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# Assignment Brief

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**Director of IT**

**Oaklands College**

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September 2023

**DODD PARTNERS**

— BOARD & EXECUTIVE SEARCH —

[www.doddpartners.com](http://www.doddpartners.com)

## About Oaklands College

Oaklands College is a large further education college in Hertfordshire with more than 7,500 students. Established in 1921, the college has a proud heritage in providing responsive, transformational education set across three main campuses in Welwyn Garden City, St Albans and Borehamwood. Throughout its rich history, Oaklands has challenged and supported its students, providing them with the knowledge and skills to achieve their individual ambitions and enabling them to make their own contributions to the wider community. Oaklands has always expected the best for and from its students.

Oaklands College offers a wide range of learning opportunities, offering courses across a diverse range of subjects at different levels, ranging from vocational courses with strong links to employers through to elite sports, the arts and a wide variety of A Levels. The college is nationally recognised for its outstanding provision



for learners with mild and severe learning difficulties. Importantly, Oaklands provides a wonderful community that drives aspiration and provides support and opportunities for its students in equal measure so that every individual is able to reach their full potential.

### The Future

As the college begins its next 100 years, it is ideally placed to respond to current challenges and opportunities, including the need for a high quality, career-focused further education system. The college is well

placed to move from being a locally significant and valued learning community college to one which is recognised at wider regional and national levels, with the potential to make an international contribution to an outward-looking and outward-reaching global Britain.

Oaklands College is aligned with national education and skills policies to break down the artificial barriers between learning that is traditionally referred to as 'academic' and 'vocational', whilst promoting parity of esteem across all pathways. The college aligns both its curriculum offer and wider support to learners with the aims and priorities of Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, its sub-boards and its Skills and Employment Strategy. Identified regional priority and growth sectors include Science and Technology, Creative, Business, Engineering, Construction and Health and Social Care.

The college's ambition is to be the most respected and aspirational brand that stands for innovation, integrity, collaboration and above all quality of provision. This will be achieved through a resolute focus on the quality of teaching and learning, a razor-sharp focus on the student experience, innovation of curriculum and an ongoing investment in the college estate.

Oaklands strong values and ethical approach will be the beacon of best practice and sustainability, SMART digital technology and mental health and wellbeing. In all this, the college will remain true to its origins as a welcoming, inclusive learning community, providing career changing education that supports progression and career enhancement opportunities for all.

# Mission, Visions, Values & Themes

## Mission

Prepare every learner for work, a rewarding career and life's opportunities. By treating every student as the individual they are, with care, passion and understanding in a professional, contemporary and community-focused environment they'll value and enjoy.

## Vision

By 2027 Oaklands College will be: **a sustainable educational trailblazer, inspiring our learners and our wider community to achieve their potential in a changing world!**

## Values

**Excellence and Innovation** - deliver outstanding results, sustainable careers and future leaders

**Collaborative Learning** - develop your knowledge and skills to prepare you for life and work

**Inclusion and Happiness** - celebrate the achievements and successes of all our communities

**Integrity and Accountability** - striving for the best in all we do

## Themes

In the daily life and work of Oaklands College there are embedded underlying principles which are encapsulated in four cross-cutting themes that underpin thinking and practice:

**Our commitment to sustainability and the environment**

**Our commitment to the happiness and wellbeing of our college community**

**Our commitment to digital transformation**

**Our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusivity**

For more information, please visit: [www.oaklands.ac.uk](http://www.oaklands.ac.uk) and to review our 2022–2027 strategic plan: <https://www.oaklands.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/strategic-plan-22-27-web.pdf>



# Job Specification

<b>Job Title:</b>	Director of IT
<b>Reports:</b>	Deputy Principal Finance, Resources & Planning
<b>Line management:</b>	IT Support, Network and Systems, Development and Reprographics teams
<b>Key Relationships:</b>	Director of Estates, Director of MIS and Exams, Finance Director

## Purpose

The role is to lead the strategic and operational IT agenda for Oaklands College and to develop a truly holistic smart campus that delivers against the needs of students, staff and stakeholders. The new Director of IT will build a responsive team that is respected across the organisation, with a clear vision to address the needs of IT today, whilst building the infrastructure to future proof the long-term sustainability of the college.

As the strategic IT lead for the college, you will deliver a solutions focused function through the transformation and modernisation of infrastructure, whilst leading on cybersecurity, business intelligence and defining the digital transformation agenda to progress curriculum provision and learner outcomes. Reporting to the College Deputy Principal Finance, Resources & Planning, the Director of IT must drive innovation and provide effective leadership across the IT service function.

## Key Responsibilities

- Work closely with the Deputy Principal Finance, Resources & Planning, to define the major strategic and operational IT challenges facing the college with a focus on driving operational change.
- Create, communicate and deliver the strategy for the IT function to support and enhance the college's strategic plans and objectives.
- Be responsible for, and take direct leadership of, the college's IT function whilst supporting and encouraging a culture of customer centricity and collective high performance.
- Operate with capability and foresight to enhance the IT systems, processes and standards across Oaklands College, whilst rigorously managing and mitigating risk and compliance.
- Be the college lead on Cybersecurity – responsible for the management of the college security platform
- Ensure data security remains a high priority and drive innovative thinking through the better use of evolving technology to support the college's evolution and drive efficiencies.
- Provide intelligent analytics and insight to the college that enable data-led planning and decision making.
- Proactively consider data and its implications to advise and influence effective decisions across the college.
- Create and develop a commercially relevant and responsive business partnering approach that aligns to the needs of individual college functions as well as the wider organisation.
- Bring a fresh perspective and insight to the senior leadership team, contributing to the broad agenda to lead the business effectively.
- Constructively challenge and be comfortable being challenged. Act as a sounding board and source of innovation and counsel on all IT related matters.
- Lead and further develop the IT team, acting as a coach and a role model, to be both progressive and focused from a strategic and operational standpoint as well as building strength and depth of capability.
- Work in a fast-paced, dynamic environment across multi functions with senior stakeholders to design and deliver commercially relevant operational IT projects and programmes to support an end-to-end college environment.
- Investigate and engage high quality external partners and suppliers to ensure all IT development requirements are met and are highly effective.
- Uphold Oaklands College values and use IT to influence its culture and key behaviours for future growth.
- Provide all levels of support where required for important college events such as enrolment and open events.

## Person Specification

The successful candidate will be highly accomplished from a technical perspective and importantly understand how to use technology within the context of a fast-paced, people and customer centric environment to deliver change that is relevant and cost efficient. The Director of IT will need to demonstrate a clear ability to lead, develop and promote a high performing team that is truly relevant to the needs of the college.

The successful candidate will need to be a progressive thinker, articulate communicator and inspirational leader, who can take people on a journey and shape and mould teams. They will also have strong intellect and a determination to deliver outstanding results. Furthermore, they must be able to influence as part of a senior leadership team and display leadership behaviours that are collaborative, authentic and consistent.

### Qualifications

Graduate calibre or degree qualified with a profound working knowledge of ITIL, with demonstrable evidence of continual professional development within an IT project management context.

### Essential Criteria

- Experience within senior IT leadership roles with an outstanding achievement record of true business and functional partnering, who is used to executing the whole end-to-end IT lifecycle in a customer centric and dynamic operational environment.
- Proven experience of conceiving and delivering IT strategies, aligned to an overarching organisational vision, whilst influencing strategic decisions at board level that have college-wide implications.
- Evidence of IT innovation to identify opportunities where technology can drive operational efficiencies and effectiveness.
- Demonstrable experience and success in implementing, technology-based transformation programmes in complex customer focused operations.
- Proven experience of leading high performing teams that are customer centric and highly responsive to leverage and deliver true competitive advantage.
- A proven ability to deliver change both operationally and culturally within a dynamic, diverse and complex organisation where the prime emphasis is on value add and delivering constant high quality, relevant solutions to meet college-wide needs in the right way.
- Experience and gravitas working and influencing at board levels or as part of a senior leadership team, both internally and externally, and influencing agendas beyond the IT function.
- An up-to-date knowledge of the latest thinking from a systems, technology and leadership perspective.
- Experience of aligning IT function objectives to leverage the continued strength of an organisation's brand and values.



## Personal Characteristics and Behaviours

- Highly values driven and inspirational leader, able to motivate others to deliver exceptional results in a collaborative, people centric context.
- Authentic and consistent in approach with the ability to empower others.
- Unafraid to take risks and constructively challenge the status quo with an adaptable and change orientated mindset.
- Strong collaborator and relationship builder who is a natural influencer and makes clear decisions based on data and sound commercial judgements.
- Proactive, self-motivated and pragmatic. A 'doer' as well as a thinker – strong on both strategy and implementation. Able to work conceptually as well as delivering operationally.
- Assertive and resilient with excellent communication skills; compelling, engaging and a highly inclusive manner.
- An open, non-political style and high level of personal integrity. Able to demonstrate a balance of assurance and personal humility. Works well with ambiguity and exercises sound judgment.
- An ability to work within the statutory and compliance framework, including safeguarding and its importance, within the college environment.
- A strong understanding and commitment to equality and diversity.



## Terms

### Remuneration

The remuneration for this role will be commensurate with the needs of the post.

### Annual Holidays

The annual leave entitlement is 35 days per annum, plus recognised public holidays.

### Pension Scheme

The holder of this post will have access to the Local Government Pension Scheme, a defined benefit pension.

### Relocation

The college will pay an allowance of up to £8,000 for relocation costs in line with HMRC rules, if required.

### Checks

This appointment is subject to satisfactory pre-employment references and DBS clearance.

## Timeline

The following timeline is indicative and should only be used as a guide. It may be subject to change.

Process	Date
Close for Applications	9.00am Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> September 2023
Interviews with Dodd Partners	w/c 09 <sup>th</sup> October 2023
Shortlist Meeting	w/c 09 <sup>th</sup> October 2023
Interviews with Oaklands College	w/c 16 <sup>th</sup> October 2023
Appointment Confirmation	October 2023

## How to Apply

The recruitment process is being undertaken by Dodd Partners on behalf of Oaklands College. If you wish to apply for this position, please supply the following:

- A covering letter highlighting your suitability and how you meet the essential experience within the Person Specification, along with your current remuneration details.
- A comprehensive CV setting out your career history, with responsibilities and achievements.
- All applications should be emailed to Dodd Partners at your earliest convenience to [contactus@doddpartners.com](mailto:contactus@doddpartners.com), clearly marked with reference number DP3091.

Should you wish to have an informal discussion about the role, please contact John Dodd on 07545 431 848 or 01244 738 450. Alternatively, email: [johndodd@doddpartners.com](mailto:johndodd@doddpartners.com)