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## LEWISHAM COLLEGE – ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT 2024/25

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### **Lewisham College – Our Purpose**

Lewisham College’s purpose is to “ensure the best life chances” for every student we support. By delivering the mission and strategy of NCG appropriately tailored to our local context. We are firmly embedded in our local community with excellent partnerships to improve the economic, social, health and wellbeing of the communities we serve. Together we use our shared knowledge, expertise and resources to benefit learners and solve key issues affecting our local and business communities.

### **Lewisham College Context and Place**

Lewisham College, situated in central South East London, is a prominent further education institution deeply connected to our local communities while also addressing wider regional and national skills requirements. Lewisham Borough has a proud shared history of standing up for equalities, of being pioneering, creative and ambitious and driven by our sense of community. The borough is incredibly diverse, with 40% representing black, Asian, and minority ethnic backgrounds, making Lewisham the 15th most ethnically diverse local authority in England. Proudly embracing its role as a ‘safe haven’ for migrants and refugees, Lewisham is designated as a ‘Borough of Sanctuary’.

Aligned with both governmental and mayoral strategies, Lewisham College's inclusive curriculum and employer-driven vocational programmes are geared towards empowering Londoners to access education, skills and training necessary for societal participation and career advancement. Our curriculum is tailored to address the specific skill demands outlined in London’s Local Skills Improvement Plan and local workforce development challenges, particularly in areas such as hospitality, healthcare, construction and green industries.

Recognising the evolving landscape of London's economy, our college is dedicated to preparing learners for the dynamic job market, including life sciences, financial services, and the cultural and creative industries.

The London labour market is challenged by a number of intricate issues. On one side, a significant proportion of London's population have higher educational qualifications compared to other regions in the UK or major global cities, with 59% of the working-age population having attained graduate-level education or higher by 2021. London also boasts a larger portion of its workforce engaged in higher-paying sectors like Finance, IT, and professional services. However, London also contends with profound structural hurdles. Unemployment rates persistently surpass the national average, with disproportionate impacts on Black and minority ethnic groups, youth, and individuals with disabilities. In addition, the already elevated rates of in-work poverty in the city are exacerbated by the escalating cost of living. As of December 2022, 21.4% of working-age Londoners are economically inactive. Concurrently, persistent shortages in skills and labour persist across construction, hospitality, and social care sectors.

A survey\* uncovered that three-quarters of companies (77%) are grappling with unfilled positions, with two-thirds (65%) encountering difficulties in filling them. Vacancies reported encompass various roles, with specialised, skilled, and managerial positions posing the greatest recruitment challenges. The most sought-after skills identified in the survey include sector-specific technical expertise, transferable skills like negotiation and basic digital proficiency, the latter of which is anticipated to be increasingly valuable in the future. Firms are encountering recruitment difficulties across all skill levels: nearly half report struggles in hiring highly skilled specialists (49%), followed by technical and skilled support roles (43%), managerial positions (35%), skilled trades (30%), and sales and customer service roles (26%). The predominant recruitment challenge cited is the scarcity of suitable candidates possessing requisite skills, highlighted by 57% of companies. While two-thirds of firms (66%) express confidence in the existing skills and capabilities of their workforce to meet business demands, the remaining report skill gaps.

Over the next two to five years, digital skills are projected to be the most in-demand, with over half of respondents (56%) indicating a need for advanced skills and a third for basic digital proficiencies (33%). Sector-specific technical skills (49%), versatile transferable skills like negotiation and resilience (31%), basic numeracy (29%), literacy (23%), and environmental sustainability skills (23%) are also identified as crucial skill sets. *(Sourced from Business LDN's Local Skill Improvement Plan for London.)*

In the borough of Lewisham, the most significant skills gaps are in hospitality, healthcare, construction and green skills, impacting operational efficiency, business resilience, and overall GDP growth. The Mayor of Lewisham's Corporate Strategy 2022-2026 prioritises several key areas for improving the borough's quality of life. This includes initiatives to promote cleaner and greener spaces, revitalising high streets, and supporting business start-ups and local businesses through campaigns like Lewisham's Shop Local Campaign. Efforts will be made to attract jobs and businesses to the area, building on the success of Lewisham Works, creating more space for pop-up shops, while also encouraging businesses to adopt the London Living Wage. Housing quality will be improved, with a focus on carbon-neutral retrofitting and a Lewisham Rent Repairs Charter to ensure timely and quality repairs. The strategy also commits to supporting school improvement and increasing opportunities for young people, as well as promoting health and wellbeing, safer communities and Violence Against Women and Girls. As a vital participant in the Lewisham Strategic Partnership, Lewisham College actively collaborates to deliver essential education, skills, and training tailored to address local challenges and stimulate economic growth within the community.

A significant portion of our curriculum is geared towards adult learners striving to enhance their social and employment prospects, aligning with initiatives such as the London Living Wage and Good Jobs for All. Our curriculum design places particular emphasis on the LSIP cross-cutting themes of digital skills, green skills, transferable skills, and labour market inclusion. Our employer responsive sector-based work academy programmes are designed to fill specific skills gaps whilst targeting individuals who are furthest removed from the labour market and promoting access to jobs and progression to better paid careers.

Our inclusive Study Programmes for learners aged 14-18 and those with special educational needs are designed with the overarching ambition of unlocking every individual's full potential. T Levels will provide high-quality skills and industry training needed for learners to pursue careers in priority sectors such as digital support, early years education, health care, finance, business administration and building services. In essence, Lewisham College serves as a vital educational hub deeply rooted in our community's needs and aspirations, while simultaneously contributing to the broader economic and social fabric of our region.

### **Lewisham College actions to engage with key stakeholders and providers**

Robust partnerships, employer engagement and collaboration serve as fundamental pillars of our College strategy, facilitating the realisation of our vision to nurture talent within the sub-region. Informed by priority sectors set out by the Mayor of London and BusinessLDN London Local Skills Improvement Plan, our accountability plan is thoughtfully crafted. Leaders across the College extensively liaise with key stakeholders and partners to develop delivery plans, ensuring our curriculum remains inclusive, locally pertinent, and employer driven. Actively involved in BusinessLDN LSIP stakeholder groups spanning Creative, Digital, Hospitality, Construction, Health and Care, and Green Skills, we contribute to shaping sector-specific initiatives.

Our curriculum development is underpinned by comprehensive market insights, in consultation with local and regional employers to discern labour market needs which help us to improve the relevance of our curriculum. These include key players in Construction, Hospitality, Health and Social sectors, and Digital industries. Senior leaders' involvement in the Lewisham Borough Post-16 Strategy Group and the Participation and Engagement Strategy Group demonstrates our commitment to aligning with borough-wide initiatives and fostering local talent retention. Senior leaders are represented in all four work-strands of the Lewisham Strategic Partnership and the Vice Principal is contributing to the development of a Community Strategy for Lewisham. The important themes of this strategy have informed the cross-cutting themes of our curriculum design and learner support: opportunities and investment, climate emergency; race and equality and cost of living.

Collaborations with institutions like Goldsmiths University, University of London, The Albany, National Maritime Museum and Horniman Museum, enrich our creative curriculum priorities, while partnerships with Millwall Community Trust support programmes in creative media, broadcasting, journalism and a football academy. Guided by our Department for Work and Pensions network, we prioritise developing skills and opportunities for vulnerable groups furthest from the labour market, collaborating with key partners such as The South East Chamber of Commerce, Thames Water, Greggs, ISS, Lewisham Hospital, Lewisham Council and Transport for London to address skills gaps, succession planning and developing the existing workforce.

### Lewisham 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><b>Aim/Objective 1:</b></p> <p><b>Aim: Ensure our T level provision is employer lead and endorsed</b></p> <p>Objectives:</p> <p>Develop industry boards for each key sector, agreeing curriculum, units/modules/, sequencing and assessment methods</p> <p>Identify industry placements, with agreed training plan with employers</p>	<p><b>BusinessLDN: London</b></p> <p>Galvanise more employer/educator co-design of provision, especially in areas with fast changing cutting-edge technology.</p> <p>Scale-up employer provider collaboration through more co-design of courses and workforce exchange programmes to ensure training keeps up to speed with changing industry training needs.</p> <p><b>Impact:</b> Increased number of learners will have undertaken an employer led and endorsed programme and gained industry skills and behaviours to enable them to progress into employment “work ready”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successfully expanded the T level programme in Digital Support with a Networking pathway and recruited 16 new students by Sept 2024.</li> <li>• Introduced T level programmes in Early Years Educator; Supporting Adult Nursing; Plumbing and Heating Engineering; Electrotechnical Engineering; Business Management and Administration and Finance; recruited 8 students in each cohort by September 2024.</li> <li>• Developed T level programmes in Media, Broadcast and Production for introduction by Sept 2025</li> <li>• Expand study programmes in creative industries (art &amp; design, media and performing arts) with +40 learners by Sept 2024</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broaden cybersecurity operations and coding skills within the Digital curriculum linked to a new eSports Study Programme and short courses for adults.</li> <li>• Broaden the health and life sciences curriculum to include a life sciences study programme and recruit 16 learners by Sept 2024</li> </ul>
<p><b>Aim/Objective 2:</b></p> <p><b>A: Develop our supported learning curriculum to ensure our SEND students have access to jobs and work, whilst improving their Health &amp; Well-being</b></p> <p>Objectives:</p> <p>Create four curriculum strands; preparing for life, vocational, preparing for Supported Internship, volunteering &amp; working and Support Internship</p> <p>Develop an employer board for SEND, along with an employer training plan to develop an inclusive and diverse workforce action learning set</p> <p>Pilot a Supported Internship in Hospitality, Facilities Services &amp; Business Support</p>	<p><b>National Priority</b></p> <p>Evidence in <u>post-16 education and labour market activities, pathways and outcomes</u> shows that pupils with SEND are less likely to be in sustained employment 15 years after key stage 4 than their peers. Getting more people with disabilities, mental or physical health conditions into good jobs remains a key priority for the government and four key programmes have been introduced - NHS Talking Therapies, Individual Placement and Support, Restart and Universal Support – to help those with mental or physical health conditions stay in or find work.</p> <p><b>Impact</b></p> <p>SEND learners develop skills valued by employers, demonstrate their value in the workplace and confidence in their abilities to perform successfully at work. SEND learners progress into sustained and paid jobs, build confidence and self-esteem, increase good health and well-being, gain friendships and a social life. Employers are enabled to diversify their workforce.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16 learners successfully complete a supported internship in Hospitality, Facilities Services or Business Support by June 2025</li> <li>• 60% of the cohort gain employment by August 2025 which has a positive impact on their finances, health and wellbeing.</li> <li>• 4 employers are better equipped to diversify their workforce by embracing neurodiversity and disability.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Aim/Objective 3:</b></p> <p><b>Aim: Develop our curriculum for transferable skills, prioritising ESOL, English &amp; maths</b></p> <p>Objectives:</p> <p>Develop employer endorsed vocational pathways for construction, health &amp; social care and facilities services</p>	<p><b>Business LDN</b></p> <p>There is a growing employer demand for people with essential, transferable skills which can be used in a variety of roles or occupations, such as such as critical thinking, resilience and problem solving. As new technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) transform the labour market in the coming years, these skills will become even more vital. Transferrable skills and Essential Digital Skills (EDS) need to be embedded across programmes, in more modular provision, funded by the AEB budget. Programmes need to move away from traditional qualification led to a skills-led approach.</p>

<p>Develop English and maths programmes which are vocationally contextualised in construction, hospitality and health</p>	<p><b>Impact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction SWAP endorsed by employers with guaranteed interviews for 80 adult learners by July 2025</li> <li>• ESOL Teaching Assistance and Health Care programmes endorsed by employers with guaranteed interviews for 120 learners by March/June 2025.</li> <li>• Essential digital skills, problem solving and resilience are embedded into ESOL for Life, Work and Study programmes E3 and L1 programmes completed by 200 learners by June 2025</li> <li>• English skills for construction and facilities services programme, focused on health and safety language, completed by 30 learners by June 2025</li> <li>• English skills for hospitality programme, focused on culinary, housekeeping and customer service, completed by 30 learners by July 2025</li> <li>• English skills for medical terminology developed to prepare students for AMSPAR qualifications, completed by 18 students by July 2025.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Aim/Objective 4:</b></p> <p><b>Aim: Embed the NCG People Plan, identifying actions to take forward the strategic aims of recruit, retain and develop</b></p> <p>Objectives:</p> <p>Continue to rollout and deliver the “Get into FE’ SWAP</p> <p>Develop and deliver the Higher Apprenticeship – Learning &amp; Skills Teacher, including DET</p> <p>Develop &amp; Deliver the Apprenticeship in Learning Support</p>	<p><b>Business LDN</b></p> <p>Across education, a significant concern is the scarcity of qualified teachers and our ability to attract industry skilled professionals into teaching. This issue is particularly acute in areas facing skills shortages or in emerging sectors. Given the rapid evolution of industries, colleges also struggle to ensure that their teachers remain abreast of current practices and emerging technologies.</p> <p><b>Impact:</b> The college is able to attract, recruit, retain and develop a teaching workforce that maintains a consistent standard of high-quality student experiences. Teaching staff effectively teach relevant and up-to-date industry-focused skills and knowledge to learners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30 learners successfully complete the Get into FE SWAP by July 2025 and are guaranteed an interview</li> <li>• 60% of the cohort gain employment in teaching, learning support or assessment</li> <li>• Learning and Skills Teacher apprenticeship piloted with 6 apprentice teachers</li> <li>• Apprenticeship in Learning Support developed and introduced by July 2025</li> <li>• 2 vocational teachers in each sector upskill their industry knowledge and skills which informs their teaching practice</li> </ul>

## **Lewisham College links to supporting documentation**

[The London Local Skills Improvement Plan May 2023](#)

[Levelling Up the United Kingdom - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Skills for jobs: lifelong learning for opportunity and growth - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[National Skills Fund - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

## **Lewisham College Local Needs Duty**

Lewisham College meets its local needs duty. We continue to deliver on our vision of “ensure the best life chances” and are focussed on, and committed to, delivering the skills needed by our local community and region as identified by The Mayor of London and BusinessLDN in the Local Skills Improvement Plan and by the Mayor of Lewisham. The four priority areas of Construction; Creative, Health and Social Care and Hospitality, with cross-cutting themes of digital, green and transferable skills and labour market inclusion, drive our curriculum intention and plans.

An area with considerable expertise and anticipated growth to match demand is Health and Social Care. We are working collaboratively with NHS Trusts and local care homes to develop skills in care, nursing and counselling. Our curriculum includes T levels and sector work academy programmes equipping learners for progression to higher education in subjects such as Midwifery, Nursing and Social Work professions. Construction programmes are tailored to support the growth of a ‘replacement demand’ workforce and upskill the existing workforce to increase the capacity to meet the rising demand in Lewisham and Greater London. Learners are enabled to progress through vocational, technical, and academic pathways, including the newly introduced T levels in Electrical Engineering and Heating and Plumbing. This ensures learners can continually upskill, reskill, and progress throughout their careers. The expansion of our digital curriculum aims to develop the specialist digital and computing skills needed to nurture home-grown talent as well as up-skill the workforce and increase the digital capability of both young learners and adults.



By collaborating closely with Lewisham council Lewisham Local Authority, Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Business, Job Centre Plus/DWP and several prominent employers (including TFL, Thames Water, Greggs, ISS, Lewisham Homes), we are expanding our sector-based work academy programmes. This aims to address skills gaps and to cultivate opportunities for vulnerable groups that are currently furthest away from the labour market. Lewisham College has also been successful in extending the Mayors Academy Programme in Hospitality to continue to address skills gaps within the industry and support Londoners into work.

We need to further develop our construction provision to align to the green and sustainability agenda, and our Health & Life Sciences offer for technical back of house roles. Additionally, we are assessing our early years and childcare provision to address the current urgent need for additional early years practitioners and childminders. We need further develop our supported learning curriculum and create additional Supported Internship placements to enable this cohort to have greater access to employers and job opportunities.