

ESTATES STRATEGY 2022–2027

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INTRODUCTION

I am excited to present the CCEA Estates strategy 2022–2027 which will be an essential enabler in supporting CCEA in achieving its ambitions.

The Estates Strategy is a key facet to the Corporate Services offering providing people working in CCEA with everything they need to do their job well.

It is essential that we provide an enriching, inviting environment for all our staff that promotes diversity and inclusion in the space we share and cultivates the excellent public services required by our stakeholders.

Public Services in Northern Ireland face a difficult and uncertain financial environment. This strategy recognises these challenges and endeavours to achieve value for money through efficient use of space and innovative use of technology. It also ensures that CCEA complies with all legislative requirements and protects any public sector investment in the estate.

CCEA's Executive Team is embracing the opportunity presented from the organisation's pandemic disruption response and is exploring new ways of working. Our Estates strategy has been planned to provide effective space to support this.

Leah Scott

Interim Chief Executive



WHO WE ARE

HOW WE OPERATE

Governance

CCEA is the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment comprising a Chairperson plus 13 non-executive board members appointed by the Department of Education. Council members provide a wide range of expertise with representatives from education, industry and commerce.

Executive

The Council is supported in its work by an Executive Team led by the Chief Executive and is currently organised into three broad areas:

- Finance and Corporate Services Directorate
- Education Directorate (including Curriculum, Assessment and Examinations)
- Regulation

Our work is expansive in supporting the curriculum, developing resources, setting assessments and examinations and in awarding qualifications. Delivering upon our mandate helps young people through their education and/or vocational journey from pre-school through to 19 years of age, Special Education Needs and Gaeloideachas (Irish medium).

OUR MISSION

CCEA's Mission is to enable the full potential of all learners to be achieved and recognised.

OUR VISION

CCEA is recognised as a leading authority on Curriculum, Assessment and Qualifications.

We deliver a modern curriculum supported by assessment that provides learners with qualifications and skills to embrace the opportunities and challenges of a changing world with confidence.



OVER
55,000
STUDENTS
YEARLY
FOR GCSE
AND A LEVEL



OVER 10,000 EXAM
AND SUPPORT
MATERIALS
FOR SCHOOLS
AND STUDENTS

Our refreshed strategic themes from the Draft CCEA Corporate Plan 2022–2025 are:

- **Curriculum**
Proactively monitoring and providing guidance on the curriculum.
- **Assessment**
Providing high-quality assessment arrangements that meet the needs of learners, schools, the system and other stakeholders.
- **Qualifications**
Offering a range of high-quality qualifications that recognise knowledge, understanding and skills to support progression and lifelong learning.
- **Regulation**
Maintaining public confidence in the integrity and validity of all regulated qualifications used in Northern Ireland.
- **People and Partnerships**
Developing mutually beneficial partnerships across public sector bodies, schools and industry.

OUR VALUES



ESTATES STRATEGY

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Our buildings shape the experiences of our staff and visitors. They are invaluable elements of our sense of place and purpose.

The facilities serve the 316 fulltime staff, 60 people on fixed term contracts and some 20,000 visitors.

The estate has evolved over 25 years in response to changing organisational needs and demands. Our current estate is divided across three main sites within the greater Belfast area and consists of predominantly leased office accommodation.

Current facilities present significant challenges in fulfilling our responsibilities in a way that is sustainable for the future.

This strategy provides our vision to make changes in line with aspirations to modernise and evolve for the next 15 years.

OVERVIEW OF CURRENT ESTATE

- Encompasses three buildings with a gross area of 6,120 square metres.
- Since 2016 we have invested £324,000 financed from capital and revenue and grants from the Department of Education. Projects are small scale and only inescapable projects presenting major risks are funded.

Capital Spend

16/17 £'000	17/18 £'000	18/19 £'000	19/20 £'000	20/21 £'000	21/22 £'000
84	124	10	45	39	22

Supporting New Ways of Working

CCEA's Executive Team is embracing the opportunity presented from pandemic disruption to provide flexible working for staff long-term and launched a Hybrid Working Pilot on 25 April 2022, to assess the feasibility of new ways of working and permanently moving to a hybrid model, depending on roles and responsibilities.

CCEA Management is considering options for the future which will require a more modern workplace to support future ways of working. This will represent a fundamental cornerstone to plan a future estate.

Challenges

- Estate is more than 25 years old and buildings require substantial investment to cater for future workplace needs.
- Internal layout of premises is largely comprised of cellular offices which does not lend itself to an agile work environment.
- Staff Welfare facilities are not fit for purpose.
- While the current estate has been adapted to facilitate reasonable adjustments to accommodate people living with disabilities, the internal layout makes it difficult to access.
- As an arm's length body of the Department of Education, CCEA is limited by public sector regulations in relation to office accommodation standards as set out by the Department of Finance. There are opportunities to modernise as set out in the Department of Finance's document 'New Ways of Working' which standardises space standards. This also constrains the scope of a future estate and CCEA must carefully plan future estate requirements in the context of its particular business needs.

Funding

CCEA has operated in a challenging financial environment for a number of years.

Funding opportunities in the Education sector are limited as the sector continues to experience increasing demands on resources.

Additionally, the current landlords have not invested sufficiently in properties resulting in a dated and limited offering.

Looking ahead, increased inflationary pressure is also likely to put increasing financial pressure on facilities and services.



Sustainable Environmental Impact

The outdated energy infrastructure, age and condition of the current premises limits CCEA's ability to fulfil ambitions to minimise its carbon impact on the environment. Energy costs and related carbon charges are likely to increase much faster than CCEA's income streams and are beyond our direct control.

Usage	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	% difference from 2019–20 to 2020–21	% difference from 2020–21 to 2021–22
Electricity (KWh)	654,437	296,358	320,206	55% decrease	8% increase
Gas (M3)	25,526	20,591	*114,450 (kWh)	19% decrease	*47% decrease
Oil (Litres)	61,446	77,237	68,823	26% increase	11% decrease

Connecting CCEA

Improve connectivity and access for staff and visitors within the CCEA sites for ease of access and to reduce our carbon footprint.

It is essential that the location of a future estate should be central to support easy access for staff and visitors.

The current location makes using public transport a challenge as it is not close to central train or bus networks which means most staff and visitors currently drive to CCEA.

A future facility should also encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport including walking and cycling.





PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

The strategic vision of the Estates Strategy is: 'By 2027 the CCEA Estate will provide a modern, appropriate and inspiring working environment for all our staff and visitors to connect and empower them to deliver on aims and priorities'.

The estate and its facilities must continue to plan to meet current and future needs of the organisation, supporting the delivery of key organisational priorities.

Our vision for the CCEA estate and the landscape in which it is set is that it should be of a quality that befits an organisation seen as Northern Ireland's leading awarding body.

This vision for the estate is consistent with the strategic objectives outlined in the Draft CCEA Corporate Plan 2020–2022 and is designed to help deliver on them.

Additionally, CCEA's Draft Corporate Plan states that: CCEA is seen as a great place to work and its people are its strength, and that we will 'look after our people and attract talent in a new hybrid working landscape by providing modern facilities and opportunities for personal and professional development with a focus on enhancing digital skills'.

Estate Needs

The estate needs to be functional, welcoming, pleasant and attractive in order to:

- Support world-class education services.
- Be secure.
- Promote CCEA's achievements and brand.
- Provide a stimulating environment for working.
- Contribute to the quality of the experience we offer our staff and visitors.
- Be aesthetically pleasing.
- Meet the highest standards of environmental sustainability.
- Engage the public at large with the work of CCEA.

Opportunities

There are several significant opportunities presented for our staff, stakeholders and public at large by delivering our vision for a modern CCEA estate.

This vision supports CCEA's People Strategy and Digital Strategy and should consider the culture and aims of the organisation.



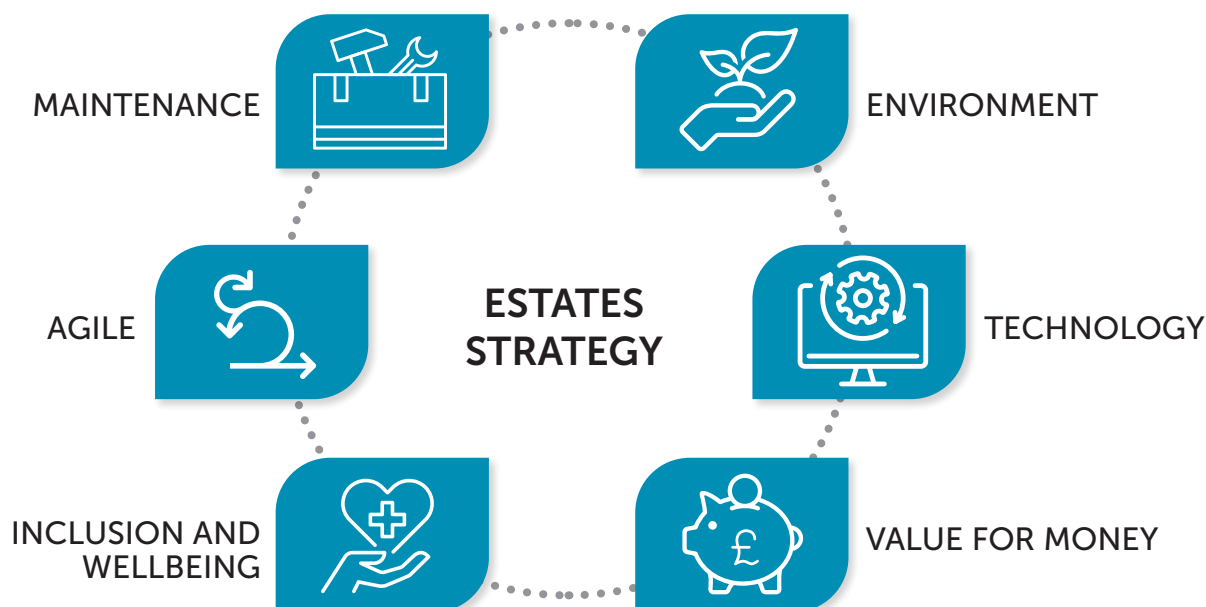
Opportunities include the ability to:

- Bring the organisation together on one site, ideally within the Greater Belfast area with access to the main transport links including bus/train and motorways.*
- Provide flexible office accommodation that supports the need to re-configure, reshape and reform how people work post-pandemic with a focus on wellbeing and social space.
- Offer a fully inclusive space, complying with the Disability Discrimination Act now and into the future.
- Allow for the greater digitisation of services.
- Reduce car travel, parking and carbon footprint.*
- The development of a Building Management System to allow integration, automation and optimisation of services that manage building(s) environment.

* This was identified as a key requirement by staff in the consultation exercise conducted in early 2022.

* While the new location should provide some staff and visitor car parking, the Digital Strategy should facilitate less travel to meetings, reducing the need for expansive visitor provision.

STRATEGIC THEMES



The following Strategic Themes have been set to support the delivery of the Estates Strategy. The strategic themes will be underpinned by all of CCEA's values and, in particular, quality and innovation.

We will:

1. Ensure accommodation is agile, fit for purpose and flexible to meet the needs of our business.
2. Provide a safe and welcoming space which cultivates an inclusive workplace to support the wellbeing of the people working there, with staff health, safety and wellbeing being the primary consideration in all estate activities.
3. Provide an efficient and value-for-money estate which is affordable.
4. Ensure the building makes best use of technology to ensure users enjoy an optimal experience.
5. Respond proactively to environmental and sustainability challenges and opportunities.
6. Provide a responsive and efficient planned maintenance approach by developing a comprehensive and strategic estate master plan which organises long-term maintenance and capital investment in a way that supports planned growth.

AGILE



1. Ensure accommodation is agile, fit for purpose, and flexible to meet the needs of our business.

We will:

- Provide all parts of CCEA with flexible accommodation which is of a quality, size and functionality appropriate to the activities to be delivered and which supports CCEA's vision while conforming to wider public service standards.
- Provide office provision that is agile and flexible to make hybrid/agile working a success.
- Undertake a space utilisation study and put in place findings for best practices recommendations.
- Provide accommodation which empowers staff to maximise productivity and is seen to be offering value for money.
- Provide accommodation that will support the organisation's workforce plan for years 1, 3 & 5 years as outlined in the People Strategy.
- Utilise the estate to improve inter-relationships and collaboration between directorates and teams through physical co-location, in order to facilitate interdisciplinary work within and across structures.
- Ensure the most efficient use of space and utilise additional capacity to meet growth spikes and project-based pressures.
- Review space use and advise on the appropriate capacity.
- Effectively utilise condition data to inform prioritisation of short, medium and long-term works.
- Undertake projects to provide the necessary space and facilities to develop required specialism(s).
- Conduct proactive review of work practices post pandemic and develop facilities to accommodate changing needs.

Key Measures of Success and Impact:

- Successfully met space demands during peak periods.
- Measured interdisciplinary and collaborative working.
- Space that supports new flexible ways of working targets to ensure optimum usage.
- Acting upon recommendations of the space utilisation study.



INCLUSION AND WELLBEING

2. Provide a safe and welcoming space which cultivates an inclusive workplace to support the wellbeing of the people working there with staff health, safety and wellbeing being the primary consideration in all estate activities.

We will:

- Promote equality, diversity and social responsibility.
- Promote the development and advancement of underrepresented groups in the workplace.
- Encourage participation of those with disabilities, visible and/or hidden.
- Endeavour to embrace the Menopause in the workplace.
- Encourage a work-life balance in the hybrid working pilot.
- Place employee wellbeing at the centre of our business.
- Ensure that our culture, leadership and people management are the bedrock on which to build a fully integrated wellbeing approach.
- Implement workplace wellbeing practices that address psychosocial as well as physical aspects of health and wellbeing.

Key Measures of Success and Impact:

- Physical safety – safe working practices, safe equipment, personal safety training.
- Working environment – ergonomically designed working areas, open and inclusive culture.
- Building audit and staff satisfaction on inclusivity.
- Building discussions at Disability and Equality forums.



VALUE FOR MONEY



3. Provide an efficient and value-for-money estate which is affordable.

After the cost for human resources, the financial commitment for the provision and maintenance of the estate is the highest in any organisation. Therefore, it is important that the estate provides the optimal physical environment in an efficient manner for the staff who are expected to work within the facilities.

We will:

- Consider a capital programme to support the renewal of future accommodation capacity by 2026 (end of current leases).
- Manage the current CCEA estate constraints which render it not ideally suited to requirements.

The capital investment and maintenance programme will be informed by CCEA priorities and objectives for services to be provided and help ensure buildings are adaptable to remain viable in a continually modernising environment.

Key Measures of Success and Impact:

- Reduced estate running costs in line with budget expectations.
- Proactive reduction of utility costs in line with ISO environmental targets.

TECHNOLOGY



4. Ensure the building makes best use of technology to ensure that users enjoy an optimal experience.

We will:

- Coordinate, review and update current arrangements for Building Management Systems to better manage the needs of building users.
- Consider users' perceptions of the managed environment and balance controls by seasons.
- Review billing information and system data concurrently.
- Install additional hardware to automate control functions.
- Consider facilities' booking arrangements to ensure efficient use of space.

Key Measures of Success and Impact:

- More comfortable and ambient working environment measured by user satisfaction.
- More efficient use of space and reduced administration time for bookings.
- Business Management System checks within agreed specifications.



ENVIRONMENT

5. Respond proactively to environmental and sustainability challenges and opportunities.

We will:

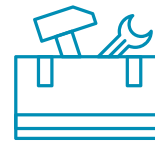
- Encourage stakeholders to develop a vision, values, awareness and an understanding of sustainability and its core drivers.
- Continue to reduce energy use and, where possible, consider sustainable energy providers.
- Continue to reduce carbon emissions.
- Enable CCEA to realise the environmental value of waste minimisation and resource efficiency.
- Provide eco-friendly access and public transport for CCEA staff and visitors. Working with the local authority, transport providers and other agencies we will develop safe, green and accessible transport routes to buildings.
- Seek to integrate a consideration of new and existing environmental issues into all estate related business activities.
- Continue to reduce the consumption of primary raw materials (including fossil fuels, water and energy) and seek to enhance the contribution of energy efficiency measures, recyclable components and renewables to reduce carbon footprint.
- Maintain sound long-term waste management strategies to actively promote and reduce overall waste production and increase the recycled component of the waste stream, both internally and amongst its customers and suppliers.

Key Measures of Success and Impact:

- Works have and will be planned and undertaken with environmental consideration.
- Incumbent specialist contractors are required to inform of regulatory changes to environmental and sustainable practices.
- Procurement is environmentally sustainable following set parameters for purchasing such as providing equipment of minimally required energy standards which is ethically sourced.
- Systems, occupancy and comfort levels are constantly monitored to dynamically manage use of energy.
- Automated energy management systems are programmed and provide failsafe timing for systems.
- Environment management systems, encompassing waste, conform to ISO14001* and are audited externally on a yearly basis.
- Carbon footprint is reduced.

**ISO14001 specifies the requirements for an environmental management system that an organisation can use to enhance its environmental performance.*

MAINTENANCE



6. Provide a responsive and efficient planned maintenance approach by developing a comprehensive and strategic estate master plan which organises long-term maintenance and capital investment in a way that supports planned growth.

We will:

- Develop a five-year rolling estates and capital works plan.
- Undertake a robust regime of planned maintenance where:
 - » Proactive checks are planned with information recorded and logged on the appropriate system for action.
 - » Complaints and information from building users are verified and acted upon in a timely manner.
 - » Plant and environmental controls are monitored, altered and regulated for most appropriate response to conditions at any given time.
- Optimise estate budget to continue to enhance estate and buildings in line with curriculum and strategic priorities.
- Ensure that reactive work is undertaken in a timely and effective manner.
- Review plant and equipment in a timely manner.
- Benchmark key norms/data to ensure effective use of estate.
- Utilise specialist existing knowledge when required.

Key Measures of Success and Impact:

- Plan aligns with forecast growth in provision and drives estates capital and maintenance financial modelling.
- Fixed plant and equipment are serviced and maintained at industry-approved intervals.
- Plant and equipment are working across the broadest range available.
- Records held can be audited to demonstrate compliance of current regulations.
- Plant and equipment provide all functionality within expected lifespan.
- Ensure, via planned maintenance, that failure of plant and equipment is not a regular occurrence, and, should such a failure occur, that it is not as a result of lack of maintenance or neglect.
- Improved timelines for Inter-departmental transactions.
- Reactive works are undertaken as soon as possible to allow spaces to be used with minimal educational impact.
- Benchmarking of key data against CCEA historical and sector norms.
- Sequencing of activities which respond effectively to condition data.

THE ROADMAP TO SUCCESS

HOW WE PLAN TO DELIVER

In application of the Estates Strategy, we will provide a coordinated and consistent approach.

We will:

- 1**

Develop a comprehensive and strategic estate master plan which organises our long-term maintenance and capital investment in a way that supports our planned growth. Refine the CCEA established plan for medium to long-term asset management to align curriculum demands with investment in property and plant by:

 - » Reviewing information from previous years and similar Estates in order to benchmark progress and practice.
 - » Evaluating financial and non-financial implications at all points of work to ensure that plans are deliverable and value for money.
- 2**

Hold and administrate an effective and appropriate record-keeping system by effective use of technology to measure and monitor progress.
- 3**

Ensure all compliance and regulation works are undertaken at the appropriate time. Plan and sequence work to minimise educational impact.
- 4**

Foster a shift in focus from reactive works to planned maintenance. Respond dynamically to any reactive issues by working in partnership with all teams across CCEA.
- 5**

Provide the right level of skills within the team to undertake as many duties as reasonable and attract, retain and develop an excellent, multiskilled workforce.





ANNEX A: IDENTIFIED ESTATE DEVELOPMENTS (AS AT MARCH 2021)

We have an ambitious ongoing programme to develop our physical spaces. For the life of this strategy, we will support these proposals and programme(s) from feasibility through to project completion and post-project review. CCEA will effectively utilise its condition data to inform the prioritisation of short, medium, and long-term works.

Estates projects either underway or in early proposal stages include:

Short-Term Considerations (completion within the next 12 months)

- Boiler pumps

Medium-Term Consideration (Completion within the 12 months plus to 24 months)

- Consider all options available for new modern accommodation to meet organisation's needs now and in the future.

Longer-Term Considerations (completion envisaged over 24 months plus timeframe)

- Complete a review of organisation's future accommodation needs and secure approval to implement most suitable option in a timely manner.

