



HIGH
SPEED
RAIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Opportunities for Birmingham residents

Background

"To pioneer excellence in higher technical training".

The National College for High Speed Rail is the largest of five new, national employer-led colleges being created by the Government to help British students develop world-class skills.

Opening in September 2017 on state-of-the-art campuses in Birmingham and Doncaster, the college is dedicated to providing the higher level training required to create HS2 and work on future high speed rail projects, in what will be a major growth industry in the UK and abroad over the coming years.

Through a combination of classroom teaching and real work experience, the college will offer cutting-edge technical and professional courses to learners that are starting a career in rail infrastructure, looking to switch careers, or part of the existing workforce.

Employers will have a central leadership role in the college, through strong representation on its governing body and by supporting the design, development and delivery of its provision, for example, by offering placements and providing real life work challenges for courses.

The college will also meet the wider economic need for an increased supply in engineers and will therefore have a purpose beyond the timeframes of HS2.

The Birmingham site is in the city centre Science Park and will provide modern, fit for purpose buildings, demonstrating a high standard of design that provides an effective learning environment, as well as meeting high efficiency and environmental standards. The higher level of study and the national status of the college will mean that in some cases learners will be willing to relocate to study there and the high speed rail college will therefore also have some residential facilities. The college will also work on a 'hub and spoke' model, with links to a range of providers with whom National College for High Speed Rail will form a network for railway and engineering skills across the country.

Partnership

Since its inception, the college has worked closely with a range of local partners including the City Council, Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP and West Midlands Combined Authority. Birmingham City Council are represented on our board, and a Working Group meeting held monthly keeps the local authority up to date. The college is represented on the Ignite, Accelerate and Retune groups.

For individuals

For individuals the opportunities are clear, the college will provide the opportunity for individuals from a range of background to access training that will give them the skills needed to enter and progress in one of the country's fastest growing sectors. We will be targeting those already employed in the rail sector, those employed elsewhere looking to reskill, learners leaving other full-time education as well as those currently furthest from the labour market.

While our provision starts at Level 4, we are committed to facilitating access to a wide range of learners, and to this end are in talks with other providers to ensure that our curriculum is complementary to that provided by other colleges and schools. We are currently in talks with a wide range of providers in this regard. We are supporting other providers to deliver appropriate qualifications to gain access to the National College, including potentially an Access to Higher Education pathway, that may be of particular interest to the long term unemployed. In addition to this we are putting consideration into the entry requirements of the College to ensure we are assessing more than just academic ability. The assessment process will look at cognitive, dexterity and mental challenges to look at a person all round ability. Not all our courses will hold entry requirements of level 3 Maths and Science.

It was recently announced by the High Speed Industry Leaders Group that they will provide a bursary for two learners who would otherwise not attend the College. This will pay a learners fees and support the wider costs of studying at the College i.e. transport, The college is in conversation with other sponsors to build this bursary opportunity to a greater number of students.

For businesses and their employees

Businesses working in rail and associated sectors will have the opportunity to invest in their employees and upskill their company. The increased competitiveness that upskilling brings will allow companies to grow and prosper.

As a fully functioning college, there will be a range of opportunities to work at the college itself. We will be commencing recruitment in early 2017 for a range of jobs including teaching and support staff.

As a local college, and local employer, the college will also seek to use local businesses to provide products and services.

SEPTEMBER 2017 OPENING		
Both sites		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher Apprenticeships – core units <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership & management (high speed rail specialism – level 5 CMI) Continuous Professional Development modules 		
Apprenticeship specialisms – September 2017		Apprenticeship specialisms – January 2018
Birmingham	Doncaster	Both sites
Civil engineering	Track systems	Systems engineering