Group Director of Information Technology (IT)

ATTITUDES   KNOWLEDGE   SKILLS

Candidate Information Pack
January 2025
www.fea.co.uk/job/tbcg-gdit/

Welcome

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Group Director of IT 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.

The successful candidate will have a strong leadership background, excellent communication skills and a proven track record in managing IT services within a large and complex organisation.

To succeed in this role, you must have strategic vision, a passion for technological innovation and the ability to foster a culture of high performance and continual improvement. Applications are welcomed from sectors outside of FE.

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, Amanda.Hart@fea.co.uk, to arrange an initial discussion prior to submitting an application.

With best wishes

Yiannis Koursis
Group Chief Executive
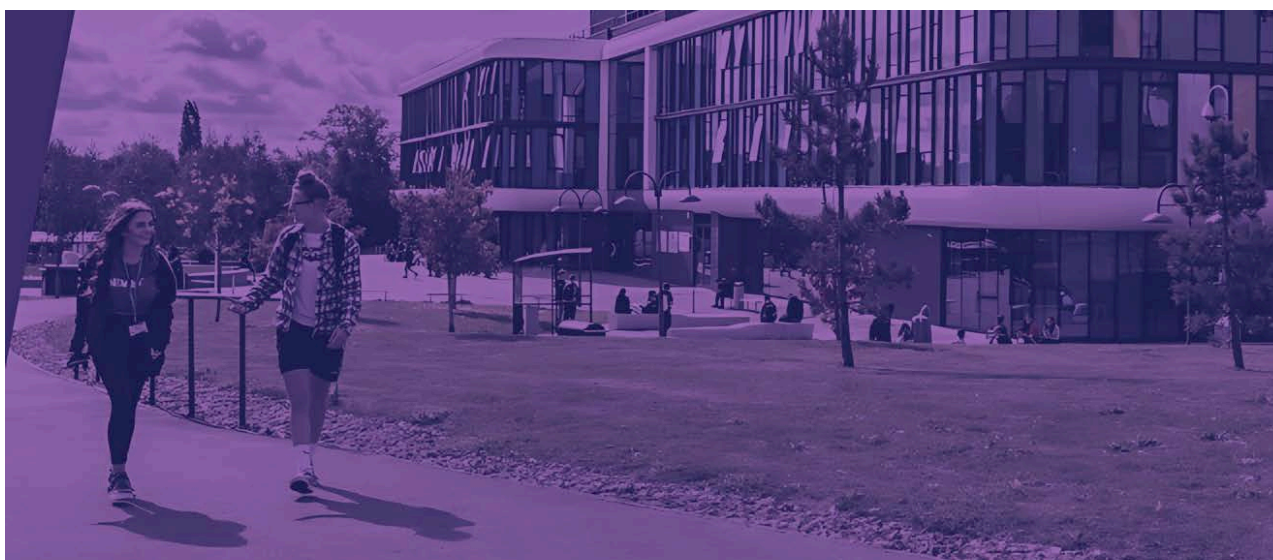
About Us

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 title: **Group Director of Information Technology (IT)**

Reports to: **Chief Operating Officer (COO)**

Direct reports: **Head of IT**

Salary: **Competitive**

Job Purpose

- **Strategic IT Leadership**
  - Developing the organisation's IT vision and translating it into actionable goals.
  - Managing the implementation, development, monitoring, maintenance, upgrading and support of organisational IT systems.
  - Identifying and recommending new technology solutions.
  - Overseeing the development and enhancement of systems and integrating new systems with existing systems.

- **Risk Management**
  - Formulating and implementing business continuity and disaster recovery plans from an IT perspective.
  - Identifying future challenges in the IT landscape and developing mitigation strategies.

- **General Responsibilities**
  - To lead on the provision of an effective and reliable IT service across The Bedford College Group (TBCG).
  - To provide leadership and management across TBCG.
  - To represent the Directorate at local and Group levels.
  - To ensure the effective management and performance of the team within the directorate and ensure a high-quality provision.
  - To ensure the achievement of both TBCG and departmental strategies and workplans.
  - To ensure all Statutory requirements, policies and procedures are in place and effectively communicated, implemented and followed by all employees of TBCG.
  - To carry out all aspects of the role in line with TBCG culture and values.
  - To ensure the student experience is kept at the heart of everything your Directorate does.

Key Responsibilities

Specialist Area

- To implement the IT strategy across TBCG with identifiable goals and milestones.
- Cybersecurity.
- To ensure effective sourcing for the implementation of new software and hardware.
- To ensure business continuity plans and disaster recovery plans are in place for the whole TBCG network.
- Ensure the consistent availability of network services.
- Identify key areas of connectivity challenges across TBCG and develop plans to resolve these challenges.
- To develop, implement and issue a replacement policy for hardware across TBCG.
- To monitor, identify and test security vulnerabilities across the network and develop plans to eliminate these.
- To lead on the implementation of new systems across TBCG, ensuring compatibility with current systems and networks.
- To ensure the development of knowledge within the IT team, of all systems across TBCG, to enable effective support to users.
- To identify and recommend new technology solutions for TBCG to ensure it remains current.
- To streamline the issuing of new user accounts.
- To develop standard operating procedures which follow best practice and are supported by guidance documents for users.

Leadership

- To represent the group internally and externally.
- To participate in the development of the TBCG strategy and support the communication and implementation of it.
- To implement the Directorate strategy and vision that supports the overarching TBCG strategy.
- To develop plans and objectives to support the achievement of strategy.

Leadership cont'd

- To ensure Directorate structures are effective both in terms of delivery and cost and review models to ensure development and innovation.
- To act as a mentor to those directly reporting to you.
- To be visible and appropriately accessible to your wider team.
- To participate in innovate 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 ensure compliance in all regulatory and policy requirements.
- To ensure the completion of all TBCG wide Quality & Monitoring processes.
- Be accountable to the COO for the performance of the Directorate.

Management

- To ensure all employees are effectively managed on a day-to-day basis.
- To provide honest management of employees, particularly Heads of Department (HoD), through setting of standards and targets, providing regular feedback and holding people accountable when standards are not met.
- To ensure the effective performance of those reporting directly to them, and support, mentor or take action as appropriate where this performance fails to meet required standards.
- To ensure any performance management issues are effectively handled in a timely manner following policy and procedure.
- To ensure all employees are up to date on and are supported to attend all mandatory training and staff development.
- To ensure HoDs are effective in ensuring cover is in place at all times for the Directorate to operate effectively.
- To support the departmental management structure in planning and implementing effective strategies to meet the staffing needs of the Directorate.
- To ensure effective induction is in place and is carried out in a timely manner across the Directorate.
- To ensure effective annual appraisal is carried out by all managers and themselves.
- To ensure continuous succession plans are in place with opportunities for managers to step up.
- To consider what appropriate support is in place to ensure employees well-being and that it is effectively utilised.
- To effectively supervise the HoDs in monitoring and managing the Directorate's budget.
- To report any relevant information regarding the Directorate or wider Group to your line manager.
- To ensure all Directorate targets are met.
- To attend and participate in all relevant organisational meetings.
- To undertake any other tasks reasonably requested.
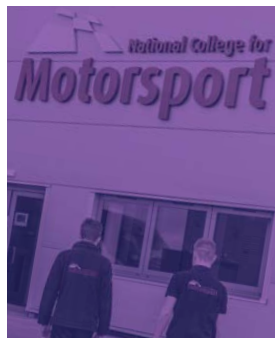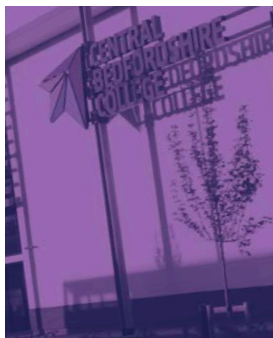
College-Wide Responsibilities
- To attend other TBCG campuses for team management, meetings etc.
- To act as Duty Manager as assigned by rota.
- To support and participate in weekly ID checks and walk rounds.
- To support and participate in invigilation during exam periods.
- To support and participate in TBCG open days.
- To carry out investigations and disciplinary hearings as an independent Director.

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 level qualification.

Desirable

- Post graduate qualification in relevant discipline.
- Level 5 management qualification.

Essential Knowledge/Experience

- An excellent knowledge of IT systems, networks and experience of network design, implementation and maintenance.
- Experience working within an IT environment at a senior level.
- Experience of developing and implementing policies.
- Experience of project management.
- Experience of effectively managing a network/systems across multiple geographical locations.
- Experience of managing a budget.

Essential Skills

- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Excellent people management skills.
- Excellent organisational skills.
- Excellent customer service skills.
- Excellent interpersonal skills.
- Excellent prioritisation skills.
- Good project management skills.
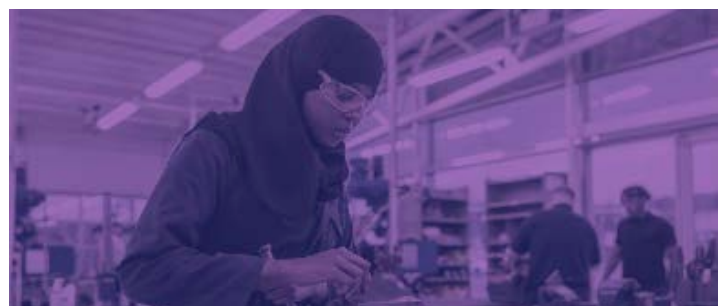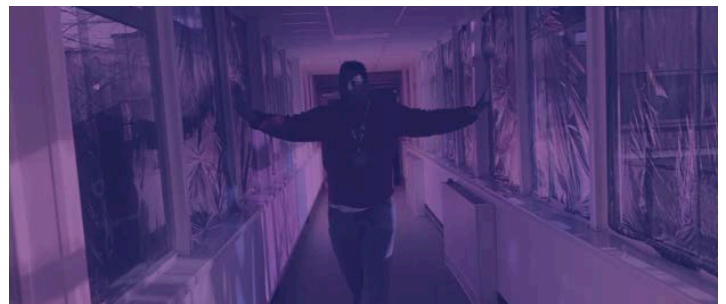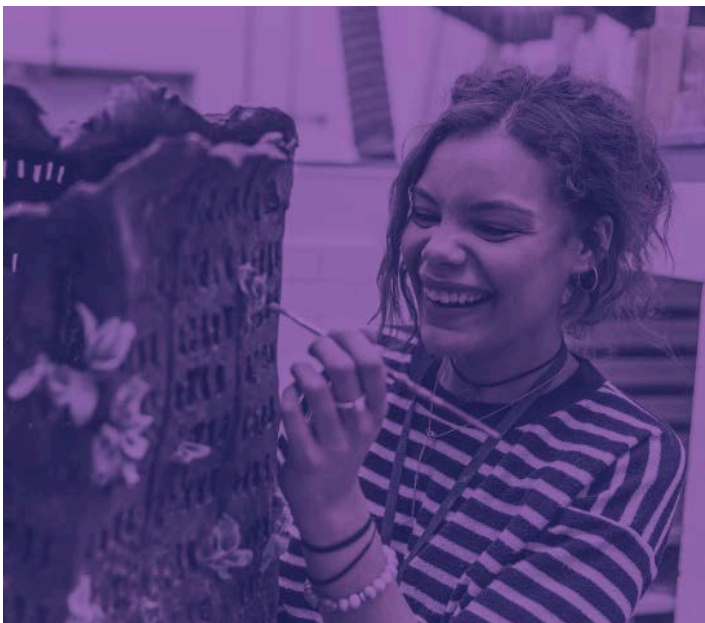
Essential Skills cont'd

- Excellent decision-making skills and the understanding of your own authority levels and responsibility within this.
- Excellent level of numeracy.
- Excellent IT skills to include Microsoft Office (Word, Excel etc.).
- Excellent analysing skills.

Essential Attributes

- Ability to deal with sensitive data confidentially.
- Ability to work both alone and within a team.
- Ability to work under pressure and adapt to changing workload demands.
- Ability to work to deadlines.
- Ability to build professional relationships.
- Ability to influence at all levels.
- Ability to take responsibility and exhibit leadership.
- To demonstrate the ability to work in line with Bedford College Group's values, policies and procedures, with particular reference to Equality & Diversity, Safeguarding and Health & Safety.
- Demonstrates a willingness to continuously develop personal knowledge and skills.

Additional Requirements

- Ability to travel to all campus locations for meetings, events, training etc.
- Ability to provide duty manager cover.
- 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 20 February 2025
Shortlisting:	Monday 24 February 2025
Interview date:	Friday 7 March 2025

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 Amanda.Hart@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.
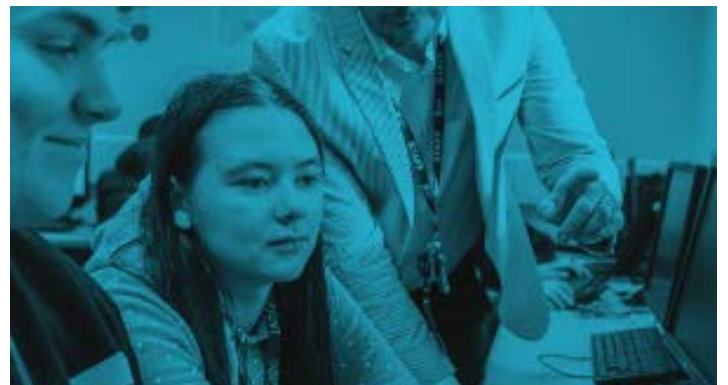
Having obtained the full information from **https://www.fea.co.uk/job/tbcg-gdit/**, discussed the role with Amanda Hart and scheduled your first-stage interview via Teams, you should email your application to recruitment@fea.co.uk in advance of the closing date and time (see Key Dates section). Applications 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-gdit- 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-gdit- ED.

THE
BEDFORD
COLLEGE
GROUP

FEA FE ASSOCIATES