

ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT 2024/2025

Link: <https://newbury-college.ac.uk/documents-and-transparency-information/235-annual-accountability-statement>



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PURPOSE

We believe in: 'Creating opportunities to transform lives'. The purpose of our college is to meet the education and skills needs of the economy, by providing learning opportunities which transform career and life chances. As a leading educational provider for our community, our core intent is to deliver 'careers not courses'. This means that we will support learners to identify, plan and achieve their career goals, through the acquisition of the skills they need to succeed. Listening to the views of our learners, staff and stakeholders is at the heart of ensuring the development and quality of our provision.

The College and University Centre Newbury (UCN) aim to deliver the education and skills required to meet the needs of business and the aspirations of our local community. The curriculum offer is built upon both an understanding of the skills required in the regional economy, national priorities and on the demand for education and training from local people. The skills offer is underpinned by two key concepts:

- Careers not courses – the intent of our offer is to enable all learners to access, or to progress with, their chosen career, rather than simply undertaking a particular course of study.
- Progress – our '3 5 7' approach supports learners to progress through different levels of study, to achieve the highest level of qualification which supports their career aspiration; typically for three, five or seven years.

We also work in partnership with other organisations, to enhance our offer to learners and increase our ability to meet the skills needs of employers. This includes a collaborative approach with a range of other organisations such as universities, colleges and training providers, where this supports the expansion or diversification of provision in accordance with our Strategy.

VALUES

How we aim to behave...



A - ASPIRATION

- being ambitious for individuals and for the quality of provision
- inspiring innovation and creativity



I - INTEGRITY

- acting with uncompromising integrity in everything we do
- taking responsibility for own development



R - RESPECT

- listening to all members of the College community
- fostering a culture of respect for their rights, differences and liberties

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Our strategic goals aim to provide clarity for all stakeholders (learners, staff, governors, employers, parents and the community) about the purpose of the College and what we aim to achieve between 2024 to 2028.

The College has been a central hub of the local educational landscape for seventy-five years and we will continue to develop a learning campus, which meets the skills needs of the economy and of our community. We are committed to developing and maintaining partnerships with a wide range of organisations to achieve our vision and to fulfil our core purpose of 'creating opportunities to transform lives'.

[Link to Strategic Plan](#)



1. OUTCOMES

Achieve positive outcomes for learners.



6. FINANCE

Secure and sustain financial strength.



2. WELLBEING

Ensure learner wellbeing in an inclusive, safe and respectful environment; to deliver a holistic learning experience.



7. GROWTH

Achieve sustainable growth in our core business areas.



3. SKILLS

Meet the skills needs of our regional economy.



8. COMMUNITY

Provide an educational hub for our community.



4. LEARNING

Deliver excellent teaching and learning.



9. ESTATES

Deliver high-quality estates and facilities provision to support learning.



5. STAFF

Support staff to develop their skills and meet their objectives.



10. SUSTAINABILITY

Reduce our adverse impact on the environment.

CORE BUSINESS

What we do...

Career Academy	Full time programmes for young people and adults
University Centre Newbury (UCN)	Degree level and higher professional programmes
Apprenticeships	Skills in the workplace
Adult Learning	Development opportunities for adults
Foundation Learning	Developing skills for independence and employability
Online Learning (Study Online)	Skills development online

Newbury College is a general further education college based in Newbury, West Berkshire. The College is based on one main campus and some specialist provision for young people at other locations in the region. The College offers a wide range of programmes for adults, young people and apprentices from entry level to level 7. In 2023/24 the College has approximately 2,014 students, of which 292 are apprentices, 936 are students aged 16 to 19 years, and the remainder are adult students.

The College travel-to-learn area is defined as 'urban with significant rural' (ONS, 2017) and includes West Berkshire (Newbury, Hungerford and Thatcham), Reading, North Hampshire and South Oxfordshire. There are 7 local secondary schools within 10 miles of the College, 5 of which have sixth forms. Using the main 'Progress 8' measure for GCSE (Key Stage 4) performance, one school has performance above the national average, 5 schools have average performance and 1 is well below average.

Between 2017 and 2021, West Berkshire's population increased by 4% to 170,000. Demographic changes mean that the numbers of young people aged 15-19 will continue to increase for the next seven years. The local housing plan for 1,500 new homes near to the College on the Sandleford Park development may also boost student numbers in future years, along with the development of housing as part of the College strategy for the sale of land to the East of the campus.

The geographical reach of an LSIP, in a region that does not have, for example, a large, combined authority, has been the subject of diverse views. It has been agreed that the definition of the 'Thames Valley' will be the footprint of the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce, which is the organisation chosen to lead the development of our region's LSIP.

The geographical area chosen was also informed by discussions with employers who were less concerned about administrative or democratic boundaries and more interested in how identified acute and chronic skills needs across the area might benefit from collective effort across regions. The map below outlines the area for the Thames Valley Local Skills Improvement Plan and associated colleges in the area.

Map 1. Administrative Boundaries and Providers

This first map sets out the geography of the Thames Valley split into the constituent counties with the motorways and the Thames identified, and plots the location of every FE provider with at least 20 achievements in 2019-20, as well as all universities.



Specific economic and social characteristics identified by our Local Skill Improvement Plans identified the following;

- Oxfordshire & Berkshire have a high concentration of SMEs, which account for more than 99 % of all businesses in the county so employer demand for training is often fragmented and difficult for Education and Training Providers to respond to in a cost-effective way.
- According to the 2019 English Indices of Deprivation, 17 of 61 wards in Oxfordshire are the most deprived in England. The city of Oxford is the second most unequal place in the UK (source: Cities Outlook 2022 | Centre for Cities), in terms of income, housing affordability and life expectancy.
- The proportion of people qualified at Level 3 or above is higher than the national average. Oxfordshire has the highest proportion across all 38 LSIPS .
- The employment rate in both regions is higher than the national average.

APPROACH TO DEVELOPING THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

“Leaders have a clear and well-defined vision for the College, which is based around their ethos of preparing students for the world of work, known as ‘careers, not courses’. They realise this through effective collaboration with a wide range of appropriate stakeholders, including employers, the chamber of commerce, the local authority, and the local enterprise partnership (LEP), to gain a secure understanding of the skills needs in the local area and wider region.” Ofsted (June 2023)

To understand local need when planning our curriculum, the College aims to engage as many stakeholders and key partners as possible. Across the region we work with Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce, Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership including the Skills Advisory Panel, LSIP, Workforce Development Partnerships and employer forums to gather information on skills needs. This is supported by the engagement we have with employers and local businesses through our sector specific forums, round table events and discussions. Our employer engagement team works with employers to identify skill gaps through training needs analysis and our curriculum areas work with employers to ensure their needs are embedded into the design and planning of curriculum. Our agile approach ensures that we can cater for bespoke and individualised requirements, whilst ensuring we are best placed to support emerging needs.

This information, alongside data from sources such as Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) from the Unit for Future Skills and the Association of Colleges (AoC), informs the annual Curriculum Planning process and stakeholder engagement drives in-year decisions for each curriculum area. Our board receives regular updates and reports on how we are performing against our targets in relation to the skills agenda and this academic year we have built upon the positive skills sub-judgement feedback we received from our recent Ofsted inspection.

The plan is informed through engagement with stakeholders from the following groups;

CIVIC

The Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIP) for our regions are key to our strategy, where we are involved with the workforce development partnership meetings and have successfully delivered new curriculum under the Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) in sectors of high priority skill needs.

The College’s approach to identifying the key priorities and target outcomes included in the annual accountability statement is to build on the strong relationships developed with the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce, Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership including the Skills Advisory Panel and employer forums to gather information on skills needs.

EDUCATION PROVIDERS

The College regularly works closely with regional Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) providers on collaborative projects such as Skills Bootcamps, Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) projects, Workforce development partnership meetings and Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce events. Providers discuss their provision to ensure that courses delivered in the region are complementary and not overly competitive, thus ensuring learners and employers can be signposted to the most relevant provision for their needs. We have worked on collaborative projects with independent training providers, an example of this can be seen with launching new provision such as green skills apprenticeships. We work with colleges and local 6th forms by supporting their Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) to ensure that students understand the broad range of programmes on offer to them, including T-Levels and Apprenticeships.

The College works closely with numerous schools within the region to develop the curriculum offer. This includes partnership work with the St. Bartholemew's, Castle and Brookfield Schools. These schools have supported the development of the Foundation Learning pathways (Connect, Focus and Engage) the 'Sixth Form Plus' programme, and the linking of the Key Stage 4 extracurricular provision to the 16-19 vocational offer.

We work with our university partners to ensure that our provision meets emerging skills needs such as validating modules for topics such as Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning.

EMPLOYERS

The College works with a range of employers who help to steer the curriculum to meet local skills needs, address national and regional priorities, design the curriculum offer, provide talks, placements and progression opportunities to students and support with funding opportunities. We hold our own skills advisory events with employers. The College's apprenticeship provision is graded as outstanding by Ofsted (June 2023) and highlights the outstanding work the College does with employers to build a curriculum that is responsive to their needs. Ofsted noted that "Leaders and staff work closely with employers to ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of apprentices and their workplaces".

COMMUNITY

The College collaborates closely with West Berkshire Council and local secondary schools to support students with high needs and those not yet in education, employment or training (NEET). This is in collaboration with the council's post 16 education lead and SEND further education lead. The College are also collaborating with the council to implement resources that support the expanding sports curriculum offer and the local community. The council have a developing strategy around young adults' fitness and healthy living and see the College as a significant partner in supporting the implementation and impact of young adults' development in these areas, including work experience opportunities and partnership work with council sponsored and national organisations such as Everyone Active, Berkshire Youth, Sports England and the Football Foundation.

CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL, REGIONAL, LOCAL PRIORITIES

The Skills Strategy is developed to meet the needs outlined in national, regional and local skills priorities. This has been underpinned by national policy that is linked to the following fundamental key pillars:

- Employers at the heart of the post-16 skills system
- Provision that supports access and progression onto advanced and higher technical skills
- Supporting students across all age groups allowing for career progression (3,5,7 approach)
- Being responsive to local needs and ensuring these can be mapped into the funding offer
- Developing more modular Higher Education (HE) provision to support the 'lifelong learning entitlement'
- Creating and developing outstanding teaching across all levels and provision

Sector	Local Priority	National Priority	Priority Transferable Skills	Current contribution	Future Development / Target Outcomes
Construction	✓	✓		Provision in this area is delivered through T Levels, study programme and apprenticeships. From Level 1- Level 3.	As part of a successful LSIF bid we are launching new provision around renewable energy and low carbon technologies. This provision will see introduction of higher-level provision with the L4 Building Energy Management Systems (BEMS) apprenticeship and L3 Building Services Engineer
Manufacturing	✓	✓		Our provision in manufacturing is strong, with options from L3 - L6. This provision is strongest in apprenticeships & HE.	We are working with key employers to look at additional provision in this area. This is including the feasibility of running Lean manufacturing and metrology. We are also continuing to run skills bootcamps to support local skills needs.
ICT	✓	✓		We currently deliver the T Level in Digital Support Services and the Essential Digital Skills Qualification.	As well as continuing to grow our T Level provision we will also look to use Adult Skills Funded (ASF) provision to further develop the ICT and digital skills of our local communities. We are also investigating apprenticeship options in this sector.
Health and Social Care	✓	✓		Health & Social Care study programme.	We are engaging with employers to better understand local skill needs and how we can best support these needs.

Haulage and Logistics	✓	✓		L2 & L3 Motor Vehicle Provision. ASF provision around warehousing.	Engaging with regional FE providers and workforce development partnerships to see how we can tailor our offer to meet the industry needs. Development of softer skill provision through Adult Skills Fund (ASF).
Engineering		✓		Provision from L2 - L7. Study Programme, apprenticeships and HE	Growth of our engineering degree provision with the launch of the Embedded electronic systems design apprenticeship.
Science and Mathematics		✓		Life Science Bootcamps ASF funded provision	Further development of our bootcamps and development of mathematics provision through ASF.
Health & Life Sciences	✓			L2 & L3 health and social care study programmes. Life science skills bootcamps. HE provision includes access courses in nursing and paramedic science. ASF courses.	Further development of our ASF offer.
Hospitality	✓			Study Programme provision	Planning to run T Levels in this area, when this occupational sector is available.
Screen Industries	✓			We are launching T Level in media for 24/25 academic year. We also currently delivery some of the secondary skills identified by the LSIP; these include office functions such as accounting and also trades such as carpentry.	As new provision we will be looking to grow the T-level in this area. Through the workforce development partnership, we are looking to open opportunities for students in the secondary skill areas with employers in this sector to highlight the opportunities available.
Leadership & Management			✓	Provision from L3 - L6 Coaching qualifications in Sport.	Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeship
Skills for a Net Zero Economy			✓	Renewable pathway, plumbing	BEMs, Building services, Low Carbon Heating Technician
Digitalisation			✓	LSIF – AI (Artificial Intelligence) course Digital skills - ASF	AI Development of ASF curriculum and digital offer
Business & Professional			✓	Accountancy L2 - L4 Business Administration	

OBJECTIVES

Objective	24/25 Target Outcome
Professional Development curriculum	Increase student opportunity for employability skills, work experience
Offsite / onsite alignment	Recruitment of staff to ensure consistency in our approach to elements such as personal development across our main site and offsite provision.
Expand our Green industry offering in line with LSIP	Increase new provision particularly around Building Maintenance Systems
Apprenticeship & Adult Skills Growth	Increase new provision
Increase the provision of Digital Skills	Develop more Digital Skills courses through ASF, Tailored Learning and T Levels

LOCAL NEEDS DUTY

Section 52B of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 places a duty on governing bodies of institutions in the further education sector to review how well the education or training provided by the institution meets local needs, and to consider what action might be taken in order to meet those needs better.

Newbury College/ UCN Board of Governors have conducted a review of the 2024/25 curriculum plan and evaluated how well it meets current local skills needs and appraise our preparedness for emerging needs in the future.

This review was undertaken through engaging key external stakeholders and college leaders. It also takes into account the relevant findings and themes from our most recent Ofsted report and our Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP).

The College will continue to work collaboratively with our regional education providers to ensure that the offer is defined and addresses the needs of local employers and the priorities set out in the LSIP. This approach will ensure that we collectively fulfil those needs and avoid over saturation of sectors where possible. The College will continue to support educational partnerships, initiatives and projects across the region and build upon the positive relationships we have with our local education providers. This accountability statement was produced in consultation with these providers and by building on the existing strong relationships we already have we will work to ensure local needs are met by continuing the strong collaboration with stakeholders in the region.

The College has regular representation at LSIP Project Board Meetings, at which we review collaboration and provision with other partners including the Employer Representative Body. This meeting allows key representatives to discuss their goals and objectives for skills growth in Berkshire, identifying areas in which greater collaboration would help. The agenda has included a review of the success of collaborative projects funded through the Strategic Development Funds and Local Skills Improvement Fund. The Berkshire LSIP has concluded that there are gaps in provision for some priority sectors requiring further development and engagement with employers. We are working collaboratively with the ERB through the Workforce Development Partnerships (WDP) to do this.

CORPORATION /GOVERNING BODY STATEMENT

On behalf of the Newbury College corporation, it is hereby confirmed that the Corporation conducts reviews in line with the local needs duty and confirms the plan.

This annual accountability statement sets out an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the corporation at their meeting on 24th June 2024.



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Chair of the Corporation



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