
LEWISHAM COLLEGE – ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT 2025/26

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 has updated the Strategic plan “Our Strategy Towards 2030”, which outlines our strategic objectives for the next 7 years. The relationship with the Accountability Statement is that the statement outlines our SMART targets for the next 12 months, which link in to the overall strategy and enables our local board to measure our distance travelled and impact towards our overall objectives.

Lewisham College’s strategic objectives are;

1. We will ensure financial viability to support long-term growth, ensuring we continue to provide high-quality education and training for Lewisham and South London’s diverse local and business communities.
2. We will continue to prioritise essential and transferable skills throughout all aspects of our curriculum, i.e. English, maths, digital, resilience, team-work, oracy, etc. prioritise improving literacy, numeracy, and digital skills. Along with closing attainment gaps and improving outcomes for underrepresented groups.
3. We will develop recruitment initiatives to ensure our staff profile is reflective of the rich diversity within Lewisham.
4. We will strengthen outreach with local schools, employers, and community groups to increase access to education. We will ensure our courses align with employment opportunities within Lewisham and across London.
5. We will grow our apprenticeship provision by 5% annually, working closely with Lewisham and South London based businesses.

6. We will increase our full-time 16–19 student numbers by 3% annually, expanding vocational, academic and T Level offer, to grow to 2030 learners by 2030.
7. We will ensure transparency, accountability, and strong student and community representation in decision-making, whilst maintaining the highest levels of educational oversight and strategic leaderships. Our local board will be representative of our local community and members have expertise in the world of work, education and the local community.

Lewisham College Context and Place

Lewisham College is a medium sized further education college, which is part of NCG. Lewisham is based in South East London and is part of the Central London Forward sub region. Although Lewisham is an inner London borough with high levels of deprivation, especially to the north of the borough, parts of Lewisham feel very suburban London with green social spaces. Lewisham is part of the London Local Skills Improvement Plan, which has been led by BusinessLDN, as the Employer Representative Body (ERB).

Lewisham is an anchor institution which is fully embedded in the local community. The majority of education currently delivered is English, maths and ESOL programmes to adults and young people, along with a variety of vocational pathways for those of all ages to pursue.

The majority of learners reside in Lewisham borough. However, some students attend from Greenwich, Southwark, Croydon, Bromley and Tower Hamlets boroughs.

Lewisham Borough has a history of standing up for equalities, of being pioneering, creative, ambitious and driven by its 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. Lewisham is designated as a 'Borough of Sanctuary'.

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.

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.

Employers 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 BusinessLDN'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 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 continues to have one of the high rates of unemployment and economically inactive in London. With 15,011 individuals unemployed, representing 7.2% of the working aged population.

Lewisham continues to see an increase in young people Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET), again the largest impact tends to be for young black men.

Approach to developing annual Accountability Statement

Lewisham College's approach to develop the Accountability Statement is by actively engaging with employers, education, civic and community stakeholders.

The Accountability Statement has also been informed and influenced by our recent Ofsted inspection which took place in November 2024.

Exceptional partnerships, civic and employer engagement, along with collaboration have been fundamental pillars of our college strategy, facilitating the realisation of our vision to develop future talent. Informed by priority sectors set out by Skills England report, Industrial Strategy, the Mayor of London's developing Growth Plan and BusinessLDN Local Skills Improvement Plan, our Accountability Statement is thoughtfully crafted. Leaders and staff across the college extensively liaise with key stakeholders, employers and partners to develop curriculum sequenced delivery plans, ensuring our curriculum remains inclusive, fit for purpose and employer driven.

Our curriculum development is underpinned by our Employer Advisory Boards (EAB), of which we have established 9 sector focused EAB (Early Years, Health & Social Care, IT & Digital, Business & Finance, Construction, Hospitality, Sport, Hair & Beauty and Creative). These boards are made up of employers, stakeholders, civic and community partners, who inform and challenge our curriculum offer. Whilst supporting us with sequencing our delivery and ensure 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, leading to sustained outcomes. Senior leaders are represented in all four work-strands of the Lewisham Strategic Partnership, along with active engagement with the Department of Work & Pensions.

Collaborations with institutions like Goldsmiths University, Job Centre Plus, Millwall Community Trust and Lewisham Council (Education and Economic Development departments), enrich our curriculum priorities. 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 Transport for London, Thames Water, Greggs, ISS, Lewisham Hospital, Lewisham Council and GLL - Better 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>Aim/Objective 1:</p> <p>Aim: Ensure our technical qualifications at level 2 and at level 3 are employer led and endorsed</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <p>Introduce level 2 and level 3 vocationally relevant skills-based qualifications that provide direct entry into employment in areas identified as national skills priorities</p>	<p>National Priority</p> <p>Highly skilled individuals are required to address areas with high volumes of vacancies, which are expected to increase such as health and early years, and areas that are important in providing opportunities for employment in key growth areas such as clean energy industries.</p> <p>Business LDN</p> <p>Galvanise more employer/educator co-design of provision, especially in areas with fast changing innovative technology.</p> <p>Scale-up employer provider collaboration through more co-design of courses and workforce</p>

	<p>exchange programmes to ensure training keeps up to speed with changing industry training needs.</p> <p>Impact: 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"> • Continue to successfully expand the T level programme in Digital Support with a Networking pathway and to recruit 16 new students in Sept 2025. • Introduce T level programme in Early Years Educator and recruit 8 students in Sept 2025 • Introduce the newly released L2 Technical Occupational Entry qualifications in Health and Social Care, and for Early Years Practitioner (first teach Sept 2025). Recruit 20 new students to each programme in Sept 2025
<p>Aim/Objective 2:</p> <p>Aim: Develop our supported learning curriculum to ensure our learners with SEND have access to progress into the College’s wider setting, jobs and world of work.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <p>Pilot new Progression to Vocational programme for learners within Supported Learning</p> <p>Reshape Supported Internship pathways, with ‘pre-SIPs’ and new external SIP programmes in Lewisham.</p>	<p>National Priority</p> <p>The development of essential skills is a key priority across all sectors. Those with SEND needs will require opportunities to develop English, maths and digital skills.</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>Impact: SEND learners develop skills valued by employers, demonstrate their value in the workplace and confidence in their abilities to perform successfully at work.</p>

	<p>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"> • Identify 4 new large employers who are equipped to diversify their workforce by embracing neurodiversity and disability and taking on SIPs placements. • 8 learners successfully complete an external Supported Internship programme by June 2026 • 40% of the cohort gain employment by August 2025 which and 60% progress into other positive destinations which has a positive impact on their finances, health and wellbeing. • Establish new Entry 3 Supported Learning 'Progression to Vocational' Programme, with cohort of 8 learners.
<p>Aim/Objective 3:</p> <p>Aim: Develop our curriculum for transferable skills, prioritising ESOL, English & maths</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <p>Develop employer endorsed vocational pathways for construction, health & social care, and facilities services</p> <p>Develop relevant and contextualised English and maths programmes in all vocational areas e.g. construction, hospitality, and health</p>	<p>National Priority</p> <p>English and maths skills, up to and including level 2, have been identified as a priority to enable individuals to progress to key areas such as Health, Construction, Creative, Digital and Financial Services. Additionally, Digital skills at level 1 have been identified as a priority to support improved outcomes and take-up of priority programmes.</p> <p>Business LDN</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 modern 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.</p>

	<p>Programmes need to move away from traditional qualification led to a skills-led approach.</p> <p>Impact: In addition to essential English, maths and digital skills, learners will develop transferable skills such problem solving, resilience and communication, all of which are key for employers and in industry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction SWAP endorsed by employers with guaranteed interviews for 24 adult learners by July 2026 • Continue to develop English skills for construction and facilities services programme, focused on health and safety language, to be completed by 30 learners by June 2026 • Continue to develop English skills for Hospitality programme, focused on culinary, housekeeping and customer service, to be completed by 30 learners by July 2026
<p>Aim/Objective 4:</p> <p>Aim: Embed the NCG People Plan, identifying actions to take forward the strategic aims of recruit, retain and develop</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <p>Pilot the Higher Apprenticeship – Learning & Skills Teacher</p>	<p>National Priority</p> <p>Both the development of essential skills (English and maths up to Level 2, and Digital Skills up to Level 1) as well as the sector specialist skills which enable learners to progress into these industries. In order to meet this demand, the education sector requires specialist teachers with industry experience and technical knowhow to teach and train the future workforce. Training teachers is a key priority which will enable the education sector to meet the national priorities.</p> <p>Business LDN</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.</p>

	<p>Given the rapid evolution of industries, colleges also struggle to ensure that their teachers remain abreast of current practices and emerging technologies.</p> <p>Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohort of 12 Higher Apprenticeship, Learning & Skills Teachers to be recruited by February 2026.
<p>Aim/Objective 5:</p> <p>Aim: Embed an ambitious and bespoke study programme for 16–18-year-old learners not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), linked to the Youth Guarantee</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <p>Create a study programme that engages young people who are currently not in education, employment or training (NEET)</p> <p>Enable 16–18-year-old learners to develop essential skills in English and maths, and study for vocationally relevant qualifications</p> <p>Upskill and prepare young people to progress onto employment in areas identified as national priorities such as health, digital, creative and hospitality</p>	<p>National Priority</p> <p>Participation in education for some 16–18-year-olds continues to be challenging and therefore, they are unable to progress into meaningful employment or further training. The creation of a bespoke study programme that focuses on the development of essential skills in English, maths and digital, alongside a chosen vocational pathway in which they have expressed an interest, will give them the skills to progress into vocationally relevant technical qualifications</p> <p>Business LDN</p> <p>Galvanise young people who are not in education, employment or training to upskill and gain relevant qualifications Working with local employers, meaningful industry placement opportunities will be created, especially in areas with identified as local priorities such as health, hospitality, creative and construction</p> <p>Impact: Re-engage young people whose experience of education has sometimes been challenging through an innovative study programme that enhances opportunities to progress into further vocationally relevant education and training</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop study programme that focuses on the development of the identified national skills priorities of English and maths. Enrol 24 learners in Sept 2025 • Collaborate with key vocational areas such as Health, Digital, Hospitality and Creative to develop four vocational pathways. Enrol 18 learners across the pathways • Develop an entry level 3 Construction pathway for students who wish to develop skills in this high priority area
<p>Aim/Objective 6:</p> <p>Develop the Construction offer to ensure that it promotes progression into green jobs & promoting sustainability through new pathways including courses in retrofit.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot courses linked to green jobs, including retrofit. • Embed Green awareness skills across all construction courses. • Develop links with net zero focussed employers leading to industry placements, talks, visits and events leading to employment. • Develop Green Energies provision, increasing the offer and 	<p>National Priority</p> <p>Providing opportunities for employment in sector growth areas Green jobs, Net Zero and construction is a key National Priority. There are further priorities to tackle the high volumes of vacancies by ensuring skilled workforce is</p> <p>Impact:</p> <p>To support and train learners with the specialist industry skills and knowledge to enable them to progress into employment, with a particular focus on learners entering into green jobs and industries working towards the Government's Net Zero target.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish two new Level 2 Retrofit programmes, 12 learners in each - one for adults, one for 16 – 18s, completed by July 2026 • Increase provision of Level 3 Advanced Technical Diploma in Electrical Installations, with a focus on Green Energies. To increase offer by 20% by July 2026. • Increase selection of units within all construction programmes covering environmental awareness in the construction industry, each course to have minimum 1 unit per course – to be delivered in 2025/26 academic year.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop link with a 'Net Zero' employer to provide work experience opportunities for learners, industry talks and visits by July 2026.
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Lewisham College links to supporting documentation

[Skills England: driving growth and widening opportunities](#)

[Invest 2035: the UK's modern industrial strategy - GOV.UK](#)

[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 Skills England Report, Industrial Strategy, 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 based 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 level in Digital Support and Advanced Certificate in Electrical Engineering. 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, South East London Chamber of Commerce, 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.