
KIDDERMINSTER COLLEGE – ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT 2024/25

Kidderminster College - College Purpose

Kidderminster College's mission is to **enable social mobility and economic prosperity through exceptional education**. Supported by meaningful collaboration and partnerships which connect learners to valuable opportunities, our purpose is to bring about positive change, growth and impact for individuals, our community and the wider region through the education and training we deliver.

Kidderminster College's **Strategy to 2030** has been formed within the framework of NCG's Strategic Pillars and has 7 strategic objectives:

1. **DELIVERING EXCELLENCE:** Bringing exceptional teaching and learning to the region, using digital transformation and educational technology to equip students with the skills required for future jobs and opportunities.
2. **CURRICULUM STRATEGY:** Collaborating with employers and key stakeholders to meet the skills priorities identified in regional Local Skills Improvement Plans.
3. **OUR PLACE AS OUR PURPOSE:** Strengthening our place as the anchor institution for further education within the civic infrastructure of the Wyre Forest and Worcestershire.
4. **HEALTHY & HAPPY COLLEGE:** Supporting the health and wellbeing of our students and colleagues, equipping our college community with the tools to manage challenges that a rapidly evolving world brings.
5. **ESTATES & SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY:** Leading in sustainability and aligning our strategy and curriculum with the Climate Action Roadmap for FE.
6. **INVESTMENT FOR A COLLEGE OF THE FUTURE:** Investing in infrastructure and delivering financial sustainability through income growth and diversification and effective planning.

7. **NCG GUARANTEE CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE:** Providing innovative and engaging experiences that enable our students to unlock opportunities and to achieve their full potential.

Kidderminster College: Context and Place

The College is a vibrant and diverse institution, located in the heart of the Wyre Forest. Serving a wide, semi-rural catchment area across the wider region of Worcestershire and into the Black Country and West Midlands, the college is expanding its footprint through opening a brand-new Construction & Automotive Green Technology Centre in the town, reinforcing a growing specialism in this curriculum area within the region.

A successful track record in working collaboratively with fellow providers, employers and key stakeholders has enabled the college to adapt to meet skills challenges and priorities. The curriculum offer was realigned to priorities identified within the Worcestershire LEP Plan for Growth 2020-2040 and the Local Skills Report 2022 and is now further refined in line with the regional skills priorities identified within the Local Skills Improvement Plan. Underpinned by **Digital, Net Zero** and **Leadership and Management** themes, we continue to focus on developing our offer in **Construction, Health** and **Business and Professional Services**, with other regional providers specialising in **Manufacturing Engineering** and **Agritech**.

The economic and demographic environment is challenging across the Wyre Forest, with the economy operating at well below the national median and the employment base ranking in the lowest 20% of districts nationally. The Wyre Forest employment rate has increased from 67.2% in September 2022 to 80.8% in September 2023, a rate that is higher than the West Midlands rate of 74.8%. This data goes some way in illustrating the challenge around the Adult Education Budget, with little employer funding available to invest in workforce development. Around 1700 people aged 16 and over were unemployed in the Wyre Forest last year, at a rate of 3.3%. 19.2% of the population (11600 people) were economically inactive in the year ending September 2023.

Productivity in Worcestershire is below average with the gap with national GVA per hour worked remaining unchanged in recent years. Productivity is particularly low in Wyre Forest which is the local authority with the second lowest GVA per hour worked in England.

Deprivation in Worcestershire areas is generally below average, with only 24% of small areas in Worcestershire in the lowest 4 IMD Deciles, compared to 40% nationally. However, there are pockets of deprivation in urban areas, with some areas of the county in the worst 10% nationally, including parts of the immediate Kidderminster College catchment, the Wyre Forest.

At a district level, Wyre Forest and Worcester have the highest proportions of children living in poverty in Worcestershire, with both absolute and relative poverty levels above national averages. The percentage of pupils in Worcestershire schools with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is relatively in line at 3.9% with both the national average and the average among statistical neighbours at 4%. However, proportions have increased from 2.9% in 2016, which is in line with increasing national trends alongside an increase in the complexity of needs.

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Worcestershire 2022-2032 has a central overarching priority of supporting good mental health and wellbeing. This needs assessment was developed to bring together evidence and analysis around levels of mental health and wellbeing in Worcestershire and identify evidence-based opportunities to support its development. The new Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Worcestershire will run from 2022-2032. Young people consistently wished to have greater access to information about emotional wellbeing and ways to support this.

Kidderminster College: Actions to engage with key stakeholders and providers

Kidderminster College engages in purposeful dialogue with local and regional stakeholders to inform development of high-quality learner experiences and opportunities. We are proud of our 'anchor institution' status within the Wyre Forest, employing a systems leadership approach that builds supportive coalitions to achieve key community initiatives and meet local and regional skills needs.

As Vice Chair of the Worcestershire LSIP Board, the College Principal continues to work closely with the **Chamber of Commerce** and other Board members to provide direction, oversight and review of the implementation of the LSIP for Worcestershire. The LSIP builds on existing intelligence from the work of the **Worcestershire LEP Skills Advisory Panel** and **Employment and Skills Board**. This has ensured that the College has access to data intelligence outputs from employer engagement surveys and events that supports curriculum planning and future forecasting of skills needs, alongside dialogue and discussion with employers and fellow providers across the region. This platform has enabled meaningful consultation on accountability objectives with these key stakeholders, leading us to expand the work that we do on enterprise and innovation as part of the NCG Guarantee, to ensure our learners are fully equipped with the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to be successful in the future.

The College is **Lead Provider for the Worcestershire Local Skills Improvement Fund**, coordinating collaborative projects with Heart of Worcestershire College and Warwickshire College Group and liaising with the DfE on progress and outputs aligned to the LSIP.

We work closely with both **Worcestershire Local Authority** and **Worcestershire LEP**, supporting their 'Our Plan for Growth 2022-2027' strategy which focuses on unlocking further expansion in common skill sector priorities. Working proactively with the **Worcestershire Careers Hub** on provision of IAG is a key facet of our local authority partnership and allows us to continue to champion apprenticeships and work experience offers across the County with the aim of bringing education and business closer together to deliver future skills.

Accountability Statements and emerging LSIP curriculum priorities are discussed and agreed via the **Herefordshire & Worcestershire Principals Consortium**, a long-standing collaborative meeting of Principals/CEOs. This working group engages key stakeholders on regional issues and agrees approaches and accountabilities on curriculum developments and plans. The College is also part of **Colleges Worcestershire**, a consortium that drives collaborative projects such as our recent successful SDF project on Health and Digital.

Our partnership with the **West Midlands Combined Authority** supports our curriculum strategy to focus on wider West Midlands skills priorities, demonstrating synergy with those in Worcestershire. As the College catchment area incorporates areas of the Black Country, our provision must be responsive in offering training opportunities for residents of Stourbridge and the surrounds, where no other FE provider is available.

We are also a member of **Colleges West Midlands**, a formal strategic partnership of 18 colleges, who work together to support skills development across our region, responding as a single voice to new initiatives and government reforms.

The College also works closely with the **Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)** when developing curriculum plans. The DWP are responsible for understanding and dealing with the causes of poverty, encouraging people to work, and making work pay, and encouraging disabled people and those with ill health to work and be independent. This partnership is critical due to high levels of economic inactivity within the Wyre Forest, alongside an ageing workforce across Worcestershire.

Kidderminster College: Strategic Aims and Targets

College Strategic Aims and Objectives	Impact and/or Contribution towards National, Regional and Local Priorities for Learning and Skills
<p>Aim/Objective 1:</p> <p>Ensure the College has access to the specialist skills and expertise required to support our ambitions to deliver a curriculum offer that meets the requirements of the Worcestershire Local Skills Improvement Plan and the WLEP Skills Report.</p>	<p>Strengthen Governance and increase strategic partnerships to deliver opportunities for growth, diversification and to respond to skills requirements through recruiting College Board members: 1 x Construction specialist, 1 x Community/Civic, 1 x Health Care specialist, 1 x Early/Inclusive Education specialist. Deadline October 2024.</p> <p>Use our unique position as the largest provider of post 16 and adult education in the Wyre Forest and surrounding areas to raise the profile of technical and vocational skills education to operationalise the parity of esteem of vocational careers and remove barriers to future progression, thus increasing our market share by 2% by the end of 2024/25 academic year.</p>

	<p>Develop industry progression maps for each curriculum SSA, identifying the top technical and behavioural employment skills in each area by the end of the 2024/25 academic year.</p>
<p>Aim/Objective 2:</p> <p>Development of curriculum offer in sustainability and green technology in response to priority sector demand (WLEP Skills Report and Worcestershire LSIP).</p>	<p>Utilise opportunities afforded by opening a new Construction and Automotive Centre in September 2024 to embed sustainability as a golden thread through all construction and automotive provision, with all study programme learners undertaking sustainability training.</p> <p>Offer a Higher Technical Qualification in Construction Management, starting September 2024, to meet regional demand. Recruitment target of 14.</p> <p>Increase apprenticeship participation across construction and automotive apprenticeship standards, including expansion of provision to meet demand in advanced level apprenticeships (Electrical Installation and Site Carpentry). Increase recruitment at advanced level by 10%.</p> <p>With a view to launching a formal offer in the 2025/26 academic year, pilot a discrete adult offer through short course and part time provision in construction and automotive courses in 2024/25, with a focus widening participation of underrepresented groups (e.g. Women into Construction, BAME and learners with additional support needs).</p> <p>Pilot new sustainable provision through micro-generation certification and electrical vehicle (EV) charging in 2024/25, with a view to formalising the offer in 2025/26.</p>
<p>Aim/Objective 3:</p> <p>Extend work-readiness strategies for young people in response to LSIP employer feedback.</p>	<p>Work in partnership with Worcestershire LEP in the development and launch of the new Worcestershire Employer Standards, aligned to the Worcestershire LSIP.</p> <p>Complete a whole college assessment of provision (core and student experience) which supports the NCGG five core principles (Employability, Community, Enterprise, Digital Literacy and Mental Fitness) identifying gaps and opportunities for development including within the curriculum offer.</p> <p>Complete a mapping exercise to identify current alignment of the apprenticeship standards with the NCGG standards, providing all apprentices with the opportunity to extend their development beyond that of their mandatory KSs.</p> <p>Ensure all L3 leavers have achieved the 5 NCGG badges to support their future progression into positive destinations by the end of the academic year.</p>

	<p>Increase sector specific positive destination outcomes to exceed national benchmark.</p> <p>90% of employers agree that their apprentice has demonstrated the skills necessary for positive career progression.</p>
<p>Aim/Objective 4:</p> <p>Support Local Authority priorities to provide 'in County' progression opportunities for learners with SEND.</p>	<p>Accessing the world of work can be life transforming for people with learning disabilities and/or autism. It can improve health outcomes, wellbeing and social inclusion. Paid employment also fosters greater levels of independence, allowing people the freedom to live the life they choose based on their talents and abilities.</p> <p>Just 4.8% of adults with a learning disability in England are in paid employment, compared to 75% of working age adults in the general population (Measures from the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework - NHS Digital) – the West Midlands is the second lowest region for proportion of adults with a learning disability in paid employment at just 3.2%. The difference between how many disabled people are in work compared to how many non-disabled people are in work is known as the disability employment gap. The Kidderminster College vision is that young people with special educational needs or disabilities have greater opportunities and choice and are supported to achieve their aspirations to gain paid employment.</p> <p>Implement defined 'life' and 'work' pathways across all Foundation Learning curriculum aligned to Preparation for Adulthood outcomes with clear progression towards employment or alternative meaningful activity after college. Leading to:</p> <p>Increased annual student numbers (10) progressing to Supported Internships and from these to paid employment (70%) upon completion.</p> <p>Increased accessibility to FT applicants whose sensory needs cannot currently be met through the provision of new capital investment and the availability of sensory spaces. Planned total increase in FT SEN enrolments of 16 in 24/25.</p> <p>Introduction of new adult learning disability offer to address gaps in education services which seeks to address key issues of digital/technology inclusion, community engagement and Health and well-being (linking to Universal Support where appropriate and available). Target to offer 3 groups, minimum 8 learners per group.</p>

Aim/Objective 5:

Address the lack of a comprehensive inclusive learning offer to engage the growing number of NEET young people in the Wyre Forest and surrounds.

Develop and launch provision to help meet the needs of specific groups of young people who may be at greater risk of social exclusion, may be marginalised or isolated or at risk of achieving poor educational outcomes. Establish a Youth Hub situated within the college that will support NEET and those at risk of becoming NEET through targeted interventions. Launch a new FT offer from November 2024 (pre-census referral) for those at highest risk of withdrawal following enrolment in September, supporting at least 50 young people with advice and support to prevent them becoming NEET.

Deliver mentoring and coaching support towards the development of key common skills and workplace behaviours, supporting a minimum of 100 young people into education, apprenticeships, internships or employment (with training).

Hold regular employer events (minimum of 3 in the year) and upscale our existing 'Market Place' activity, where employers are introduced first hand to the young people that we work with.

Implement a 'hub and spoke' model, providing greater opportunities to engage with business through WLEP and LSIF funded Leadership and Sustainability Hub at the new Kidderminster College Construction and Automotive Sustainability Centre.

Work with our strategic partners such as West Midlands Safari Park and Kidderminster Harriers Football Club to take employer engagement events out into the business community – identifying diverse career paths that sit behind the employer's main sector (for example, accountancy, property maintenance and business administration jobs in sport and hospitality companies).

Deliver an annual schedule of activities (2 per week) that will be planned and marketed in advance with activities such as preparation for interview, mock interviews and employment sessions, as well as hosting and organising recruitment activities and processes for employers, particularly SMEs that do not have the time or capacity to undertake the process, maximising opportunities for Youth Hub participants.

Signpost and support young people to access work placements, internships and supported internships to maximise opportunities in securing long-term employment.

Hold monthly industry talks across 12 vocations that will take place both within the Youth Hub setting and in employer premises, where young people will be supported to break down barriers by attending employer sites.

	<p>Expand our current programme of industry insight sessions, where we will connect groups of participants with employers from a diverse range of sectors in order to widen the breadth of their career options.</p>
<p>Aim/Objective 6:</p> <p>To develop key strategic partnerships to support the future delivery of responsive and impactful Adult Education provision.</p>	<p>Refine curriculum offer to target priority sector skills gaps identified in the WLEP Skills Report and Worcestershire and West Midlands LSIP reports through continued development of a well-defined AEB Strategy and associated growth of AEB provision, embedding the themes of digital, sustainability and leadership and management as golden threads throughout curriculum.</p> <p>Engage with stakeholders to produce a comprehensive AEB strategy and provision pathway model, to meet targeted outputs of AEB funded programmes such as skills bootcamps, sector-based work academy programmes and short courses in addition to meeting local and regional need for delivery of micro-credential and modular training and numeracy upskilling.</p> <p>Deliver a minimum of 45 skills bootcamp outputs across priority sector areas: Leadership and management, Sustainable Construction and Health and Social Care.</p> <p>Prioritise delivery of flexible provision to re-engage the economically inactive, to retrain adults to fill vacancies in key skills areas such as Health, Digital, L&M, Construction and Sustainability and to provide development and progression opportunities for 19+ employees.</p> <p>Delivery of a minimum of 133 upskill interventions in numeracy through Multiply.</p>

Kidderminster College links to supporting documentation:

[WLEP-Worcestershire-Economy-2023-A4-report-WEB.pdf](#)

[Worcestershire's Local Skills Improvement Plan \(hwchamber.co.uk\)](#)

[West Midlands and Warwickshire Local Skills Improvement Plan](#)

[Mental Health Needs Assessment \(worcestershire.gov.uk\)](#)

Kidderminster College Local Needs Duty

Kidderminster College meets its **Local Needs Duty**. The college consults on **Accountability Statement** objectives with, although not limited to, key stakeholders such as **Worcestershire LEP, Worcestershire Local Authority**, and the **Chamber of Commerce** to gain assurance and feedback on how successfully our curriculum offer and output meets local and national skills priorities.

Our Further Education provider consortium, **Colleges Worcestershire** is a forum where our respective **Governance and Senior Leadership representatives** come together to share Accountability Statements for the region, discussing and agreeing specific objectives and priorities.

We will continue to build on the collaborative relationship that we have with our regional FE and HE colleagues, which has been strengthened over time through successful delivery of common objectives within SDF and LSIF projects over the last 2 years. There is more work to do moving forward, and we will commit to further development and agreement of key curriculum specialisms and standards focused on our regional priorities of Construction, Automotive Engineering, Health & Social Care and Professional Services. For example, our new Construction and Automotive Sustainability Centre, opening in September 2024 and funded through both LEP and LSIF capital grants, responds to serious skills gaps across Worcestershire and the West Midlands. This will provide training opportunities for both school leavers and adults, facilities to support increasing levels of employer engagement, and will seek to address long standing equality issues.

Further priority sectors that are not specifically identified in the LSIP but have high skills demand and potential for increasing regional GVA include:

- Creative and Performing Arts
- Animal Care and Animal Management
- Service Industries – Hair, Beauty, Sport and Travel and Retail

We are also continuing to respond to wider skills demand identified in both the Worcestershire and West Midlands LSIPs through our curriculum planning.

Both have golden threads of sustainability, leadership and management and digital skills that we will build into the curriculum offer, alongside associated staff development opportunities. We have successfully delivered Bootcamps in Health and Construction and have developed a Level 4 Higher Technical Qualification in Construction Management for launch in September 2024, to address significant regional skills gaps in site management and surveying. We are also developing discrete provision to meet demand for green technology skills including electric vehicle, renewable energy and sustainable construction.