

BARNET AND SOUTHGATE COLLEGE: STUDIO – BOOSTING PATHWAYS INTO WORK

Barnet and Southgate College saw that students did not have adequate access to pathways linking education into the creative and media industries, and felt there was a need to address this to strengthen learners' sector understanding and work-readiness – as well as to deliver in-demand skills.

In response, they have launched new creative media courses as part of their STUDIO project, using leading-edge equipment and facilities to allow learners to train in industry-standard environments. This better prepares students for the transition into the working environment relating to their sector skills and insight.

Input from industry experts informed the design of learning spaces and the procurement of leading-edge equipment across TV, film, sound, games, VFX and animation production. The College is currently building a network of industry advisers, partners, and trainers to support course delivery.

The STUDIO project comprises of two main phases. The planning stage included industry input into the design of the new studio spaces and specification of the production equipment; and the implementation stage includes kit installation and training, followed by the September 2024 launch of new courses. An industry partner, Sky, is providing two-week placements at their West London group headquarters – where successful students will experience various roles across a live broadcast studio before choosing an area in which to develop more detailed understanding. This hands-on experience will provide students with invaluable insight into how to develop their creative and technical skills as they plan their careers. Another partner, NextGen Skills Academy, is supporting the development of the new games, VFX and animation facilities alongside course delivery which ensures leading-edge skills outcomes.

STUDIO is already providing additional learning and partnership opportunities, ahead of the new courses launching in September 2024. The course has capacity for 50 new learners in year one, and aims to have additional enrolments in its second year. Tutors attended an industry-led day in May, which generated ideas on how to enhance the course curriculum using the new STUDIO facilities and equipment. Partnerships are being developed with Barnet TV and other local organisations. The new courses are aligned with the creative & media T-Levels, also launching in September 2024; and enrolment across courses is under way. Ongoing industry engagement is planned from Autumn 2024, and the STUDIO facilities will be available for use by industry and community partners.