



Lancaster &
Morecambe
College

Celebrating 200 Years of Learning

Accountability Agreement

2026-2027

Our Purpose

Transform lives and communities

Our Core Values

Collaborative • Inclusive • Aspirational



Lantern Morecambe College

Celebrating 200 Years of Learning

Our Values



Collaborative



Inclusive



Aspirational



Our Strategic Drivers:

PEOPLE

Staff, learners and partners thrive together

- We will strengthen workforce development, retention, and wellbeing; refine learner support and equity; amplify learner voice and success. Staff will be equipped for a digital future, and learners will benefit from personalised plans, strong pastoral care and a respectful, inclusive culture



PLACE

A college at the heart of its community and economy

- The college will deepen its community presence, strengthen relationships with VCSE partners and enhance the impact of local initiatives. Employer partnerships will drive local prosperity through T Levels, apprenticeships, work and industry placements and The Employer Hub. Sustainability and flexible lifelong learning will be embedded across operations and curriculum.



PROGRESS

Outcomes, growth and prosperity

- We will focus on career progression, social mobility and contribution to the local economy. Digital transformation, AI-enhanced teaching and data-informed practice will drive quality and innovation. Financial resilience and sustainable growth will ensure the College continues to have a strong foundation to meet local and regional needs.

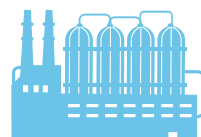




1.0 Context & Place

4.7% **Unemployment rate in the district**
below the national average of 4.9%

The **unemployment rate in the district is estimated at around 4.7%** (model based estimate, year ending December 2025), which is **below the national average of 4.9%** (December 2025 to February 2026) and **higher than the wider Lancashire area, where unemployment stands at around 3.6%** (year ending December 2025). A key contributor to this position is **economic inactivity**. The **district's economic inactivity rate is estimated at approximately 24–25%**, which remains above the national average of 21.0% for people aged 16–64 (December 2025 to February 2026). The proportion of people who are self employed continues to be lower locally than nationally. Nationally, **self employment now accounts for around 12–13%** of those in employment, reflecting a continued post pandemic decline. Local rates remain below this level, indicating more limited engagement with entrepreneurial and freelance activity within the district. **Employment opportunities in the district continue to be strongly concentrated in health, social care and education**, which remain the largest sources of employment growth locally. This profile is closely mirrored in the College's core curriculum offer, particularly within health related provision (SSA 1).



The industry generating the greatest gross value added (GVA) in the district is **electricity production, driven primarily by Heysham 1 and Heysham 2 nuclear power stations**, operated by EDF Energy. Together, the stations generate sufficient electricity to power around four million homes annually. Following confirmed life extension decisions, Heysham 1 is now expected to cease generation in 2028 and Heysham 2 in 2030. Thereafter, both sites will transition into defueling, decommissioning and deconstruction, a process expected to extend over approximately 25 years. This transition will create new and sustained demand for specialist technical, engineering, safety and project management skills. As Great British Nuclear progresses its long term strategy, areas with an established nuclear workforce, infrastructure and supply chain, such as the Heysham area, are likely to represent an attractive proposition for future nuclear technologies and investment.



Highest number of registered businesses in the district

The highest number of registered businesses in the district continue to be concentrated in **retail, wholesale, construction and motor vehicle** related activities, highlighting a structural contrast between a large number of small employers and a small number of very large employers in energy, health and education, which together account for a significant proportion of total employment.



THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

The incoming Labour parliament launched a new government body, **Skills England – to transform opportunities and drive growth**. The creation of Skills England aims to bring together the skills landscape to create a shared national ambition to boost the nation's skills. There is recognition this will require the help of key partners in the system to grow the economy and achieve this ambition. Skills England aims to bring businesses, training partners and unions together with national and local government to develop a clear assessment of the country's skills need – and map pathways by which they can be filled. Skills England will work closely with the **Industrial Strategy Council, Migration Advisory Committee** and across Government, ensuring that the **government's five missions** are underpinned by the necessary skilled workforce and aims to join up national and regional systems to deliver both local and national priorities.

The labour market and the skills required to increase productivity and economic growth vary considerably by region. Employment rates vary across the country and **Local Skills Improvement Plans** have indicated how specific sector skills are concentrated in different regions. Demand for occupations, and associated skills, differs across industries. The **health and social care industry** has the highest volume of roles in demand. Other high demand occupations include those in the **education, manufacturing, and professional scientific and technical industries**. Looking to the future, many of the skills needed in the labour market over the next decade will be impacted by demographic and technological shifts, as well as the transition to more **green skills**. Many of the occupations currently in demand are also those projected to see employment growth in the future, including those in **health, social care and life sciences, green jobs, AI, creative industries and service-orientated roles**. Occupations requiring higher education (such as building and civil engineers) and interpersonal skills (e.g. youth and community workers) are expected to see the most employment growth by 2035.

THE LANCASHIRE CONTEXT

Lancashire is a diverse county with a rich history and culture. The emblem of the historic county of Lancashire is the **Red Rose of the English royal House of Lancaster**. The contrasting geography of the area, along with the creativity and friendliness of its people, combine to make Lancashire a great place to live, learn and work. Lancashire has a long tradition of innovation and entrepreneurship which has gone on to change the world. With a population of 1.5 million residents and a GVA of £35 billion, Lancashire offers enormous potential. It has over **55,000 businesses providing over 637,000 jobs**. It is a coherent economic area and has a range of significant future looking sectors with potential for growth, including **advanced manufacturing and engineering** (with one of the world's largest aerospace clusters), **cyber, digital and low carbon**, as well as traditional strengths in areas such as **tourism and food production**. Given its size, scale and importance, a thriving Lancashire remains one of the prerequisites to a successful economy in the North of England. However, Lancashire also faces challenges which impact on productivity and employment levels and its ability to grow. There are clear and profound disparities in skill levels, health, economic productivity measures and resident prosperity across the county, which in turn impact more widely on people's life chances. Youth employment and inactivity are key areas of focus at a county and local level.





LANCASHIRE

COMBINED COUNTY
AUTHORITY

DEVOLUTION – LANCASHIRE COUNTY COMBINED AUTHORITY (LCCA)

In September 2024, Lancashire agreed a Level 2 devolution deal with Government, leading to the establishment of the **Lancashire Combined County Authority (CCA)** in 2025. The CCA brings together Lancashire County Council, Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool to take on devolved powers and funding to support economic growth, transport, employment and skills. Functions previously delivered through the Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership have transferred into the CCA, with a Lancashire Business Board retained to provide a strong, independent employer voice in strategic decision making.

Alongside devolution, Government has progressed **Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)** to simplify governance in two tier areas such as Lancashire. Following the **English Devolution White Paper**, Lancashire councils jointly developed proposals to replace the current county and district structure with a smaller number of unitary authorities, removing duplication, improving financial sustainability and strengthening strategic capacity. Five options—ranging from two to five unitary councils—were submitted to Government in November 2025, and a statutory public consultation was completed in March 2026. The consistent recommendation across the LGR proposals is the creation of larger, financially resilient unitary councils that align with public service footprints, maintain local identity, and work in partnership with the CCA on county wide priorities. Government is expected to confirm a preferred option in summer 2026, with new unitary authorities planned to go live in April 2028.

A key element of the devolution deal is the transfer of the **Adult Skills Fund** from August 2026, strengthening Lancashire's ability to align skills provision with economic need and Local Skills Improvement Plans.



Lancashire Local Skills Improvement Plan

THE LANCASHIRE LOCAL SKILLS IMPROVEMENT PLAN (LSIP)

The **Lancashire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)** builds on the work carried out by the LEP Skills & Employment Hub and the LSIP Trailblazer. Led by the **North & Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce**, the LSIP has worked with local stakeholders including local authorities, etc. to ensure collaboration across relevant bodies both in the development of the LSIP but also in the future delivery of recommendations. LMC has been actively engaged throughout the process and have included LSIP priorities into the accountability agreement and associated Strategic Planning.

During all phases of the Lancashire LSIP, the College had representation on the LSIP Board for the county, alongside key employers. This College presence on the LSIP Board proved beneficial in understanding the key strategic drivers for the county, whilst ensuring positive provider representation to ensure transparency around key issues such as funding requirements and restrictions. In addition to Board representation, the College continues to support the LSIP process through hosting a range of forums and events with both employers and apprentices.



The College is an active member of **The Lancashire Colleges (TLC) group**. TLC is a collaborative network that colleges have invested in for over 25 years, projecting a united voice from the sector for the region. TLC includes all of the **Further Education and Sixth Form Colleges** in the area, including a specialist college, and represents the diversity of the sector as a whole. Through TLC, colleges have a successful track record of working collectively and collaboratively to improve quality, enhance the curriculum and deliver programmes that respond to employer and community needs. TLC acts as an advocate and voice for the sector locally and has been influential in informing and shaping the Lancashire LSIP, national education policy and lobbying for the region and wider sector. The College recognises the value of working with other education and skills providers in north Lancashire and the wider area to review how well our provision is collectively meeting local needs. Our shared ambition is to ensure that, together, we deliver a curriculum that serves the local community while building on individual strengths and specialisms to maximise collective impact and meet employer needs..



CONTRIBUTION TO MEETING SKILLS NEEDS

Ofsted confirmed that the college makes a strong contribution to meeting skills needs

They recognised that **leaders and managers engage very effectively with stakeholders and employers** to understand local and regional skills needs. They highlighted the use of information to shape the curriculum offer working proactively with partners including the local authority, chamber of commerce and key employers, using local skills improvement plans (LSIP) to support the borough's wider recruitment needs. Through discussions with key stakeholders Ofsted outlined how the college plays a **key role leading on the sustainability and green skills agenda in the region**. This has resulted in the **development of net zero and decarbonisation qualifications** to support businesses to develop sustainability plans. Other examples include where college leaders work across the wider Lancashire college group to meet the emerging needs in health and social care, hospitality and catering, engineering and manufacturing. This has resulted in the introduction of **T levels in health, childcare, business and engineering** to respond to these needs. The findings also emphasise that college staff work highly effectively with an extensive network of employers to develop tailored training and education programmes. Using the expertise of employers and stakeholders to inform curriculum to meet future skills needs. The college makes sure that **learners and apprentices develop the transferrable skills** that will support them into further and higher education or employment.

THE LOCAL CONTEXT

Lancaster & Morecambe College is a small, yet growing general Further Education college, situated on the edge of a largely coastal rural area. The College serves the communities of north Lancashire, south Cumbria, the city of Lancaster and the seaside resort of Morecambe. The college offers a comprehensive range of technical education and training, which includes **Education Programmes for Young People, Adult Learning courses, Apprenticeships, Bespoke Employer Training programmes and Higher Education**. LMC plays a significant role in the lives of thousands of students, the local community and a diverse range of businesses each year: we are committed to ensuring the best quality education for all. Provision aims to meet the needs of the community and stakeholders it serves. Curriculum is employer led and developed in line with local, regional and national priorities.

To complement the college being a core member of **The Lancashire Colleges group** and a founder member of the **Lancashire and Cumbria Institute of Technology** in 2023. As an anchor institution in the district The College collaborates with many other organisations and is a key member of a number of local influential forums.



THE LANCASTER AND MORECAMBE DISTRICT

The majority of students studying at the College live in or near to the Lancaster and Morecambe District. The district is the second largest Lancashire authority in geographic terms covering 567 square kilometres; however, the number of people per km² is the second lowest in Lancashire, well below the county and national averages.

The 2021 census population estimate total for the district was 142,931

There are 64 schools in Lancaster; of these 50 are primary and 8 secondaries

Lancashire's average attainment 8 score has increased from 44.9 in 23/24 to 45.1 in 24/25. The national average for this performance measure is 46. Learner's prior attainment of English and Mathematics are in the lower quartile (Figure one and two), nationally and emphasises the need for programmes to support entry to the labour market for those without relevant literacy and numeracy qualifications. Recruitment to the College has shifted in 25/26 with more balance toward Level 2 and 3, which is highlighted in figure three and four.

Fig.1 Previously Taken GCSE Maths

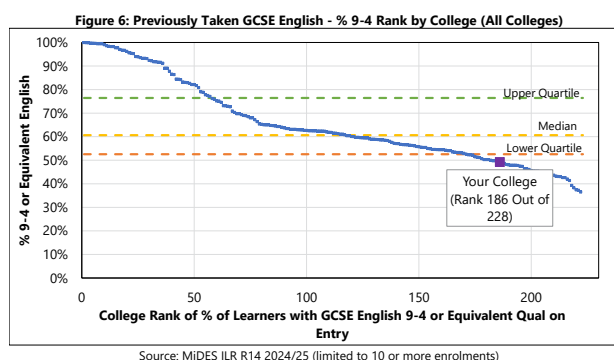
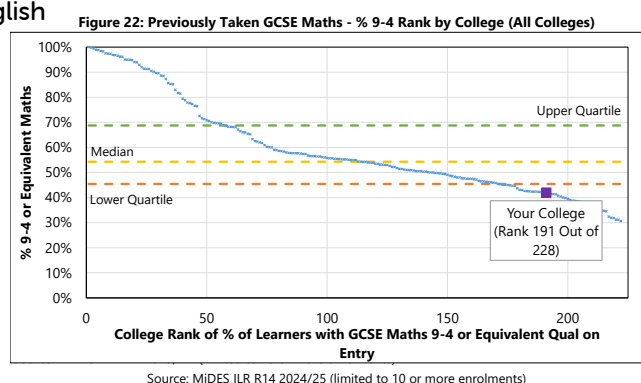


Fig.2 Previously Taken GCSE English





The college has seen a significant increase in recruitment over the last two academic years. A detailed analysis of demographic projections has ensured that curriculum planning, resourcing and financial investment in facilities is carried out in a strategically informed manner. The growth in advanced levels of learning will continue with the college focusing on the curriculum reform agenda, V Levels development and T Levels expansion where demand requires. Higher Education (HE) provision is being considered to develop progression opportunities. This will foster stronger partnerships with Universities in the area and establish an alternative option for learners in the region. Fig.3 and Fig. 4 highlight the scale of 16-19 growth in comparison to other FE colleges. Fig.5 and Fig.6 outline the profile comparison for adult recruitment, which is less significant in growth and indicates LMC bucking the national trend.

Fig.3 2025/26 LMC recruitment profile of 16-19 learners

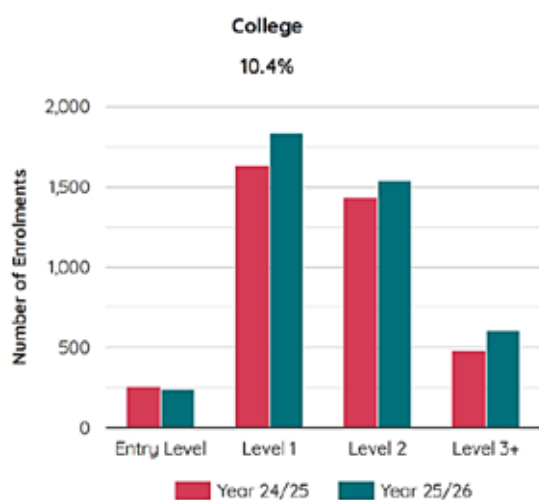


Fig.4 2025/26 16-19 learners national recruitment comparator

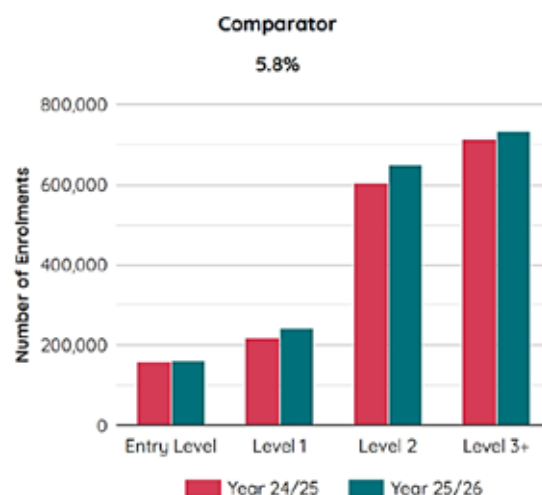


Fig.5 2025/26 LMC recruitment profile of adult learners

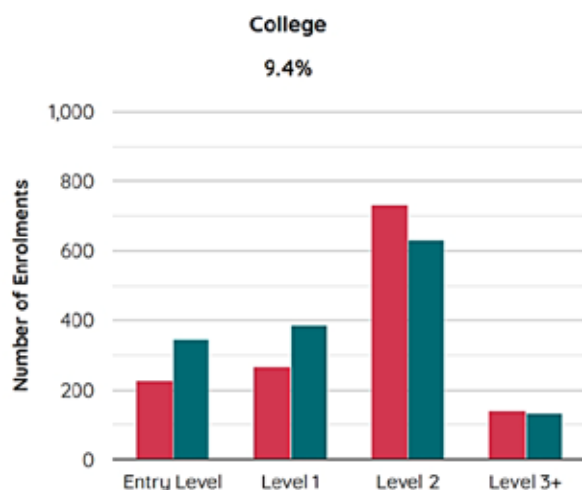
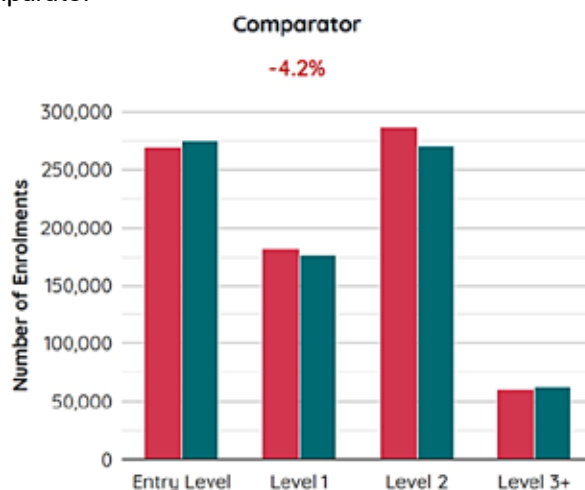


Fig.6 2025/26 Adult learners national recruitment comparator





EXTENT OF TRAVEL TO LEARN AND WORK

In addition to the key catchment area of Lancaster and Morecambe District and North Lancashire, the College also provides accessible **'travel to learn'** opportunities from the disparate rural communities of South Cumbria and the Craven District of North Yorkshire. This mirrors the **'travel to work'** patterns of these areas and reflects the importance of the Lancaster and Morecambe district as a key employment hub for the wider, **'out of county'** rural areas.

The College will, therefore, ensure that the emerging LSIP priorities in both Cumbria and North Yorkshire continue to shape provision and has created a range of partnerships to widen progression opportunities for students and apprentices.

The priority sectors being considered by the **Cumbria Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)** are **construction, energy, manufacturing/engineering (with a subset of food and drink), land based, social care and visitor economy**. It also considers cross-cutting themes including **recruitment, basic and functional skills, apprenticeships and engagement with providers**.

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT AND UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUNDING

The College worked alongside TLC peers to secure Local Skills Improvement Funding (LSIF) to refurbish Catering and Hospitality facilities creating a more sustainable and energy efficient environment, supporting skills development to benefit the visitor economy. The **'Green Skills'** agenda is also an area that LMC has focused both development and investment. A dedicated outdoor workspace has been established to enable capacity to deliver sustainable construction techniques via a simulated real working environment. This will assist response to skills demand for emerging infrastructure projects in the region.



Through the **UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)** Lancaster & Morecambe College offered funded courses in line with skills demand for local businesses, entrepreneurs, volunteers and our local community. The offer promoted awareness of stress and mental health in the workplace, sustainable practice and supports businesses to develop their decarbonisation plans. More recently courses linked to leadership, AI and Microsoft Office solutions were developed and delivered based upon employer requests. This funding is not available from March 2026 and new initiatives to support businesses will be required to secure consistency in the offer.





2.0 Developing the Annual Accountability Statement

The process of developing an Accountability Statement for Lancaster & Morecambe College is not unfamiliar in terms of both process and practice. Since 2017, the College has based its strategic planning and local accountability around two key factors:

Accessible provision for all members of its community

All provision is led and shaped by employers

ENGAGEMENT WITH LANCASHIRE EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS HUB

Since 2017, the College has benefited from direct access to extensive **Labour Market Intelligence (LMI)** provided by the Lancashire Employment and Skills Hub. This LMI data informs College strategic planning, curriculum development, design and innovation across a wide range of provision. Whilst LMI data is always triangulated against direct employer feedback and the latest emerging LSIP priorities, it does form a key element in both the strategy and operation of the College in effectively meeting local skills' needs and informing resource planning.

CURRICULUM DATA SOURCES

The College is able to use curriculum data sources, both internal and external, to triangulate local employer need with the provision of the organisation. This could include data such as RCU's MiDES data demonstrating clearly the mix of provision and how that maps against Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) data. During the latter stages of 2023 the College carried out a comprehensive review of the curriculum offer. The process involved key curriculum leaders who carried out a detailed analysis across all types of provision. LSIP priorities, replacement demand, market share, destinations and performance data were interrogated to identify gaps and opportunities to meet employer and community needs. This work resulted in '**Programme Area Maps**' being created, which are used to inform planning and visually promote career pathways, plans are reviewed to inform the annual cycle of curriculum planning. This ensures that the College does not '**roll over**' too much unnecessary curriculum. The maps include evidence for curriculum intent, based on jobs opportunities and replacement demand. Construction demand is reducing (in theory), but there will always be a replacement demand locally for these skills. LMI data allows staff to review the local labour market down to occupational level.

The curriculum maps allow the College to fully determine whether it is meeting local skills need, but they are only part of the evidence base. From a Board perspective, they highlight the areas the College needs to move into and provide assurance that, if the College is not meeting a specific local need, it will be moving towards that in a considered way. The caveat is that there is a lag in destinations data, which, at best, is a year out of date.

A powerful tool to measure skills progress has been developed within the College. In partnership with employers, the 'top 10' skills' requirement for each technical area have been identified to mirror local industry. Student progress in developing these employer-determined skills is then monitored four times per year to ensure progress and confidence. This progress data is then analysed alongside academic progress, ranging from individual report per student to whole College performance reported to Governors.

BEST PRACTICE IN DIRECT EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

Whilst the LSIP process, national priorities and LMI data can inform the strategy, approach and accountability of the College, it is believed that direct employer engagement and feedback leads to the most impact and an agile College response in meeting local, regional and national needs. The college has a well-established model, the College has invested significant time, resource and commitment in terms of engaging with, listening to, and then responding quickly to employer need. The front facing **Employer Engagement team** of the college play a key role in securing the voice of employers.

EXAMPLE 1 CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Since early 2018, the serving Principal of the College has acted as a **Director of Lancaster and Morecambe Chamber of Commerce**. Whilst this strategic approach pre-dated the LSIP process by several years, the intention was the same – ensuring employer representative bodies have direct influence over shaping the local skills provision. This overt and visible relationship between the College and Chamber has provided direct access to the Principal for hundreds of local employers, fostering the opportunity for direct accountability for the impact of College provision and the knowledge, skills and behaviours of graduating students entering their employment settings. In reverse, the Principal has been able to raise the expectations of employers in terms of work experience, apprenticeships, supporting work-readiness and building highly productive relationships with businesses. The college acts as a host for the Chamber of Commerce functions providing direct physical links to the employer engagement team, curriculum teams, learners and employers utilising the dedicated Employer Hub facilities.



EXAMPLE 2 ELECTECH INNOVATION CLUSTER AND TECH LANCASTER

Over the past three years, the College has been working in partnership with the **Electech Innovation Cluster**, representing over 30 local specialist electronics businesses, operating internationally but based as entrepreneurial local SMEs. This initiative and the College's role were commended in parliament by local MPs and minister at that time. This close working relationship has led to the creation of new resources, equipment and provision, generating new interest and awareness in electronics careers with world-beating local companies. A well-established **Employer Advisory Group** is now in place to lead curriculum progression, including from Tech Lancaster's specialist Bootcamp provision. The group will continue to shape the curriculum priorities for new T-Level provision launched in September 2024, including the formulation of an associated capital strategy. The group offers extensive industry and work placements, masterclasses and donate specialist resources to support student work-readiness.





EXAMPLE 3 MORECAMBE BAY CURRICULUM

Eden Project Morecambe is an exciting cultural visitor attraction set to be built in the region with opening scheduled for 2028. As a significant opportunity for inward investment, a new anchor employer and a catalyst for change for the local area the college has nurtured an excellent relationship with Eden Project to support development of their future workforce and contribute to the wider social value opportunities this initiative presents. The College co-created, with wider partners the **Morecambe Bay Curriculum**, a place-based birth to 25 offer embracing sustainability, climate change and the significant opportunity posed by Eden Project Morecambe.



The key drivers of the curriculum are to ensure smooth transition through the education phases toward fulfilling careers, whilst delivering a real project that has a positive impact for community, environment and place. This pan-Morecambe Bay project now embraces significant numbers of early years, primary and secondary schools delivering a range of projects, alongside third sector and NHS, to tackle key inequalities, whilst employers, colleges and universities focus on career progression pathways and longitudinal research.



The **Morecambe Bay Curriculum Green Passport** is a new development that will see participants gain a deeper understanding of sustainability to stand out in the jobs market. The brand new passport programme involves three training days where participants will meet new people, employers, visit different colleges and Lancaster University. Learn about the impact of climate change, food and energy production and how industries and businesses are making positive changes. Those involved will carry out research on environmental/climate based topics that interest them to achieve the passport, which will enhance employment opportunities in the future. This is a ground breaking delivery partnership between **LMC, Myerscough College and Lancaster University** and follows in-depth collaboration and codesign work across the partnership which has been endorsed by **Lancaster City Council**.

THE LOCAL NEEDS DUTY

LMC Governing body periodically reviews how well the education and training provided meets local needs and considers what actions are required to meet those needs better. To complement the regular reporting and discussions with governors through both formal and informal meetings LMC governors carried out a comprehensive review of the delivery plan associated with this Accountability Agreement. The session included a deep dive with employer representation and considered the impact and progress made with the delivery plan included in section three. Over the course of the year Governors have challenged the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) on the following themes;

- How is our curriculum meeting local employer needs?
- How the current provision supports learners to secure local employment?
- How is the curriculum changing in response to local, regional and national skills priorities
- Would collaboration help overcome barriers to meeting local employment needs?
- Does the curriculum on offer enable learners, particularly those studying at Foundation Level or those with special educational needs or disabilities
- Does the curriculum offer support the local authority's responsibilities in relation to NEETs?
- What provision has been removed, and what impact will this have?
- What level of investment is required for future curriculum resource requirements
- Where there are local needs that are not being met by colleges, to what extent are these being met by other providers?
- What are the key messages from feedback from key stakeholders and users?

Key conclusions and outcomes

- Productive partnerships with local stakeholders will lead to a broad and responsive curriculum offer from entry through HE
- Curriculum reform presents opportunities to develop a wider advanced curriculum (Level 3+) in Construction, Digital, Catering & Hospitality, Early Years and Health
- Ofsted confirmed the college makes a 'Strong Contribution' to meeting skills needs
- Curriculum Maps are highly effective tools to identify opportunities and assess accurately the College's response to local skills needs
- Foundation level curriculum is well established across every programme area and is leading to inclusive approaches to engaging learners
- Growth in Health, Digital and Construction apprenticeships is needed to meet emerging skills priorities
- Campus Vision and Strategy to reflect future investment and be clearly linked to curriculum/skills priorities
- Partnership with local provider to deliver Automotive courses for young people is aligned to local skills need

4.0 CORPORATION STATEMENT

On behalf of Lancaster and Morecambe College Corporation, it is hereby confirmed that the plan as set out above reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the Corporation at their meeting on 7 July 2026.

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



Hilary Fordham
Chair of Corporation

Dated

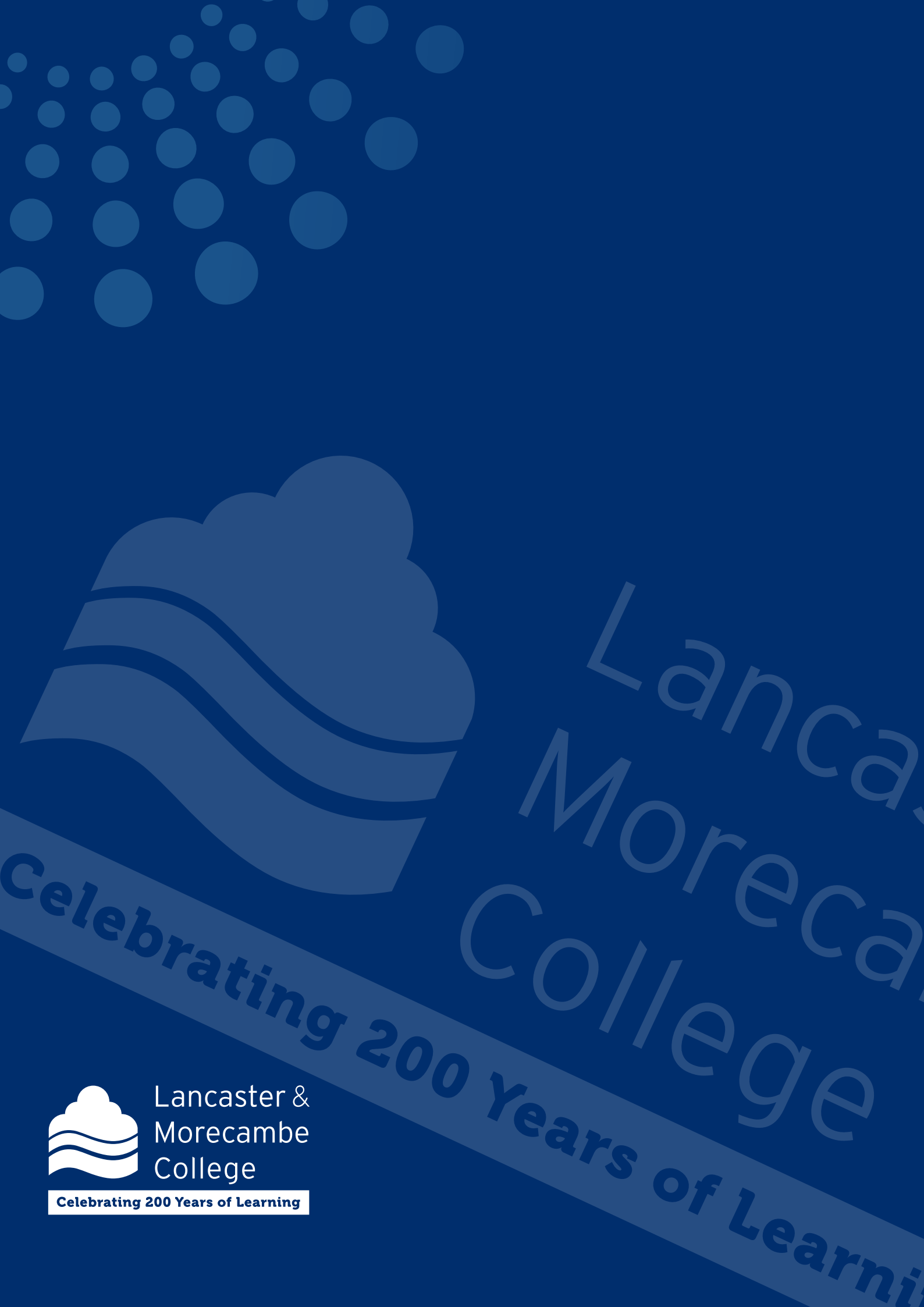
Danny Braithwaite
Principal, Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

Dated::



Lanca
Moreca
College

Celebrating 200 Years of Learning



Lancaster &
Morecambe
College

Celebrating 200 Years of Learning



Lancaster &
Morecambe
College

Celebrating 200 Years of Learning