



IT ALL STARTED AT
HOPWOOD

CELEBRATING
70 YEARS
OF YOUR STORIES

It All Started At Hopwood...

It's amazing to think that our college's history stretches back more than 70 years. While its name hasn't always been Hopwood Hall College, it's always served the same purpose in the community - and that's to aid people in reaching their potential and discovering their path.

If our hallowed halls could speak they'd surely dazzle you with their stories. After all, countless people have found triumph and success here since 1947. It's been an experience that's provided them with the perfect springboard to achieve some incredible feats in life.

There are those who have secured their dream job and worked in careers that most people could only fantasise about.

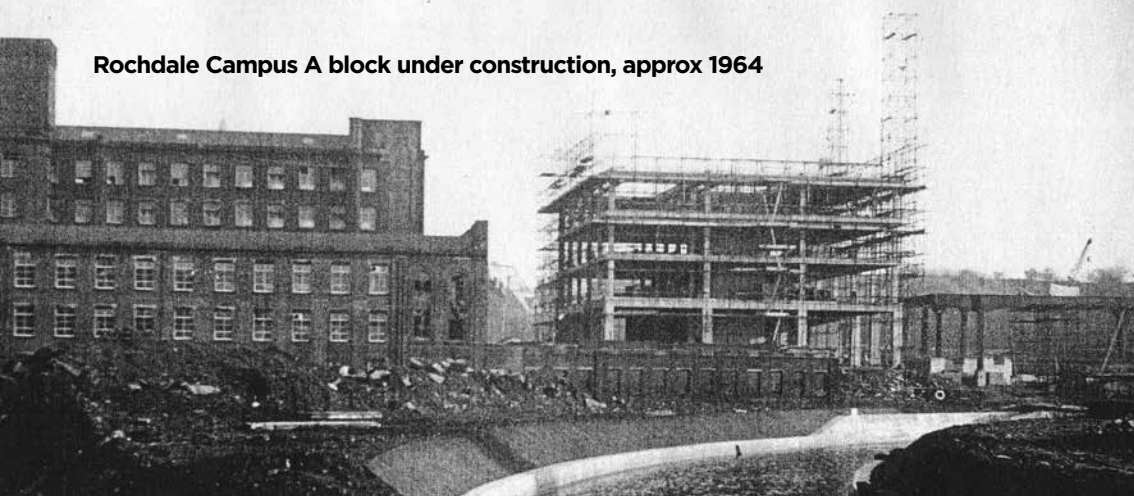
There are those who have left our classrooms and gone on to travel the globe and see the world's most awe-inspiring sights.

Finally, there are those who found enduring love and friendship that would last long after their days on campus.

It All Started At Hopwood traces these stories - from people's first days at the college to what they're doing present day. You'll hear from men and women who have reached the pinnacle of success, while at the same time never forgetting their time at Hopwood Hall College.

Let them inspire, entertain and motivate you. After all, when all's said and done your own path could look remarkably similar...

Rochdale Campus A block under construction, approx 1964



Timeline of the College Campuses

1947: The De La Salle Brothers open a Teacher Training College in the Old Hall as an affiliated college of the University of Manchester. It marks the start of a 70-year (and counting) run for providing high quality education.

1953: Our Lady's Hall of Residence is built to accommodate 80 students. This same building is now called Ashworth and is the main home of our University Centre.

1955: Cardinal Griffin Hall of Residence is built along with a new gymnasium. This same building is now called Littleborough and is home to our Hopwood Theatre.

1961: New living, teaching and administrative buildings are built for 600 students. Thousands more students continue to follow in their footsteps.

1962: The old Hopwood Hall is restored from a family home to a centre for students. This historic building can still be seen on the path to our Animal Enclosures.

1965: The Chapel, designed by Frederick Gibberd (architect of Liverpool Cathedral), is built. It remains one of the most distinctive parts of the college.

1990: Hopwood Hall College opens as a tertiary college offering A-Levels and vocational courses. Vocational routes are still offered to this day and remain more popular than ever.

1992: Hopwood Hall College is incorporated and officially opened by HRH Queen Elizabeth II on 17 July 1992. The College operates from two campuses in Rochdale and Middleton.

The Rochdale campus was formerly home to Rochdale College of Further Education, Rochdale College of Art and Rochdale Technology College, all of which merged when the College was incorporated.

2002: The Sports Arena was opened at Middleton campus by football legend, Paul Scholes at the height of his football career with Manchester United.

2006: In April Lord Tom Pendry, President of the Football Foundation, opens the Football Pavilion and Astro turf pitches at the Middleton campus.

In May the Henry West Building at the Middleton campus is officially opened by College governor Henry West.

2011: A £7.5m scheme to construct a purpose-built technology centre at the Middleton campus is completed.

2012: Animal enclosures are developed at the Middleton campus. These are now home to over 700 species, many of which are endangered. Meerkats, wallabies and alpaca now feature in the Hopwood animal family.

2014: Riverside Salon and Riverside Restaurant are developed at the Rochdale campus and open their doors to the public for the first time, giving our students invaluable experience.

2019: Hair and beauty training salons undergo a stunning transformation at Rochdale campus.

2021: A £6.1 million extension gets underway at the Technology Centre, this will help tackle the skills gap providing further training in advanced manufacturing and construction.

April 2021: Hopwood Hall College and University Centre becomes one of just 16 colleges nationally to be awarded 'transformative' government funds. This will enable the college to make significant changes to its campus at Rochdale including a state of the art teaching block.

This will allow the College to continue to provide the highest quality of education and training for many more years to come.



Middleton Campus, approx 1967



Middleton Campus, present day



Rochdale Campus, 1966



Rochdale Campus, present day

Construction of Rochdale Campus, approx 1960



The Riverside Restaurant
opens for business, 2014



The Queen officially opens
Hopwood Hall College, 1992





Interior of the Chapel,
Middleton Campus



Steve Taylor

Studied: Nursing

Years: 1982 – 1984

Post-Hopwood highlights: Managing Director and Chief Officer for Rochdale Care Organisation. Governor at Hopwood Hall College

When Steve first entered Hopwood Hall – then known as Rochdale Technical College – it marked his first steps into a rewarding career in healthcare. It’s a vocation that’s given him the opportunity to have a positive impact on countless lives.

He’s experienced many exciting twists and turns – including working in mental health care for a decade and creating healthcare models in the United States. In addition, Steve also attained an MSc in Leadership from Salford University.

Steve’s road to success was eventually followed by his daughter, who also attended the college before later securing a marketing job in Sydney.

“Have ambition! Be confident in yourself and think about the value you will bring to a role. If you’re knocked back, don’t give up!”



Frances Fielding

Studied: Leisure and Tourism

Years: 1997 – 1999

Post-Hopwood highlight: Commercial Director at Rochdale AFC

Frances was a shy teenager when she first came to Hopwood. It was a transformative experience for her and she was able to come out of her shell and seize the opportunities ahead.

This included work experience placements and the chance to study on a funded scholarship programme in Italy. Just thinking about these opportunities still brings back memories that she cherishes to this day.

A lively career would follow, working for the likes of Rochdale and Tameside Councils. These days most people will know Frances best for her role at Rochdale AFC.

Say says: “Follow your heart in your career and do what you love. Also, the friends you will make at college will likely be friends you will keep for the rest of your life, so treasure your friendships and enjoy this starting point in your career.”

First day friends...

Frances met a girl called Helen as she waited for a bus on her first day at Hopwood. It turned out that this girl was also a new student and doing the same course.

The pair struck up a friendship that day and all these years later are still close pals. It's a testament to the many ways the college can change a person's life!



Cllr Yasmin Toor

Studied: Public Services Interpreting

Years: 2001 – 2002

Post-Hopwood highlights: First female Asian councillor in Oldham. Mayoress of Oldham.

The stage was set for Yasmin to make history after leaving the college. As a mature student, many doors started to open after she achieved her qualification. This includes a role managing over 350 staff at Tameside General Hospital.

Yasmin's time at the college boosted her confidence, ultimately giving her the courage to become a radio presenter, a poet and a published author.

She's now a councillor in Oldham and also held the post of Mayoress of Oldham in 2015.

“Opportunity knocks at your door only once, please don't lose it, don't waste your time. You can achieve all your dreams, your parents' dreams for you and can become a great role model for your children by following your goals and ambitions.”



David Marshall

Studied: English, Maths and Business

Years: 1999 - 2001

Post-Hopwood highlights:

Sergeant in the RAF,
Flight Line Supervisor
for The Red Arrows.



David has enjoyed two decades in the Armed Forces, with a career that's taken him all over the world - from Afghanistan to the Falkland Islands.

He'd only just finished at Hopwood Hall when he was snapped up by the Royal Air Force. Since then he's been rising through the ranks!

The pinnacle of his career came when he was chosen to join the Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team for The Red Arrows! It marked the accumulation of years of hard work and dedication.

“Never fear failure. Use it as experience, a lesson of its own. A platform for future success! Always put maximum effort into your studies because you never know where it might take you.”



Nicola Adams

Studied: Sport

Years: 2007 – 2008

Post-Hopwood highlights: Won two gold medals at the Olympic Games

Nicola's path to the podium started at Hopwood Hall. She excelled in boxing – a skill that would eventually lead to her being the best in the world.

She picked up her first gold medal in London in 2012, before making it a double in Rio in 2016. The whole college – and the country – was cheering her on!

Most recently she made history once again when she was part as the first same-sex pair to feature on BBC's Strictly Come Dancing in 2020.

“It was all for my mum. I always promised her I was going to be the best.”



Jordan Perkins and Cara Taylor

Studied: Level 3 Animal Management

Years: 2015 - 2017 (Cara), 2016 - 2018 (Jordan)

Post-Hopwood highlights: Starting an eco-friendly dog grooming business

Great things can happen when two alumni come together - just look at Jordan and Cara! The two have formed a strong team and grown a successful business in GreenPaws Grooming.

Their courses helped boost their knowledge and confidence to the point where they could make a huge success of the venture. They've even got plans to expand and offer more services for the community.

The pair are a fantastic reminder that at Hopwood Hall, friendships can blossom to partnerships and ideas can grow into businesses.

“Both of us agree that the time at the college gave us confidence to put ourselves out into the unknown and to form good partnerships.”



Ewa Dryglewska

Studied: Level 3 Animal Management

Years: 2014 - 2016

Post-Hopwood highlight: Zookeeper at Exmoor Zoo

Ewa is a great reminder that your dream job is just around the corner when you study at Hopwood Hall. Following her time at the college - where she had the opportunity to handle and feed many different animals - she's now a zookeeper.

She credits her time at the college with giving her the 'crucial experience' needed to go into her role, as well as helping her secure a spot studying Wildlife Conservation with Zoo Biology at the University of Salford.

In the years to come, Ewa now plans to become an expert in hornbills and further set herself apart from others in the industry.

"The greatest achievement is the hand-rearing of Madagascar fody, trogons and flamingos."



Anthony Crolla

Studied: Boxing

Years: 2005 – 2007

Post-Hopwood highlights: WBA World Lightweight Champion

It was through grit and determination that Anthony Crolla rose through the ranks of the boxing world. But before he was going toe-to-toe with the best in the business, he was learning his craft at Hopwood Hall College.

After leaving the college, he would go on to rack up an impressive win-loss record and compete for some of the biggest titles in boxing. He would eventually retire in 2019 after a decorated career in the squared circle.

To this day you'll still find him reflecting on his days at the college when he posts to his legions of fans on social media.

“I had great times at the college with great teachers and coaches.”



Aitch

Studied: GCSE English

Years: 2016 – 2017

Post-Hopwood highlight: Brit Award nomination for Best New Artist

Chart-topping rapper Aitch is known for hits such as ‘Taste’, ‘Rain’ and ‘Buss Down’. These songs have been played all over the radio and racked up millions of hits on sites like YouTube and Spotify.

A man of many words, his ability to play around with such imaginative language was partly honed during his time studying English at Hopwood.

Aitch is a great example of the heights students are able to reach following their time at the college. The right course can make a person a star – and there’s no telling how bright they can shine.



Clint Boon

Studied: Art

Years: 1975 – 1976

Post-Hopwood highlights: Keyboard player for Inspiral Carpets.
Radio DJ for XS Manchester

Clint was lured to the college due to its reputation in honing people's creativity. That's exactly what happened, especially as he got vital experience using audio and visual technology.

He would eventually go on to join the Inspiral Carpets – a band that would enjoy decades of success in terms of selling records and filling up venues across the country. These days his voice is still known all across the region, only this time it's as one of the most popular presenters at XS Manchester.

“Working on the radio and being in a band like the Inspiral Carpets needs a degree of self-confidence that, for me, is completely attributable to my experiences at Hopwood Hall.”



Michaela Corder

Studied: Level 3 Hairdressing

Years: 2006 – 2008

Post-Hopwood highlights: Owner of The Bamford Hair Company

Michaela's time at the college didn't just land her a job immediately after finishing her course, but also set her up for a thrilling journey in life - one that's taken her across the seven seas and then into the role of business owner.

She notably landed a job as a hairstylist on a cruise ship, docking in places like Rome. After successfully making a 'splash' in the hair and beauty industry, she returned to Manchester to pursue roles at places like Toni and Guy.

Michaela now owns her own salon and is rightfully proud of everything she's achieved.

“Hopwood Hall was a perfect supportive start to my career. They have also continued to support me and that's why I continue to support them.”



Vanessa Beesley

Studied: Level 3 Animal Management

Years: 2015 - 2017

Post-Hopwood highlight: Started her own dog grooming business
'Marley's Makeovers'

Vanessa knew she wanted to work with animals, but it wasn't until the college provided a work placement in dog grooming that she decided on the exact career to go into.

She already had an entrepreneurial flair and – once she had the qualification to go with it – she was primed to open her own business and become her own boss.

Vanessa has high hopes for what the future holds and has never second-guessed the route she's taken in life.

"I really enjoyed the practical side of the course, loved all the animals, and of course the friends I made at the college."



Matthew Bottomley

Studied: Level 3 Hospitality and Catering

Years: 2013 – 2016

Post-Hopwood highlight: Working in Sydney, Australia

Matthew's gone very far since studying at the college – more than 10,000 miles in fact! It was the prospect of this jet-set lifestyle that drove him during his time at Hopwood.

The Riverside Restaurant aided him greatly in preparing to work in a kitchen environment. In the end it was this experience that ultimately helped him secure restaurant roles in the Land Down Under.

There's no telling where Matthew's qualification will take him next – but it will always be a journey that started at Hopwood.

“I have been able to travel and meet new people from all over the world and that is all down to being a chef.”



Tanveer and Danielle Abbas

Studied: Uniformed Public Services/Performing Arts

Years: 2001 – 2003

Post-Hopwood highlight: Getting married and welcoming five children

Tanveer and Danielle quickly fell in love after meeting at the college. Hopwood holds such special memories for them both that after they left Tanveer chose the Middleton Campus as the perfect place to pop the question!

The pair are now happily married and have five lovely children together.

Things came full circle when Danielle returned to the campus in 2020 to study an Access course at the University Centre.

“On my 19th birthday we drove into the campus and Tanveer pulled up beside the football fields. That’s where he proposed to me!”



Daniel Noble

Studied: Uniformed Public Services

Years: 2010 – 2012

Post-Hopwood highlight: Firefighter at Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service

It was non-stop action when Daniel first arrived at the college. He'd spend his days doing fun activities like camping, canoeing and hiking - in the process making memories that would last a lifetime.

In the end, the experience gave Daniel the skills and outlook to enter the fire service. He's now been a firefighter at Hollins Fire Station since 2017.

Life's still as fast-paced as ever – only now he's bravely running into burning buildings, saving lives and serving his community in the most inspiring way.

“Listen, learn and get involved. The tutors at the college have a wide range of experience throughout the public services and will help you massively.”



Ronan Beckett

Studied: Level 4 Personal Training with Strength and Conditioning

Years: 2019 - 2020

Post-Hopwood highlight: Personal Trainer at The Gym Group, Bolton

For a man who likes helping people, Ronan found the perfect course when he joined our University Centre. He knew it was the best way to reach his potential in the fitness industry.

Ronan is now in high demand in his current role, where he's working with clients to support them in achieving the perfect nutrition and fitness regime.

Throughout all his success, he always points to the fact that it all started at Hopwood.

"I love changing people's lives for the better, whether it be mentally or physically. Hopwood gave me most of my attributes to do so – and I'm forever grateful."



Joanne Drysdale

Studied: Foundation Degree in Early Years

Years: 2017 – 2018

Post-Hopwood highlight: Newly Qualified Teacher at East Crompton St George's Primary School

When Joanne joined our University Centre as a mature student, she found herself on the fast-track to her dream career.

At the time she was a teaching assistant, but the part-time nature of the course allowed Joanne the opportunity to fit the qualification around her personal and professional life.

The supportive nature of the course gave Joanne the skills and confidence to go on to complete further study and she's now got the job she always wanted.

“It's never too late to achieve your dream! I was a mature student and Hopwood supported and encouraged me to pursue my dream and achieve it.”



Callum Rigg

Studied: Level 3 Creative Media Production

Years: 2013 – 2015

Post-Hopwood highlights: Content Creator on YouTube, Owns channel with 100,000 subscribers.

Callum has managed to master the world's most popular video sharing site - in the process earning legions of followers who are gripped by his content and eager to see his next move.

After learning skills like video editing, camera work and photography at the college, he was primed to make an impact on the online world.

The best evidence of his success is a recent video that currently boasts more than three million views! You might have even watched it yourself...

“I’ve had moments where I’ve given up, the given it another try. It’s not about how hard you fall, it’s about how you get back up and try again until you do succeed.”

The story continues...

We hope you have enjoyed this small glimpse at the college's history and some of the talented people who have been a part of it. It All Started At Hopwood for them - and it can for you too!

There are, of course, many more individuals who have passed through our halls. In the weeks and months to come, we'll be adding to this campaign and telling these inspiring stories.

If you're a former student, we'd love for you to reach out and tell us about the impact the college had on your life. Was Hopwood the place where you found your true calling, met your best friend or fell for the love of your life? Please do share these memories with us.

On the other hand, if you're a prospective learner then you've got all these exciting moments to come in your future.

**Just remember: the story doesn't end here -
it's only just beginning!**

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