

ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT 2026/27

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The plan will be published on the College's website within three months of the start of the new academic year and can be accessed using the following link:

<https://leicestercollege.ac.uk/about/corporate-information/>

PURPOSE

OUR MISSION, STRATEGIC AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The College's mission is:

**Developing Skills, Partnering Employers, Connecting Communities,
Transforming Lives**

Our core values which run throughout all our work are:

- **Respect**
- **Inclusion**
- **Sustainability**
- **Equality**
- **Excellence**

The College's strategic commitments for 2026/27, as set out in the College's Strategic Plan and supporting strategies and operating plans, are:

STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS	
1)	Deliver High Quality Teaching and Learning We will provide engaging and forward-looking education and training that achieves excellent student outcomes and equips them with the skills and confidence to reach their potential
2)	Create an Exceptional, Inclusive Student Experience We will foster a vibrant, supportive environment where every student thrives and contributes to a diverse and welcoming community.
3)	Align our Curriculum to Local and National Priorities We will shape and deliver a high quality, future-focussed curriculum for education and training to meet the evolving needs of Leicester and Leicestershire's economy and address national skills gaps. We will position Leicester College as a partner of choice for employers by delivering responsive, high quality skills solutions that meet workforce needs.
4)	Attract, Retain and Empower Engaged and Motivated Staff We will build a culture of excellence and belonging by investing in staff development, wellbeing and leadership growth, inspiring our people to deliver transformative education

STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

- 5) **Invest in Future-Ready Spaces, Resources and Technologies**
We will create cutting-edge learning environments that reflect industry standards, promote sustainability and deliver excellent student experiences.
- 6) **Help to Drive Regional Growth as a Leading Anchor Institution**
We will demonstrate bold, collaborative leadership that strengthens our role as a catalyst for social mobility, economic development and community engagement across Leicester and Leicestershire.

The College's Strategic Plan 2026-2029 was developed in consultation with key stakeholders and included the development of a series of curriculum sector strategies focussed on national and local priority sectors. In completing these, the College conducted a thorough review of the curriculum, a summary of which can also be found on the College's website. We have ensured that the aims and objectives in this accountability statement align with our Strategic Plan.

CONTEXT AND PLACE

Leicester College was formed in 1999 from the merger of two colleges. It operates from three main sites, four satellite sites and in community venues across the City of Leicester.

The College attracts 60% of its students from the City with 40% coming from the wider County area and further afield. The range of its offer, much of which is not offered by other institutions, means that students will travel to Leicester College to benefit from the expert technical training and specialist facilities that the College provides.

Over 55% of our student population is from a minority ethnic group and over 100 nationalities are represented in the student body. We value diversity and recognise that people bring different perspectives, ideas, knowledge and culture. This difference brings strength and energy to the College.



Leicester city has a population of 368,800 and is the 19th most deprived local authority in England, with a 59% ethnic minority population; 71% of school pupils are from non-White British backgrounds. 41% of Leicester residents were born outside the UK, one of the highest proportions outside London and 30% of the population has a language other than

English as their main language. We are privileged to be serving a city with such a diverse population.

Leicester has very specific education and training needs for both adults and young people and experiences pockets of serious economic as well as educational deprivation and inequality.

There are still high numbers of young people who perform poorly up to Key Stage 2 and achievement in Leicester remains below the national average. GCSE English and maths results in the city are 3% below the national figures and 16 to 18-year-olds are below average for the achievement of level 3 academic and vocational qualifications. 2021 census data reveals that 27% of the post-16 population do not have a GCSE or equivalent qualification. This means that many young people come to further education, and specifically to Leicester College, with significant educational gaps. 68% of young people who enrolled with Leicester College in 2025/26 had not achieved GCSE English and/or Maths. Nevertheless, many flourish in vocational and technical fields and go on to perform highly in a further education setting, progressing to further study or employment and making highly successful career paths.

In the City, 5.8% of the 16-17 year old population is not in education, employment or training (NEET), that amounts to approximately 600 young people..

The 2021 Census also showed that over a quarter (26.7%) of Leicester's adult population, 78,000 people, have no qualifications. 21% of households are workless compared to 14% nationally.

Leicester and Leicestershire is a thriving and growing local entrepreneurial base. There are over 40,000 businesses in the wider Leicestershire area, 13,000 of which are based in Leicester, including a significant proportion of small and medium sized enterprises; 89% businesses employ 9 or fewer staff and only 1.8% businesses employ more than 50 people. There is also a strong public sector which includes some of the largest employers in the City.

The locality has traditionally had a strong manufacturing base, including a significant textiles industry. 14% of the Leicester and Leicestershire workforce is employed in the manufacturing sector compared to 9% nationally. In contrast, 13% of employees work in banking, finance and insurance compared to 18% nationally. This difference is also reflected in a higher proportion of people working in process and machine operations and in elementary occupations compared to nationally and fewer in professional occupations. The average income in local workplaces is approximately £70 a week less than national levels.

Significant inward investment in local and national priority sectors including in the engineering, logistics and space/aeronautical industries is introducing new employment opportunities to the local area.

APPROACH TO DEVELOPING THE ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

The College has a range of stakeholders, all of whom have an important role to play in helping us plan, create and deliver high quality education and training. These stakeholders include:

- Students
- Apprentices
- Prospective students/apprentices
- Parents/carers
- Staff
- Employers/businesses and business groups including the East Midlands Chamber
- Other partners (colleges, schools, universities, other local organisations)
- Local community
- Funders
- Other statutory bodies.

The various ways in which the College engages with stakeholders to plan, develop and deliver education training and support are set out in a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy.

The College works collaboratively with other local providers and partners in the city and wider county area, notably through formal and informal local networks, including the Local Skills Accountability Board, CEIAG, the Social Care Academy, and previously through projects such as the Skills Development Fund and the Local Skills Improvement Funds, which have resulted in the development of programmes to upskill technicians in the motor engineering sector in electric/hybrid vehicle, high voltage battery testing and component testing. Other new programmes to meet regional need emerging from these collaborative projects include decarbonising transport programmes, green leadership skills, digital upskilling and an employer skills training hub.

The College has a close relationship with local universities. It is an associate college of De Montfort University and is establishing a strategic partnership with the University of Leicester focussed around engineering.

The schools in Leicester are predominantly 11-16. While there are three sixth form colleges, and five schools offering post-16 provision, their offer is in the main academic or different from the College's technical and vocational offer. The College therefore has an important role in working with schools to ensure that young people are well informed about the full range of options post-16 and particularly the technical and vocational routes, and the employment and career opportunities that are open to them. In addition, the College works with other colleges in the City and County to explore ways in which the institutions can plan for the changes expected following national curriculum reform including the introduction of the new V level qualifications.

As one of the largest providers of T levels in the Country, Leicester College has a strong track record in delivering new technical qualifications and is therefore in a good position to

work with other providers to plan for and delivery V levels over the coming years, including as a member of the Department for Education's Pioneer group.

CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL PRIORITIES

Leicester College is the largest FE college in Leicestershire and our Strategic Plan sets out a wider range of longer-term goals and commitments to its stakeholders. In developing the aims and objectives in this Accountability Statement, the College has carefully considered national, regional and local priorities, particularly where these directly align.

Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership's Local Skills Report¹ identified some of the main skills issues and needs locally, many of which the College is well placed to support. In addition, the Local Skills Improvement Plan for Leicester and Leicestershire identifies several key sectors for the locality Advanced Manufacturing, Digital Technologies, Life Sciences, Health and Social Care, Construction, Creative Industries, and Sport. Each sector is significant for employment, innovation, and regional identity. Transition to a low-carbon economy (Net Zero) is creating new skills requirements, especially in construction, manufacturing, transport, and energy.

The LSIP has five Strategic Priorities:

1. Enable Flexible and Inclusive Skills Pathways
2. Widen Engagement with Diverse and Underrepresented Communities
3. Strengthen Employability, Workplace Behaviours, and Inclusive Leadership
4. Develop Data, Digital, AI, and Technology Skills Across All Sectors
5. Develop Job-Linked Green Skills for Clean Growth, Retrofits, and Electrification.

We already have a strong market share particularly in the Construction, Engineering, Business, Administration and Law, Health and Social Care, Creative and Performing Arts sectors. Further detail is given below. Our strong reputation, unique and specialist curriculum and excellent facilities and resources mean we are in an excellent position to capitalise on the growth potential in these industries by expanding our offer and establishing centres of excellence in vital sectors such as Construction, Engineering and Health and Life Sciences.

The LSIP also identifies persistent skills shortages across sectors, driven by rapid technological change, digitalisation, electrification, an ageing workforce and barriers to training participation. Employers report gaps in work-readiness and behavioural skills (communication, punctuality, teamwork, resilience, adaptability) among new entrants and the LSIP includes the strengthening of employability and work-readiness as one of its strategic priorities. Our personal development and enrichment activities are a key component of the curriculum in providing these essential skills for all students to enhance their confidence, life skills and employment changes.

¹ https://lep.org.uk/app/uploads/2021/04/LLEP-Local-Skills-Report_v2.pdf

Locally, Leicester and Leicestershire derives its strengths and energy from a diverse local population. The LSIP includes a strategic priority to widen engagement with diverse and under-represented communities. The diversity of the population is reflected in our students and in our staff and we pride ourselves on being an inclusive organisation where everyone belongs and is supported to find their future.

However, many local people face persistent inequalities; there are skills shortages in key growth sectors, as well as in adult basic skills, and an urgent need to support young people and adults into positive destinations including students with high needs. A high proportion of young people in Leicester do not participate in education, training or employment and are NEET and need to be brought back into education to enable them to find their future paths to success. Around two-thirds of our younger students also come to us without the basic English and maths skills expected by many employers and necessary for progression into employment or further study.

Demand for inclusive provision, mental health and wellbeing support, continues to be high. An emphasis at national level on providing a positive experience for young people, including the Youth Guarantee, a focus on reducing NEETs and SEND reforms and expectations about the experience of students with high needs means that there are opportunities to work collaboratively with local partners to find high quality routes for these young people.

Leicester College is a major anchor institution for the city and county, with a critical role in finding and delivering solutions for local issues. The Get Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) Working Plan (2025–2035) is a 10-year regional strategy aimed at improving employment rates to 80%. One of its strands is specifically aimed at reducing NEETs and there is a role for the College to play in supporting this work to enable residents to access good jobs and tackle health, disability, or caring-related barriers to work.

The College can make an important contribution to the implementation and of these recommendations and to the impact on the skills of the local workforce. It will continue its strategic partnership with the East Midlands Chamber of Commerce which is intended to enable the College to be at the forefront of the East Midlands business community, helping to influence its future and development. This will also provide collaborative opportunities to engage local and regional businesses with the College through physical events held at the College, networking and consultation, all of which will be crucial as the College embarks on the first year of its new Strategic Plan.

LOCAL NEEDS DUTY

During 2025/26, as part of the development of its new Strategic Plan, the College undertook a review of its curriculum offer, developing separate strategies for the 2026-2029 period. Strategies were developed for sectors, focussed on the national and local priority sectors including those set out in the Industrial Strategy. The strategies included a review of the local labour market information and the identification of areas of market share, areas for growth and how the offer contributed to local priorities identified by the Leicestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) and the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP).

The review identified that Leicester College demonstrates a strong and coherent approach to meeting both local and national skills needs through a broad, employer-responsive curriculum aligned to the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), national policy priorities, and sector-specific labour market intelligence.

Across all curriculum areas, the College positions itself as a regional anchor institution, delivering technical and vocational education at scale and with clear progression pathways from entry level through to higher technical study, apprenticeships, and employment. This is underpinned by:

- Strong market share in key sectors (e.g. Construction ~35%, Engineering ~33%, Service Industries up to 62%, Creative up to 32%)
- High-quality teaching and outcomes, frequently above National Achievement Rates
- Deep employer engagement, including co-designed curriculum, work placements, and industry-led training
- Alignment with LSIP priorities, particularly in construction, engineering, visitor economy, digital/creative, and green skills
- Inclusive provision, supporting progression for diverse communities and addressing local deprivation and skills gaps.

Locally, the College responds directly to skills shortages (e.g. construction trades, engineering roles, digital creative skills). It also supports Leicester's SME-led economy, particularly in service industries and creative sectors and provides accessible pathways for diverse and disadvantaged learners while also sustaining key sectors such as the visitor economy, construction, and manufacturing

Key strengths of the offer include:

- Strong market leadership in multiple sectors
- Employer-responsive curriculum design
- Clear progression pathways across all levels
- Consistently good or improving outcomes
- Significant contribution to social mobility and inclusion.

Cross-college areas for development include:

- Expansion of Level 4–5 and modular provision
- Growth in adult and flexible learning
- Continued investment in facilities, digital and green technologies
- Addressing staff recruitment challenges in technical areas
- Strengthening apprenticeships and higher-level progression routes

The College continues to work in close collaboration with the DWP, to devise and deliver a range of ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) programmes, to equip claimants with the language skills needed to access employment opportunities. We continue to be the largest provider of adult provision in the City delivering over 40% of all adult courses. As such, we have an important role in enabling adults to develop the skills

they need to enter or progress in the workforce and develop both career and personal aspirations.

The College's Employability programme area is aligned to the latest government welfare reforms and the Get LLR Working Plan to help sick and disabled people who have the potential to work, into jobs. These programmes will be offered to the DWP-referred claimants and will be available to other students who may wish to improve their health and well-being

In order to address the growing numbers of young people who are NEET, over the next year, and into the following years, the College will expand its Foundation Learning Offer to provide students at the Entry/Level 1 stage, with a broader carousel of vocational experiences (including small qualifications) and more intensive support to prepare them for progression to higher levels in the College. This will help to address the city-wide NEET issue, focus on English and maths development, help build resilience and positive behaviours, and at the same time contribute to an inclusive curriculum offer.

CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL PRIORITIES

The College currently makes a significant contribution to addressing national and local skills priorities.

Sector Area	Local Priority	National priority
Advanced manufacturing	✓	✓
Space/Aeronautical	✓	✓
Logistics	✓	
Creative industries	✓	✓
Care	✓	
Defence		✓
Digital and technologies	✓	✓
Financial services		✓
Life sciences/Biotech	✓	✓
Professional and business services		✓
Clean energy industries	✓	✓
Construction	✓	✓
Sport and Health	✓	✓
English and Maths	✓	✓
ESOL	✓	✓
Green Economy	✓	

Sector Area	16-19 (*inc T levels)	Apprentices hip	Adult, employability, SWAPs, Free courses for jobs, Bootcamps (**)	HE/HTQs/ HLAs	Tech. Ex.College
Advanced manufacturing	✓*	✓	✓	✓	
Care	✓*		✓**	✓	
Clean energy industries	✓		✓	✓	
Construction	✓*	✓	✓	✓	Spoke – Derby College TEC
Creative industries	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Defence	✓				Spoke – Lincoln College TEC
Digital and technologies	✓*		✓	✓	
ESOL	✓		✓		
English and Maths	✓		✓		
Financial services	✓*		✓		
Green Economy	✓		✓	✓	
Life sciences/Biotech	✓*		✓		
Logistics					
Professional and business services	✓*	✓	✓	✓	
Space/Aeronautical	✓			✓	
Sport and Health	✓*	✓	✓	✓	

For the logistics sector, where the College does not deliver provision, other colleges have a strong offer which meets local needs.

Areas for development including growth areas and new provision to address gaps and meet skills priorities are set out below.

AIMS AND TARGETS 2026/27

College Commitment Ref.	Aim for 2026/27	Target	Baseline 2025/26	By end 2026/27	Timeline
1, 2	1. Increase the number of students on Study Programmes gaining core transferable and personal skills and progressing to positive destinations	Deliver high numbers of enrolments on English and maths qualifications for 16-18 year olds	2,220	2,200 enrolments	By July 2027
1, 2, 6	2. Maintain the College's T level and apprenticeship offer to further address local and national priority sector needs	650 students complete T level programmes	625 students	650 students	By July 2027
		Maintain breadth of the T level offer to address local and national priority sectors	21	22	By July 2027
		Maintain breadth of the Apprenticeships offer to address local and national priority sectors	27	28	By July 2027
1, 2, 6	3. Facilitate better engagement with employers in the curriculum development through the Strategic Partnership with the East Midlands Chamber and termly Skills Advisory Boards (SAB)	Establish a minimum of five partnerships delivering curriculum, progression or regional growth impact	-	5	By July 2027
		All areas to have a SAB which meets termly	SABs in place for 4 areas	6	By December 2026
1, 2, 6	4. Use ASF funding including Tailored Learning to support more people from Leicester and Leicestershire into employment or progression to further learning.	Ensure the continuation of a broad adult skills (ASF) offer, reflecting the funding reduction, to enable adults to participate in education and training	9,300 enrolments	9,300 enrolments	By July 2027
		Use the full Tailored Learning allocation	2,100 enrolments	1,900 Enrolments	By July 2027
		Increase English and maths and ESOL provision in the City to address the growing demand	4,000 ESOL 1,150 English and maths enrolments	4,500 ESOL 1,250 English and maths enrolments	By July 2027
		Increase enrolments on employability programmes to enable more adults to gain the skills they need to progress into employment	4,100 enrolments	4,500 Enrolments (565 students)	By July 2027
		Continue Bootcamps starting with the care sector	1	1	By July 2027

College Commitment Ref.	Aim for 2026/27	Target	Baseline 2025/26	By end 2026/27	Timeline
	5. Make a significant contribution to addressing the rising population of NEETs in the City through an expansion of the Launchpad programme and by mapping suitable progression pathways through all sectors	Expand foundation learning opportunities through the Launch Pad programme to increasing numbers 16-18 year olds who would otherwise have become NEET	94 students	118 students	By July 2027
1, 2	6. Develop and implement an Inclusive Mainstream Fund delivery plan that identifies key barriers to learning and participation for students with additional needs and uses evidence-based interventions to strengthen adaptive teaching, early support, inclusive practice and progression.	Improve early identification of additional needs Strengthen universal inclusive teaching Reduce unnecessary referrals to high-needs funding Expand access to assistive technology and inclusive resources Strengthen pastoral and wellbeing support Improve transitions into, through, and out of College Improve learner outcomes for those with additional needs	-	IMF activity implemented across agreed priority areas, with impact reviewed through improved access to support, participation, attendance, retention, achievement and student voice for identified student groups.	By July 2027

CORPORATION STATEMENT

On behalf of the Corporation of Leicester College, it is hereby confirmed that the College plan as set out above reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the Corporation at its meeting on 2 July 2026.

RELEVANT SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

- [LSIP](#)
- [Ofsted report](#)
- [Financial statements](#)