



THE
BEDFORD
COLLEGE
GROUP

Group Director of Business Engagement and Apprenticeships

ATTITUDES

KNOWLEDGE

SKILLS



Candidate Information Pack

January 2025

www.fea.co.uk/job/tbcg-bea/

Welcome

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Group Director of Business Engagement and Apprenticeships at The Bedford College Group (TBCG). The Group is the seventh largest further education college group in the sector by income and comprises seven distinct colleges with three further educational colleges, two sixth form colleges, one agricultural college and one national college for motorsport.

Our values are extremely important to us and keep the student at the heart of everything we do, but none more so than those of valuing teamwork, continuously improving, caring and inclusive, all of which sit at the heart of this role.

To succeed in this role you will have substantial, recent experience at a leadership level overseeing apprenticeship and business engagement activities in the education, skills or training sectors. You will also have experience of improving the quality of apprenticeship provision and outcomes, along with a thorough understanding of apprenticeship policy and funding.

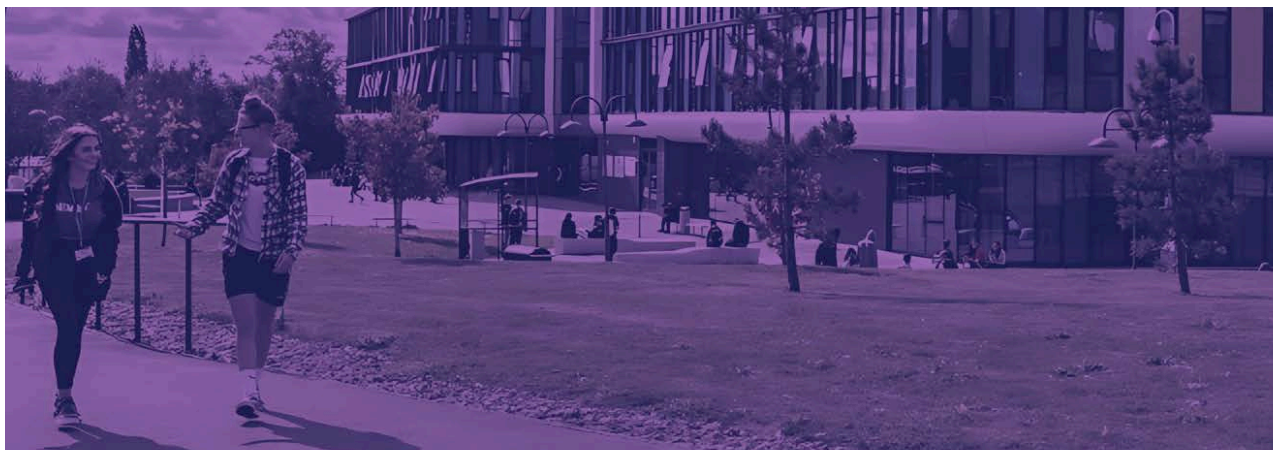
The successful candidate will lead on growing the Group's apprenticeship provision and business engagement and partnership activities to meet the skills needs of businesses in the South Midlands.

You will be coming to TBCG at an extremely exciting period of change, having joined as the new CEO in January 2024 the Group is being led with a passionate commitment to and vision of excellence that will take us forward in the next stage of TBCG's evolution.

Interested parties are strongly encouraged to contact our FE Associates recruitment partner, Claire.Gehlig@fea.co.uk, to arrange an initial discussion prior to submitting an application.

With best wishes

Yiannis Koursis
Group Chief Executive



About Us

TBCG is one of the largest FE providers in England and has grown rapidly in the last few years. Initially based on the old Bedford College site, through mergers and acquisitions, this year we have grown to have approximately 18,000 learners on multiple sites. In 2018, it successfully merged with Tresham College to create pan-Bedfordshire and North Northamptonshire provision based on the concept of developing regional market towns, and this has been boosted by Central Bedfordshire College (CBC) deciding to join the Group in February 2023. The Group has an Ofsted judgement of 'good', having rapidly improved the quality rating of Tresham on merger. These developments mean that TBCG has geographical sites in Bedford, Kettering, Corby, Wellingborough, Silverstone (housing a specialist motorsport facility), Shuttleworth (a land-based campus), and CBC sites in Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard.

Our strategic plan from 2022 to 2027 has a straightforward but challenging aim: 'to be the best and most authoritative further education provider in the South East Midlands'. This reflects both our current position as being the largest provider of FE in the region and also our ambition to be recognised as a system leader in national FE and a major source of civic leadership within our communities. TBCG is explicitly a regional institution and has no interest in being a national group or in growing for the sake of growth. Our rationale for expansion has been (and will continue to be) to achieve the benefits of regional integration, and its location is a major strength sited, as it is, within the southern part of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc and within easy commuting distance of London. Economic growth and employment opportunities are buoyant (under almost all economic models) and population growth and long-term demographic projections are strong. The region has genuine world-class employers with needs requiring world-class technical skills, and TBCG is committed to



making a substantial contribution with regional partners to achieving this. We are also aware that advances in digital technology will change many aspects of how FE operates and we intend to be a leader in this area as well.

Notwithstanding such ambitions, TBCG will remain a values-driven institution with its students and the communities it serves at its heart, and with a strong commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion (our strategic plan reaffirms this). TBCG has always striven to do what is best for its students and, thereby, to promote educational excellence by delivering programmes that stretch and challenge them. Continuing to enhance the quality of provision and student and employer satisfaction is at the heart of our strategic plan.

The strategic plan is available on our website and has been included on the FE Associates microsite for this role. The financial position of the Group is strong and it has a reputation in the sector for excellent financial management including having retained an ESFA financial rating of 'outstanding' for many years. Clearly, the national funding environment is difficult, particularly given inflation and the challenges of many aspects of staff recruitment and reward. Nonetheless, TBCG is better placed to weather such storms than the vast majority of the sector and we have a strong working relationship with our banks.

Our CEO, Yiannis Koursis OBE, continues to build on the Group's strong reputation, guiding us through the next phase of our journey. Yiannis has been transforming the lives of students for more than 17 years, having held senior roles in further education at colleges across the UK. In recognition of his exceptional contributions to social progress and development, he was awarded an OBE in 2022 and a fellowship from the Royal Society of Arts in 2020. Yiannis is a passionate national advocate for further education, championing its power to transform lives and tirelessly promoting the sector as a vital force for opportunity and growth.

We operate a model where each of our colleges has a designated Principal responsible for the day-to-day leadership of their respective campuses, ensuring the effective development and delivery of curriculum, teaching, and learning. The Business Development team, part of TBCG's professional services operations, is led at the Group level, serving the needs of stakeholders across each institutional region.



Job Description

Job title: Group Director of Business Engagement and Apprenticeships

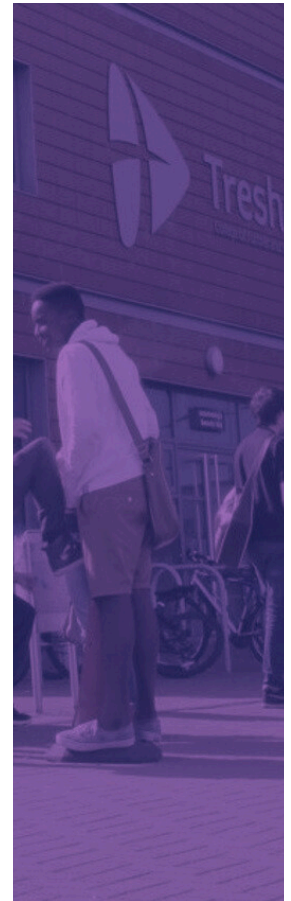
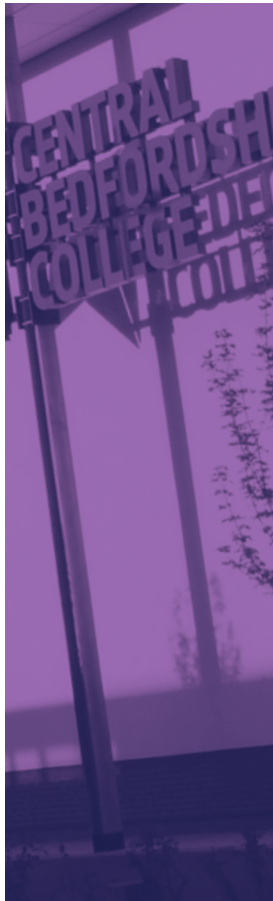
Reports to: Executive Director of Strategy

Direct reports: Director of Partnerships, Head of Apprenticeships, Head of Business Development

Salary: Competitive

Job Purpose

The Group Director of Business Engagement and Apprenticeships will play a pivotal role in shaping and executing the strategic goal to grow our apprenticeship provision, business engagement and partnership activities and wider curriculum offer to meet the skills needs of businesses in the South Midlands. Operating with credibility, experience and confidence, you will work collaboratively across the Group to drive the business engagement and apprenticeship strategies, and provide leadership to the following teams: Apprenticeships; Business Development; and Partnerships. You will be accountable for the quality of the Group's apprenticeship provision, the apprentice and employer experience, and business development and partnership growth targets (both financial and learner number).



Main Duties

Specialist Area

- To lead on developing the Group's Business Engagement Strategy and overseeing its delivery, ensuring it aligns with the Group's vision and strategic objectives and achieves set targets.
- To lead and direct the Group's apprenticeship provision, implementing strategy and ensuring operational plans deliver a high quality skills-based curriculum designed with employers to meet their needs.
- To have overall responsibility for the quality of the Group's apprenticeship provision, ensuring a high standard of teaching, learning and assessment, driving improvements in achievement and retention rates and apprentice and employer feedback.
- To ensure compliance is fully embedded in the apprenticeship journey to meet the requirements of funding and auditing bodies, etc.
- To act as the lead for apprenticeships in Ofsted Inspections.
- To lead on embedding new apprenticeship provision within the Group and ensuring that objectives relating to growth are achieved.
- To work closely with the Executive Director of Curriculum and Senior Leadership Team to ensure the Group's curriculum is responsive to local, regional and national skills needs and priorities.
- To work with the Head of Learning and Development to oversee the Group's approach to fully utilising the Group's apprenticeship levy.
- To lead and direct the Group's business development and partnership teams to ensure a high-quality service to businesses that is dynamic, highly responsive, meets/exceeds businesses' expectations and builds long-term collaborative relationships.
- To develop and maintain strong relationships with employers representative groups and key stakeholders to build the Group's positive profile and reputation.
- To maintain a thorough understanding of developments in the further education and apprenticeship sectors, and expertise in apprenticeships policy, regulations and funding guidance, providing advice and guidance on compliance and maximising opportunities for income.



Leadership and Management

- To lead, motivate and empower staff to operate as high-performing, ambitious teams.
- To ensure the effective performance of direct reports, through the setting of standards and targets, regular feedback and holding staff accountable when standards are not met.
- To champion a culture of transformation and celebration of differences, and lead staff in embedding behaviours and practices that incorporate equality, diversity and inclusion and the Group's values.
- To ensure effective strategies are in place to meet the current and future staffing needs of the Directorate, and that structures are effective both in terms of delivery and cost.
- To be visible and appropriately accessible to your teams and the wider College Group.
- To effectively monitor and manage the Directorate's budget.
- To report to the Executive Director any relevant information regarding the Directorate or wider Group.
- To represent the Group at local, regional and national levels as required, maintaining good relations with external stakeholders and partners, and developing networks that support future partnerships.
- To lead on innovative projects and groups for the further development of the Group.
- To write and present reports to the Executive and Board of Governors as required.
- To collaborate closely with colleagues and work in partnership to achieve the vision and strategic objectives of the Group.

Group Wide Responsibilities

- To attend other Group campuses and external venues as required.
- To support and participate in weekly meet and greet ID checks and walk rounds.
- To support and participate in invigilation during exam periods.
- To support and participate in recruitment and stakeholder events.
- To demonstrate professional behaviour and appearance at all times.
- To work in a flexible manner and be willing to undertake other duties as reasonably requested.

Statutory Duties

- SAFEGUARDING – To be responsible for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and for raising any concerns in line with BCG policy and procedure.
- EQUALITY & DIVERSITY – To be responsible for promoting equality and diversity in line with BCG policy and procedure.
- HEALTH & SAFETY – To be responsible for following health and safety requirements in line with BCG policy and procedure.
- TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT – To participate proactively in training and development including any required qualification development.



Person Specification

Qualifications/Training

Essential

- Relevant degree or relevant professional qualification.
- Evidence of continuing professional development (CPD).

Desirable

- Relevant postgraduate qualification.
- Management qualification at Level 5 or above.

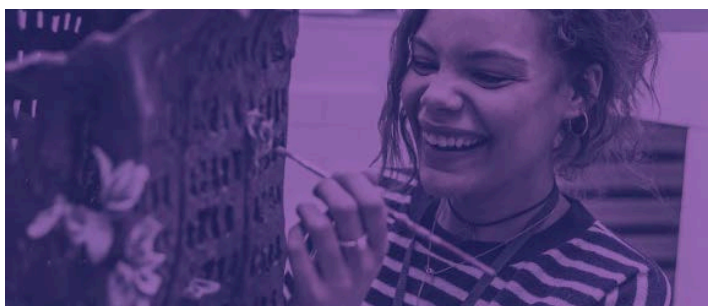
Knowledge/Experience

Essential

- Substantial, recent experience in a leadership role overseeing apprenticeships/employer engagement.
- Substantial experience in improving the quality of apprenticeship provision and apprentice outcomes.
- Experience of developing and implementing business engagement and apprenticeship strategies.
- Experience of working collaboratively across an organisation to deliver improvements/raise standards.
- Proven results in achieving growth in apprenticeship numbers and employer engagement activities.
- A thorough understanding of the government skills agenda and apprenticeship policy, guidance and funding regulations/audit.
- Experience of leading a high-performing team against clear objectives with measurable results.
- Experience of building successful relationships with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders.
- Experience of budgetary planning and management.
- A detailed understanding of delivering apprenticeships according to the Education Inspection Framework (EIF).

Desirable

- Experience of leading the successful introduction of a CRM platform.
- Experience of being the lead for the apprenticeship element of an Ofsted inspection.



Skills

Essential

- Effective networking, negotiation, influencing and communication skills.
- Ability to effectively manage resources.
- Ability to plan strategically.
- Ability to multi-task and manage competing and challenging deadlines.
- Strong leadership skills with the ability and confidence to motivate others and operate at a senior leadership level in managing change.
- Excellent project management skills with the ability to successfully manage cross-group projects.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.

Attributes

- A dynamic and proactive approach to work.
- Ability to work effectively and under pressure and to deadlines.
- A "can do" attitude that will inspire enthusiasm in others.
- A professional approach to dealing with staff relationships, customers and external agencies.
- Demonstrates a willingness to continuously develop knowledge and skills.

Additional Requirements

- Ability to travel to all campus locations.
- Ability to adapt working hours to changing needs in the business when these occur.
- A clear understanding of the appropriate professional boundaries and relationships that should be formed and maintained with children and young people.



The Bedford College Group

Terms and Conditions

The appointed candidate will receive the following:

- a competitive salary
- 35 days annual leave plus bank holidays
- a pension through the local government pension scheme

Key Dates

Closing date for applications:	9am Thursday 13 February 2025
Shortlisting:	Monday 17 February 2025
Interview date:	Tuesday 25 February 2025

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The Application Process

We have retained FE Associates to support us in finding an outstanding individual to inspire excellent practice across our organisation. The application process is outlined below.

Initial Discussion and Recorded First-Stage Teams Interview

Prior to submitting an application, interested parties are advised to arrange an initial conversation with our FE Associates lead consultant, by emailing Claire.Gehlig@fea.co.uk, to discuss the role before the closing date. Once it is agreed for you to proceed with an application, the lead consultant will schedule a first-stage interview via Teams with you which will take place before the closing date and will be recorded. Once this interview has been scheduled, you should submit your application. Please see the final page of this pack for full details on how to submit your application.

Shortlisting and Invitation to Interview

After the closing time/date, our lead consultant will send all applications and recorded first-stage discussions to the college for shortlisting. Once the shortlist has been agreed, candidates will be notified by the lead consultant and shortlisted candidates will be invited to a formal interview/selection process with the college.

Safer Recruitment and Due Diligence Checks

Applicants are advised that, as part of the statutory guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education, colleges/training providers are advised to make arrangements for an online search as part of due diligence on shortlisted candidates. The searches are aimed to assist in identifying things said or done that may harm the organisation's reputation or make the candidate unsuitable to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. Where a cause of concern arises from the online search, a risk assessment will determine whether the concern is of such a nature that it is appropriate to exclude a candidate from the process or whether a clarification discussion, before or during an interview, is needed.

This post is exempt from The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the Exceptions Order 1975 provides information about which convictions must be declared during job applications and related exceptions and further information about filtering offences can be found in the DBS filtering guide. The Bedford College Group's policy on the employment of ex-offenders is available upon request. Candidates who are barred from working with children are reminded that it is a criminal offence to apply for this post.



Having obtained the full information from <https://www.fea.co.uk/job/tbcg-bea/>, discussed the role with Claire Gehlig and scheduled your first-stage interview via Teams, you should email your application to recruitment@fea.co.uk in advance of the closing date and time (see Key Dates section). Applications received after this time will not be considered. Please note, CVs will not be accepted in place of, or in addition to, the application form.

Email Checklist

Please use the latest version of the application and ED forms found on the job page for this role and not older out-of-date versions. These forms are not compatible with IOS/MAC (Pages).

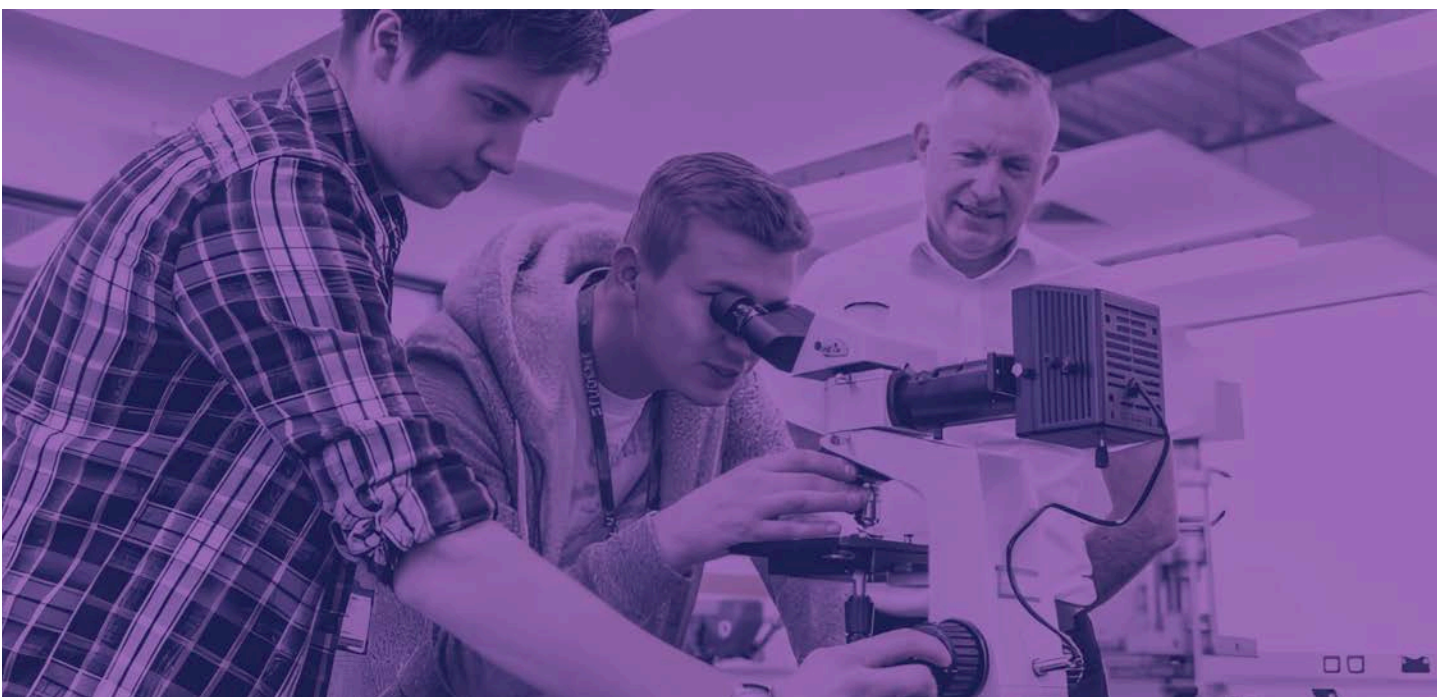
Ensure your email includes only the 2 forms necessary for your application (these forms are located with the candidate information pack on the FEA website jobs page for this role):

1. An Application Form with all sections completed including:

- An explanation of any gaps in your employment in **section 6**.
- A supporting statement which does not exceed the equivalent of 2 pages of A4 and is included as part of the form in **section 9** and not as a separate document. In this section, explain how you believe your knowledge, skills and experience match the criteria as stated in the person specification for this role (detailed in this candidate information pack).
- Please include 2 referees and their full postal and email addresses and their contact numbers in **section 10**. References are usually sought after the interview process and the college will not contact referees without your prior approval.
- Ensure you enter your name/e-signature and date in **section 11**.
- Save your completed form as a Word document with your surname, first name and the job reference as the filename i.e. Surname, First Name – tbcg-bea- Application.

2. The Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form.

- This is a Word format document. Please click **inside** each check box that applies to you.
- Once you have fully completed the form, please save this as a Word document with your surname, first name and the job reference as the filename i.e. Surname, First Name – tbcg-bea- ED.





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FEA **FE ASSOCIATES**

