

# Nelson and Colne College Group

**Accountability Statement  
2024-2025**



# Overview.

Nelson and Colne College Group is a high performing, ambitious organisation. Expertly led by a strong leadership team, headed by Lisa O'Loughlin, the College's Staff, Governing Board and Leadership Team set and drive challenging targets. Through passion, creativity, rigour and diligence we deliver year on year improvement, growth and most importantly, highly successful, industry ready students and Apprentices. In March 2022, the group was recognised as Outstanding by Ofsted, making it the only Further Education College in Lancashire to have achieved this status.

The success of our communities, employers, partners and economy sits at the heart of all we do. We have forged valuable partnerships and a shared vision with like-minded organisations, employers and individuals, creating a network of opportunity and excellence.

Our highly skilled staff are committed to raising and supporting aspirations, providing social mobility and an essential talent pool for the local, regional and national economy.


In 2013, the College became sponsor of the Pendle Education Trust comprising of three primary schools and two secondary schools. The Trust is now delivering very good progress; our primary schools are now rated 'Good' by Ofsted.

The College has expanded since 2016 to include Lancashire Adult Learning, delivering adult skills education across the Country to over 14,000 learners. In 2018, Accrington and Rossendale College also joined the Nelson and Colne College family. In 2024 Nelson and Colne College Group was ranked the number two college in the country, for all learners, and number one for Adult Learning.





# Our Vision.

A photograph of three students in a laboratory setting. They are wearing white lab coats and clear safety goggles. The student in the center is holding a beaker containing a red liquid. The student on the left is wearing a maroon hijab, and the student on the right is wearing a black hijab. They are all looking intently at the beaker. The text 'To build stronger communities and create high quality routes into high-value Professional and Technical careers for all our learners.' is overlaid in white on the image.

**To build stronger  
communities and  
create high quality  
routes into high-value  
Professional and  
Technical careers for  
all our learners.**



# Part One - Purpose.

Nelson and Colne College Group aims to 'create the extraordinary' in all we do, and this ambition and drive has led the Group to be one of the highest achieving colleges in the country with a deserved track record and reputation for quality, innovation and excellence. Ofsted 'outstanding' since 2005, our latest inspection in 2022 confirmed us as the only 'outstanding' Further Education college in Lancashire.

Working closely with employers, partners and stakeholders, we develop and deliver a high quality and innovative curriculum focused on delivering against the skills priorities identified at national level and in the Lancashire Skills and Improvement Plan (LSIP) - to meet the needs and ambitions of the learners, communities and businesses we serve.

Nelson and Colne College Group (NCCG) has a turnover of £36.5 million, was formed by merger in 2018 and includes:

- Nelson and Colne College
- Accrington and Rossendale College
- Lancashire Adult Learning (LAL)

Nelson and Colne College has a national reputation for educational success and is seen within the sector as a beacon of excellence for teaching and learning. Accrington and Rossendale College is a hub for technical and professional skills delivery. With a recent £4 million investment in our campus at Accrington, we offer a relevant, impactful, and high-quality curriculum that responds to individual, regional and national needs. Lancashire Adult Learning (LAL) is the third largest adult community learning provider in the country – providing exceptional learning opportunities throughout the whole of Lancashire.





# Purpose Architecture.

## Our Vision

To build stronger communities and create high quality routes into high-value Professional and Technical careers for all our learners.

## Our Goals

### Nelson Campus

To be the number 1 provider of Academic Learning for 16-18 year olds in East Lancashire.

### Accrington Campus

To be the first choice for 16-18 year olds in Hyndburn and Rossendale for Technical Education.

### Apprenticeships

To be the first choice for Apprenticeships in Lancashire's priority sectors.

### Higher Education

To support Lancashire 2050 by providing high quality routes to Level 4/5 technical roles, in key priority sectors.

### Lancashire Adult Learning

To be the number 1 provider of Tailored Learning and Technical Education for adults in England.

### Group

To create Industry Innovation Hubs with employer co-designed facilities for Lancashire's priority sectors.

### Group

To provide the highest quality co-created routes to employment in Lancashire.

### Group

To harness the power of the Group enabling all of our 'colleges' to achieve their goals.

### Group

To establish collaborative partnerships – enabling 'ethical growth' in the interest of all learners across the region.

## Our Curriculum Intent

**'Big Fat' Maths and English College**

**Career Focused**

**Right programme for every learner**

**Positive destinations, not qualifications**

**High quality, always, everywhere**

## Our Values

**We never stop at good enough**

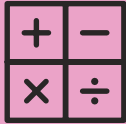
**We own it!**

**We push with love**

**We get off our backsides**

**Phenomenal people who know what it takes**

# What does our Curriculum Intent mean for learners?



## Big Fat English and Maths:

- Our core intent is to ensure that our learners are maths and English enabled, relative to their prior attainment and ambition.
- We believe that maths and English skills (and qualifications) are essential to successful progression to work, apprenticeships and higher-level study.



## Positive Destinations, not Qualifications:

- "Not about the BTEC"
- Everything leads to something bigger for our students



## Career Focused:

- We understand our regional economy and work with sector-leading businesses to create career opportunities, post college and HE
- Embedding work placements and experience in to study programmes
- 'Industry Leads' linked to vocational study programmes and T Levels, Industry Careers Days and Conferences
- Employer co-created curriculum



## Right Programme for Every Learner:

- Personally designed study programmes and learning experiences at all levels based on starting point and career aim
- Built around progress towards and end result and skill development



## High Quality, Always, Everywhere

- No learners in an experience which is less than good
- Teachers and Trainer Assessors who are dual professional - Phenomenal Teachers
- 'High expectations and uncompromising high standards of teaching and support
- High grades and 'value added' in line with value of 'good isn't good enough'



The College is part of The Lancashire Colleges group (TLC); a collaborative network that we have been a member of for over 25 years. TLC includes all of the Further Education and Sixth Form Colleges in the region including a specialist college and represents the diversity of the sector as a whole. Nelson and Colne College Group recognises the value of working with other education and skills providers in East Lancashire and the wider Lancashire region to review how well our provision is collectively meeting local needs.

Our shared ambition, as part of TLC is to ensure that together we deliver a curriculum and progression pathways that serve the local community while building on individual strengths and specialisms to maximise collective impact and meet business needs. Through TLC we have invested in pan-Lancashire analysis that has helped our colleges to better understand the demographic make-up of our learners and what they are studying. Further, we have recently commissioned the production of a series of detailed sector pathway maps which will inform a collaborative review of the curriculum offer with the aim of ensuring that there is a clear line of sight for all learners to different occupations and sectors.

We continue to work as a sector to respond to the needs of strategic employers such as the NHS and the National Cyber Force which is due to be sited in Lancashire in the near future. Through collaborative programmes funded via the Strategic Development Fund and the Local Skills Improvement Fund, Nelson and Colne College Group has pro-actively worked with its neighbours, investing in a network of industry - standard education and training spaces, building on our specialisms and collaborating to develop new courses and curriculum that align with business needs.

In the coming years we will continue to do this, supporting our Governing Body to effectively discharge its duty to review provision in the local area. We will also, through TLC, enhance the collective understanding of how well college provision meets local needs and develop a shared evidence base to assist Governing Bodies in identifying strengths and specialisms within Lancashire.

The Lancashire Colleges group developed a new strategy in May 2024, outlining the collective ambitions for collaboration amongst providers across the region. These are:

## TLC 2030 Strategy Aims:

1

**Increase the number of young people and adults in Lancashire that are aware of and able to access high quality education and skills programmes that support their personal aspirations and have a clear line of sight to future careers.**

2

**Ensure that more employers choose to work with Lancashire's colleges to solve their workforce skills needs and recruitment challenges.**

3

**Support Lancashire as a place, as anchor institutions, by maximising the social value of our activities and their positive impact on individuals, families, communities and the environment.**

4

**Work with the (emerging) Combined County Authority and other stakeholders to inform a Lancashire Skills Strategy, agree investment priorities and opportunities for innovation and lever additional funding to support delivery.**

# TLC 2030 Strategy Objectives:

1	Ensuring that a broad curriculum offer is available pan-Lancashire up to and including Level 3 (including tailored learning, basic skills, academic, vocational and technical learning) with clear progression routes within and beyond that provision.
2	Maximising the opportunities to increase the specialist curriculum available at Level 4 and above, ensuring that an offer is available within a reasonable travel to learn distance from all areas of Lancashire and establishing an agreed position with regards to joint work with local universities including through the IoT.
3	Increasing participation in post-16 education and skills by providing flexible access routes that are engaging and support progression (with a specific focus on young people who are NEET/at risk and unemployed/inactive adults).
4	Collectively and regularly reviewing the extent to which the curriculum offer is meeting local needs and agreeing actions where required in response to identified opportunities.
5	Securing/maintaining a voice for the sector on key local forums in order to influence relevant decisions (including in relation to a Devolution Deal) by promoting the impact that colleges have on individuals, businesses and communities.
6	Raising the profile of colleges and TLC locally and nationally, promoting our work and achievements and encouraging key stakeholders to utilise the network as a consultative forum, test-bed for new policy and projects, etc.
7	Supporting quality improvement through the identification and sharing of good practice within Lancashire and beyond, provision of CPD opportunities, etc.
8	Finding shared solutions to common challenges including safeguarding, staff recruitment and retention, sustainability, etc.
9	Identifying where efficiencies can be gained by working together, rather than individually, e.g. on procurement.
10	Securing additional and external funding where required in order to deliver our shared objectives.



# Part Two - Background Context to Place.

Nelson and Colne College Group is based in Lancashire in the North West of England. Lancashire is one of the most diverse economic areas in the country, with no urban core but a polycentric set of towns and cities, rural and coastal areas, agricultural and industrial zones. With a population of 1.5m people, Lancashire's 54,000 businesses generate 637,000 jobs across a range of important and future-facing sectors from manufacturing, health, cyber, and digital.

The thriving £34bn economy is home to globally leading firms with sector/supply chain clusters including the fourth largest aerospace cluster in the world. There is a pan-Lancashire labour market, particularly for technical and professional roles while workforce is also imported from and exported to neighbouring areas including Greater Manchester, Cumbria and the Liverpool City Region.



The Lancashire 2050 Vision has Employment and Skills as one of eight strategic priorities with an ambition to 'support people to develop their skills throughout their lives and attract business to the county because of our highly skilled workforce'.

The Lancashire Skills and Employment Board brings together industry and education, skills and employment providers and local authorities, and is responsible for driving forward the employment and skills theme in the locality. The Principal and Chief Executive of the College Group is a member of this board which feeds into the Lancashire Skills Improvement Plan and currently, the Local Authorities Lancashire Leaders group.

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

The Lancashire Skills Hub, the strategic body which supports the work of the board, have worked in partnership with the Chambers of Commerce who are leading on the Local Skills Improvement Plan. The LSIP team, in turn, have worked closely with employers and providers to help develop a greater understanding of what employers require from the skills system. The LSIP has produced its report highlighting the key occupations employers are struggling to fill and skills shortages. Common across all sectors were concerns among employers about employability skills and getting people with the 'right attitude' to work and learning. The report also identified issues facing many smaller companies who are not sure on exactly how the move to net zero and digital transformation will impact their work, roles within their organisations and the skills needed within their business to support progress; supporting employers to understand and plan in these areas will be crucial. The College Principal and CEO is also a member of the Integrated Care Board's Strategic Education and Training Collaborative Group, which has responsibility for oversight of the Lancashire ICB Workforce Strategy.

As stated above, the College is part of The Lancashire Colleges group (TLC). Through TLC we have a successful track-record of working collectively and collaboratively to improve quality, enhance the curriculum and deliver programmes that respond to business and community needs. Additional examples of strategic collaborations developed with and through TLC can be seen at appendix 1. The College is a key member of the Lancashire and Cumbria Institute of Technology comprising 7 colleges and 3 universities pan Lancashire to deliver a cohesive framework of world class technical education at Level 4 and above to future proof Lancashire Growth Plan.

As stated above Nelson and Colne College Group is made up of three distinct skills provisions facing distinct geographies:

- Nelson and Colne College, situated in Nelson and delivering academic and technical skills study programmes, Higher Education and Apprenticeships in the East Lancashire district of Pendle.
- Accrington and Rossendale College, situated in Accrington and delivering advanced level technical education study programmes, Higher Education and apprenticeships in the East Lancashire districts of Hyndburn and Rossendale.
- Lancashire Adult Learning (LAL), with its operational base at Northlight in Brierfield, delivering adult skills, Tailored Learning and routes into professional/technical learning throughout the whole of Lancashire.





## Pendle

The Borough of Pendle is situated in Northeast Lancashire on the edge of the Pennines and comprises the former municipal boroughs of Colne and Nelson, the former urban districts of Barnoldswick, Barrowford, Brierfield, Earby and Trawden. The current population is approximately 96,110.

### Population



- In Pendle the number of people per km<sup>2</sup> is similar to the North West average.
- The overall population has seen strong growth since 2005 in comparison to the increases at the county, regional and national levels and the population aged under 15 increased by 12.3% between censuses. It is estimated that between 2018 and 2043 the population of Pendle will increase by 4.1%, a lot lower than the 7.2% population rise predicted for the Lancashire-14 area.
- The ethnic mix is similar to other authorities in East Lancashire. It is predominantly white. The largest minority ethnic group is Pakistani.

### Schools' Performance



- The latest published figures for educational attainment in Pendle show that attainment is below the comparative Lancashire and national averages for GCSE English and mathematics. GCSE attainment is 58.6% compared to a Lancashire average of 66%.
- The average 'Attainment 8' in Pendle is 42.5 which is the third lowest score across all districts (Lancashire average is 47.1).

### Deprivation



- An ACORN profile of local households classifies Lancashire residents by 18 main groups. This shows that 'Modest Means', 'Young Hardship', 'Successful Suburbs' and 'Mature Money' are the only dominant groups featuring in Pendle. 'Modest Means' is dominant in over half of the wards while representing over 30% of households in the district.
- Only a relatively small number of families in Pendle have an income level that led to them opting out of receiving child benefit. In the 2021 census, 57.5% of Pendle's population was in at least one of the 4 domains of deprivation.
- A total of 16.5% of households were in fuel poverty in 2020 which was the 2nd highest rate in Lancashire, and the 37th highest rate in England.
- The Borough is ranked 14th of the 20 local authorities in England that have the highest proportion of neighbourhoods with the most deprived (10%) population in England out of 317 local authorities.
- In the 2019 Indices of Deprivation Pendle was the 36th most deprived area out of 317 districts and unitary authorities in England.

### Employment



- Between 2009 and 2017, employment in the authority rose by nearly 10%. Pendle has a very high proportion of private-sector jobs in comparison to the county and national averages. The 2011 census results reveal the strong commuter flows over 4,600 in each direction, between Pendle and Burnley.
- Average earnings results in Pendle for 2019 were £432.70 per week by place of residence and £425.50 by place of work. These were both 7th highest in the Lancashire-14 area.
- 83% of Lancashire businesses surveyed for by the LSIP cited Employability skills as the most important attribute they are looking for from an ideal candidate. Difficulty finding individuals with the right employability skills was the second most commonly cited experience of a Lancashire business when recruiting.

### Health



- Using the health disability and employment rank, Pendle is in the top 20% most deprived areas in England. The Pendle Health Profile reveals that the health of people in the area is generally worse than the England average with 16.3% of children living in poverty and has an infant mortality rate of 5.9% compared to the England and North West averages of 3.9% and 4.5%.

# Accrington and Rossendale College

Hyndburn and Rossendale are characterised by high levels of deprivation, unemployment, poor health, and low levels of achievement and aspiration.

## Hyndburn

Hyndburn is an authority in East Lancashire that covers 73 square kilometres and, has 16 wards. The mid 2021 population estimate for the authority was 82,234.

### Population



- The authority has a younger population and fewer people of pensionable age than the average for England and Wales.
- It is estimated that between 2018 and 2043 the population of Hyndburn will increase by 4.3%, compared to the 7.2% increase expected for Lancashire-14, and the 10.3% rise predicted for England.
- The ethnic mix is similar to other authorities in East Lancashire, predominantly white. The largest minority ethnic group is Pakistani.

### Schools' Performance



- Educational attainment in Hyndburn, in particular GCSE English and mathematics at grade 5 or above, within the College's feeder schools ranges from 33% to 48% which is significantly below the county average of 66%.
- The 'Attainment 8' average score was 43.7 in Hyndburn in 2021/22, the second lowest in the Lancashire County Council (LCC) area, where the average was 47.1.

### Deprivation



- An ACORN profile of local households classifies Lancashire residents by 18 main groups. 'Modest Means', 'Young Hardship' and 'Steady Neighbourhoods' are the only groups which are dominant in wards in Hyndburn and although 'Modest Means' is the dominant group in the district as a whole, it is only dominant in five wards compared to the eight allocated to 'Young Hardship'.
- A total of 15% of households in Hyndburn were in fuel poverty in 2020, the 6th highest in the Lancashire-14 area and the 68th highest in England.
- In the 2019 Indices of Deprivation Hyndburn was the 18th most deprived area out of 317 districts and unitary authorities in England.

### Employment



- Hyndburn has a localised labour market, with 51% having journeys to work of less than 5km (compared to 40% nationally). Strongest commuting flows are to and from Blackburn.
- Average earnings in Hyndburn are low when measured by place of work and the personal income results reveal a very low median total income figure for Hyndburn.
- 83% of Lancashire businesses surveyed for by the LSIP cited employability skills as the most important attribute they are looking for from an ideal candidate. Difficulty finding individuals with the right employability skills was the second most commonly cited experience of a Lancashire business when recruiting.
- There is a high level of employment and support allowance claimants.
- In 2023 the 'Accrington Acre' programme was successful in a bid to the Levelling Up Fund.
- Key employment sectors include manufacturing, warehousing, wholesale, retail and motor. There is currently a small employment presence in the public administration, defence and compulsory social security service.

### Health



- Average life expectancies at birth for males and females in Hyndburn are 76.7 and 80.7 which is significantly below the England average of 84.9 and 87.2.

## Rossendale

Rossendale is an authority in East Lancashire that covers 138 square kilometres, has 14 wards and a mid 2021 population estimate of 71,010.

### Population



- It is estimated that between 2018 and 2043 the population of Rossendale will increase by 12.6%, the fourth highest in the Lancashire-14 area, (7.2%), and slightly above the of 10.3% predicted for England.
- The ethnic mix (2021 census) is predominantly white and is less diverse than other authorities in East Lancashire. The largest minority ethnic group is Pakistani.

### Schools' Performance



- In Rossendale, school attainment of GCSE English and mathematics at grade 5 and above is slightly better with most schools performing on or near the county average of 48%.
- The average 'Attainment 8' score was 46.2 in Rossendale district in 2021/22. This was below the average for the Lancashire County Council (LCC) area of 47.5.

### Deprivation



- The ACORN profile of local households shows 'Modest Means' is clearly dominant in the district as it is dominant in nine of the 14 wards. 'Successful Suburbs' and 'Mature Money' also feature.
- The median house prices to earnings ratio in the authority is higher than other authorities in East Lancashire.
- 14.6% of Rossendale households were in fuel poverty in 2020. This was above the England average of 13.2%.
- The 2019 Indices of Deprivation revealed that Rossendale was the 91st most deprived area out of 317 districts and unitary authorities in England, when measured by the rank of average LSOA rank.

### Employment



- In 2022 there were 2,650 active enterprises in Rossendale, slightly fewer than in 2021. 88.7% of these had fewer than ten employees.
- Average earnings in Rossendale were the fifth lowest in Lancashire when measured by place of residence, £14.70 per week better than by place of work, where they were sixth lowest.
- The authority has a positive net benefit from commuter flows and a low job density rate confirming that many local residents seek employment outside the district.
- 83% of Lancashire businesses surveyed for by the LSIP cited employability skills as the most important attribute they are looking for from an ideal candidate. Difficulty finding individuals with the right Employability Skills was the second most commonly cited experience of a Lancashire business when recruiting.
- Key employment sectors include Manufacturing.

### Health



- Male and female averages life expectancy at birth in Rossendale district are below the national figures.



## Lancashire Adult Learning

Lancashire Adult Learning covers an extensive range of learning opportunities to over 10,000 adults across twelve districts in Lancashire. Learning opportunities take place predominantly in community settings focusing on deprived wards across the county. This removes potential barriers to learning and enables adults to engage in learning, gain first rung skills and qualifications so they have both the skills and confidence to take their next steps into further learning or into work.

35% of Lancashire residents have a Level 4+ qualification, compared to 43.6% nationally. This is up by 5% since 2015, but up 6.5% nationally, and so the gap widens. Lancashire now has the sixth lowest employment rate of 38 LEPs, placing it in the bottom quartile of LEPs nationally.

Lancashire also has lower than average disposable household incomes compared to national data. In 2020 Median Gross Disposable Household income in Lancashire was £18,146 - the bottom quartile of LEPs nationally, and below the UK average of £21,440. Lancashire has a lower employment rate (72.9%) than the national average (75.6%) and the sixth lowest employment rate of 38 LEPs, placing it in the bottom quartile of LEPs nationally.

Pre-pandemic Lancashire's employment rate was above the national average however there has been a significant growth in economic inactivity since the onset of the pandemic – more pronounced in areas of deprivation with highs of 30.0% in Pendle, and lows of 12.2% in South Ribble. Lancashire has higher than average sickness absence rates at work (1.5%) than is typical nationally (1.1%) with Pendle, at 4% the highest of any local authority nationally. Lancashire also has a higher percentage of economic inactivity that is due to long term ill health (30%) than is typical nationally (25.8%)

Lancashire Adult Learning provides a pyramid of interventions for adults, providing co-created interventions for families, individuals and communities who will benefit from education and skills as a vehicle for social mobility. The curriculum aims to support parents/carers to better enable them to support their child's learning, improving the health and wellbeing of Lancashire's workforce population and developing stronger communities. Lancashire Adult Learning creates barrier removing programmes, basic skills learning and bespoke technical education programmes to enable learners to take their first steps onto a curriculum ladder which then provides professional and technical routes to employment and/or through to Higher Education. We understand that on average someone with a Level 4+ qualification earns 60% more than someone with no qualifications and therefore our ambition is to create opportunities for as many learners as possible to access this higher- level technical education. Pre-pandemic, when Lancashire Adult Learning was working at full strength, economic activity in Lancashire was more positive than national averages.

## Higher Education

At Nelson and Colne College Group our ambition is to create ladders to Level 4 technical education in key LSIP and LEP priority sectors enabling more adults and young people to access Level 4/5 technical occupations. The college serves local communities across East Lancashire, predominantly from Accrington and Nelson, and attracts a large proportion of adults from the most disadvantaged quintiles 1 and 2. Progression into professional employment in 2022-23 for first degree level students is 81.9% compared to OFS indicators of 50%.

At Nelson and Colne, the continuation rates for first degree students is 89%. This compares very favourably against the OFS expectation for continuing students, furthermore Lancashire as a region more widely under performs against the national average for retaining graduates.

## Nelson and Colne College Group

Nelson and Colne College Group is an escalator of social mobility in each of the districts it serves. Educational outcomes for all learners across the Group are exceptional.

Young people on advanced level programmes make excellent progress from their starting points. Value added on academic programmes is exceptionally strong with an ALPs value added score of 3. Equally those on advanced level vocational and technical study programmes make excellent progress with an ALPs value added score of 2. As a result, most learners on advanced level courses progress to the Sutton Group universities and move directly into aspirational careers and destinations.

In addition, young people with very low starting points, many from disadvantaged backgrounds and those with SEND, make excellent progress in English and mathematics. Latest published figures for progress in mathematics places the College as the number 1 GFE college and third GFE college in the country for progress in English.

A very high proportion of adults on learning programmes gain the skills, qualifications and confidence to move successfully into further learning or into employment. Adults on community learning programmes, those furthest from the labour market, re-engage with learning, develop new skills and gain 'first rung' qualifications so they are better prepared to move into work. For example, on sector-based pre-employment courses, all learners have direct access to vacancies offered and a significant proportion receive job offers. The vast majority of adults from disadvantaged backgrounds across the county, gain the essential 'passport to success' English, mathematics and digital qualifications. Most adults on access programmes progress to higher education institutions or move directly into employment in a sector aligned to their studies.

Apprentices gain new industry standard knowledge and skills and behaviours that benefit their workplace and enhances their future career progression. 89% of apprentices completing their programmes can successfully apply new knowledge and skills in the workplace and 100% of apprentices say the their programmes have enabled them to work independently in the workplace and put new ideas into action. Apprentices on Standards, make excellent progress compared to their starting points, and a high proportion of those on Level 3 and 5 Standards achieve high grades in their end point assessments.





# Part Three - Approach to Developing the Statement.

In 2022/23 with the arrival of a new Principal, and having reviewed KPI performance for the previous plan period in line with targets set at point of merger, the College Corporation Board undertook an evidenced-based Strategic Review, leading to the creation of a new Vision, Strategic Goals and a detailed Strategic Plan for the Group. This process drew upon a range of available evidence including intelligence from over 850 employers and other stakeholders, and is informed by clearly articulated LSIP priorities, the Lancashire 2050 framework, and the priorities of Borough Councils in the districts we serve. The process also directly responded to key national policy drivers including:

- The Sainsbury Review
- The Post-16 Skills Plan
- Levelling up and Regeneration Bill 2022-23
- Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022
- Lifelong Loan Entitlement and HE Reform

Completed in July 2023, this Strategic Review led to the development of a new College Strategy, with the overall vision: 'To build stronger communities and create high quality routes into high-value Professional and Technical careers for all our learners'.

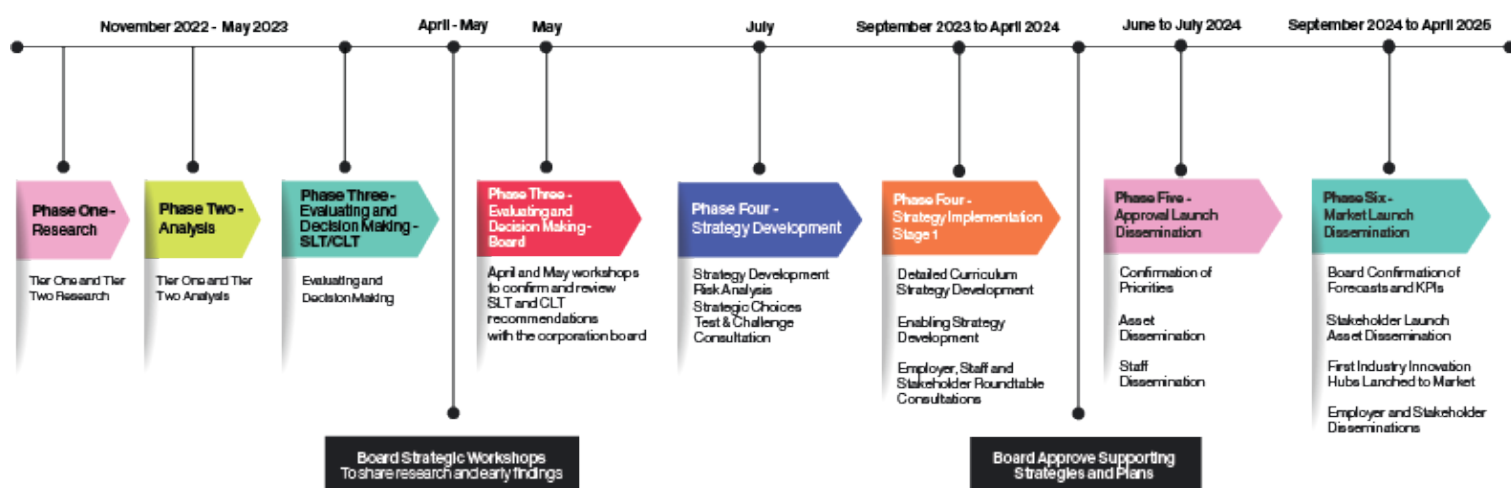
The Strategic Review process provided the Board with key information from which to review the college's ability to meet local needs including: national policy, regional skills priorities (as outlined in the LSIP and Lancashire 2050), regional demographic data, travel to learn patterns, learner perception surveys and patterns of participation, achievement and progression. Having undertaken this review, the Board working with the College's leadership team, developed, analysed and evaluated a range of strategic options, leading to the development of the College 2030 Strategy, approved by the Board at their meeting in July 2023.





In the autumn of 2023 a series of colleague, sector-based and placed-based roundtable discussions provided the opportunity for key employers and civic partners to feedback and help shape the strategy. Feedback from these events was then built into detailed curriculum and enabling strategies and plans, approved by the Board at their Strategic away days in May 2024. As part of this detailed planning process the Board agreed clear KPIs for each year of the Strategy, incorporating some of these into the 2024/25 Accountability Statement. From July to November 2024, the College 2030 Strategy will be shared with key stakeholders, including sub-regional providers, employers, education and civic partners. The full process for developing the College 2030 Strategy and Accountability Statement for 2024/25 is outlined below.

The Strategic Review process plays a key role in demonstrating the College Group's approach and commitment to the 'Local Needs Duty'.



# Part Three - Contributions to National, Regional and Local Skills Priorities.

## Nelson and Colne College Group

### Qualification Reform

As a wave 1 T Level trailblazer, the College has already rolled out five T Level routes, including in the regional priority sectors identified in the LSIP of digital, health and engineering and manufacturing. In alignment with the College's strategic plan, the College has an ambitious strategy around the growth of T Levels over the period 23/24 to 26/27, supported by significant investment in facilities and extensive collaboration with employers. Underpinning the strategy is a focus on meeting the specific technical skills needs of employers in the largest sectors in East Lancashire, including in healthcare, advanced manufacturing and digital. The T Level curriculum is co-designed with employers to ensure learners develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to progress into technical employment in their occupational specialisms, the success of which has already been evidenced by the destinations of the 2022 and 2023 T Level graduates.





## Nelson and Colne College

Programmes for young people on the Nelson Campus are informed by and closely aligned to the LSIP and offer the best opportunities for employment in professional, technical and higher technical employment. Through a high degree of collaboration, both within the organisation and with external partners, the College offers learners a relevant, impactful and high-quality technical curriculum that reflects industry needs and standards and prepares learners for the world of work through extensive employer involvement. Working through dedicated employer forums employers influence and inform curriculum development and content. Through this work employers are able to endorse curriculum plans, provide industry standard briefs and where appropriate co-deliver the curriculum through master classes, guest lectures, industry placements, mock interviews and provide workplace visits.

- A high-quality advanced manufacturing offer addresses the growing skills needs of the engineering and manufacturing sector including aeronautics, and a high-quality apprenticeship offer provides a direct labour market pipeline into Level 4 and 5 qualifications through the Lancashire and Cumbria Institute of Technology (IoT).
- The advanced digital curriculum including T Levels supports the continued growth in demand for advanced level digital skills from software developers to technicians. Learners benefit from the advanced digital suite providing industry standard learning facilities alongside the new the Advanced Digital Skills and Employer Hub where the College works in partnership with employers to co-create and co-deliver a curriculum which meets the region's digital skills needs.
- The outstanding academic suite of programmes, particularly in science and mathematics, are aligned to the regional demand for professional scientific and technical skills. A high proportion of learners progress into higher education to study medicine, pharmacy, dentistry and medical related subjects.
- The broad range of health and social care courses are closely aligned to the key employment demands in the health sector across the region. Programmes are aligned to the needs of Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board, and through close collaboration with the East Lancashire Health Care Trust, co-created study programmes ensure that the skills and behaviours that learners develop on programme, matches the demands of the employer.
- A Level maths is the College's 4th largest subject at A Level. In addition to this, we offer further maths and statistics. We also offer core maths as an additional subject for A Level students who are intending to go onto degrees which include mathematical content (such as business, finance and psychology) and also for vocational science and engineering students whose destinations would benefit from a Level 3 maths qualification.
- In recognition of the College's contribution to maths outcomes nationally and status as a Maths Centre for Excellence, Nelson and Colne College have been selected to be part of the DfE expert panel advising the government on how best to implement The Prime Minister's vision of "maths to 18". We are one of only two colleges represented.
- Through the T Level business curriculum the College has developed a strong partnership with some of Pendle's largest employers. Curriculum teams work in conjunction with a host of employers to design and deliver assessment days to select learners for placement whilst the new facility is used to deliver masterclasses by the employers.





## Accrington and Rossendale College

Programmes for young people on the Accrington campus are informed by the demographic of Hyndburn and Rossendale and are designed to meet the needs of young people by offering a range of programmes from Entry Level to aspirational technical programmes at Level 3. Courses are informed by and closely aligned to the LSIP and offer the best opportunities for employment in professional, technical and higher technical employment. Through a high degree of collaboration, both within the organisation and with external partners, the college offers learners a relevant, impactful and high-quality technical curriculum that reflects industry needs and standards and prepares learners for the world of work through extensive employer involvement. Working through dedicated employer forums employers influence and inform curriculum development and content. Through this work employers are able to endorse curriculum plans, provide industry standard briefs and where appropriate co-deliver the curriculum through master classes, guest lectures, industry placements, mock interviews and workplace visits.

- Our range of construction programmes starting at Level 1 develop the skills, knowledge and behaviours of young people so they are able to move to the next level of their study programmes or onto an apprenticeship. These programmes are designed to address the Lancashire construction skills needs which is the 6th highest contributing skills sector in the region.
- The range of health and social care courses offered on the Nelson site are also replicated on the Accrington campus and again are closely aligned to the key employment demands in the health sector across the region. In addition, young people in the Hyndburn and Rossendale area have the benefit of progressing in their studies through the College's University Centre which aligns its curriculum to meeting the needs of the health care sector providing direct progression to Level 4 and 5 professional qualifications in collaboration with the Lancashire and Cumbria Institute of Technology.
- The early years curriculum has been developed with key industry partners from Hyndburn and Rossendale. By engaging in training needs analysis with children's nurseries from the surrounding area the college has developed an early years curriculum offer that directly addresses the identified skills gaps. The purposefully designed curriculum provides learners with a comprehensive study programme where they conduct placements alongside their academic studies earning a licence to practice, allowing them to enter the workplace as a Level 3 practitioner.

## Lancashire Adult Learning

Through long established strategic partnerships and relationships with employers, community representative groups, key stakeholders and sector bodies throughout the county, Lancashire Adult Learning's curriculum offer ensures that it is carefully aligned to skills and employment needs of the region ensuring the curriculum is best placed to ensure adult learners progress to sustained and relevant employment. Tailored learning programmes are aligned to several key national and regional policies which allows disadvantaged learners benefit from wider outcomes such as improving health and wellbeing, equipping parents/carers to support their child learning, and develop stronger communities.

Collaboration with employers and partners has resulted in the creation of dedicated training facilities in areas such as health and social care, and construction. Many courses are delivered in conjunction with the employer/partners to ensure learners have the knowledge, skills and behaviours that are required by that sector/employer and wider community. Where learners are progressing into further learning, teams work both internally and with external partner Universities to ensure learners have the pre-requisite knowledge and skills that are needed for their next steps.

The college has worked to create a succinct curriculum with seamless sequenced progression routes for adult learners which can provide pathways from tailored learning programmes and basic skills through to postgraduate qualifications across Lancashire Adult Learning, Nelson and Colne College and Accrington and Rossendale College. Pre-Employment Programmes and Sector-based Work Academy Programmes (SWAPs) are co-designed with the DWP and employers, and specifically target learners who are furthest away from the jobs market and are socially disadvantaged. Employers and DWP Employment advisors work in partnership with the college to identify Foundational Economy skills shortage sectors, leading to programme design in areas such as The Civil Service, tourism, call centre operatives, health and care, warehousing and transport.

# Key Actions for 2024/2025

## Participation in National Priority Programmes

We will:

- Increase the volume of learners studying T Levels at Nelson and Colne College Group by 55%
- Increase the volume of learners enrolled on HTQ programmes at Nelson and Colne College Group by 200%

## Participation in Regional (LSIP) Skills Priorities

We will:

- Increase the volume of learners enrolled on Engineering programmes (Level 2+) at Nelson and Colne College Group by 28%

## Quality Improvement

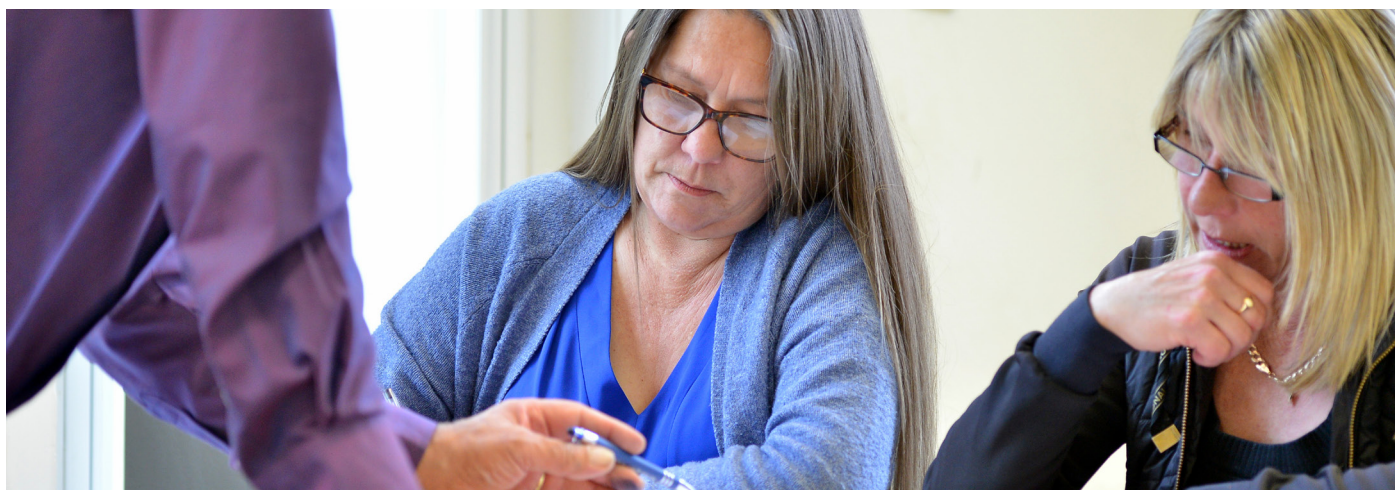
We will:

- Reduce withdrawals on Apprenticeship programmes by 17%
- Reduce breaks in learning between 180-365 days on apprenticeship programmes by 25%

## Regional Contribution

We will:

- Continue to work with our neighbours in Lancashire, working towards the TLC Strategy aims and objectives, supporting our Governing Body to effectively discharge its duty to review provision in the local area.





# Part Five - Local Needs Duty.

This statement outlines in brief the extensive review that has taken place to ensure provision across the college aligns with and responds to local needs, now and over the next five years of the emerging strategic plan. The key sectors identified through both the LSIP and four months of extensive employer and stakeholder engagement have been incorporated into the college's strategic curriculum planning, and are supported by focused enabling strategies and investment to effect swift implementation of relevant curriculum.



The outcomes of the strategic review identified key actions, some of which are listed in the previous 'Key Actions' section, that will further strengthen the college's response to meeting local skills priorities. The strategic curriculum plan will see the introduction of, or expansion of, provision that links to the LSIP, including manufacturing, construction, digital and low carbon. In addition, the sector skill areas identified by detailed LMI analysis will be developed further. An integrated sectoral approach to the development of curriculum is being implemented to continue to create linked pathways through 16-19, apprenticeship, adult and HE to enable learners to develop relevant skills and move swiftly into employment and further training. In preparation for devolution in Lancashire, the college will build on its nationally-recognised, impactful adult learning with the expansion of its skills provision across key sectors.





# Part Six - Corporation Statement.

On behalf of the Corporation of the Nelson and Colne College Group, we confirm that having completed a Strategic Review of the College's performance and offer aligned to local area need, this Accountability Statement reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the Corporation at their meeting on 23rd May 2024.

	
<b>Phil Wilkinson</b> Chair of the Board of Corporation	<b>Lisa O'Loughlin</b> Principal and Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

# Part Seven - Accountability Statement.

The Accountability Statement will be publicly available on the College Group's website within three months of the new academic year, and can be accessed from clicking here.

# Part Eight - Links to Supporting Documents.

[https://www.lancashirelsip.co.uk/downloads/LSIP\\_Report\\_31%20March%202022\\_Website\\_Publication.pdf](https://www.lancashirelsip.co.uk/downloads/LSIP_Report_31%20March%202022_Website_Publication.pdf)

<https://www.lancashireskillshub.co.uk/our-people/evidence-base/reports/> <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/lancashire-insight/area-profiles/local-authority-profiles/pendle-district/>

<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/lancashire-insight/area-profiles/local-authority-profiles/hyndburn-district/>

# Nelson and Colne College Group

**The work of  
The Lancashire Colleges  
and further examples of  
strategic collaboration**



## The Lancashire Colleges - Key Facts

**9,000**  
Businesses Supported

Lancashire's colleges have extensive networks of public and private sector partners and currently work with 9,000 businesses, supporting their staff in apprenticeships and other training. Lancashire's colleges achieve above average scores for employer satisfaction.

**£288**  
Million

With a combined turnover of almost £288 million, Lancashire's colleges are major employers in their own rights, employing around 6,000 people, making a significant contribution to the local economy.

**£1=£15**

For every pound of government funding invested, Lancashire's colleges deliver over £15 in economic benefits over their students' lifetime, a substantial return.

**82,000**  
Young and Adult Learners

Lancashire's colleges provide education and training to over 82,000 young and adult learners each year from Entry Level to postgraduate and across a spectrum from the most disadvantaged to the most able.

**Over 8,000**  
Higher Education Students

Over 8,000 or 12% of all higher education (HE) students based in Lancashire study at Lancashire's colleges compared with 4% of HE students being based in colleges nationally. Three of Lancashire's College are in the top ten largest HE in FE providers nationally.

**£13**

Million External Funding

TLC has secured over £13 million of external funding in 2021/22 for the benefit of Lancashire.

## Examples of Strategic Collaboration

A £4.5m Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) Programme (2023-25) through which we are working in partnership with local colleges to respond to skills priorities highlighted in the Lancashire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) including green construction skills, digital employability skills and pathways to employment in the food, hospitality and farming sectors.

A £9m Strategic Development Fund (SDF) Pilot Programme (2021-22) saw Lancashire's colleges collaborating with each other to help provide the skills businesses need as they respond to the challenges and opportunities presented by the shift towards net-zero carbon. This programme recognised the importance of Lancashire's Energy and Low Carbon sector as emphasised in the The Lancashire Independent Economic Review and supported and enabled businesses to respond to market and technological change, a priority highlighted in Lancashire's Technical Education Vision.

A £2.75m Phase 2 SDF project (2022-23) allowed the colleges to continue our joint work on net-zero carbon curriculum development and also allowed a focus on cyber-security. The latter was in direct response to not only the announcement that the National Cyber Force will be located in Lancashire, recognising the impact this will have on clusters and supply chain development, but also on feedback from SMEs that cyber-security is a significant area of concern.

Through an ESF 'Moving On' project (2016-23) the colleges across Lancashire have collaborated with private and third sector providers to support over 5,500 young people who were NEET/at risk of becoming NEET, a priority group for the Local Authorities and LEP. Nearly 60% of young people progressed or were retained in education, skills or employment as a result of this support.

The ESF 'Supporting Technical Education in Lancashire' project (2021-22) supported over 330 Lancashire-based SMEs to engage in technical education and training. This project directly responded to feedback from local employers that they needed more support to understand how they could engage in technical education through offering work placements or apprenticeships, by getting involved in designing curriculum and offering masterclasses.

A small pilot project (2021-22) saw the establishment of four Professional Development Networks bringing together over 130 teaching staff from across the colleges to develop their Level 4/5 subject and pedagogic content knowledge and create teaching and other resources. This helped to improve the quality of technical and professional curriculum design, teaching, learning and assessment across four local priority sectors: construction, health, sustainable energy and ecology/land-based.

