



Sunderland College



Working Better Together - A Merger of Partnership

Northumberland College and Sunderland College
Responses to formal consultation



Thank you to all who responded to our proposal during the consultation period.

We are pleased with the level of feedback which was significantly in favour of partnership and has reaffirmed our desire to merge Northumberland College and Sunderland College from 1st March 2019.

As we continue through the merger process, our commitment to our students and the communities we serve remains at the top of our priority list.

This consultation is only the beginning for our organisations. We have exciting plans to benefit our stakeholders providing many opportunities.

The feedback obtained has been invaluable as we shape the future of Northumberland College and Sunderland College.

Background

The corporations of Northumberland College and the City of Sunderland College held a formal public consultation from 1st November 2018 to the 1st December 2018 on a proposal to merge the institutions to create a new college group for the North East of England.

A 25 page consultation document was produced to set out the vision for the future, which was distributed to key stakeholders.

In addition, the document was made available on both college websites and public notices were published in national and local media.

We also held a public event on 20th November 2018 giving stakeholders, students, parents and carers the opportunity to meet with college leaders and talk through the benefits of the merger.

Views were submitted through a number of channels by visiting the websites, emailing comments to the merger@ inboxes and posting views to both colleges.

30 responses were received during the consultation process, and this report collates the feedback obtained and next steps.

Responses

Overall there were 30 responses.



4 paper-based



26 online

100%

of participants
were in favour
of the merger.



Specific comments from participants included:

- As an employer who uses Sunderland College as a learning provider for our employees to develop the skills they need in order to progress, I support the merger between Sunderland College and Northumberland College. I believe the merger will provide good opportunity for synergies. This can only be of benefit to the learners and improve outcomes for the students and businesses who use both organisations.

- This merger will benefit both colleges and the people of the North East in general.

- To continue to be financially viable, colleges need to adapt and change. This proposal allows the colleges to still deliver in the heart of their communities, but make sensible savings behind the scenes.

- Positive to have a wider North East coast provision to allow for sustainability, leading to more growth and development.

- An excellent initiative and great for the future of both colleges.

- Exciting merger!

- It will be a fantastic opportunity for the North East to have a strong position within the FE sector.

- The region needs stability in this sector this merger will create more opportunities for the students.

- Northumberland and Sunderland College are two great Colleges that can flourish together.

- The merger will protect public money and afford greater sustainability.

- Yes, I agree with the merger.

- I support any college that is endeavouring to make itself more sustainable and financially resilient. Great that the merger makes a positive difference to students.

- The vision of 'excellence is at the heart of everything we do' and the 5 strategic goals, I believe provide a firm statement of intent of the merged college group.

- Yes, colleges need to ensure they are larger and more resilient to perform.

- This will be great for the North East.

- The vision and strategic goals are transparent and ambitious, but will drive the standards of education forward, creating a positive impact on those who study with the college but also on the local community, social mobility and the wider economy.

- The merger will provide great opportunities for students and employers in the region.

- The merger of Sunderland and Northumberland Colleges will provide the North East of England with a larger college group having more political influence, better financial stability and an improved provision for learners. I can only see this as a good thing for the region, the people who use the colleges as learning providers, and those people who are employed.

- The positive impact that has been seen after Sunderland College's merger with Hartlepool Sixth Form College can only prove that this partnership will do the same.



Next steps

Thank you once again for your comments, interest and on-going support.

Based on the feedback received, our next steps are to:

- Build on the participant responses
- Continue to work collaboratively with colleagues by aligning strategies
- Develop plans to ensure the needs of our key stakeholders are met
- Work towards our merger timelines

For the latest updates on the merger, please visit:

www.northumberland.ac.uk or **www.sunderlandcollege.ac.uk**



If you have any queries about the content in this document, please contact:
mergerconsultation@northland.ac.uk or mergerconsultation@sunderlandcollege.ac.uk



Northumberland College
www.northumberland.ac.uk
01670 841200



Sunderland College
www.sunderlandcollege.ac.uk
0191 5116000