

CHIEF STRATEGY OFFICER

Candidate Information





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WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in joining the fantastic team at SGS College.

Your interest comes at a particularly exciting and important time. I joined the College in March 2025 and over the last year we have been reflecting on the challenges of a rapidly changing world, in which education, skills and opportunity have never been more critical.

Our new strategy SGS 2031: Get Future Ready sets out the role we want to play in addressing those challenges. It sets a very clear ambition.

We want SGS to be recognised as a place where lives are changed and where our students experience brilliant things every day.

We want our students to leave fully equipped with the qualifications, skills and resilience needed to thrive in the workplace and life. And we want employers to recognise the kitemark of quality that SGS delivers for their current and future employees.

The Chief Strategy Officer role is a critical part of ensuring we deliver on the promise of that strategy.

This is a brand new role, reporting directly to me as CEO & Principal, reflecting the centrality of the role to our future direction. You will be responsible for turning strategy into action, shaping long-term impact, driving organisational alignment behind our goals, and ensuring that SGS leads the way in supporting our communities to prosper.

This role needs somebody who can lead with clarity and dynamism, working closely with external stakeholders to position SGS as a leading voice in local and national skills development; with leadership team colleagues to ensure a cohesive and performance-focused culture; and with our students to ensure their voice is always the first thing we look to.

You may have deep experience in FE, or you may never have worked in the sector before. Your sectoral experience matters less than your desire to make a difference, and your ability to lead and work closely with others to deliver a more strategic approach to everything we do.

We are fortunate to have a deeply committed and highly skilled workforce at SGS.

My commitment is to make sure that everyone who works here feels empowered and supported to make the difference we all want to see.

We want SGS to be a place of choice for our staff as well as our students. We want to be a place where colleagues enjoy their work, see their impact and stretch their own careers with the same level of ambition that we apply to our students.

So if you are passionate about the role that education plays in setting up our communities for success, if you are driven to make a difference and if you are excited by the opportunity to be part of a forward-thinking and ambitious organisation then SGS College could be the place for you.

David Withey
CEO & College Principal



[Find out more](#)

THE ROLE

Chief Strategy Officer

What you'll do:

- Lead the implementation of the SGS 2031 Strategy, ensuring disciplined delivery across the College to achieve our strategic goals.
- Drive cross-college transformation, including organisational innovation and key change programmes that sets the College up for the future.
- Build a strong culture of strategic thinking, data-driven decision making and continuous improvement across the College.
- Monitor organisational performance, identifying risks, opportunities and emerging trends within the education and skills landscape.
- Lead engagement with key employers and sector bodies to ensure an in-depth understanding of employer skills needs and position the College as a critical partner in delivering work-ready, qualified employees.
- Develop and maintain influential relationships with government bodies, local authorities, and regional stakeholders and position SGS as a leading voice in regional skills development, social mobility and economic growth.
- Lead and inspire teams across Strategy Group, including those responsible for delivering our Enjoyment and Community outcomes, embedding a collaborative, ambitious and values-led leadership culture.
- Contribute to cross-college leadership as a key member of the College Leadership Team, supporting strategic planning, strong performance, good governance, and financial oversight.

This role is a brand new, top-tier position reporting to the CEO & Principal

Who we are looking for:

You will bring:

- Proven senior leadership experience with a track record of implementing organisational strategy at scale.
- A strategic and innovative mindset with the ability to analyse complex environments, spot emerging trends and translate insight into action.
- Comfort driving change, managing performance, challenging convention and embracing digital transformation.
- Demonstrated experience of leading collaboratively in a large-scale and highly integrated organisation.
- Outstanding ability to engage, influence and build relationships and the most senior levels of organisations including employers, government and national bodies.
- Exceptional communication skills with the ability to inspire large teams, engage boards and present complex ideas with clarity and conviction.
- A genuine commitment to social purpose, inclusion and the transformative power of education.

While a background in education would be welcome, it isn't a prerequisite. What matters is your ability to lead strategically, influence boldly, work collaboratively and deliver with purpose.



SGS COLLEGE

SGS College is one of the largest and most diverse further education providers in the South West of England, delivering high-quality education and training to thousands of students each year. We are proud to serve our communities across South Gloucestershire, Bristol, and the surrounding areas, offering a broad curriculum that spans academic, vocational, technical and professional pathways.

At the heart of SGS College is a simple but powerful belief: education changes lives. Every course, every lesson and every interaction is designed to help students unlock their potential, build confidence and progress into further study, skilled employment or higher education.

We are a college built on inclusion, ambition and opportunity. Our students reflect a wide range of ages, backgrounds and aspirations from school leavers taking their first steps into vocational training, to adults returning to education, to apprentices already embedded in the workplace and developing their careers.

That same commitment to inclusion shapes how we work as an employer. SGS College is proud to be a Disability Confident employer, a signatory to the Bristol Women in Business Charter and holds a Menopause Friendly accreditation. These commitments reflect the way we recruit, develop and support our staff. We actively work to remove barriers, foster a sense of belonging and ensure that every colleague feels valued, respected and able to perform at their best.



WE'RE A PROUD SIGNATORY



Accredited 2026

BRISTOL WOMEN IN BUSINESS CHARTER

Our staff are central to our mission. Across teaching, support and professional services roles, our teams work collaboratively to create a safe, supportive and inspiring environment where students can thrive. We want SGS to be a place of choice for our workforce, a place where colleagues enjoy their work, see their impact and develop their own careers with ambition.



GET FUTURE READY

SGS has set out an ambitious new strategy, SGS 2031, focused on the outcomes we are working to achieve: Community, Achievement, Readiness and Enjoyment (CARE). These outcomes define our priorities and shape everything we do.

We are clear that SGS College can and will play a major role in addressing the social and economic challenges facing our communities, from technological change in the workplace to young people disengaging from education, training and employment. Our ambition stretches beyond being a good college; we want SGS to be recognised as a place where lives are changed.

None of this is possible without our people. We are fortunate to have a deeply committed and highly skilled workforce and our strategy commits to maintaining a college culture that is empowering, ambitious and rooted in trust, a place of choice for our workforce as much as our students.

We want colleagues to enjoy their work, see their impact, and stretch their own careers with the same level of ambition we apply to our students.



[Click to view our SGS Strategy 2031](#)

Community

Achievement

Readiness

Enjoyment

CAMPUS & FACILITIES

SGS College operates across a network of modern campuses located throughout South Gloucestershire and Bristol. Each site is purposefully designed to support high-quality teaching, learning and training, with facilities that reflect the needs of industry and the communities we serve.

Our multi-campus structure enables us to deliver a wide range of academic, vocational, and professional programmes, including A Levels, technical and vocational qualifications, apprenticeships, higher education and specialist provision in areas such as construction, engineering, sport, creative industries, health and social care and digital skills.

Each campus has its own specialist identity, allowing students to access environments tailored to their chosen pathway. This ensures students are supported in developing both academic knowledge and practical, job-ready skills in settings that closely mirror real working environments.



Our campuses are inclusive, safe and welcoming environments where both students and staff are supported to thrive. They provide the infrastructure needed for innovative teaching, collaborative working and high-quality delivery.



Across SGS College, we are proud to provide industry-standard facilities that enhance the learning experience.

These include fully equipped workshops, engineering and construction bays, professional salons, digital and IT suites, performing arts studios, music and media production spaces and high-quality sports and fitness facilities.



Alongside this, our campuses offer modern classrooms, collaborative learning zones, and dedicated student support and wellbeing spaces.



These facilities are designed to replicate real-world settings wherever possible, helping students build confidence, technical competence, and employability skills.



By learning in professional-standard environments, students are better prepared for progression into employment, apprenticeships or higher education.

"Students value the high-quality facilities available to them and treat their teachers and peers with mutual respect."

Ofsted

We continue to invest in the development and improvement of our estates to ensure they remain modern, accessible and fit for purpose whilst meeting the evolving needs of students and employers.

LIFE AT SGS

At SGS, we believe a great workplace is about more than just the job itself. It's about feeling supported, included and inspired to grow, both professionally and personally. That's why we invest in opportunities and initiatives that help our people thrive and are committed to building a culture where everyone feels valued.



Family First

SGS College offers some of the most generous family leave provisions in the sector. From 18 weeks full pay on maternity and adoption leave, to paid neonatal, fertility treatment and kinship care support, we go well beyond what most employers offer.



Grow with Us

The SGS Ambition Academy is our bold, future-focused approach to professional development. Designed for colleagues at all levels, it brings together continuous professional development, leadership programmes and coaching to support growth across the college.



Work Happy

Enjoyment is one of our four strategic outcomes. We want SGS to be a place where colleagues genuinely enjoy their work, feel connected to their community and are proud of the difference they make every day.



Rest & Recharge

We provide highly competitive annual leave entitlements with 39 days for teaching staff, 35 for managers and 25 rising to 30 for corporate staff, plus a guaranteed two-week Christmas closure for everyone. A holiday buy scheme is also available allowing employees to purchase up to 5 additional days of annual leave.

COMMUNITY GROUPS

At SGS, we believe a truly great place to work is one where every voice is heard and every person belongs. Our staff-led groups including the LGBTQ+ Staff Working Group and REACH, our Racial Equality and Cultural Heritage group, actively shape a more inclusive college for everyone.



LGBTQIA+ at SGS

Our LGBTQIA+ Staff Working Group provides a space to connect, celebrate and drive meaningful change. As proud partners of Bristol Pride, we are committed to ensuring that acceptance and celebration are at the heart of our diverse community of staff and students.



REACH Group

The Racial Equality and Cultural Heritage (REACH) staff group's aim is to promote the College's strategy to provide a more equal, diverse and inclusive environment for all. We also have an Inclusion Committee led by the College's Vice Principal who meets regularly.



Sustainability Committee

SGS College has a vision to become one of the most sustainable colleges in the country by 2030, aligned to our Mission statement and the Department for Education's (DfE) Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy (2021).



ADVANCE Group

Our ADVANCE group champions accessibility, neurodiversity and diversity across SGS College. ADVANCE focuses on creating inclusive spaces and setting impactful goals for staff with physical and neurological conditions.

REWARDS & BENEFITS

At SGS College, our people are at the heart of everything we achieve. That's why we are committed to creating a workplace where colleagues feel valued, supported, empowered and inspired to thrive.

We believe in investing in our staff professionally and personally, providing an inclusive culture, meaningful development opportunities and wellbeing support that enables everyone to achieve their full potential.

From flexible working and wellbeing initiatives to career development and recognition programmes, our commitment is simple: to ensure SGS College is a rewarding and supportive place to build your career.

Financial Benefits



Generous annual leave & holiday buy scheme



Family leave



Teachers' & Local Government pension schemes



Pay progression opportunities



Staff discounts, vouchers & salary sacrifice schemes



Cycle to work scheme



Tech Scheme



Subsidised catering

Professional Development



Continuous professional development



Discounted college courses plus £250 annual learning voucher



Six development days annually (academic staff)



Dedicated Teacher Development Unit

"SGS genuinely values work-life balance and the annual leave entitlement really reflects that."



Wellbeing Support



Flexible and hybrid working options



SGS Thrive Wellbeing Commitment



Free counselling and coaching support



Gym discounts & Cycle to Work scheme



Mental health first aiders and mindfulness sessions



Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)



Dental Plans & Health Cash plans

Community & Culture



Inclusive staff networks & community groups



Staff recognition awards



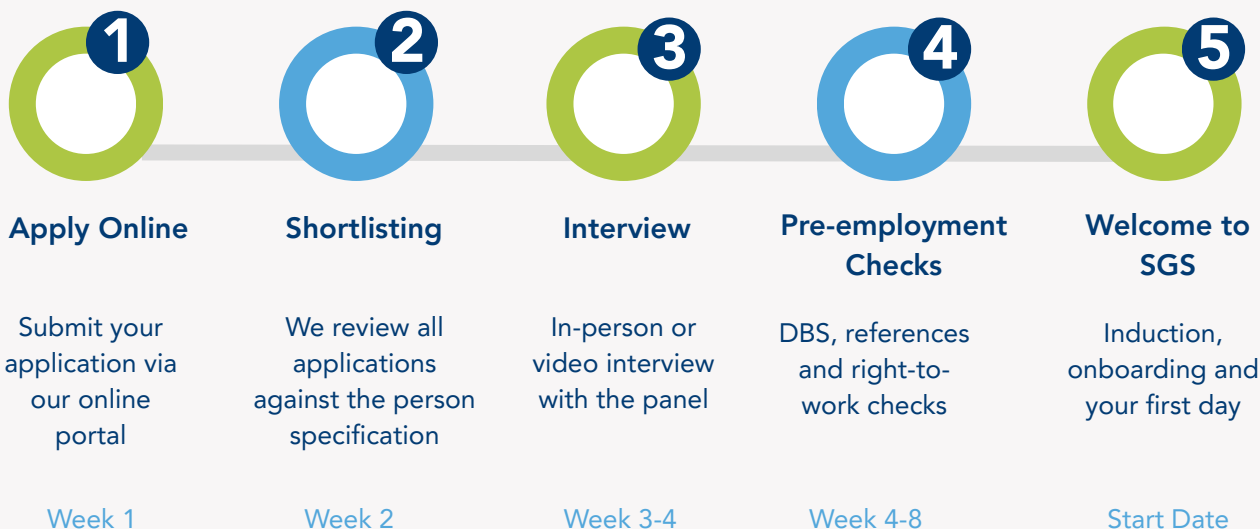
Celebration and social events



Employee voice forums shaping college improvements

"I truly enjoy coming to work, there's a real sense of support, energy and purpose at SGS."

Application Process



1 **Apply Online**
All applications are made through our online portal. You'll need to complete a standard application form, we don't accept CVs alone. This ensures a fair, consistent review process for every candidate. Ensure your supporting statement directly addresses the person specification in the job description.

2 **Shortlisting**
Our recruitment team and hiring managers review all applications against the published person specification. We aim to notify all applicants of the outcome within two weeks of the closing date. Shortlisted candidates are contacted directly by the recruiting manager with interview details.

3 **Interview**
Interviews are typically held in person on campus, a chance to meet the team and see where you'd be working. Depending on the role, you may be asked to deliver a short presentation or teaching observation. We'll share the format and any task in advance so you can prepare confidently.

4 **Pre-employment Checks**
All roles at SGS College are subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks including an enhanced DBS check, two professional references and confirmation of your right to work in the UK. As a college working with young people and vulnerable adults, safeguarding is our highest priority.

5 **Welcome to SGS**
Your induction begins before day one, you'll receive a welcome pack, IT setup instructions and your first-day programme in advance. All new staff complete our SGS induction programme, including safeguarding training, campus orientation and introductions to your team and key college systems.

Are you future ready?



www.sgscol.ac.uk/jobs

