

Southport College and King George V College Merger Frequently Asked Questions

Following the announcement that the Governing Bodies from Southport College and King George V College have agreed in principle to merge we wanted to provide you with answers to some of your most frequently asked questions.

It is recommended that this document is read alongside the public consultation document that has been produced and can be found here: www.kgv.ac.uk www.southport.ac.uk

Beyond the public consultation exercise, we want to ensure that everyone who has an interest in our colleges is informed and given their chance to have their say about key developments. If you have any further queries which arise over the coming weeks please do not hesitate to contact us via our websites www.kgv.ac.uk www.southport.ac.uk

What does a merged College mean for the people of Southport?

The partnership will ensure a broad curriculum offer for school-leavers with a high quality A-Level and vocational provision for Southport. All school leavers in Southport and the surrounding area will be guaranteed a place in a dedicated centre on a course that is right for them and their career ambitions. Our key objective is to grow 16-18 student numbers and reverse the trend of students leaving Southport to study elsewhere

Both Southport College and King George V College will continue to focus on developing students' employability and opportunities for progression. We will work closely with local employers to develop the employability of students, grow Apprenticeships and continue to respond to their recruitment and training needs. We will also expand our Higher Education Offer offering opportunities for progression for students and those in the local community who do not wish to study away from home.

We see the merger as a very positive move which will create a stronger, financially resilient modern College partnership and allow for the development and investment in both existing sites. The Colleges are committed to offering outstanding post-16 education and will work together to realize that vision.

Are there any downsides of merger?

Although all projects of this size carry risk, a full assessment of any potential risks has been undertaken with additional support where appropriate. We have plans in place to mitigate and manage the risks identified to ensure the merger is accomplished efficiently and effectively. Both colleges have confidence that the benefits of merger outweigh any potential risks identified.

When will we know if the merger is definitely happening?

Both Southport College and King George V College are strongly and firmly committed to the proposed partnership and its benefits.

The official merger process is due for completion on July 31 2017. A public announcement will be made regarding the outcome of the proposal in early July 2017.

How will I know the progress of the merger, and how will this be communicated?

The Merger Steering Group is committed to ensuring all staff and stakeholders are kept informed of progress and developments through a range of channels. Regular updates will be posted to the college websites. There are also dedicated web enquiries forms on both College websites:

<https://www.southport.ac.uk/college/about-us/contact-us/marketing-team-enquiries>

<http://www.kgv.ac.uk/contact>

These forms enable members of the public to submit a question regarding the merger.

What will the new name of the College be?

There is no plan to introduce a new college name. We believe the Southport College and King George V names and brands are important to our students and the wider community.

What, if anything will happen pre-merger?

Southport College and King George V College have been working closely together in schools and the wider community to promote the vast provision available in Southport.

The Colleges have developed a new Science Centre of Excellence which has already welcomed over 200 students from local high schools to take part in Science masterclasses. There are also plans to launch a Creative Arts Centre of Excellence and Sport Centre of Excellence before the end of the academic year. These will offer school pupils the opportunity to take advantage of the wealth of staff experience and excellent facilities across both sites through a range of exciting and engaging activities, workshops and events.

How big will be the merged College be?

The merger will create a College of circa 4,600 students with an overall turnover of approximately £15.75million. The aim is to create a College that is large enough to provide a range of provision with excellent resources and accommodation but small enough to recognise and respond to the needs of individuals.

Will a merged College result in a lack of competition and removal of choice with just one institution?

No, the merger allows students to choose the right College for their needs. Both Colleges will maintain their distinct identities and sites. The Colleges will work together to continue to develop a substantial curriculum offering that effectively meets the needs of local students. That said we understand that students will have other alternatives within the locality and that the high quality of the student experience is the key factor in choosing where to study. Our vision is to be recognized locally as the first choice for higher level academic and vocational courses. This year's advanced level results place KGV College and Southport College amongst the top performing colleges in the country. We believe that with the quality of education and support we offer there should be no reason for students to look outside of the Southport area when considering their post-16 options.

How will the proposed merger affect students applying for September 2017?

We are committed to ensuring that it is 'business as usual' for our students and employers. Whilst the merger is happening students should continue to apply for a programme in the usual way and follow the existing application guidance and procedures of each college. Our priority throughout the process is to ensure that students studying at either college continue to have the high quality education and training they expect. We do not expect courses in 2017/18 to be affected. As the merger progresses, we will keep applicants up to date with the latest news and will update both college websites to help ensure everyone has the information they need.