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## NEWCASTLE COLLEGE – ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT 2024/25

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### Newcastle College – Our Purpose

As the region's largest college, recruiting across NEMCA, we play a pivotal role in meeting the skills needs in our region's key emerging economic sectors. Our Strategy to 2030 commits us to a clear vision to 'develop the talent for our region'; our 8 Strategic Objectives articulate with the national and local skills priorities set out in our LSIPs and our duties laid out in the Skills and Post-16 Education Act.

1. **Exceptional teaching and learning, enhanced through technology** – In collaboration with industry, we will develop outstanding teachers to equip our students with the skills needed to fill the demand for jobs in local, regional and national growth sectors. We will continue to focus our efforts around a sustainable path for industry professionals via the 'Teach in FE' campaign and will expand our engagement with employers aiming to develop a pilot 'industry expert tutor and mentorship model' in priority sectors of Health, Green Energy and /or Digital.
2. **A regional Apprenticeship Hub** – Providing employers with a new talent pipeline and the opportunity to grow and develop their workforce is critical for regional prosperity. We will focus our apprenticeship offer in regional priority sectors and those with skills shortages, including construction, digital and professional services. We will explore the development and implementation of a flexible apprenticeship scheme to address the needs of the Green Energy sector.
3. **A North-East University Centre** – through co-creation with employers and regional stakeholders we will develop programmes to provide the technical and specialist digital skills required by our region. Our efforts will focus around articulation and progression routes from L3 technical study to Higher Technical Qualifications, working across priority sectors, including Digital; Advanced Manufacturing; Health; Culture, Creative, Tourism and Hospitality.
4. **The North-East's best learning facilities** – our students must be taught in industry standard facilities to transition effectively into the region's workforce. We will collaborate with other education providers and with industry to respond to emerging workplace trends, to develop the facilities to underpin technical skills for

regional growth, and to transform our digital estate, thereby building the digital literacy and proficiency of our talented students and graduates.

5. **An aligned and inclusive curriculum** - Our curriculum, endorsed by industry and integrating employer-led experiences, develops the skills that students need for their next steps. Our expanding technical FE, HE and apprenticeship offer articulates with national policy initiatives, e.g. T levels, HTQs, and matches sectors of regional growth identified by our LSIPs. By doing so, we meet the demand for skills that employers need to boost productivity. Our Adult offer focuses on social inclusion and removing barriers to access good regional jobs.
6. **Leading with partners, for our communities** – As an Anchor Institution, we deliver a place-based solution to skills. We collaborate with strategic education partners to tackle the region's social challenges, and we work closely with our communities to support access to education for all. Our programmes develop well-rounded students (digitally-literate, numerate, literate and confident communicators and team workers) alongside providing the sector-specific training, required to support upskilling and reskilling and to secure better outcomes and support progression into work.
7. **Investing in our Future** – We deliver high-quality, value for money education and seek to optimise demand-led funding opportunities. Our surplus, alongside funding grants, support investment in facilities to deliver the skilled workforce for the local economy. Multi-million pound investment has been secured from the DfE, OfS and from NCG reserves, with more to come. This investment is prioritising our capital plans in sectors of regional importance, including, Green Energy / Engineering, Digital, Health and Social Care, Culture Creative, Hospitality and Tourism, and Construction.
8. **Promoting our Health and Wellbeing** – We have recently launched the NCG People Plan with a clear focus on three strategic priorities of Recruitment, Retention and Development; through our People and Development Board, we are progressing our workplace culture.

Our College Wellbeing Board, behind our successful NTCA Good Work Pledge Advanced Standard award, supports colleagues to be more physically active and lead healthier and more productive lives. Our first-class student support services ensure that our students progress well, have support to overcome any challenges

that they face, and move on to positive destinations. This supports the training of talent for, and drives the productivity of, the City and region.

### **Newcastle College - Context and Place**

Newcastle College is an anchor institution operating in NE England delivering programmes in all funding streams throughout our City and across the area covered by NTCA LSIP and NELSIP (the entire proposed North East Mayoral Combined Authority - NEMCA). The Newcastle Upon Tyne City ward, surrounding the College, is one of the most deprived districts in England, ranked 23 (most deprived) out of 317 based on the national Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD, 2019). The region in which we are based has some very significant social challenges. It has life expectancy below the UK average for men and women, high levels of economic inactivity, and the highest rate of child poverty in the country (38%) (North East Child Poverty Commission, 2023). The College are collaborating with other anchor institutions to build an inclusive economy to serve the City's residents, particularly those with fewest choices and least control.

Our particular regional economic challenges include high youth and adult unemployment, pockets of high deprivation and a slow post-covid-19 recovery. The Region's longer term economic challenge is skills supply and shortage. It continues to lag the rest of the country regarding the proportion of better jobs, with 42.6% of overall jobs in the North East being Managerial, Professional or Technical versus a national average of 51.9%. Levels of advanced and higher educational attainment in the North East are relatively low. The region has the lowest level of graduate employment, equivalent to 143,000 fewer graduate jobs than the UK average, worth circa £1/3bn of lost regional income a year (IFS, 2020). There is an over-representation of residents with low or no qualifications, the proportion of Level 3 qualified adults is the lowest in the country, and the rate of progression from Level 2 to Level 3 by age 19 is 10% below the national average (DfE, 2021).

GCSE Maths & English attainment is in line with national levels at age 16, but 30% of each annual cohort are still without a Level 2 qualification in Maths & English by age 19, meaning that many adults lack basic literacy and numeracy skills. It is vital, therefore, that skills development focuses on residents employed in low paid, low

skilled jobs, as well as on developing higher-level technical skills to meet shortages in our growth and recovery sectors, as identified by our ERBs.

NEECC, leading the LSIP in NTCA, have identified key priority sectors to be Construction; Green Energy / Industrial Decarbonisation and Net Zero; Health & Social Care; Culture, Creative, Tourism & Hospitality; Business & Professional Services, alongside three cross-cutting themes (Digital Skills; Professional Development / Business Skills; Employability). NEAA Ltd, leading the NELSIP, have also identified priority sectors, several of which overlap. The differing priorities include Advanced Manufacturing; Health Science; Transport & Logistics. Our employer-led curriculum supports our community, developing talent for the regional economy and beyond. The majority of our delivery serves learners, employers and communities within our core area of the NTCA, Gateshead and South Tyneside. Specialist and emerging technical delivery, particularly in Green Energy and Transport, serves a broader community across the geography of both regional LSIPs.

Around 8,000 people are employed in the specialist digital sector in the region, thereby employment is still relatively low - 1.5% of workforce versus national average of 4.4% and found adjacent to areas of higher density (Newcastle & North Tyneside) (NELSIP 2023). Growth in Digital and Professional Skills for Business, are vital to growth of other priority sectors and are served through our comprehensive entry level to undergraduate offer. Green Energy underpins the UK's 2050 Net Zero commitment and that of our City's 2030 ambitions; it is estimated that there will be a demand for 6,000 regional jobs in this sector in the next 5 years (NTCA LSIP 2023). Our specialist Green Energy Academy is developing advanced engineering and maintenance technicians, fabricators and welders to meet these needs, and those of the growing motor vehicle electrification industry. Health is the largest employer within our LSIPs, with 60,000+ employed across a range of Health and Social Care providers and the 5 NHS Trusts, whilst also having the largest number of active job vacancies (c2,000 per month in the NTCA area (Indeed, May 2023).

Our Healthcare curriculum, the region's largest in post-16 education, is addressing this demand. Culture, Creative and Tourism industries underpin our region's inward investment proposition; Creative Industries grew by 68% between 2011-2020, the fastest of an UK region. Our Arts curriculum is aligned to the City's Culture Compact,

our music students harness their talents through Generator, and we successfully train the talent pipeline to support the 87% of hospitality businesses who said they are very likely to face recruitment challenges (NEECC Quarterly Economic Survey Q4 2022).

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

We have drawn our priority strategic objectives for 2024/25 from the priority sectors, key changes and actions identified by the ERBs in our LSIPs.

Our consultation and engagement with valued stakeholders of the College from the following categories, ensures that we continue to deliver an aligned and inclusive curriculum that delivers local skills needs:

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

At a Senior level, we work closely with our key stakeholder groups and other Education providers, holding strategic conversations that bring us together on collaborative projects such as SDF, LSIF and UKSPF. These conversations have involved, for example NEMCA, NEECC, our Local Authorities and Council Leaders, Newcastle and Northumbria Universities, EPNE and Tyne Coast College. Work of this nature helps to avoid duplication of effort in the skills system and ensures that we are well placed to deliver the local skills needs captured within the LSIPs.

At a more focussed delivery and sequencing level, employers and key stakeholders endorse our curriculum learning ladders and progression pathways. This endorsement is recorded in our Curriculum Intent and Learning Ladders documents – examples include Barclays, Nissan, Gateshead Hospital Trust, Sterling Pharma, Endiprev, Department of Work and Pensions, Nexus, Newcastle International Airport, Beamish Museum, Your Homes Newcastle and Lumo.

Our Course RoadMap documents capture specific examples of where our key stakeholders are engaged in delivering and / or assessing the knowledge, skills and behaviours that our students develop aligned to local needs.

Our College Local Board have had input into, and consultation on, our Accountability Statement commitments and are reassured that the actions that we are taking directly impact and/or contribute to the skills needs identified in our LSIP.

### Newcastle 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>In line with our year 1 Accountability Statement commitments, we will continue to develop an employer-led curriculum, aligned to national education reform and ensuring a prioritisation of the technical skills needed for LSIP priority sectors</p>	<p>Develop and deliver an aligned and inclusive curriculum with clear progression routes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Builds on our strong educational partnerships and school liaison to provide clear progression pathways for our young people into jobs in demand</li> <li>• Ensures articulation with national education priorities, reforms (e.g. T Levels, HTQs, etc.) and regional priority sectors identified by ERBs</li> <li>• Focuses our curriculum content to ensure that students are work-ready at the end of their programmes by:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prioritising patient-focused communication skills in practical sessions and a focus on holistic realistic working environment training to develop interpersonal and telephone communication skills (Health &amp; Social Care)</li> <li>- Embedding of communication skills development and understanding of principles of project management to support the transition into Business and Professional Services jobs</li> <li>- Integrating employer-led experiences into our programmes to raise awareness, aspirations and a focus on team working skills, professional behaviours and expectations in workplace settings</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <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"> <li>• a progression pipeline of 400+ work-ready level 3 students in Advanced Manufacturing, Renewable &amp; Subsea Engineering, Building Services</li> </ul>

	<p>Electrotechnical, Digital, Health, Social Care and Life Sciences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a progression pipeline of 600+ work-ready students qualified in Creative, Hospitality and Tourism sectors</li> <li>• 145 new T Level students (Health, Science, Digital, Construction, Business Management and Mechanical Engineering)</li> <li>• 200 more students qualified at higher technical level (L4+)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Aim/Objective 2:</b></p> <p>Through co-creation and consultation with employers and regional stakeholders the currency of our higher education programme content and assessment will develop the technical skills and specialist digital skills required by our region.</p>	<p>We will focus our Higher Education curriculum review around priority sectors of Business and Professional Services, Culture, Creative, Hospitality and Tourism, and Digital.</p> <p>Specifically, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and refresh our Civil Engineering Higher National programme to support graduates to transition into public sector planning, surveying and site management jobs</li> <li>• Develop curriculum content in our Creative and Arts programmes that enhance entrepreneurship and employability, so that graduates are confident to set up their own business or ready to add value to an employer.</li> <li>• Design 4 and 5 year programmes of study that articulate routes from further to higher education e.g. T-Level to HTQ</li> <li>• Promote cross-faculty learning experiences that develop the critical thinking, problem solving and work-ready skills of our graduates</li> </ul> <p>These actions will contribute to the region’s ambition to increase in the proportion of working age adults with level 4+ qualifications, as well as the proportion of L3 students progressing to higher technical study in priority sectors. Creative, Culture, Tourism and Hospitality, a sector identified as having immediately vacancies, will benefit from 350 creatives graduating from Level 5+.</p>
<p><b>Aim/Objective 3:</b></p> <p>We will support employers to identify (and access) their workforce technical skills requirements by enhancing the</p>	<p>Review our ‘apprenticeship business engagement toolkit’ to enable employers to better understand the joint expectations of apprenticeship programmes and associated apprenticeship funding models. This will</p>

<p>routes of progression through to apprenticeships in the Green Energy sector.</p>	<p>support increased uptake of apprentices in the Green Energy sector.</p> <p>Engage employers in the endorsement of a curriculum which supports learners from various entry points to progress onto apprenticeships in the Green Energy (Offshore Wind and Renewables) Sector with aligned exit points to support their recruitment cycle.</p> <p>This will support the delivery of the key technical skills needed for regional growth, with 20 new starts on Green Energy apprenticeship pilot programmes by January 2025.</p>
<p>Aim/Objective 4:</p> <p>Through effective use of funding bids and devolved authority AEB funding, we will create a focussed suite of short-course programmes to upskill, reskill and retrain in priority sectors. Our offer will also focus on social inclusion to support the most disadvantaged residents of our region to develop the skills needed to remove barriers to access good jobs</p>	<p>We will work collaboratively with existing strategic education partners to extend the reach of learning opportunities to a broader range of underrepresented groups of the City of Newcastle and beyond, across the wider devolved authority, by...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing an introductory-level (&lt;L2) community-based offer of digital literacy / digital refresher to increase engagement of those seeking employment - 900 residents will engage as part of UKSPF Employability programme</li> <li>• Delivering a successful Multiply programme as part of the UKSPF, resulting in 600 more adults having improved their basic numeracy skills (Entry level to L2)</li> <li>• Designing a short-course adult education offer focussed on upskill, reskill and retrain in priority sectors, commencing with the following sectors and minimum growth targets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Higher level, specialist skills in Green Energy, Wind and Renewables - 20 adults trained on a Skills Bootcamp in Welding.</li> <li>- Additional content / units for Business Professionals to upskill in financial services – including accounting, profit and loss and cashflow - 50 adults trained across Level 2 and 3 Accountancy</li> <li>- Creative Bootcamps for Technical Stage specialists - 32 residents to be trained</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Explore the development of fast-track pathways for mature workers to retrain in the following priority sectors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health new Level 3 - 50 adults</li> <li>- Digital Networking and Software Engineering - 8 in each discipline</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Aim/Objective 5:</p> <p>During 2024/25, to support our curriculum re-alignment and</p>	<p>Working in collaboration with partner providers and with industry, through our advisory boards, we will make effective use of funding opportunities to secure capital investment. This investment will come from DfE funds /</p>



<p>review, we will collaborate with other providers and with industry to secure the capital investment needed to respond to emerging workplace trends and to develop the facilities to deliver the technical skills for regional growth</p>	<p>bids, OfS funds / bids and / or industry sponsorship / donations to establish and/or update our industry-standard resources in priority sectors.</p> <p>We will have a particular focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our digital transformation plans to support the integration of basic digital skills into technical programmes, including in construction studied by 270 study programme students</li> <li>• Providing access to specialist sector-specific software and programmes to enhance skills and learning experiences for 600 study programme Health &amp; Social Care students</li> <li>• Building digital literacy across all priority sectors to build a progression pipeline of 300+ work-ready students with L3+ technical skills</li> </ul>
<p><b>Aim/Objective 6:</b></p> <p>To ensure that we retain the capacity and expertise in the teaching profession to train the workforce of tomorrow, we will expand our collaboration with industry through the exploration and development of an ‘industry expert tutor and mentor scheme’.</p> <p>We will aim to develop pilot schemes in two identified LSIP priority areas.</p>	<p>In an extension to the Government’s ‘Teach in FE’ campaign, we will build on our year 1 Accountability Statement successes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• expand our collaboration with employers in the Health and Green Energy sectors to develop a vehicle by which to bring ‘live’ industry expertise to students</li> <li>• embed opportunities for industry co-teaching into our technical education programmes in Health and Digital sectors</li> <li>• develop a pilot scheme focussed on 5 shared industry tutors</li> <li>• develop an industry mentor programme in a minimum of two priority sectors to support the transition of recently qualified students into employment</li> <li>• Undertake a review of our College Strategy to prioritise the development of expertise in the application of AI and understanding of sustainable futures in our teaching workforce. This will underpin the preparation of our students for jobs of the future</li> </ul>

### **Newcastle College links to supporting documentation**

[Home - North East Local Skills Improvement Plan \(NELSIP\)](#)

[www.necc.co.uk/lcip](http://www.necc.co.uk/lcip)

[Education, Inclusion and Skills Archives - NTCA \(northoftyne-ca.gov.uk\)](http://northoftyne-ca.gov.uk)

[Homepage - North East Evidence Hub \(northeastlep.co.uk\)](http://northeastlep.co.uk)

[Review of post-16 qualifications at level 3 in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[220728-NTCA-UKSPF-IP-Summary-Document-Final.pdf \(northoftyne-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.northoftyne-ca.gov.uk/220728-NTCA-UKSPF-IP-Summary-Document-Final.pdf)

<https://www.teach-in-further-education.campaign.gov.uk/>

## **Newcastle College Local Needs Duty**

Newcastle College meets its local needs duty. We continue to deliver on our vision of 'developing talent for the region' and are focussed on, and committed to, delivering the skills needed by our region in the identified NTCA priority sectors of Construction; Green Energy; Health and Social Care; Digital; Business and Professional Services; Culture, Creative, Hospitality and Tourism.

Our areas of significant expertise and anticipated growth to meet demand are in Green Energy (served by our specialist Energy Academy and serving the Floating Wind industries located in the NEMCA Green Skills Investment Zone), Health and Social Care (working collaboratively with the NHS Trusts and private providers through Sector-based Work Academy Programmes), Digital (with an offer underpinned by Digital Essentials for residents and expert technical skills at higher levels) and Culture, Creative, Hospitality and Tourism (where we are engaged in Bootcamps and investing LSIF funding to ensure access to the upskill and reskill training needed in the City and wider region).

Whilst we have thriving programmes in Construction and Engineering, we recognise that we are only part of the skills system here and we work collaboratively with other providers to ensure that efforts are not duplicated.

For instance, we have chosen to support EPNE and Tyne Coast College, through SDF and LSIF efforts, to focus on modern methods of construction and advanced manufacturing / electrification (for net zero), whilst we have pursued specialism in green energy and floating wind. Similarly Transport and Logistics, which features in the NELSIP, is not an area in which play a significant role. Where we have had an opportunity to support the skills needs here, through Bootcamp and AEB provision, we have done so in collaboration with partners and in support of the immediate talent pipeline required by this sector.

We remain committed to collaborative work with other education providers in this way, as we move forward. We will also look at how we can better meet the LSIPs actionable priorities by using our degree awarding powers to review our Business and Professional Services and Built Environment courses to support the transition of skills and workers into the public sector planning, surveying and site management jobs required by our LSIP. We will further develop our Creative and Arts programmes to enhance entrepreneurship and employability skills, so that our graduates are confident to set up their own business, contribute to our region's economy and/or be ready to add immediate value to an employer.