



NCG ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT WEST LANCASHIRE COLLEGE



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NCG MISSION AND PURPOSE

The strategic curriculum intent of NCG is set out in our Strategy Towards 2030, which is defined at corporate level through our mission and vision:

MISSION

ENABLING SOCIAL MOBILITY AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY THROUGH EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION.

VISION

TO BE THE UK'S LEADING COLLEGE GROUP RECOGNISED FOR OUR LOCAL IMPACT, NATIONAL INFLUENCE AND REACH.

The NCG mission sets out the ambition we aim to realise, whilst our vision describes how we will know when we get there. To underpin both, we have six strategic themes that are based on fundamental pillars of the organisation (Quality, Curriculum, People, Facilities, Finance and Reach). Our focus in each theme is on continuous improvement towards excellence and each theme intrinsically supports our curriculum strategy delivered through our national network of colleges.

We are a family of seven colleges bound by the same mission, strategic aims and a number of business-critical policy frameworks. However, each college retains a very unique identity which is based on its heritage, its curriculum and its place in the community.

We work collaboratively through the theme 'One NCG' to ensure that, wherever possible, we develop common approaches to the National and Regional Skills Priorities, whilst ensuring that each college has the flexibility to be able to respond to specific local skills needs. That way, we ensure that each NCG college remains embedded at the heart of its local civic infrastructure, whilst drawing on all the benefits of being part of a large national group.

As the only FE college with Indefinite Degree Awarding Powers, NCG is also uniquely placed to address the current national and regional skills gap at Level 4 and Level 5; indeed, we are already trailblazing in co-development of Higher Technical Qualifications with our partners.



Liz Bromley
Chief Executive Officer, NCG



Lisa Hoseason
Deputy Principal, West Lancashire College

NCG STRATEGIC AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

As part of our development of the NCG Strategy to 2030, we have clearly set out our strategic aims and objectives as a group. These goals are underpinned by a set of strategic KPIs overseen by the NCG Board.

THE KEY THEMES ARE:

- Exceptional Teaching, Learner Experience and Outcomes
- Innovative, Relevant Courses and Qualifications
- Ambitious and Responsible Educators and Leaders
- Outstanding Digital and Physical Learning Environments
- Financial Sustainability Powering Reinvestment
- Impactful External Engagement and Civic Commitment.

The strategy and strategic aims were approved by the NCG Corporation in December 2019 and the KPIs are measured and refreshed on an annual basis. There will be a more comprehensive mid-point review during 2024/25 of the NCG Strategy.

Each NCG college has its own strategic plan which aligns to local skills needs and the NCG Strategy. These college-specific plans will be reviewed for the start of the 2024/25 academic year.

There is also a statement of local curriculum intent. The curriculum intent is reviewed, to ensure it remains relevant in its efficacy (self-assessment). Our local curriculum intent is tested routinely with college boards and other local stakeholders and periodically through Ofsted inspection.

WHEN DETERMINING OUR CURRICULUM STRATEGY, WE WILL PAY HEED TO FOUR KEY DRIVERS:

- 1 Our Strategic Mission and Vision
- 2 National and regional economic context
- 3 Emerging government, national and regional policy ambition
- 4 Local skills requirements and stakeholder needs.

THE COMMUNITY NCG SERVES

Our colleges are each located in their own distinctive geography and serve a specific local demographic:

Carlisle College – the single FE college in the only city in Cumbria, Carlisle College works closely with the other three Cumbrian colleges to ensure a coherent FE offering for that region.

Kidderminster College – serves the Wyre Forest area of Worcestershire to the West of Birmingham, reaching into the fringes of the Black Country.

Lewisham College – sits at the heart of the vibrant South East London borough with its campus on Lewisham Way. It is a community-focused college with a large adult and ESOL provision.

Newcastle College – serves the city of Newcastle upon Tyne and the North East Combined Authority, including large parts of Gateshead, Derwentside, South Tyneside and Durham. It also offers sector-specialist vocational and technical education across the wider North East region and beyond.

Newcastle Sixth Form College – a specialist, high-quality and inclusive provider of A Levels to the city of Newcastle upon Tyne and surrounding areas.

Southwark College – located on The Cut close to Waterloo Station, this college serves the diverse borough of Southwark, with a growing focus on the working population that travels to the borough every day.

West Lancashire College – located in the town of Skelmersdale, this college serves a broad population spread from the fringes of Greater Manchester to the outskirts of Liverpool. The college is also the base for our national online learning offer.

Each college is positioned as an anchor institution within their community and also is actively engaged with local stakeholders. More recently, this has included the Employer Representative Bodies (ERBs) within the area to inform and then deliver the local LSIPs. The specific demographics and local geographies are set out in each college section of this plan.

PROCESS FOLLOWED BY NCG TO MEET STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

As a national group of colleges, NCG has introduced a process to meet this statutory requirement which maximises the local knowledge and expertise of its local governance arrangements and the wider stakeholder groups to review their college provision in relation to Accountability Statement aims and targets, as well as its Local Needs Duty.

In 2023/24, NCG undertook a review of its local governance arrangement to better meet the changing demands of assuring local skills needs were being addressed. To develop the Accountability Statement for NCG, the following process was followed by all seven colleges:

- Each college produced a draft Accountability Statement based on its own research and consultation relevant to its local area. For 2024/25, this includes a review that the college is satisfying the Local Needs Duty.
- Key to developing the statement is direct engagement with larger employers, Employer Representative Bodies (ERBs) and those responsible for producing the LSIPs.
- The draft Accountability Statement is discussed locally under the governance arrangements and is also taken to a broad range of stakeholders for consultation and input, including employers, other education providers and civic bodies and community groups.
- The College Accountability Statement is modified as a result of the feedback from the consultation process.
- A statement on the success of any given college in meeting the local skills and national priorities is agreed and identifies how this could be further improved.
- A final version is agreed with the NCG Executive and checked for alignment to the NCG strategic priorities and satisfying the Local Needs Duty.
- The final version of the College Accountability Statement is incorporated into the NCG Accountability Statement.
- This NCG Accountability Statement is reflective of the skills needs across the scope of operation for NCG and has been developed and robustly challenged through a comprehensive consultation process including community representatives, employers, civic bodies and other education partners.
- The NCG Accountability Statement, including the statement on how well NCG meets the local skills needs, national priorities and Local Needs Duty, is presented to the NCG Corporation for approval.

NATIONAL POLICY OVERVIEW

The key policy focus for 2024/25 and beyond for NCG will be to continue the implementation of the FE White Paper – ‘Skills for Jobs’, particularly the changes enacted through the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022, alongside responding to the qualification and Higher Education reform. The focus on national skills priorities will include:

- Ensuring the curriculum offer to meet local and national skills needs as identified in LSIPs, now and in the future
- Contributing to and responding to curriculum and funding reforms
- Developing Higher Technical Skills, especially at Level 4 and Level 5.

The overarching NCG approach to national priorities is covered in the Strategic Aims of each of the colleges.



NCG CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL PRIORITIES

Across its seven colleges, NCG will address all the National Skills Priorities shown below except for Haulage and Logistics.

This national priority is not pertinent to the local areas in which the NCG colleges operate, or it is actively being addressed by another provider in that location area. This will continue to be monitored as part of the Local Needs Duty.

- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Digital and Technology
- Health and Social Care
- Haulage and Logistics
- Engineering
- Science and Mathematics.

The focus on national skills priorities will include:

- Ensuring the local curriculum offer meets the local and national skills needs as identified in LSIPs, now and in the future.
- Contributing to and responding to curriculum and funding reforms, including increasing the number of T-Level routes in the priority areas.
- Develop Higher Technical Skills, especially at Level 4 and Level 5.



NCG ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT OVERARCHING AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

NCG Strategic Aims and Objectives	Impact and/or Contribution towards National, Regional and Local Priorities for Learning and Skills
<p>Aim/Objective 0.1:</p> <p>Continue to roll out the NCG T-Level offer with the addition of subjects from Wave 2 and beyond. NCG will review 'what worked well' and 'lessons learned' from Wave 1 T-Level roll-out, so that we are better able to recruit to and deliver planned enrolment targets.</p> <p>From September 2024, we will have broadened our T-Level offer to include Wave 2 subjects in Business and Administration, Creative and Design, Engineering, and Finance and Accounting.</p>	<p>Impact:</p> <p>The aim is to build on the Wave 1 subject roll-out and continue the delivery of T-Levels across the six NCG FE colleges from September 2024. The pathways on offer will be different for each college and dependent on local facilities and skills needs.</p> <p>The 14 pathways offered in Year 1 will be expanded to a minimum of 18 pathways in 2024/25. The T-Level Council will continue to oversee approvals and course development, building on the model of identified T-Level Route Leads that was successful last year, to ensure a consistent sequencing and delivery model exists to benefit all NCG learners.</p> <p>NCG will share teaching and learning resources through dedicated communities of practice for each of the T-Level streams.</p> <p>T-Level marketing, communications and promotional materials will be developed centrally by the NCG Marketing and Communications Lead, and these will be made available for colleges to adapt and use locally, to drive positive T-Level recruitment.</p>
<p>Aim/Objective 0.2:</p> <p>Ensure the curriculum offer in each college is meeting the Local Skills Needs Duty through the embedding of the revised 'place-based governance' model.</p>	<p>Impact:</p> <p>Introduce and embed the revised governance model for the 2024/25 academic year for all of our colleges.</p> <p>Recruit and train the new members of the College Boards to support them in performing their duties in providing local oversight and advice on the curriculum offer, which in turn will provide assurance to the NCG Corporation that NCG is responding to the local skills needs.</p> <p>Provide the structure to enable the College Board members to advise and challenge the College SLT on meeting the current and future local skills requirements and, in turn, providing assurance to Corporation that the college is satisfying the Local Needs Duty.</p> <p>Introduce the updated sub-structure of Corporation to enhance the challenge and rigour of the governance process.</p>

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NCG ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT OVERARCHING AIMS AND OBJECTIVES (CONTINUED)

NCG Strategic Aims and Objectives	Impact and/or Contribution towards National, Regional and Local Priorities for Learning and Skills
<p>Aim/Objective 0.3:</p> <p>Optimising apprenticeship pathways and existing group sizes to achieve realistic growth, building on the 'succeed through specialisms' apprenticeship strategy.</p>	<p>Impact:</p> <p>NCG has made significant improvements to the curriculum, quality and administration of apprenticeships, resulting in a streamlined offer based on college specialisms ('reduce to produce' improvement phase). As a result, standards of delivery, cohort size, compliance, contribution and outcomes have improved in recent years. Additionally, the Group has successfully pivoted from a predominantly adult offering to one that now predominantly supports young people aged 16-23. Therefore, NCG is now targeting modest growth by July 2025 with a focus on more substantial growth in 2025/26.</p> <p>This growth will be partially achieved by aiming to convert many more learners from study programmes into apprentices on the current standards approved by the NCG Apprenticeship Council. A small number of additional standards are likely to be tabled for approval. However, most growth is anticipated to come from subject growth, rather than diversification.</p> <p>There is an additional target to ensure that NCG has at least 10% of apprentices drawn from under-represented participation groups – for example, apprentices with SEND or care-experienced learners – whilst NCG will continue to increase the proportion of non-White-British ethnicity groups in Lewisham (to reflect the learner community in the wider college).</p>
<p>Aim/Objective 0.4:</p> <p>Delivery of higher level technical and professional skills at HE provision, as well as priority development of Higher Technical Qualifications in national priority sectors.</p>	<p>Impact:</p> <p>NCG has been a national leader of the development of HE in an FE setting over the last two decades, being the first FE Corporation to gain Taught Degree Awarding Powers in 2016 (following FDAP in 2013). Having secured awarding powers without time limit in 2022/23, we will continue to implement our ambitious HE strategy, aligning with the national priorities around Level 4 and Level 5 provision and broadening the reach of NCG awards. The specific actions are contained within the strategy document. This focus meets the national priority to develop skills at Level 4 and Level 5.</p>

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NCG ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT OVERARCHING AIMS AND OBJECTIVES (CONTINUED)

NCG Strategic Aims and Objectives	Impact and/or Contribution towards National, Regional and Local Priorities for Learning and Skills
<p>Aim/Objective 0.5:</p> <p>To increase the number of learners with SEND participating on supported internships and apprenticeships.</p>	<p>Impact:</p> <p>NCG has a history of delivering very stable provision for young people and adults at risk with SEND and profound high needs. In recent years, this has included increased participation on supported internships.</p> <p>NCG will pledge to increase the number of learners engaging with supported internships and apprenticeships as a vehicle for sustainable employment. We will do this through quality-first teaching and by exploring the potential to create a flexible apprenticeship agency. This will aim to support employers committed to creating opportunities for these learners by hosting their employment, whilst the agency can ensure additional and specific needs are met in the transition phase to employment.</p>

WEST LANCASHIRE COLLEGE ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT



WEST LANCASHIRE COLLEGE COLLEGE PURPOSE

West Lancashire College has a pivotal role in providing vocational and technical education in West Lancashire and the surrounding area. Its purpose is to deliver NCG's mission and strategy in a way that meets local skills needs. Our vision is to position West Lancashire College at the heart of our local community, being recognised for the work we do supporting social mobility through a skills and careers-focused curriculum that connects individuals to opportunities and enables people to fulfil their potential. Our strategy has been formed within the framework of NCG's Strategic Pillars and is aligned to the Lancashire Local Skills Improvement Plan.

Within this context, we have five strategic objectives:

1. Exceptional Learning
2. Innovative and Responsive Curriculum
3. Skilled and High-Performing Workforce
4. Inspiring Learning Environment
5. Partnership and Collaboration.



WEST LANCASHIRE COLLEGE CONTEXT AND PLACE

West Lancashire College is a small community-based college in the heart of Skelmersdale delivering programmes across all funding streams. Situated within commuting distance of Manchester and Liverpool, and close to the M6 corridor, the College is well placed to serve a diverse range of skills needs in the locality.

Lancashire is one of the most diverse economic areas in the country, with no urban core but a polycentric set of towns and cities, rural and coastal areas, and both agricultural and industrial zones. With a population of 1.5million people, Lancashire's 55,000 businesses generate 700,000 jobs across a range of important and future-facing sectors, from manufacturing and tourism to cyber, digital and low carbon. The thriving £35billion economy is home to globally leading firms with sector/supply chain clusters, including the fourth-largest aerospace cluster in the world. There is a pan-Lancashire labour market, particularly for technical and professional roles, while workforce is also imported from and exported to neighbouring areas, including Greater Manchester, Cumbria and the Liverpool City Region.

Lancashire-12's index of multiple deprivation (IMD) ranking is 78/151 upper-tier local authorities but 1/26 out of 26 two-tier county council areas, where 1 is the most deprived (2019). Within West Lancashire, Skelmersdale and the surrounding areas some of the highest indices of deprivation for employment, health and education. Lancashire is characterised as having a lower job density than is typical nationally (77 jobs for every 100 working aged people compared to 85 in Great Britain) and a workforce that has a lower proportion of residents with higher level qualifications (LLSIP, March 2023). West Lancashire College, along with other anchor institutions in the local area, are collaborating to help build an inclusive economy to serve the region's needs. In line with the Lancashire LSIP, we work with other education providers and employers to make sure skills and qualifications are closely aligned to labour market demands so businesses have a skilled and productive workforce to draw upon.

The Lancashire-12 area is ranked 3/151 upper-tier local authorities and 2/26 out of 26 two-tier county council areas for number of people income and employment deprived. 11.2% (74,890) people of working age are employment deprived, 13.3% (157,319) people are income deprived and 16.7% (36,322) children aged 0-15 are living in income-deprived families.

Lancashire's working age population is decreasing, and significant numbers are leaving the workforce as a result of ill health or caring responsibilities. In addition, businesses in some sectors are experiencing challenges finding workers who are appropriately qualified or have the qualities they are looking for.



WEST LANCASHIRE COLLEGE ACTIONS TO ENGAGE WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND PROVIDERS

We have drawn our priority strategic objectives for 2024/25 from the priority sectors and key actionable priorities identified in the Lancashire LSIP (August 2023) which was developed by The North and Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, working in partnership with the East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, following a successful Trailblazer in 2021.

Our consultation and engagement has been with valued stakeholders of the College representing one of the following categories, from which we have received feedback and/or endorsements for the extent to which our provision and identified priorities align to the LSIPs and are responsive to employer needs and those of the local economy:

- Civic (including local, regional or national government bodies and designated ERBs)
- Employers (including local, regional and national employers and sector representative bodies)
- Community (including community representative groups and local authority projects)
- Education/Training Providers (including Colleges, Universities, Independent Training providers, Schools, etc.).

In developing our Accountability Statement, we have consulted with civic stakeholders, including Lancashire Skills Hub and North and Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce.

We have engaged with key employers in our local area and across the county, covering a range of sectors including Merseyside and West Lancashire NHS Trust, Pepsico and NSG Group.

We have strong enduring relationships with further and higher education providers in the region and consulted with several key education stakeholders in developing our Accountability Statement, including Winstanley College and Edge Hill University.

The College is part of The Lancashire Colleges group (TLC), a collaborative network that we have invested in for over 25 years. TLC includes all the further education and sixth form colleges in the area and represents the diversity of the sector as a whole. As part of TLC, we have a successful track record

of working collectively and collaboratively to improve quality, enhance the curriculum and deliver programmes that respond to business and community needs.

Through TLC, we have invested in pan-Lancashire analysis that has helped our colleges to better understand the demographic make-up of our learners and what they are studying. Furthermore, we have recently commissioned the production of a series of detailed sector pathway maps which will inform a collaborative review of the curriculum offer, with the aim of ensuring that there is a clear line of sight for all learners to different occupations and sectors.

TLC acts as an advocate and a voice for the sector locally and works closely with key stakeholders, including the Chambers of Commerce, Local Authorities and the LEP to drive recognition of the collective offer of its members and gather intelligence about emerging skills needs.

The College is actively engaged in preparations for a Lancashire Combined County Authority (CCA) Devolution Deal, which is expected to include the devolution of adult skills budgets. Under the banner of TLC, we are working closely with the emerging CCA Team to demonstrate the impact that adult education and skills provision has on the local economy, individuals and communities. We are supporting the CCA Team to consider their skills strategy and to identify the opportunities and additional flexibilities that devolution can bring, allowing the sector to better support local priorities and respond to emerging needs.

TLC was influential, informing and shaping the Lancashire LSIP and the College continues to actively engage with our local Chamber, helping them to engage local employers, capture intelligence and understand current and emerging skills needs. This has already acted as a catalyst for curriculum change and will continue to do so as we work with local employers and industry bodies to design local solutions to emerging skills needs for employers of all sizes.

WEST LANCASHIRE 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>By September 2024, we will review our curriculum offer, learning ladders and progression routes to ensure articulation with emerging national education priorities (e.g. T-Levels, HTQs, etc.) and priority regional growth sectors identified by LSIPs.</p>	<p>Impact:</p> <p>This strategic aim supports the progression of work-ready students into technical-level jobs in sectors of regional importance with a focus on delivering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A progression pipeline of 80+ work-ready Level 3 students in Manufacturing and Engineering, Digital and Health and Social Care. • A progression pipeline of 50+ work-ready students at Level 2 qualified in Construction and Business. • 30 new T-Level students in Health, Early Years, Digital, Business and Engineering.
<p>Aim/Objective 2:</p> <p>By September 2024, we will extend our CEIAG activity further to highlight vocational options and illustrate progression pathways into careers to support skills needs to attract people into areas with skills shortages.</p>	<p>Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will host 10 school visits in key curriculum areas: Digital, Construction, Health and Engineering. • We will arrange a Careers Fair with over 60 employers and invite Year 9 and Year 10 students from six local schools to attend. • We will engage with 20 local employers and HEIs to promote job opportunities and progression routes into careers to existing and new learners.

WEST LANCASHIRE COLLEGE – 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 3:</p> <p>By September 2025, we will provide additional opportunities for adult learners to retrain and upskill, focusing on skills identified in Lancashire LSIP and LMI data for growth into employment and progression in the local area.</p>	<p><u>Impact:</u></p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Offer courses that address local skill gaps and industry needs identified through regional workforce development plans and employer engagement, leading to 80 new adult enrolments on part-time programmes, including Digital, Health, Education and Construction. ▪ Forge strategic partnerships with local businesses, community organisations and public sector agencies to co-design and deliver adult education programmes that meet the needs of learners and the broader community using multiple funding streams, including AEBs, Bootcamps, Learner Loans and Multiply. ▪ Set up a jobs club in collaboration with DWP to establish SWAPs in key areas, including Health, Childcare and Business.
<p>Aim/Objective 4:</p> <p>By September 2025, we will invest in industry-specific resources and estates improvements to provide learners with exceptional spaces for teaching and learning and for social spaces.</p>	<p><u>Impact:</u></p> <p>In 2024/25, we will invest more to further improve our resources by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Using LSIF funding to research the viability of and begin planning for Hospitality and Catering programmes, with the longer-term ambition of 15 trained students by the end of 2025/26. ▪ Planning and resourcing our T-Level offer to extend to five routes, including Digital, Health, Engineering, Education and Business, investing significantly in physical and human resources to deliver high standards of education, leading to skilled, work-ready students. ▪ Further enhance our social spaces on campus, making West Lancashire College a great place to learn and teach at the heart of its community. ▪ This will help to address lack of work-readiness from those on full-time college courses and increase engagement with employers for students, providing employers with a pipeline of over 100 vocationally competent, well-rounded staff.

WEST LANCASHIRE COLLEGE – 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 5:</p> <p>By September 2025, we will have established appropriate procedures, monitoring and recording systems to capture cross-college stakeholder activity to consolidate and further enhance our partnership work to better support employers to navigate the skills system and improve future staffing and skills planning.</p>	<p>Impact:</p> <p>Review current employer/stakeholder CRMs with a view to consolidating either locally or using NCG-wide CRM solutions to include all employer and stakeholder activity from across the College. The CRM will be an amalgamation of information from current and new documentation and processes, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer Diagnostic for Skills Matrix – this will be reviewed to ensure that all courses have employer endorsement on content, suitability and correct sequencing fit for industry. • CEIAG Matrix – matrix to be developed that maps out career interventions by individual courses. • Stakeholder Involvement Database – employers who have supported our various events in College, including The Careers Fair, Summer Science Festival, etc. • College Skills Board – embed NCG’s place-based governance by developing a College Skills Board with membership aligned to Lancashire LSIP priorities (Health, Digital and Visitor Economy). <p>These actions will support 5% (40) growth in the number of work-ready students progressing from College into local jobs, specifically in Construction, Health and Business, in line with local skills needs.</p>

WEST LANCASHIRE COLLEGE LINKS TO SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

[Lancashire LSIP](#)

[Lancashire 2050](#)

[Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub – Strategic Framework](#)

[Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub – College Curriculum Data Pack](#)

[IMD Data: English Indices of Deprivation 2019](#)



WEST LANCASHIRE COLLEGE LOCAL NEEDS DUTY STATEMENT

West Lancashire College meets its local needs duty. This has been achieved through our partnership work with key stakeholders to inform and shape our curriculum. We are committed to addressing local skills gaps identified in the Lancashire LSIP and providing our students with the knowledge, skills and behaviours to progress into employment.

The North and Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, as the lead employer representative body on the Lancashire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), has worked closely with employers and providers to help develop a greater understanding of what employers require from the skills system. This work resulted in the publication of the Plan in August 2023, which highlighted the key priorities of employers and laid out a roadmap to address these priorities.

Common across all sectors were concerns among employers about people leaving education being 'work-ready' with the 'right attitude' to work and learning. Alongside specific shortage areas in each priority sector, there were constant themes around the increasing importance of digital skills in different job roles across all sectors, as well as a lack of understanding of how the move to net zero and improved sustainability will affect businesses, jobs and skills.

In response to these identified priorities, we have introduced T-Levels in Health, Childcare and Digital, and will extend our offer to include Engineering and Business in 2024. We have also developed new programmes for adults to upskill and retrain in these sectors, utilising multiple funding streams to increase participation and availability.

We will further develop our offer to meet more of the LSIP's actionable priorities by extending our work with local schools to attract more people into shortage occupations and sectors, develop employability skills for young people and work with employers to help them navigate the skills system. We will also research the viability of programmes in Travel, Tourism and Hospitality to support the growing number of roles for the visitor economy in the region. Additionally, we will refine and extend our enrichment, personal development and work experience offer to ensure our students leave College with not just vocational skills, but the right attitudes and behaviours for the world of work.



NCG LOCAL NEEDS DUTY

NCG is meeting its local needs duty in its area of operation across the country as well as supporting the national skills priorities.

NCG provides a framework through its executive and its governance arrangements that enable the Corporation to satisfy itself that it is meeting the local needs duty.

Each college has demonstrated that it is meeting the local skills needs in its geographical area as well as contributing to the wider skills needs of its region and contributing towards national priorities. This is confirmed by the College Boards who have specific knowledge of the local skills needs and opportunities.

NCG has reviewed and refreshed its governance arrangements to provide better advice and oversight in developing a skilled workforce. Local college board members are drawn from the four key Ofsted stakeholder groups (employers, educators, civic and community) and have knowledge of the local skills demands and challenges.

NCG has set its five high level aims that are aligned to the broader activity of NCG and cut across all our colleges in meeting priority skills needs. These are supported by more specific, local objectives that are identified, developed and agreed at college level. Together the two sets of objectives provide comprehensive targets for NCG.

To complement the local arrangements, NCG has worked to develop regional and national partnerships to provide input into our curriculum offer and planning. Whereas the employer stakeholders have direct input to the local curriculum offer in the college, the national relationships tend to be with sector-based ERB and other education providers to provide broader objectives. For example, implementing curriculum reform and planning is developed with national partners such as Activate Learning and LTE and locally with Education Partnership North East and regional Universities. The employer relationships are with organisations such as Chamber of Commerce and CBI.

We recognise the need for continuous improvement, as addressing the skills needs will require a process of reflection and adjustment to meet the changing demands of the external environment. Significant progress has been made against the previous year's aims/objectives and new challenges emerging.

The colleges have recognised that there is more to be done around the skills needs for Digital, Health and Care, Engineering and Construction trades. The green economy and sustainability is a theme that cuts across most areas.

In some areas Hospitality remains a regional priority and more will need to be done to meet these needs. Where NCG does not offer much training in a subject area such as Haulage and Logistics, we will work with and support other providers to meet the local needs.

Although NCG is involved in a great number of partnerships at local and national level, we recognise that we need to continue to build on this success to provide a comprehensive approach to meeting the skills needs.



NCG CORPORATION / GOVERNING BODY STATEMENT

On behalf of the NCG Corporation, it is hereby confirmed that the NCG plan as set out above and in the individual college accountability statements, reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the Corporation at their meeting on 21 May 2024.

The plan will be published on the College's website within three months of the start of the new academic year and can be accessed on the NCG website: www.ncgrp.co.uk

Chair of Governors

John Widdowson



Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

Liz Bromley



