been awarded a limited amount of money to help students in need of financial support. The bursary fund is mainly used for helping students with transport costs and essential equipment and materials.

We receive a large number of applications for funding and aim to pay a percentage towards student costs while funding lasts. After the initial payment has been paid, further payments are subject to good attendance and behaviour. The fund is discretionary and the College has set up a panel to assess claims and appeals to ensure fairness. You may be eligible for bursary funds to help you with your studies

Who can my son or daughter turn to for help with other issues?

Whether the issue is directly related to the College or not, the Safeguarding Team are here to listen to students and help them resolve any problems they're experiencing. We want students to enjoy their time at SUAC, and have a range of services to assist them when required which include; personal tutors, a College Counsellor, a College Nurse, Learning Coaches, the Safeguarding Team and a Student Liaison Co-ordinator.

Students are welcome to pop into Student Services for more information or advice at any time.

We live quite far away from the College. What about transportation?

Our students travel from far and wide to study here. We have a large car park, so travelling by car or car sharing is an option. Most students use public transport, and as we are opposite Stratford's main railway station, this is one of the main forms used. Travel information is available from the College Reception.

What happens after college?

Our students progress onto a wide range of opportunities once they have completed their course here. We provide advice and guidance on:

- ^^ Careers
- ^^ Applying to university
- ^^ Apprenticeships

We hold a Careers & Higher Education Event in the Autumn term, where we host over 80 universities and employers from across the country, all of whom provide information and advice on what to do next.

Students can also visit our dedicated in-house Job Pod, which offers the opportunity to discuss their next steps. Students can talk to dedicated careers professionals, get support with University applications and Apprenticeship opportunities, as well as finding information on job vacancies, volunteering and gap years. They can also access workshops on CV writing and gain tips and tricks from local companies and universities.

If my son or daughter completes a BTEC vocational qualification can they still go to university?

Yes! BTEC National Extended Diplomas are equivalent to 3 A Levels and are highly valued by universities, attracting UCAS points like A Levels. They provide practical skills and experience alongside the theoretical understanding and underpinning knowledge required to progress to university or employment in the chosen subject area.

The qualification is scored based on distinction, merit or pass, or a combination of all three as follows:

BTEC National Extended Diploma	Equivalent UCAS Points
DDD	360
DDM	320
DMM	280
MMM	240
MMP	200
MPP	160
PPP	120

