

Lincoln College Group Accountability Agreement – The College Plan

College Mission and Purpose

The Lincoln College Group's (LCG) Purpose is:

'Be Ready.....Realise Aspirations; Shape Futures; Serve our Communities.

The Group uses its Purpose to drive behaviours across its Colleges to meet local skills needs as identified in Local Skills Improvement Plans. It does this within the regulatory framework of its statutory reporting responsibilities and the DfE's accountability regime.

Our Purpose sees a future where:

- **Aspirations are Realised:** We inspire and empower individuals to uncover and achieve their full potential, fostering a culture of ambition and success.
- **Futures are Positively Shaped:** We provide transformative learning and teaching that equip individuals with the skills, knowledge and behaviours necessary to thrive in their future careers and contribute meaningfully to society. Our role extends beyond immediate qualifications to focus on being work-ready and productive through behaviours and experience.
- **Communities are Well Served:** We recognise our vital role as an anchor institution, actively contributing to the social and economic wellbeing of the diverse communities and employers we serve in Lincoln, Newark and beyond.

Our current College Strategy 'Vision 2030' further articulates our ambitions. Our future strategy is aspirational and forward-looking, suggesting a broad and positive impact. It specifies our role in community citizenship, which is a vital aspect of education. Our communities are geographically diverse, extending beyond Lincoln or Newark, allowing for local context wherever we operate, in the United Kingdom or internationally.

LCG's Purpose drives continuous improvement in the relevance of all curriculum areas in relation to employer need, as well as targeting areas identified for growth investment to provide a significant skills stimulus to the local and regional economy.

Meaningful employer engagement and curriculum co-design via employer engagement groups and critical friends leads to raised aspirations, improved attendance and achievement and most importantly, achieving high quality and relevant employment destinations for learners. Many programmes include significantly enhanced enrichment activities, trips and visits and extended teaching and learning to promote and create the right 'mindset' for better productivity through employability, leadership, confidence building, communication and problem-solving skills.

LCG's International and Commercial Divisions' additional income streams are invested to boost some programmes significantly beyond DfE funded 580 hours per learner.

Context and Place

The College Group delivers to around 12,000 learners from pre-entry to level six undergraduate study. This includes substantial community engagement across two counties and works with over 1,000 employers on a regular basis delivering to around 1,300 apprentices annually. It runs significant adult delivery working with key partners to deliver regular training for the unemployed and supports numerous Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) students amongst the 3,800 full time 16-18-year olds.

Our investment has led to a range of Group run commercial businesses in the UK, which again add to our commercial revenue that is reinvested into UK education, but more importantly provides 'finishing schools' for students who are working to commercial standards in terms of their skills and outputs and so makes them work ready for external employers. These include a fine dining restaurant with accommodation, an events centre providing gigs for 600+ people and seated dinners for 300, Deans gym and leisure centre, Aura hair and beauty salon, a commercial catering company, and Data Alchemy (leadership, management and data analytics consultancy). The College focuses commercial activity to support the education and training delivery in construction, engineering, visitor economy, and defence and security sectors in line with local, regional and national priorities.

The UK Colleges are based in Lincoln and Newark spanning both the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) and Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA) and LSIP regions (See Fig. 1). This geography means the college interacts with East and West Lindsey, City of Lincoln, North Kesteven, Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood District Councils as well as the upper tier authorities in Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire. College Senior Leaders are also members of both the Lincoln and Newark Towns Fund Boards, Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce Board and Lincolnshire Skills Steering Group.

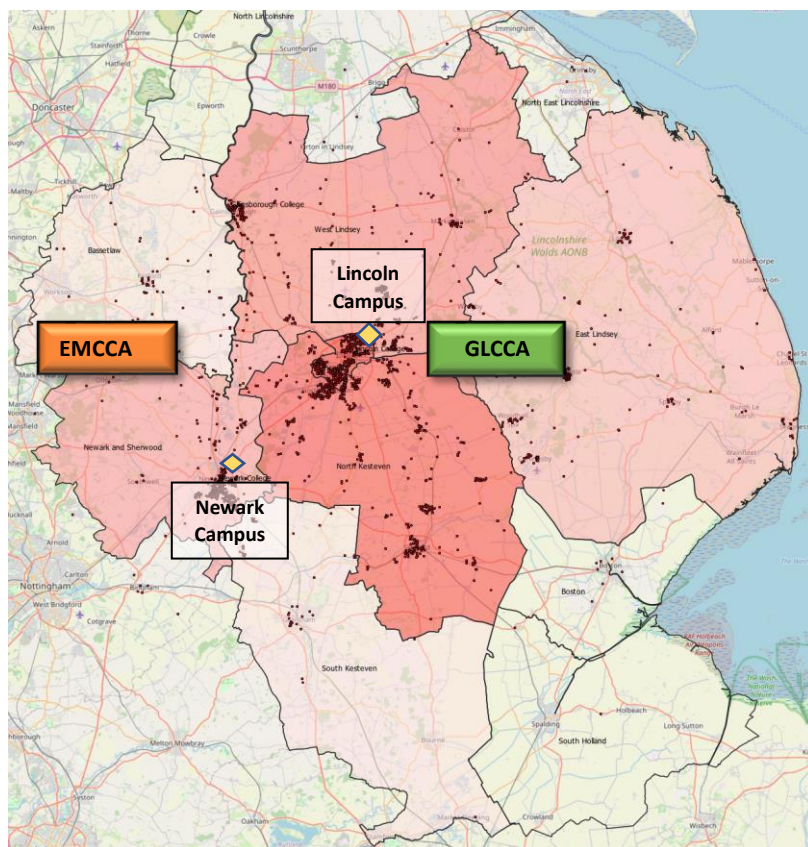


Figure 1 – Heat Map of the GLCCA and EMCCA Districts where Learners Reside.

In terms of economic and social context, Fig. 2 indicates both the Newark and Lincoln Campuses are situated in areas that have high levels of deprivation, across multiple indices. The local authorities recognise that residents in these areas are at risk of being “left behind” and continue to take social inclusivity policy actions to mitigate this. Local authorities use UK Shared Prosperity and Towns Funding to put in place mitigating factors and our experience in this area is invaluable.

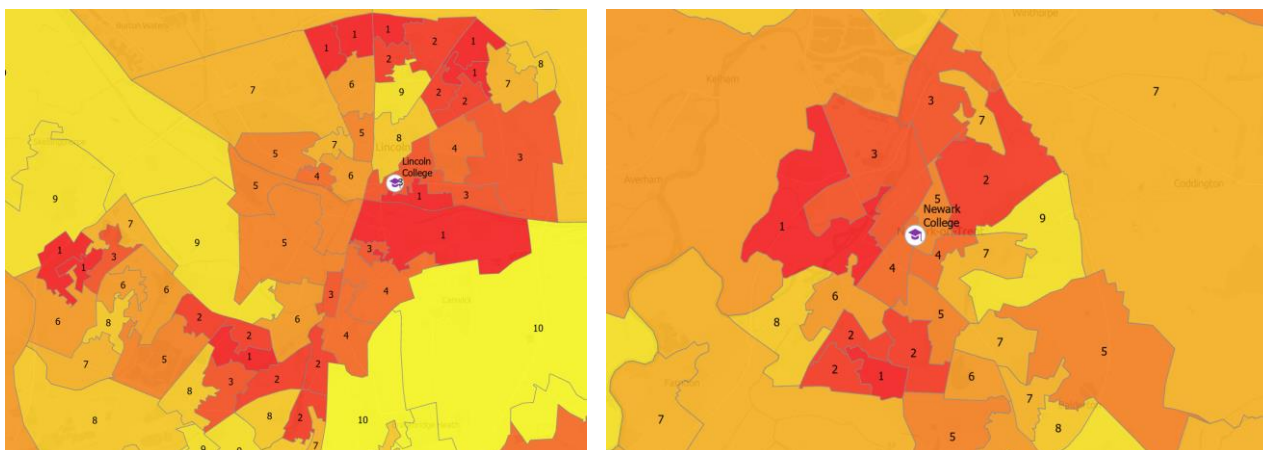


Figure 2 – Indices of Multiple Deprivation near Lincoln and Newark Colleges (1 = Most Deprived)

Lincoln College is proud of the role it plays in supporting the local community. Located at the heart of the most economically deprived ward in Lincolnshire, it is important that we seek to provide opportunities for local residents to learn new skills, achieve qualifications, often for the first time, and help them to better support themselves and their family. Although the number of unemployed and benefit claimants continues to fall across the region, the following statistics demonstrate some underlying concerns that need to be addressed:

- Average earnings in Lincoln (£19,175) remain consistently below the average earnings across England by £4,175.
- There are an estimated 13,000 employees in Lincoln earning below the Living Wage.
- 22.9% (4,465) of children are living in low income households.
- Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index shows Lincoln ranked the 38th most deprived area in England for this type of deprivation.

A significant number of Abbey Ward residents fall into the category of under-represented individuals. In Lincoln, 5,259 residents have a main language other than English and the majority of these people live in three wards, Abbey having the largest proportion. The College already engages with these residents on a variety of levels, offering adult evening classes across many different disciplines, including English classes and engaging members of the community in employability programmes.

Similarly, in Newark College, only 33% residents across Newark and Sherwood are educated to degree level compared to 40% in England. Conversely, 11% of the district’s residents have no qualifications compared to 8% nationally. Of the provision that is available, Newark and Sherwood have a lower proportion of higher-level apprenticeship qualifications compared to the England average. 36% of residents earn less than the Living Wage compared to 22% in England. Providing enhanced education facilities is a key lever for tackling Newark’s low-wage, low-skill economy. To date the College and the Air and Space Institute Newark staff have seen an increase of 50% in enrolments over the last two years and a growth from 400 to 700 prospective students attending open evenings for the 2024/25 academic year.

Approach to Developing the Plan

The College is very well integrated into the local communities which it serves. This allows for strong representation in multiple local authorities, LEPs and skills fora as well as strong relationships with the Colleges across Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire, the Lincolnshire Institute of Technology and the University of Lincoln. To gather information for this plan and carry out labour market research we have engaged a wide range of stakeholders highlighted below:

- Local Enterprise Partnerships and Devolved Authorities – through engagement in Education and Skills Boards.
- Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) led by the FSB in Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire.
- Employer representative bodies – such as Chambers of Commerce, FSB etc.
- Local authorities via UK Shared Prosperity Funding and other programmes to support economic growth across both District and County Councils.
- Towns Fund Boards in both Newark and Lincoln.
- Sharing knowledge and experiences with other education providers via Strategic Development Funds (East Midlands Colleges and Lincolnshire Federation Colleges) whilst also being members of the Lincolnshire Federation of Colleges and D2N2 Principals’ Group.
- Institute of Technology Higher Technical Qualification work with Lincolnshire IoT.
- Employers supporting our Air and Space Institute, Newark, digital, construction, engineering and care programmes as ‘critical fiends’ to help shape delivery and content.
- Ongoing relationship management with DWP and employers directly supporting our learners through a range of interventions – e.g. provision of a work experience and/or Industry Placement; running a masterclass; Youth Guarantee trailblazer; sponsoring a curriculum project and co-hosting jobs fairs etc, equating to thousands of employer contacts a year.
- We also engage with other education providers to ensure we cover the range of skills. For example, although a regional priority, we do not deliver Agrifood training which is delivered by Bishop Burton and Boston College as well as the University of Lincoln at Holbeach.

In addition to this analysis, College has Data Alchemy which accesses information from a wide variety of sources to allow for analysis and decision making to help assess and target skills needs.

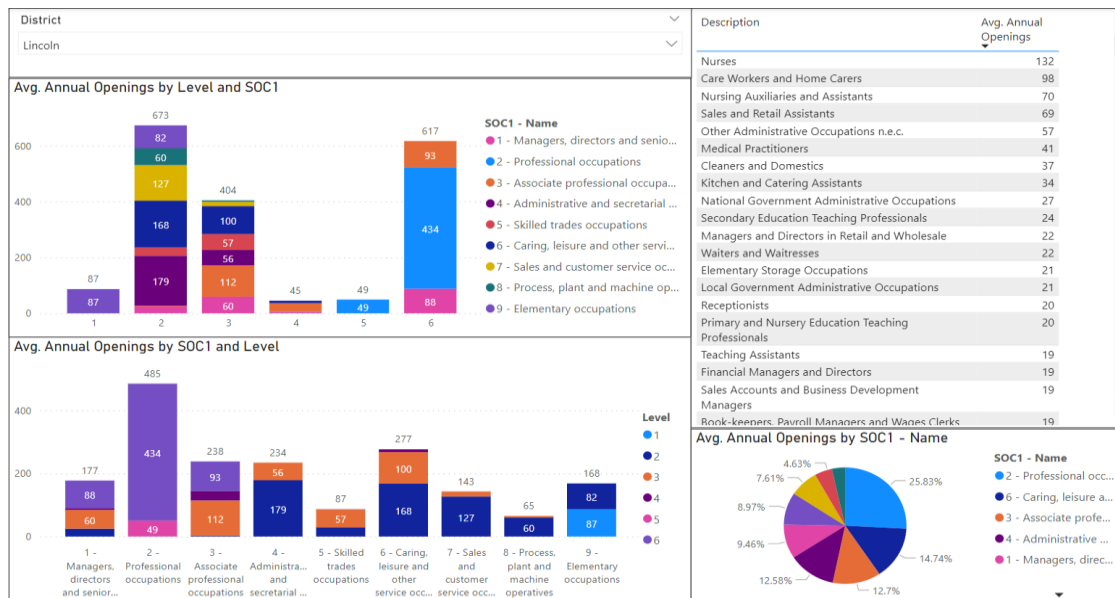


Figure 3 - Employer Demand: Annual Job Openings by Occupation Code and Qualification Level in the Lincoln District.

This analysis and broader partnerships with local government, engagement with employers, LEPs and (now) Devolved Authorities has allowed us to focus in areas of curriculum to best support students, employers and economic drivers. Based on the feedback of stakeholders and the results of our desk-based research, we have identified six priority skills needs that we will address. These priority areas align either with the Lincolnshire LSIP and/or the GLCCA.

- Health and social care (over 64,000 regional jobs, vacancies 10% over national average and a regional priority)
- Engineering, defence and space (over £4bn regional GVA, job openings 60% over national average and a Towns Fund priority)
- Employability skills (5 key skills are consistently requested by employers: communication, enthusiasm and self-motivation, teamworking, problem solving and time management)
- Policing (Uniformed public services contributes over £280m GVA, strong links with Lincolnshire police)
- Construction (contributes over £1.7bn regionally, construction in the top 10% of all occupations for 16-24 year olds, high regional wages)
- Visitor economy (contributes £1bn GVA, 31m tourist visitors annually, regional priority sector)

It should be emphasised that the list above is not shown in any priority order and there are other economic sectors in which skills will always need to be imparted to sustain the workforce such as computing, supply chain management, Access to HE and A levels. Delivery of these skills will always be required, and FE providers will need to work together to ensure there is sufficient local coverage and investment to enable this provision to be available. Providers will also be required to respond to more urgent and tactical skills needs caused by economic shocks, the difficulties in recruiting into hospitality and retail currently being prime examples.

Lincoln College also work in conjunction with the other education FE and HE providers within Lincolnshire the College to focus on areas that can be delivered within the infrastructure, student and employer demand in the different areas of the county. The agri-food sector is strongly supported by the University of Lincoln with their Holbeach Campus, by Riseholme Campus of Bishop Burton College and Boston College to the South. These rural locations are well placed to meet the local need, provide study options for students in the agricultural heartlands of South Holland, East Lindsey and Boston. The energy, ports and logistics sectors are geographically focused; with North and North-East Lincolnshire home to the vast majority of the energy and renewable industries supported by Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education and the University of Lincoln. Boston College, supported by the University of Lincoln, also provides the main support to the ports and logistics businesses primarily centred on the port of Boston and the agri-food logistics element based in the south of the county, from where Lincoln College draws hardly any students.

Approximately 10% of the UK provision of the Lincoln College Group is based in Newark within the EMCCA region. There are six other larger FE Colleges and three Universities within the region. At our Newark campus we have largely focused on the skills priorities of construction, advanced manufacturing (aerospace and automotive), creative and digital arts and health and social care. These priority areas align closely with the skills priorities within EMCCA's Strategic Skills Plan. There are also other emerging priorities within EMCCA, such as low levels skills and Skills Bootcamps. Through our stakeholder relationships we will ensure we contribute effectively to these ongoing developments, for example involvement in the collaborative Youth Guarantee project.

The development of this plan has been conducted with both the College leadership team and Board of Corporation working together to ensure the strategic aims and objectives align with the local and regional skills needs. This plan was formulated and agreed as part of the Annual Board strategy day and the Board is regularly updated on progress and any evolution of the plan.

LCG Strategic Priorities linked to Contribution to Meeting Skills Needs

College Strategic Priorities – the next five years	Contribution towards National, Regional and Local Priorities for Learning and Skills
<p>Priority 1: Provide an inclusive and supportive learning experience for every learner: Be Ready...to Learn</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide high quality learning experiences through clearly structured, flexible, personalised courses and transformational teaching that realises learner's aspirations and equips them for life and work. • Give an exceptional student experience to become the first-choice provider locally, particularly within the key sectors of construction, aerospace, defence, health and social care, and the visitor economy. • Teach an innovative, creative and stimulating digitally enriched curriculum that responds to local skills demand and national priorities. 	<p>Improve numbers and quality of students in LSIP priority skills areas with growing workforce demand.</p> <p>Provide exceptional study programmes in priority sectors to better meet the skills needs identified in LSIPs.</p> <p>Continue to develop higher education including HTQs at Levels 4 & 5 that meet the identified LSIP needs for both part and full-time students.</p> <p>Contribute to meeting the needs of national and East Midlands priority sectors in advanced engineering aviation and space.</p>
<p>Priority 2: Deliver an innovative and inspiring curriculum, equipping learners for their future: Be Ready...for Life and Work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and deliver an innovative, inclusive careers focused, digitally enabled, curriculum which supports excellent student progression in lifelong learning goals. • Create clear and coherent curriculum progression pathways. • Grow our employer-led experiences by diversifying our “finishing schools” that build upon the success of Aura, The Old Bakery, Deans and The Drill. 	<p>Improve work readiness which is a key theme identified in LSIPs including focus on communication, resilience and confidence in the workplace.</p> <p>Enable students to achieve further study/ meaningful employment contributing to the vocational skills needs of Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire.</p> <p>Continue to add to the national rollout plan to deliver vocational excellence.</p> <p>Improved integration with vocational areas to offer more flexible, higher quality options to employers.</p>

<p>Priority 3: Develop and value our workforce, creating healthy, happy places to work: Be ready...to Make a Difference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be regionally recognised as an employer of choice. • Successfully attract and retain high quality talent. • Support and train our leaders and managers to lead a culture that values wellbeing, inclusion and high performance of staff and students. 	<p>Support LSIP objectives of improving resilience, retention and upskilling of staff</p> <p>Leadership and management highlighted as emerging area of weakness in LSIP with many 'accidental managers' lacking skills and training.</p>
<p>Priority 4: Secure long-term financial stability, funding an exceptional learner experience: Be Ready...to Thrive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve significant financial growth for the Group with an EBITDA margin of 7%+ by 2030, reflecting strong profitability and a minimum financial health score of "Good". • Achieve a 3%+ Group surplus annually from 2026/27, allowing for self-funded capital investment of at least £1m per annum for the next 5 years. • Increase learner numbers beyond our current market share across Lincoln, Newark and the ASI, balancing growth with strategic need, capacity and the cost of delivery. 	<p>Financial strength and stability enables us to;</p> <p>Provide breadth of education and training to meet the increasing demand for vocationally trained personnel regionally.</p> <p>More readily fund growth in technical facilities, supra-study programmes and innovation to meet priority skills across the region.</p> <p>Develop partnership to grow adult education provision to meet LSIP priorities where current provision doesn't exist.</p>
<p>Priority 5: Champion environmental sustainability and responsible practices: Be Ready...to Care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train leaders and managers in sustainability, with tangible progress towards becoming the most sustainable College in the East Midlands. • Embed sustainability programmes, practices and qualifications across all areas of the College. • Lead by example, educate and train the next generation in sustainable practices. 	<p>In line with LSIP, Local Authority and national initiatives to reduce carbon footprint. Will also provide a positive sustainable example to students.</p> <p>Supports the LSIP focus on leadership and management to improve sustainable leadership across the region.</p> <p>Deliver a greater focus on college leadership across sectors in line with LSIP recommendations.</p>

<p>Priority 6: Forge extraordinary international and commercial partnerships: Be Ready...to Grow</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversify and grow to ensure long-term resilience and financial viability, growing education overseas to more than 5,000 students. • Secure our position as the UK’s largest Further Education provider in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. • Grow nationally recognised student experiences, including paid work experience, student run enterprises and international student exchanges 	<p>To be able to fund growth in technical facilities, staffing, supra-study programmes and innovation to meet priority skills across the region.</p>
<p>Priority 7: Modernise and enhance our learning environment: Be Ready...to be Extraordinary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand and modernise on-campus facilities by increasing dedicated study areas, collaborative workspaces, and quiet zones to support independent and group learning. • Provide a fleet of reliable, high-performance, standardised technology to staff and students to support flexible working and high-quality digital pedagogy. • Integrate enhanced Artificial Intelligence, equipment and automated processes across the estate to deliver industry-standard learning and teaching in every classroom and workshop. 	<p>Improve numbers and quality of students in LSIP priority skills areas with growing workforce demand.</p> <p>Provide exceptional study programmes in priority sectors to better meet the skills needs identified in LSIPs.</p>

Local Needs Duty

Further Education Colleges. Lincoln College has played an active role in bringing local Colleges together to collaborate on projects to meet skills needs including the Lincolnshire Institute of Technology. The College currently chairs the Lincolnshire Federation of seven Colleges within Lincolnshire, is the further education representative on the Employment and Skills Board as well as leading on the Lincolnshire LSIP strategy group. In EMCCA we work with the seven Colleges to engage the LEP and provide input to the LSIP, assisting with their data analysis, as well as forming a good partnership for Strategic Development and Local Skills Improvement Fund.

In Lincolnshire, Colleges have collaborated on several bids. The Lincolnshire Strategic Development Fund (LSIF) has supported the development of the visitor economy training with infrastructure, equipment and courses to upskill students supporting a local economic demand. This has supported the College's wider drive to upskill students across the visitor economy with the acquisition of The Drill and The Old Bakery as commercial finishing schools for students to gain valuable experience. The LSIF funding has developed collaborative work across digital, green construction and engineering skills as well as employability skills, leadership and management skills across the region.

In partnership with the Inspire Education Group and the Road Haulage Association the College has won a Labour Market Support Fund Bid to deliver HGV training across the County. This is currently being successfully delivered and highly likely to be funded into the future by the LEP.

Lincoln College partnered with Chesterfield College to deliver a College Collaboration Fund (CCF) Project You. Such was the success of 'Project You' which provided team building, fitness and healthy lifestyle interventions for students that the College has funded this programme for a second year. The interventions led to improved outcomes for students and allowed a good collaboration with Chesterfield College.

Most recently working in collaboration with the NHS, Grantham, Boston and Lincoln College have developed a collective apprenticeship provision to meet an emerging NHS demand across the middle of the County. This partnership includes the Universities and will develop over time to place education at the heart of NHS workforce planning over the next 5-7 years.

Lincolnshire Institute of Technology (LloT). This partnership across the regional Further Education providers led by the University of Lincoln has provided funding for an exceptional technology centre to deliver higher technical qualifications in automotive, computing and electronics. Employers like KryptoKloud, Halfords and the NHS have supported the development of LloT and Professional Skills Centre training. There remain challenges in recruitment of students but the planned expansion of IoT provision into engineering and construction should lead to increased student numbers and higher skilled employees for the local economy and Higher Education providers. Future collaborations are planned around skills to support the development of nuclear facilities within the region, the renewable energy sector and bids for high quality equipment to support new provision.

Higher Education Institutions. We have partnerships with the University of Hull, University of Derby, University of Lincoln, The Open University, Nottingham Trent University and Lincoln Bishop University to enable us to offer programmes at Levels 4 - 6. In each case we partner with the relevant institution to design and the develop the curriculum based on our shared insights into employer and learner needs. We currently support more than 300 students per year on Higher Education programmes. With Government policy heavily focused on improving Level 4 and 5 Higher Technical Qualifications and the growth of our Air and Space Institute we expect to see student and partnerships grow throughout our current strategic plan.

Corporation Statement

On behalf of the Lincoln College Corporation, 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 Board of Corporation at their meeting on 13 May 2025. This has been updated in December 2025 in line with the new Strategy as also approved by Board in July 2025.

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 from the following link: [The Lincoln College Group](#)

Ian Billyard
Chair of Governors

Mark Locking
Principal/Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

Dated: Updated December 2025

Reference to Relevant Supporting Documentation

Colleges should provide links below to any other key documents that are referred to or directly relevant to the college plan, such as LSIPs; annual financial statements; performance dashboards; and Ofsted inspections.

Annex:

A. Lincolnshire Collaborative Annual Accountability Agreement – May 25.

Labour Market Intelligence:

[Local Skills Improvement Plans | FSB, The Federation of Small Businesses](#)

[Who are we? | Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce \(lincs-chamber.co.uk\)](#)

[Home – Greater Lincolnshire CCA](#)

[Home - East Midlands Combined County Authority](#)

Ofsted:

[50241693 \(ofsted.gov.uk\)](#)

Financial Statements: Management & Governance: Lincoln College