



Windsor Forest
Colleges Group (WFCG)

Annual Accountability Statement 2026-27



Our Vision

Our students will be recognised locally and nationally for their positive impact on the communities and industries in which they choose to work.

Our Purpose

To inspire our students to gain the skills, knowledge and behaviours they need to be resilient and thrive in an ever changing world.



Core Values



Excellence

A culture of creativity, high expectations, ambition and aspiration



Respect

Showing fairness, courtesy and mutual respect to each other and our environment



Integrity

Honesty, openness and trust at the heart of College life



Diversity

Celebrating diversity and inclusivity as a key to our success

Supporting links:

- Local Skills Improvement Plans LSIP
- [Latest Ofsted inspection report for the group](#)
- [Latest Annual Report and Financial Statements \(year ended 31 July 2025\)](#)
- [WFCG Strategic Plan \(2024–2029\)](#)

1. OUR PURPOSE & STRATEGIC PLAN

The Windsor Forest Colleges Group (WFCG) strategic plan was approved by our governing body in June 2024. In March 2024, the group was given the grade of 'STRONG' by Ofsted in recognition of the strong contribution that the colleges in the group make to meeting local, regional and national skills.

Our purpose and curriculum intent are to inspire our students to gain the skills, knowledge and behaviours needed to fulfil their potential and successfully progress into the workplace, supporting economic growth and employer needs at national, regional and local levels. This approach supports the national priorities set out in the Skills England report, Industrial Strategy and the Plan for Change.

The college has five strategic priorities:

1. Growth - Expand provision with particular focus on 16-19 study programme, adults, apprenticeship & HE
2. High quality, always, everywhere – Deliver consistently high standards across all provision.
3. Personalised learning - Develop study programmes and learning experiences tailored to student starting points, aims and needs.
4. Alliances – Strengthen partnerships with employers, local authorities and communities.
5. Financial Resilience – Improve the financial health rating from 'RI' to 'GOOD' by Financial Year 2025.

The annual accountability statement incorporates the strategic aims of the group and maps against the LSIP and work of the Thames Valley Berkshire LEP, Surrey/ M3 and West London Local Skills Improvement Priorities (LSIPs). WFCG actively secures capital funding to support local and regional skills priorities, in recent years receiving capital funding for Green Skills, Aviation, Screen/ Creative Skills Industries and Agriculture. The group has secured Strategic Development Funding for Skills Bootcamps focusing on Green Skills within key priority industry sectors.

SKILLS STRATEGY



CAREER FOCUSED, INDUSTRY READY

Through strong partnership and collaboration, empowering people and businesses to develop the skills to succeed in our local and regional economy.

A skills hub that engages with students of all ages and backgrounds. Developing the competencies and skills to be industry -ready.

A skills hub that builds and develops our strategic partnerships with employers, local authorities, local providers, schools and higher education institutions to ensure fair access to excellent education, training, careers support and guidance.

A skills hub that provides opportunities for those who are looking to upskill, retrain or return to the workforce. Developing English, Maths and Digital Skills alongside industry ready programmes of learning.

1 Serving Our Communities

We provide accessible, high-quality education and training. We acknowledge the unique challenges and opportunities within each geographical area that we serve. Our programmes are designed to address the specific needs of our communities as detailed in our Annual Accountability Statement

2 Engaging with stakeholders

We work with employers, local councils and educational institutions to ensure that our curriculum is responsive to the skills demands of the economy. Our apprenticeship and vocational programmes, developed with employer input, target skills gaps in the identified (LSIP) priority areas.

3 Addressing Business and Economic Profiles

We understand the economic landscape of Berkshire, Surrey and the surrounding areas. Our provision in sectors such as health and social care, engineering, digital and technology, green skills and construction, life sciences, Screen/ Creative Skills Industries, land-based provision, travel and aviation are designed to meet the major economic skills needs in our region. Our commitment to offering pathways for both young people and adults ensures a skilled workforce that meets current and future demands.

4 Skills Priority Target and Actions

We have set clear targets and actions for each skills priority area, aiming to enhance curriculum planning, offer progression routes and utilise strategic funding to develop resources that support the delivery of high-quality education. Examples of this can be seen in the development of Screen/ Creative Skills Industries, and facilities, Green Retrofit, AI skills courses and Digital Skills. Our initiatives are focused on ensuring that students and apprentices are equipped with the qualifications and skills needed for successful careers in their chosen fields.

Our Next Steps

We will continue to develop and refine partnerships with industry and higher education institutions to ensure curriculum relevance and alignment with emerging trends.

We will continue to invest in state-of-the-art facilities and technologies that enhance real world and industry current learning experiences for students.

We will expand initiatives focused on sustainability and environmental stewardship to prepare students for careers in green industries.

We will strengthen outreach and support services for underrepresented and disadvantaged groups to ensure broader access to vocational education and training opportunities.

2. OUR COLLEGES AND THE COMMUNITIES THAT WE SERVE

The Windsor Forest Colleges Group (WFCG) is comprised of four separate colleges. There are two sixth form colleges: Strode's College in Egham, Surrey and Windsor College in Berkshire. There are also two further education colleges: Berkshire College of Agriculture (BCA), a specialist Land-based college in Maidenhead and Slough & Langley College, in Slough, Berkshire. Collectively we serve the communities of East Berkshire, West London, North Surrey, South Buckinghamshire and South Oxfordshire. As such we are working collaboratively with the LSIPs for Berkshire & Oxfordshire, Surrey and London.

Slough & Langley College

Slough & Langley College, an FE College serves the communities of East Berkshire and West London. The travel to learn patterns are tight with most of our students coming from Slough and West London. Most of the local wards are classed as areas of high deprivation. The College has outreach centres in West London, Slough and Maidenhead for the provision of ESOL and essential digital skills. Slough & Langley College has an ethnic mix of 69.9% ethnic minority groups. In the district of Slough, 34% of the population only have a Level 1 or no qualification. Language skills are a significant barrier to learning and parental/carer participation.

BCA

BCA is a specialist L provision and-based college serving East Berkshire, South Buckinghamshire and South Oxfordshire. The college serves a district with a mainly white ethnicity of 85%. In addition to the land-based specialism, the college has an outstanding reputation in the region for the training, education and support that we provide to young people and adults with learning difficulties. The college runs a dedicated transport system which allows for a wide travel to learn pattern supporting the important land-based regional . In January 2026 the college celebrated the opening of Top Farm Drive, with the support of investment from T Level capital. This facility has expanded the college's capacity to deliver high quality land based technical education and training.

Strode's College

Strode's College is situated in Egham, northwest Surrey. From September 2025 the college offered an increased range of Level 2 courses alongside its traditional Level 3 programmes for full time 16–19 year old students and professional courses for part time adult students. It serves the boroughs of Runnymede and Spelthorne but also attracts a considerable number of students from neighbouring London Boroughs, Surrey and Berkshire. The college has mainly white student base with ethnic minority groups of 37.6%

Windsor College

Windsor College is a thriving post-16 college offering a range of post-16 vocational and academic qualifications that provide a popular alternative to the school sixth form provision in the area. The college has recently benefited from a significant Local Skills Improve Fund grant to support the purchase and installation of state of the art screen industries technology. This has allowed Windsor College to further develop its expertise and specialisms in the creative sector. The college catchment includes Slough, Maidenhead and Windsor with a demographic of learners from ethnic minority backgrounds of 56%.

Scale of provision

In 2025/26 we enrolled 6796 students, comprising 4665 aged 16–18; 104 part-time aged 14–16; 776 apprentices; 65 higher education students; and 1186 adult learners. We support 550 students with high needs and continued to expand inclusive programmes, including supported internship pathways.

Our curriculum includes academic and technical pathways from entry level through to higher education, as well as short course and employer-focused provision including apprenticeship delivery and Skills Bootcamps and we embed English, mathematics and digital skills as core enablers of progression.

Approach to developing the annual accountability statement

In the context of slowing productivity growth and labour market softening across Berkshire and Surrey, WFCG's focus on priority sectors and progression pathways is designed to strengthen local economic resilience.

We developed this statement through early engagement with the designated Employer Representative Bodies (ERBs) and relevant Strategic Authorities for the geographies we operate in, to ensure alignment to LSIP priorities and coherent local planning.

Across our footprint, this includes:

- The Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce ERB for Thames Valley Berkshire and Oxfordshire LSIP areas
- Designated ERB for Surrey LSIP area
- Designated ERB for Greater London Authority

2. OUR COLLEGES AND THE COMMUNITIES THAT WE SERVE

We consult and align with key local authority partners and wider stakeholders relevant to our colleges and learner travel patterns, including:

- Adult skills, community learning, ESOL delivery contexts)
- Local employers and sector partners (including the aviation, digital, health and screen sector employment base) and through our work with The Berkshire Business Board.

We actively collaborate and participate in opportunities with other education and training providers to reduce unhelpful duplication, improve progression pathways and align to LSIP actions. This includes our ongoing regional collaboration across the Thames Valley with peer colleges through the Thames Valley Principal Group and strategic alliance to shape skills planning and joint approaches where appropriate.

Data and evidence used

We draw on employer intelligence through ERBs/LSIP engagement, strategic partner input, such as The Berkshire Business Board and performance and outcomes evidence including achievement and progression measures. We make effective use of the FE provider dashboard where possible; our targets below include audited baseline outcome measures; achievement, learner volumes and apprenticeship outcomes and are updated with in-year 2025/26 baselines prior to submission. In addition to ERB/LSIP intelligence and performance data, this statement draws on the State of the Economy Review for Berkshire Business Board (Skills & Business Hub, December 2025), which provides analysis of:

- Berkshire GVA and productivity trends
- Labour market participation and unemployment
- Priority sector performance (care, ICT, construction, creative industries, haulage & logistics, health & life sciences)
- Business birth and survival rates
- Deprivation and demographic change

Contribution to national, regional and local priorities

Below we set out how the group contributes to national skills priorities via full time 16-19 provision (including T Levels), the delivery of apprenticeships, Free Courses for Jobs, Skills Bootcamps and Higher Technical Qualifications.

Our objectives focus on the national priority sectors (with reference to the Modern Industrial Strategy) construction; clean energy industries; digital and technologies; health; creative industries; life sciences; professional and business services.

Objectives and progress against regional and national skills priorities

Baselines are shown as "latest published" (2024/25 DfE Provider Dashboard) and "current year baseline". Targets are for 2026/27 and have been confirmed through internal planning and Corporation approval.

Objective one

Improve overall outcomes while maintaining growth.

Baseline: overall achievement (all ages) **82.6% in 2024/25; 16–19 achievement 83.5%; adult achievement 80.6%.**
In year 2025/26: overall achievement and retention position: **93.6% at R08.**

Target (2026/27): increase overall achievement by at least +1.0 percentage point, with particular focus on 16–19 and adult learner achievement; sustain high achievement in

higher education (baseline pass rate 97%).

Apprenticeship dashboard – no at risk indicators, target: in year retention improvement of 20% to 70% minimum.

Delivery route: quality improvement actions linked to priority-sector programmes, strengthened attendance and progress monitoring, and employer-validated curriculum delivery (including placements for technical programmes).

Objective two

Expand LSIP priority programme participation

Baseline: 7,238 total learners in 2024/25, including 851 apprentices and 65 higher education students.

Baseline: 2025/26 planned volumes 7,350 total learners

Target (2025/26): achieve year-on-year growth in priority programmes (apprenticeships, T Levels, Skills Bootcamps, HTQs) of at least +5% compared with the 2025/26 baseline,

focusing growth in construction, clean energy/retrofit, digital, health and creative industries pathways.

Delivery route: employer co-design, use of specialist capital investments already in place (for example screen/creative and green retrofit facilities) and coordinated groupwide curriculum planning to strengthen progression.

Objective three

Increase participation in construction and clean energy industries (including retrofit)

Baseline: 367 learners in established employer linked green skills and retrofit programmes and Skills Bootcamps across the group, with an expanding apprenticeship offer in construction related routes.

Baseline: 2025/26 390 in year starts in construction/retrofit programmes

Target (2025/26): In partnership with stakeholders including SECTEC, increase participation in construction and retrofit

priority programmes (apprenticeships, Bootcamps, Free Courses for Jobs where applicable) by at least +5% compared with the 2025/26 baseline and increase progression into sustained employment, apprenticeships or higher technical study in these sectors.

Delivery route: expand employer partnerships and placements; align curriculum to LSIP actions on retrofit/low carbon skills.

Objective four

Increase progression opportunities in digital and technology skills for adults

Baseline: demand for adult learning exceeded funded allocation in 2024/25; the group has implemented a digital strategy to remove barriers to digital access and improve employability outcomes (45 new learners in 2024/25).

Baseline: 2025/26 essential digital skills participation 68 new learners.

Target (2025/26): Subject to funding, increase essential

digital skills participation by at least +10% compared with the 2025/26 baseline.

Delivery route: embed digital skills in all curriculum areas; expand retraining provision and progression “prep” routes; use employer boards to validate digital tools and practices.

Objective five

Increase health and life sciences higher level progression opportunities

Baseline: 127 progressing learners in health sciences benefitting from particularly well performing access courses.

Baseline: 2025/26 132 progressing learners in health sciences.

Target (2025/26): grow health sector priority programme delivery (T Levels, apprenticeships and higher technical/

higher education progression routes) by at least +5% compared with 2025/26 baseline, with explicit progression routes into NHS and social care employment where relevant.

Delivery route: employer placements, strengthened progression agreements with higher education partners and targeted adult upskill routes (access provision).

Objective six

Consolidate and grow creative industries and screen specialism programme

Baseline: significant investment and a strengthened curriculum offer in screen/creative specialisms, including apprenticeship routes in content creation and related roles resulting in 279 learners on a creative programme.

Baseline: 2025/26 281 learners in screen/creative programmes

Target (2025/26): increase enrolments and completions in creative industry pathways by at least +5% compared

with the 2025/26 baseline, including an increase in apprenticeship starts and in adults accessing short course upskilling routes.

Delivery route: align provision to LSIP creative industry actions, maintain industry standard facilities and expand employer involvement in project briefs and placements.

Objective seven

Grow learner numbers in engineering

Baseline: 187 Engineering learners in 2024-2025 of which, 111 were 16-18, 38 were apprentices and 38 were Adult FE.

Baseline (current year): 2025/26 : 223 Engineering learners of which 106 are 16-18, 66 are apprentices, 51 are Adult FE

Target(2026/27): grow engineering related programmes including apprenticeship activity by at least 5% compared with the 2025/26 baseline, while improving apprenticeship

achievement (measured by completed and passed EPA outcomes) year-on-year.

Delivery route: targeted employer co-design, sustained investment in specialist equipment and strengthened learner support and progress monitoring for apprenticeship retention and completion.

Objective eight

Professional and Business Services, including Travel and Aviation

Baseline: 928 Professional Service learners in 2024-2025 of which, 772 were 16-18, 22 were apprentices and 134 were Adult FE. the group offers 16-19 professional (business, marketing and IT) and adult professional accountancy programmes (AAT) alongside adult short courses in travel and aviation.

Baseline 2025/26: 922 Professional Service learners of which 827 are 16-18, 19 are apprentices, 76 are Adult FE

Target(2026/27): increase participation and completion in

business, leadership and accountancy pathways by at least +3% compared with the 2025/26 baseline and widen access to these pathways for priority learner groups (including older workers and underrepresented communities).

Delivery route: flexible delivery models, strengthened careers guidance to support progression into higher level roles and higher technical learning.

Local Needs Duty statement

WFCG fulfils the statutory Local Needs Duty by periodically reviewing how well our education and training meets local needs and considering what actions we can taken, individually and collaboratively to better meet those needs. Reviews are undertaken at least every three years, sooner if circumstances substantially change.

Summary of latest review outcomes (as reflected in our current curriculum strategy)

Our most recent review has directly informed curriculum strategy and includes: expanding employer led provision in priority areas; strengthening apprenticeship pathways; developing direct entry to college programmes for 14-16 year olds; and investing in industry standard facilities to support curriculum growth and development.

These actions are delivered alongside our cross group collaboration activity to reduce unhelpful duplication and improve progression pathways, including partnership working with other providers across the wider region.

3. OUR KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The group works closely with its key stakeholders and partners to ensure that it meets local, regional and national skills. Our vocational programmes, co-designed with local and regional employers, ensure our students gain valuable industry placements and stay current with employer demands. In our Land-based, Green Skills and Screen Industries Academies, students access industry-standard technology, essential for skill development. We coordinate our Sixth Form (SF) and Further Education (FE) offerings to provide clear, non-duplicative learning paths, tailored to specific regional needs.

Our apprenticeships, HE and adult education programmes are developed with employer input, targeting skill gaps in key areas. Strong partnerships with stakeholders and other colleges enhance our community impact. WFCG continuously expands its range of programmes in priority sectors, including a specialist training brand for short courses and apprenticeships in green skills, retrofitting, digital, the screen / creative skills industries and land-based provision.

3. OUR KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The group continues to work closely with a range of key stakeholders to achieve our strategic objectives, these include:

- Slough Borough Council
- The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead
- Surrey County Council
- Buckinghamshire County Council
- The Great London Authority
- The Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Our local Counsellors and MPs
- The Thames Valley Principals' Group
- The Virtual School
- Frimley Health Foundation Trust
- The Gatsby Foundation
- Learning to Work
- Slough Secondary Schools
- SECTEC
- FE Colleges Of Sanctuary
- Thames Valley Police

Universities

We work closely with several universities both in the planning and delivery of our undergraduate degree programmes and in preparing students for progression to further study. These include the key stakeholders listed:

- University of West London
- Reading University
- Royal Holloway University London
- Bucks New University
- Brunel University
- St Mary's University
- Landex

We are working with colleges across the Thames Valley Region to develop a skills prospectus in advance of the proposed devolution. Our established regional partnership, brings together colleges across the wider Thames Valley to collaborate on addressing skills needs and shaping individual college priorities. This includes Activate Learning (Reading and Bracknell Colleges), Swindon College and Newbury College. The partnership also extends across Oxfordshire, involving Activate Learning (Oxford and Banbury), Henley College and Abingdon & Witney College.

4. OUR APPROACH TO DEVELOPING THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

Our accountability statement is developed through:

- Engagement with Employer Representative Bodies (The Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce) and Local Skills Improvement Plans.
- Collaboration with local employers, providers and stakeholders to ensure that our provision meets local, regional and national skills needs.
- Use of the FE provider dashboard data to assess student outcomes and performance against strategic objectives.
- Consultation with stakeholders such as local councils, MPs, employer groups and regional partnerships.

Our engagement aligns with the scale of employer consultation evidenced through the LSIP process (including engagement with over 2,900 employers across Thames Valley), ensuring our curriculum planning reflects validated regional skills intelligence.

The group continues to play a leading role in strategic skills planning, working collaboratively with other providers to align curriculum planning and address barriers to participation. There are several areas where this has resulted in the removal of unnecessary duplication, such as Heavy vehicle engineering, e-sports and catering programmes of study. Importantly, this approach has improved pathways for learners across the region.

WFCG will use the FE provider dashboard alongside other data sources to:

- Track learner outcomes and ensure continuous improvement
- Support curriculum planning and strategic conversations with the Department for Education
- Inform our annual strategic conversations with the DfE, LSIP stakeholders and the Further Education Commissioner

5. BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC PROFILE

OUR REGIONAL LANDSCAPE

Thames Valley Berkshire

- Significant sectors: professional, scientific & technical, ICT, wholesale/retail and business & support service
- SMEs account for 99% of businesses
- Tight and tightening workforce, being exacerbated by an ageing workforce, increase in economic activity and shifts in working patterns
- Higher than average projected employment growth, driven by professional jobs
- Number of people educated to level 3 and above higher than national average
- Increase in screen/creative skills industries/creative jobs resulting from new film studios opening in area

Surrey

- Significant sectors: construction, financial, insurance, ICT, science & technical and professional
- 27% more productive than average, driven by high concentration of digital & professional services jobs
- 23% higher jobs than average in green sectors
- High skills & low unemployment have caused a tight labour market

The importance of Slough's economy

Slough has experienced significant economic growth, attracting businesses across many sectors. The town has become a hub for industries such as information technology (including data centres), pharmaceuticals, logistics, and manufacturing. This growth has contributed to increased job opportunities and investment in the area.

- Berkshire has the highest concentration of foreign-owned companies of all LEP areas. Of these companies Slough has the greatest proportion of employment in EU-owned companies. Proximity to Heathrow is key to this success.
- Slough's largest employers in terms of number of employees include GSK (includes an office in Maidenhead), Royal Mail and NHS (in various locations across Berkshire).
- The Slough Trading Estate is Europe's largest trading estate in single ownership (SEGRO) and is home to 221 occupiers including DHL, Mars and Lonza.
- Recent relocations into Slough have included Octopus Energy and Getir (the pioneer of ultra-fast grocery delivery). Bray Film Studios received planning consent for the next phase of expansion of its historic film studios with plans for new state of the art studio facilities and nearly 3,000 permanent jobs.

The importance of West London

For Slough & Langley College, it is important that skills priorities are considered in the context of the surrounding areas of West London. Areas such as Uxbridge, Hounslow, and Ealing serve as a significant source of employment for Slough residents. West London and Slough share a symbiotic relationship, with each area contributing to the other's economic, social, and cultural vitality. Commuting, business, education, healthcare, and lifestyle considerations all play a role in the importance of West London to Slough and vice versa.

Heathrow Airport

Heathrow Airport plays a pivotal role in the economic vitality of the region and is a crucial factor for businesses based in Slough that rely on logistics and international trade.

The work of the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) has identified a number of common themes across the region that the college group serves.



Employer Challenges

Employers want skills not quals in the professional workforce. Increased interest & commitment from employers to pay for direct bridging and add-on skills courses that address immediate skills gaps/upskilling needs. Partnership models of jointly developed and delivered training between industry and education providers based on co-design and sharing expertise. Customised content directly tailored to needs.



Green Skills

- Unclear how some sectors will develop skills and what skills needs will be.
- Urgent need to upskill the current workforce without affecting productivity or eating into staff personal time.
- Non-accredited AEB provision could be key to filling immediate skills gaps in some sectors (engineering, construction)
- Specific issues with outdated skills of aging workforce



Employability Skills

- Cultural disparities between employer expectations and young people entering the workforce, e.g. Gen Z/Millennials.
- Issues such as working hours, pay, progression, outside work life/wellbeing, communication styles.



Engineering

Analysis of the LSIPs has identified an engineering mega-trend.

As automation and changes in other sectors due to increasing technology gather speed, the need for engineering specialists will increase exponentially.

Master and technician level skills will be in great demand across many sectors.

Additional digital skills will be key here, drone skills, sensors, 3D printing and CAD.



Land-Based

The land-based sector is facing a revolution in farming and horticultural methodology in the next few years.

Automation, the need for more efficient food production, and conservation/environmental legislation requirements will radically change approach and subsequent skills needs.



Delivery and assoc challenges

FE workforce cannot compete with industry on salaries

Employers do not understand or are not aware of the post-19 offer, and many do not find apprenticeships easy to navigate

CIAG employer engagement is limited.

Lack of digital skills in all programmes - should be embedded in almost everything

Government offer is not meeting employers need in post-19 space.

LSIP identified common themes.

Regional Landscape Characteristics



Surrey

Significant sectors: construction, financial, insurance, ICT, science & technical and professional
27% more productive than average, driven by high concentration of digital & professional services jobs
23% higher jobs than average in green sectors
High skills & low unemployment have caused a tight labour market



Oxfordshire

Employment growth forecast mostly in; professional, business, non-marketed services, trade, accommodation and transport
High concentration of SMEs
Tight labour market, exacerbated by aging workforce and increase in economic inactivity
Digitisation & new tech significant skills drivers, particularly in professional, scientific & technical sectors



Buckinghamshire

Significant sectors: health & social care, admin & support, education, professional, scientific &

technical and retail

Mostly rural area

Service sector provides 85% of local employee jobs

Large skills mismatch (higher than average)

Proximity to London causing retention challenges

New & improved film studios leading to skills requirement in screen industries and creative



Thames Valley Berkshire

Significant sectors: professional, scientific & technical, ICT, wholesale/retail and business & support services

SMEs account for 99% of businesses

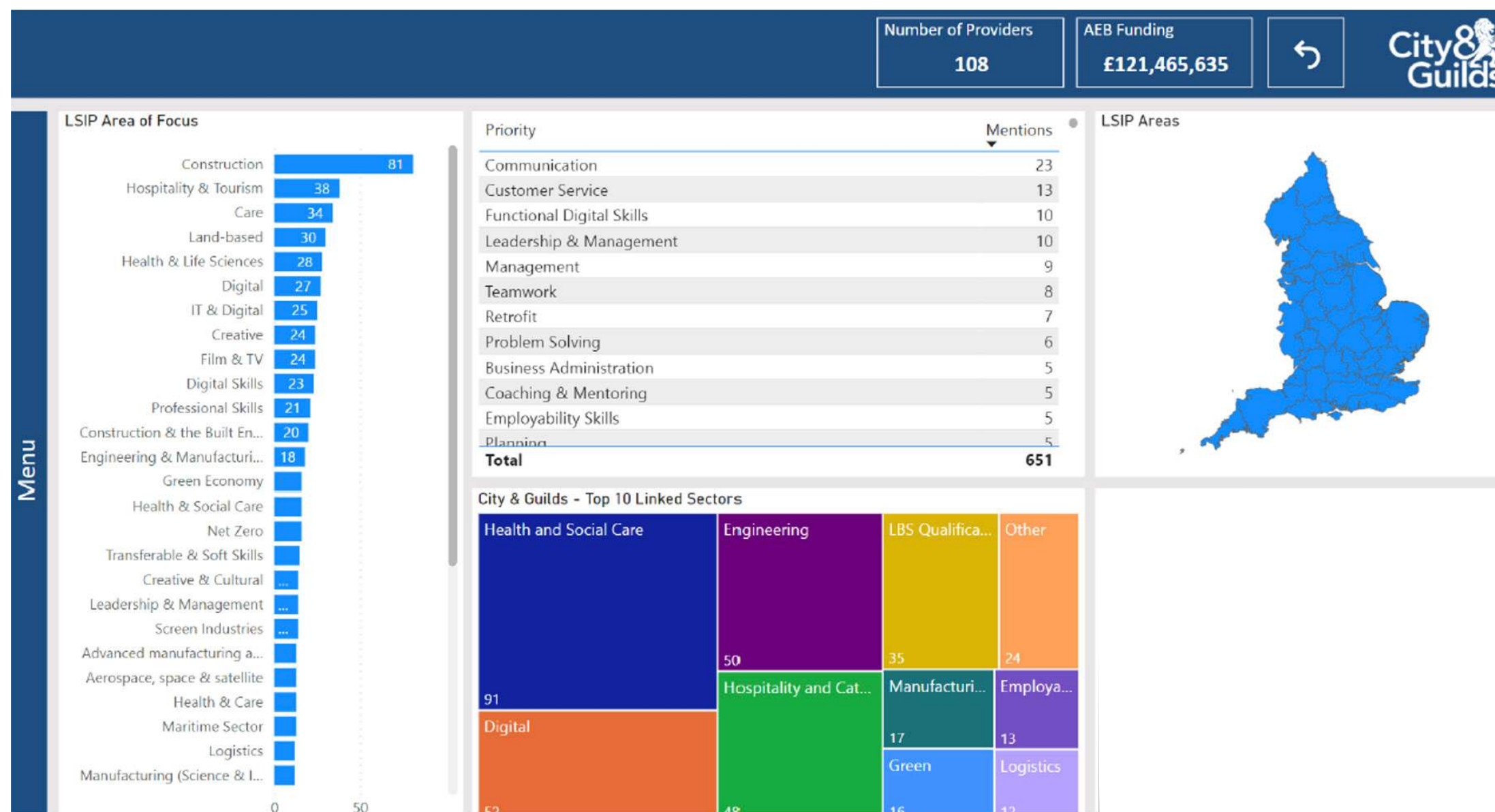
Tight and tightening workforce, being exacerbated by an ageing workforce, increase in economic activity and shifts in working patterns after COVID.

Higher than average projected employment growth, driven by professional jobs

Number of people education to level 3 and above higher than national average

Increase in screen industries/creative jobs resulting from new studios opening in area

LSIP – KEY EMPLOYMENT SECTORS



Contribution to National, Regional and Local Priorities

Below are the priorities from the LSIPs in each of the regions in which we operate alongside the identified national skills priorities. When designing our curriculum with employers we seek to ensure that the skills required by the sectors below are delivered through our provision. Across all priority sectors, the Group responds to LSIP identified cross cutting themes including digital literacy, leadership and management, AI awareness and the strengthening of entry level talent pipelines.

The college group supports the emerging priorities outlined in the Greater London Authority LSIP, through a contract to deliver adult learning. Here we continue to focus on the cross-cutting themes of digital skills, green skills, transferrable skills and labour market inclusion.

Berkshire	Oxfordshire	Surrey/EM3
Screen/Creative Skills Industries	Creative Industries	Health and Social Care
Construction and Built Environment	Construction and Built Environment	Aerospace, Space and Satellite
Life Sciences	Life Sciences	Animal Health and Life Sciences
Critical Services	Critical Services	Creative, including Creative Technology
Defence	Defence	Construction
Digital (ICT)	Green Technology	Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering
Transferable Skills; Business, Professional and Administration; Leadership and Management; Skills Net Zero and digital	Digital (ICT)	IT

Demographic growth in 16-24 provision

In Berkshire, the number of 16–24year-olds is expected to increase by circa 2% year on year for the next 3 years. The comparable demographic growth for Surrey is 0.2%, Buckinghamshire 3.4% and West London 9.1%

Office for National Statistics (ONS) Population Growth 16/17 year olds

	2022 Pop	Peak yr	Peak no	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Buckinghamshire	13992	2027	1565	1135	1463	1543	1565	1473	980	445
Slough	4384	2028	875	523	536	668	833	875	858	841
Hillingdon	7498	2029	1581	462	590	652	869	1278	1581	1574
Runnymede	1821	2028	223	189	218	165	179	223	154	144
Wokingham	4458	2027	836	532	710	777	836	818	690	397
West Berkshire	4153	2024	210	210	113	59	152	74	-52	-210
Windsor and Maidenhead	4360	No growth	0	-203	-343	-239	-256	-303	-480	-665

	Aged 0-15	Aged 16-64	Aged 65+	All Ages
Bracknell Forest	-2,029	-903	+5,655	+2,727
Reading	-2,845	-754	+5,034	+1,437
Slough	-4,791	+186	+4,177	-423
West Berkshire	-3,392	-5,328	+7,426	-1,347
Windsor & Maidenhead	-3,112	-2,846	+6,473	+514
Wokingham	-2,218	-2,154	+7,346	+7,284

Population projections in local authorities in Berkshire 2025-2035.

Source: ONS Population Projections.

6. LOCAL NEEDS DUTY STATEMENT

In compliance with the Local Needs Duty, WFCG undertakes a full review of provision every three years, this results in the Curriculum Strategy which is approved by the Board of Governors. This process ensures that our education and training meet the needs of local employers and communities and that we collaborate effectively with other providers to address skills gaps. The 2025-26 statement reflects key outcomes from our latest review, including:

- Expansion of employer-led provision in priority areas
- Strengthening of apprenticeship pathways
- The development of direct entry onto college programmes of study for 14-16 year olds
- Investment in industry-standard facilities to support curriculum growth and development

Our strategic plan has been developed in consultation with our key stakeholders. The accountability plan maps across the strategic plan to support the work that we do with our employer stakeholders. Our strategic plan sets out a wide range of goals with clear accountability. These included our civic and community responsibilities as well as capital and people investment plans and objects to improve our environmental sustainability.

At Windsor Forest Colleges Group (WFCG), we offer a diverse array of programmes in priority sectors, constantly expanding our scope. We've launched specialist training brands, including Land-based Training, Green Skills, and, with recent LSIF investment, Screen/Creative Skills Industries. These brands facilitate short-course commercial training, addressing needs in green skills, retrofitting, digital, and land-based disciplines.

Cross-cutting themes of Leadership and Management, Digital and Numeracy are embedded into AEB provision as well as in the personal development for the 16-18 learners. WFCG deliver Multiply for four local boroughs with a range of engaging programmes to upskill 19+ learners.

Local Skills Improvement Plan (Priorities)

Skills priorities as identified by the Berkshire and Oxfordshire LSIP, West London LSIP, Surrey LSIP (May 2023)

SKILLS PRIORITY	NATIONAL REGIONAL LOCAL	OUR CONTRIBUTION TO MEETING THE SKILLS PRIORITIES (all curriculum programmes include English, Maths & Digital skills)
Care Services	NATIONAL REGIONAL LOCAL	The Group offers a broad range of academic and vocational courses from L1 to L6 providing students with qualifications and progression pathways to all health care sectors including adult social care. WFCG offers the T-Level in Health & Social Care to meet local skills' needs. Access to specialist facilities such as a dedicated Health Sciences Centre, laboratories and hospital room enables students to develop required skills and knowledge. Local and regional employers work closely with curriculum teams to support students in developing identified skills through activities such as our dementia café programme with the Alzheimer's Society, industry placements and care certificate. HE and Access to HE courses offer adult learners progression pathways into and access to higher level skills in health and social care

7. HOW WE MEET LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL SKILLS NEEDS

Digital & Technology	NATIONAL REGIONAL LOCAL	Slough & Langley College offers IT provision designed to develop the skills needed to progress into cyber security and software industries. Students can choose to progress on to the level 4 ICT practitioner apprenticeship to further develop their skills in industry. Slough & Langley College will commence delivery of level 2 E Sports from September 2024 broadening the scope of the current IT provision to attract students interested in opportunities within the creative technology industries. The wider curriculum across the Group incorporates digital skills and business skills and education for sustainable development. For example, construction students learn about the impact of digital technologies on their sector as part of a 'Digital Construction' project with the Career Colleges Trust. The Digital Construction project links staff and students to an employer board that provides industry specific guidance on the digital tools used in the rapidly evolving construction sector. In agriculture, learners will benefit from a partnership with Haynes Agriculture, providing access to and use of new and emerging technologies within the industry including telematics and isobus equipment which allows for collection and analysis of data to optimise farming operations. Apprenticeship provision includes local needs such as data analyst, digital marketer and infrastructure technician. The adult focus is on statutory entitlement to digital skills as well as focused 'Prep Up to' courses for retraining and upskilling 19+ learners. Students in animal management take part in industry leading research using up-to- date technologies to support an increase in biodiversity at BCA in line with national needs. Alongside this agricultural engineering students have access to the latest technologies through the funding received from the Strategic Development Fund to ensure that graduates can support the industry in its journey to Net Zero. A level Computer Science and BTEC Level 3 in IT deliver progression into digital and technology careers as do our A levels in Graphic Design, 3D Design and Business
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7. HOW WE MEET LOCAL, REGIONAL
AND NATIONAL SKILLS NEEDS

Construction & Retrofit	NATIONAL REGIONAL LOCAL	The Group has growing relationships with a wide range of construction and building engineering employers including Mears and Octopus Energy. The SDF investment has enabled curriculum managers to design programmes to support both new entrants to the market as well as upskilling current employees. Courses include air source heat pump training and solar panel installation. Apprenticeship provision includes the traditional trades as well as planning with employers for the new low carbon technician and corporate responsibility and sustainability practitioner. We continue to work with our employers to develop the emerging retro fit industries and apprenticeships. Students from across the construction, built environment and building services engineering curriculum areas undertake extensive industry placements in these sectors. The college operates a number of successful Skills Boot Camps in 'green skills' technologies.
Life Sciences	REGIONAL LOCAL	A level science programmes and BTEC L3 applied science across the college group deliver progression routes into a range of life sciences careers supported by industry placements and strong links to HE providers and employers. Level 3 NQF animal management, equine, health and sports science programmes include a wide variety of life science subjects and give students an excellent grounding in the core science principles required to be successful at university and to progress into a wide variety of health, microbiology and health science careers.
Screen/Creative Skills Industries	REGIONAL LOCAL	Vocational and A levels in art & design provide students with a range of pathways to develop knowledge and skills for the Screen/Creative Skills Industries. Art & design practice and A Level 3D design develops skills in prop making, mould making, casting, sculpture scale construction and model making whilst costume design is delivered within our L3 Fashion, Interiors and 3D Design course. L2 and L3 hair and make-up effects for film and theatre prepare students in using hair, wigs, make-up and prosthetics. Vocational courses in creative and digital media equip students with skills in pre and post-production and special effects (SFX) lighting and sound. Our partnership with industry provides students with guidance and training on the use of cameras, sound and virtual production.

7. HOW WE MEET LOCAL, REGIONAL
AND NATIONAL SKILLS NEEDS

		A Levels in creative subjects including drama, music technology alongside vocational courses in music performance, dance and performing arts provide alternative pathways into the Screen/Creative Skills Industries offering students experience in performance, stage management and technical aspects of theatre. Students benefit from access to L4 foundation courses in art and design, creative media and performance. These enable students to further develop their knowledge, skills and experience including technical and production practice and storyboarding enabling them to successfully progress into the Screen/Creative Skills Industries. Strong relationships with external providers including The Old Court Theatre in Windsor and a growing relationship with the creative and digital arts department at Royal Holloway University London (RHUL) support students in developing skills and an understanding of progression pathways and opportunities within these industries. Apprenticeship provision for 24-25 includes two apprenticeships: content creator and creative venue technician.
Specialist Land based Provision	REGIONAL LOCAL	Berkshire and Oxfordshire have vibrant farming communities, the agriculture provision at BCA has been developed with the requirements of this community directly. Local farmers have been working alongside the college for several years helping us to develop our curriculum in livestock and crop production. Students have access to numerous employers, many of whom support the college through providing equipment and expertise through co delivery and industry talks. Students utilise these contacts to complete industry placements where they progress successfully into the industry. The recent SDF investment in agricultural technology has enabled BCA to invest in specialist facilities including an electric tractor and tractor driving simulator. These have been further improved via the use of T level capital funds to facilitate significant improvements on Top Farm Drive which now provides industry standard teaching facilities for the land-based provision. These facilities are used to ensure that students are leaving the college with the skills required within the sector. Partnerships with local employers has also benefitted learners by providing training on industry required skills and tickets that fall outside of the standard curriculum including tractor driving and telehandler qualifications. Other niche markets in the local area include the ever-growing sport horse and horse racing industries as well as the veterinary science sector. BCA has excellent links in these sectors and has a long-standing history of supplying new talent to the local businesses in Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Surrey as well as progressing a large number of students into Higher Education provision nationally. Landbased Training and Green Skills Academy provide specific industry competency accreditation and courses required by local, regional and national employers for adults

**7. HOW WE MEET LOCAL, REGIONAL
AND NATIONAL SKILLS NEEDS**

Hospitality and Visitor Economy	REGIONAL LOCAL	The college group is based in the locality of numerous tourist destinations e.g. Windsor and Heathrow Airport. Across the group we have developed a range of courses to meet the needs of local people and employers. Skills Boot Camps in aviation have been incredibly successful with some courses boasting a 100% success rate when completing students were interviewed by local aviation firms e.g. EasyJet. The college's Travel and Tourism provision continues to grow, the new aviation suite at Slough & Langley that replicates industry-standard training facilities enables learners to be fully prepared for industry during their time studying at the college. Local hospitality and travel and tourism companies are strong supporters of our Foundation and Adult Learning for Independence and Employment (ALFIE) curriculums. Many of these employers take supported interns and work experience students from these provisions and help the college to successfully transition these learners into the job market. The apprenticeship provision is expanding to include L2-L4 routes for each tier of the industry. Adult funded courses, L2 and L3 entitlement as well as non-regulated routes have been planned to support the skills shortage and provide skilled staff.
Manufacturing and Innovation	NATIONAL REGIONAL LOCAL	Slough & Langley College's engineering provision has well established roots with apprenticeship employers across Slough. The curriculum has been designed in collaboration with our employers to ensure key skills are developed allowing our students and apprentices to undertake additional training via our short course provision. The full time FE engineering curriculum offer is broad and allows students to have a choice of progression routes at Level 3 that align to local industry need. Students can choose a practical manufacturing route, learning advanced machining and programming skills or an academic route that will enable progression into university and support them to be successful in Computer Aided Design (CAD) and engineering service roles in the future.

All areas above are considered to be priorities across the three LSIPS

8. HOW OUR CURRICULUM MEETS THE WIDER NEEDS OF OUR LOCAL AND REGIONAL COMMUNITIES

COMMUNITY NEED	OUR CONTRIBUTION TO MEETING LOCAL NEED
Supporting older workers	We offer a range of professional, vocational and academic courses which support older workers in gaining skills and qualifications enabling them to progress in their current employment or change pathway to meet local and regional needs. English, Maths and Digital Skills. AAT, Counselling, Teacher Training; Access and Degree qualifications (Business, Health and Social Care, Nursing and Education); Green Skills, Construction, Hair and Beauty, Royal Horticultural Society (RHS). Skills Network funding for retraining and upskilling. We work with Job Centre Plus (JCP) on a range of initiatives to train over 50 learners in the local community, including conferences such as 'Inspiring Women' and Recruitment cafes involving employers.
Supporting adults and young people with additional learning needs	Across FE, we have students with additional needs across all curriculum areas as well as discrete provision Foundation Learning at Slough & Langley and BCA. Our Foundation Learning courses start from Entry Level 1 up to Level 1, and all have a focus on developing independence and preparation for adulthood. We currently have students accessing our courses from 14 Local Authorities. We have two Foundation departments, one at BCA and one at Slough & Langley, with 210 students across both sites. We also run a range of short courses for adults with disabilities called Adult Learning for Independence and Employment (ALFIE). ALFIE staff work with local communities including day centres and adult social care. Our courses are regularly full and in the past 2 years we have almost doubled our ALFIE offer. We plan to continue to grow both specialist areas across FE so we can meet the local need.

**8. HOW OUR CURRICULUM MEETS
THE WIDER NEEDS OF OUR LOCAL
AND REGIONAL COMMUNITIES**

COMMUNITY NEED	OUR CONTRIBUTION TO MEETING LOCAL NEED
Supporting adults and young people for whom English is a second language	We teach English as a second language to 16 to 18 year-olds as part of a study programme, which also includes ICT and maths. Adult learners study on average 5 hours a week. As part of our curriculum development, we offer ICT lessons to our adult learners as well as a 'Living and Working in the UK' qualification, as we understand that to help our learners integrate into the society, and find better jobs, we need to equip them with more than English lessons. ESOL learners take part in our 'Prep up to' and 'Step up to' provision to allow them skills to access higher education and improved job opportunities.
Supporting asylum seekers and refugees	We have a specialist provision for asylum seekers and refugees, both at the hotels they are housed in and within our campuses. ESOL, Multiply, Digital Skills programmes are offered as well as courses in Living and Working in the UK and Employability skills. The provision includes families, and we have created workshops including 'Grow and Cook' and local treasure hunts. Within our Slough & Langley campus, we have a nominated safeguarding lead and pastoral tutor working with our unaccompanied asylum seekers (under 18). These members of staff advocate for our learners and attend regular meetings with multi-professionals to ensure students' needs are being met and they are making good progress with their studies. We currently have 89 looked after children, 79 of them are unaccompanied asylum seekers (UASC).
Supporting rural communities	Our specialist land-based provision at BCA is well respected within the local community. Senior staff at the college attend local council rural forums to ensure that all parties can engage in meaningful discussions about how the college can support the local rural community with achieving their future plans for the rural economy. The college takes part in environmental surveys and is supporting the local community council rural forum in meeting its net zero targets. The departments are establishing relationships with local charities such as the Soil Association to ensure implementation and demonstration of sustainable practice and high welfare standards. Our curriculum is designed in conjunction with our local farming network who work with the college to ensure our students are exposed to the most up to date equipment and farming practices.

9. SKILLS PRIORITY TARGETS AND ACTIONS

Skills Priority	Aim/Action	Outcome/Impact
Health & Social Care	Use LSIPs to help shape curriculum planning Offer pathways for adult learners to upskill through development of Pre-Access to Working in Health & Social Sciences and Foundation Degree in Professional Practice in Health & Social Care. Use funding from T Level Specialist Equipment Allowance grant to support development of resources	Continued offer of a broad range of courses from L1 to L5 which meet national, regional and local Introduction of T-Level in Health (supporting the adult nursing team) from September 2024 to provide students with qualifications to progress directly into NHS roles an social care.
Haulage & Logistics response	Develop apprenticeship and adult routes into local and regional employer need. Increased focus and curriculum including the cross-cutting themes of Leadership and Management, Digital Skills, transferrable employability and net zero economy.	Apprenticeships from L2 to L4 in Logistics and Warehousing. Involvement of stakeholders such as Heathrow Airport in creation and delivery of Aviation Customer Service, Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability Practitioner, Ground Controller and Cabin Crew. Adult skills provision in regulated and non-regulated provision in both haulage and logistics as well as the cross-cutting themes.

**9. SKILLS PRIORITY
TARGETS AND ACTIONS**

Skills Priority	Aim/Action	Outcome/Impact
Screen/Creative Skills Industries	In collaboration with partner LSIP colleges, map out a curriculum that incorporates, apprenticeships and T Levels to support the development of career pathways into the screen and associated industries. Offer pathways for adults to upskill through the development of short course provision. From September 2024 Windsor College commenced delivery of an employer led curriculum for the Screen/Creative Skills Industries.	Introduction of T level provision with associated capital funding to support the development of cross cutting provision at Windsor College. Apprenticeships from L2 to L7 in all provision areas to support the screen industry sector. Adult skills provision in regulated and non-regulated provision.
Digital & Technology	Increase the essential digital skills offer to ensure that all adult learners at the college are improving their digital literacy to increase their employment opportunities Develop skills bootcamps and free courses for jobs opportunities to increase the number of students graduating with skills in networking, programming and cyber security. Develop a CPD and recruitment plan to strengthen the teaching team's ability to deliver courses that support the needs of local business in these subjects. Apprenticeship digital offering Data Analyst, Digital Marketer, Infrastructure Technician.	Increased adult learner participation in essential digital skills courses to improve the economic prosperity and future participation in lifelong learning of adults. Increased offer of digital and technology apprenticeships for local stakeholders.

**9. SKILLS PRIORITY
TARGETS AND ACTIONS**

Construction	Increase the volume of apprenticeships available to young people through continued development of relationships with employers in the sector and engagement with LSIPs events. Offer upskilling and reskilling opportunities for adults through skills boot camps and free courses for jobs by ensuring resource utilisation covers evenings, weekends and holidays to increase opportunities for those adults in low paid work. Increased focus on Women and over 50 learners, upskilling and reskilling the sector. Focus on low carbon and sustainable apprenticeships.	Increased adult participation in construction free courses for jobs at L2 and L3. Introduction of a L4+ apprenticeship offer for construction workers to enable lifelong learning for our local communities.
Engineering and manufacturing	Improve the colleges facilities and resources through the T Level capital build fund and Specialist Equipment Grant to offer the occupational specialisms outlined in the LSIPs as in demand. Develop a CPD and recruitment plan to strengthen the teaching team's ability to deliver courses that support the needs of local business in these subjects.	Offering engineering T Levels from September 2026 with industry standard resources.
Science and Mathematics	Improve the colleges' facilities and resources through the T Level capital build fund and Specialist Equipment Grant to offer the occupational specialisms outlined in the LSIP as in demand.	Introduction of T Level from September 2025 with industry standard resources.

Corporation Statement

On behalf of the Corporation, we confirm that this annual accountability statement has been approved by the governing body on [INSERT DATE], and that it fulfils the statutory Local Needs Duty under section 52B of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 (as amended).

Signed:

Chair of Governors:

Accounting Officer:

Date:

Publication statement (website)

We will publish this submitted annual accountability statement (including Local Needs Duty outcomes) on our website within three months of the start of the 2026/27



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