Ofsted
Good
Provider

Lancaster &
Morecambe
College

Accountability Agreement

2023-2024
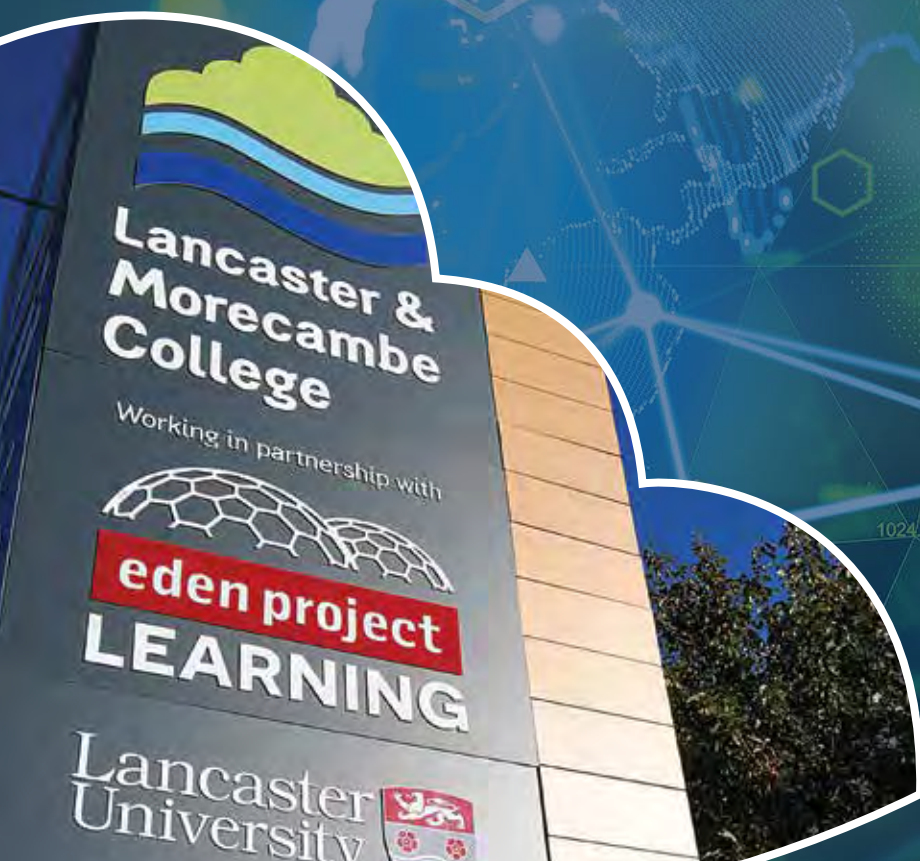
Lancaster &
Morecambe
College

Working in partnership with

eden project
LEARNING

Lancaster
University

PURPOSE

Creating opportunities and building partnerships across our community; empowering individuals, business and the environment to thrive.

CORE DNA: LMC VALUES:

Community – *caring, collaborative and inclusive*
Opportunity – *accessible, aspirational and transformative*

Lancaster & Morecambe College has adopted a community based, employer-led approach since 2017; this has been reflected in the 'Accountability Agreement' style to both its 2018-21 and 2021-26 Strategic Plans.

'Leaders have created a clear vision for the College. They have focused on delivering an inclusive curriculum that meets employers', learners' and apprentices' needs.' **Ofsted, 2020**

COLLEGE PURPOSE

Creating opportunities and building partnerships across our community; Empowering individuals, business and the environment to thrive.

CORE DNA: COLLEGE VALUES

COMMUNITY – caring, collaborative and inclusive
OPPORTUNITY – accessible, aspirational and transformative

STRATEGIC DRIVERS:

PEOPLE

- Safer College Community – a respectful, welcoming safe space to work, learn and thrive with high expectations of all.
- Clear Career Pathways – high quality technical education, which drives progress, skills, ambition and talent toward sustainable and fulfilling careers.
- Opportunity for All – an accessible and aspirational ladder of opportunity, ensuring no-one is left behind and all are stretched and challenged to excel.

PLACE

- Growing Local Partnerships – employer led and community-based partnerships, creating significant new opportunities.
- Lifelong Flexible Learning – excellent learning available to all, delivered flexibly, when and how to best meet need.
- Place-Based Curriculum – understanding, celebrating and valuing the special place where we live, learn and work.

PROGRESS

- Supporting Local Employers – supporting diverse, entrepreneurial and sustainable local businesses.
- Technology and Digital Development – delivering outstanding skills for future jobs, nurturing innovation and creativity.
- Local Sectors for Growth – celebrating the district's unique specialist industries; supporting tenacity, enterprise and high-quality skills for the employers of the future.

FRAMES OF REFERENCE

Our three Strategic Drivers will respond to, and be guided by, the following three Frames of Reference:

HEALTH & WELLBEING

RECOVERY & RESILIENCE

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

1.0 CONTEXT & PLACE

Lancaster and Morecambe College is a small 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 provides a wide range of vocational post-16 education and training, including educational programmes for young people, adult learning, apprenticeships, Higher Education and provision for learners with high needs. The College focuses on technical, creative and professional education and does not deliver A Levels, a provision type which is well served by local schools.

The College is a core member of The Lancashire Colleges group, a delivery partner of the National College for Nuclear and will be a founder member of the Lancashire and Cumbria Institute of Technology later in 2023.

NATIONAL SKILLS PRIORITIES

In April 2023, the Department for Education released a list of national skills priorities, which will be addressed within this accountability statement. These sectors are:

- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Digital and Technology
- Health and Social Care
- Haulage and Logistics
- Engineering
- Science and Mathematics

THE LANCASHIRE CONTEXT

LANCASHIRE 2050 – EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS

The Lancashire Local Authority Leaders recently launched Lancashire 2050, which sets out shared ambitions for the future of Lancashire against eight priorities, including employment and skills.

The Lancashire Skills and Employment Board brings together industry and education, skills and employment providers and local authorities, and is responsible for driving forward the employment and skills theme in the locality. The Board feeds into both the board of the Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the Local Authorities Lancashire Leaders group, giving both an economic and inclusive lens to the priorities which are articulated in the local skills strategy, the Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework. The framework is underpinned by a robust evidence base of local labour market intelligence. This base is shared with the colleges to inform curriculum planning, including Government data sets and novel data, such as real time insights into vacancies and LinkedIn profiles. The Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub, the strategic body which supports the work of the Board, works in partnership with the Chambers of Commerce who are leading on the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), so that the LSIP adds value to existing intelligence, providing additional insights from employers directly.

There is a strong partnership approach in Lancashire with The Lancashire Colleges (TLC) group working in partnership with the LEP, the Lancashire Local Authorities, the Skills Hub and the Chambers of Commerce, with the colleges working collegiately to solve the skills challenges in the local economy.

The Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub produces a suite of excellent Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) data sets. The College has utilised these data sets since 2017 to inform its Strategic Plan and curriculum offer; specific reference to this will be made later in the Accountability Statement as to how this LMI data will inform and shape plans for 2023/24.

THE LANCASHIRE COLLEGES (TLC)

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.

Lancashire is one of the most diverse economic areas in the country, with no urban core but a polycentric set of towns and cities, rural and coastal areas, agricultural and industrial zones. With a population of 1.5m people, Lancashire's 54,000 businesses generate 637,000 jobs across a range of important and future-facing sectors from manufacturing and tourism to cyber, digital and low carbon. The thriving £34bn economy is home to globally leading firms with sector/supply chain clusters including the fourth largest aerospace cluster in the world. There is a pan-Lancashire labour market, particularly for technical and professional roles, while workforce is also imported from and exported to neighbouring areas including Greater Manchester, Cumbria and the Liverpool City Region.

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

The 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.

Most recently, through a Strategic Development Pilot and Phase 2 programme, the College has pro-actively worked with neighbouring colleges, investing in a network of industry-standard education and training facilities and resources, building on our specialisms and collaborating to develop new courses and curriculum that align with employer needs. Through Communities of Practice and investment in joint Continuing Professional Development (CPD), we have been able to jointly meet challenges and build on best practice to ensure our teaching remains high quality and keeps apace with technological and other developments.

TLC acts as an advocate and voice for the sector locally and works closely with key stakeholders, including the Chambers of Commerce, Local Authorities and the LEP to drive recognition of the collective offer of its members and gather intelligence about emerging skills needs. TLC has been influential in informing and shaping the Lancashire LSIP and the College has actively worked with our Employer Representative Body (ERB) helping them to engage local employers, capture intelligence and understand current and emerging skills' needs. This will act as a catalyst for further curriculum changes and adaptations to provision planned for the coming year.

We will continue to work with our neighbours in Lancashire, supporting our Governing Body in effectively discharging its duty to review provision in the local area. We will, through TLC, enhance the collective understanding of how well college provision meets local needs and develop a shared evidence base to assist Governing Bodies in identifying strengths and specialisms within Lancashire. We will work towards the development of a shared action plan and consider what actions the colleges might take, individually or collectively, in order to better meet identified local needs.

THE LANCASHIRE LOCAL SKILLS IMPROVEMENT PLAN (LSIP)

In Lancashire, the Local Skills Improvement Plan is being led by North and Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce and East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce. They are aiming to engage with 10,000 Lancashire employers, giving businesses a chance to set out the key changes needed to make technical skills training more responsive to employers' skills need.

Lancaster and Morecambe College had Principal representation on the LSIP Board during both the 2021/22 pilot and 2022/23 phases.

In March 2023, the LSIP shared their emerging priorities with providers, focussed through the following structure:

Sector Specific Findings
- Occupation shortages
- Upskilling opportunities
- Skills priorities
- Key challenges

Cross-Cutting Issues
- Employability and soft skills
- Green skills
- Understanding the skills system
- Course delivery

Provider Priorities
- Collated priorities
- Addressing challenges
- Future collaboration

Whilst the specific emerging priorities of the LSIP will be addressed later in this document, a summary of emerging findings are:
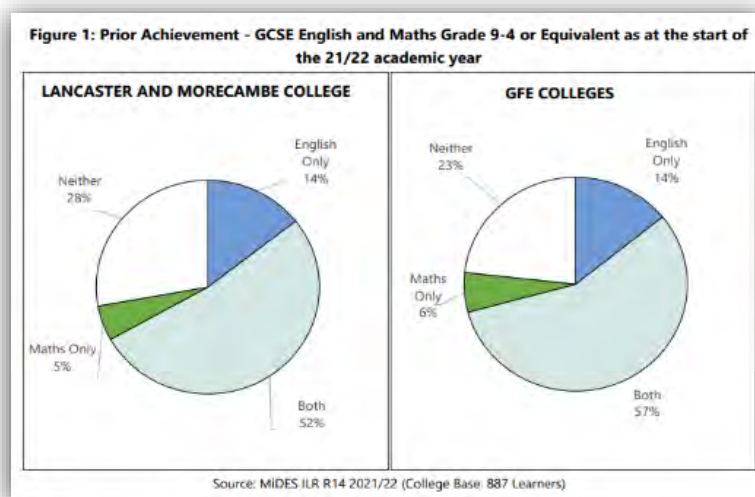
'While there are specific gaps in occupations and skills, many issues are actually caused by a lack of people coming through to those sectors. There is a genuine opportunity for providers to foster ongoing relationships with employers and work collaboratively with them to promote the variety of roles alongside the skills training pathway. The relationships providers and those employers who don't currently engage with them can be improved significantly with more dialogue and communication in responding to employer's needs. This provides an excellent opportunity to develop those relationships and deliver on employer needs. The LSIP will continue to work with all parties to make the changes we all want to see'
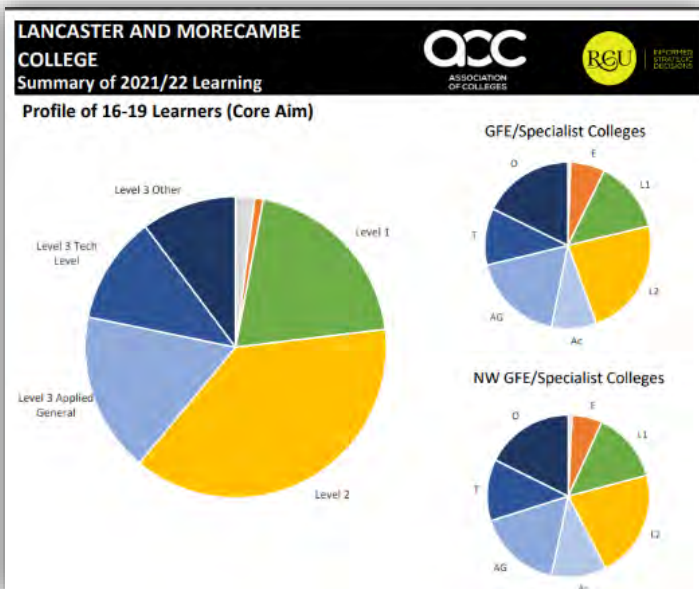*Lancashire LSIP, Emerging Priorities, March 2023*

THE LANCASTER AND MORECAMBE DISTRICT CONTEXT

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. In 2021/22, the average 'Attainment 8' score was 48.7 in Lancaster district. This was above the average of 47.5 for the Lancashire County Council area. Enrolments to the College are skewed to Level 1 and 2, however, with both English and Mathematics prior attainment in the lower quartile nationally.

Figure 1: Prior Achievement - GCSE English and Maths Grade 9-4 or Equivalent as at the start of the 21/22 academic year

LANCASTER AND MORECAMBE COLLEGE
Summary of 2021/22 Learning

Profile of 16-19 Learners (Core Aim)

GFE/Specialist Colleges

NW GFE/Specialist Colleges

The employment rate in the district is 72.9%, below both the national average and pre-pandemic rate. The key contributor to this is 'inactivity' at 23.9% and unemployment at 4.4%, both above the national average (December 2022). The employment rate in the district of 74.4% is higher than the pre-pandemic rate (the only such district in Lancashire), but remains slightly lower than both the national average and wider Lancashire area. The self-employment rate of 7.5% is below the national average.

The employment opportunities in the district are heavily skewed towards health and education related careers, with health (SSA1) mirrored in the core provision at the College:

% of Total Employment and Number Employed by Industry and Local Authority

Local Authority Area ● Lancaster

Industry	%
Human health and social ...	17.3%
Education	13.8%
Wholesale and retail trade...	13.8%
Accommodation and foo...	10.4%
Professional, scientific an...	6.0%
Administrative and suppo...	5.2%
Construction	5.2%
Manufacturing	5.2%
Transportation and storage	4.3%
Agriculture, forestry and fi...	3.0%
Public administration and ...	3.0%
Financial and insurance ac...	2.6%
Information and communi...	2.6%
Electricity, gas, steam and...	2.2%
Arts, entertainment and r...	1.7%
Real estate activities	1.7%
Other service activities	1.6%
Water supply; sewerage, ...	0.3%
Mining and quarrying	0.1%

SSA

1. Health, Public Services & Care
2. Science & Mathematics
3. Agriculture, Hort. & Animal Care
4. Engineering & Manufacturing
5. Construction
6. ICT
7. Retail & Commercial Enterprise
8. Leisure, Travel and Tourism
9. Arts, Media & Publishing
10. History, Philosophy & Theology
11. Social Sciences
12. Languages, Literature & Culture
13. Education & Training
14. Preparation for Life & Work
15. Business, Administration & Law

Profile of 16-19 Learners by Subject (Core Aim)

■ % College   ■ % GFE/SC   ■ % NW GFE/SC

The industry generating most gross value added (GVA) in the district, however, is centred around electricity production, influenced significantly by Heysham 1 and 2 nuclear power stations run by EDF and generating around four million homes' worth of electricity each year. Over the next decade, both stations will end generation and move into defueling, decommissioning and deconstruction phases over a 25-year period.

The highest number of businesses per sector are centred around retail, wholesale, construction and motor vehicle in the district, illustrating the contrast between the largest employment segments centred around a small number of very large employers in health and education.

2022: Number of Businesses by Business Size
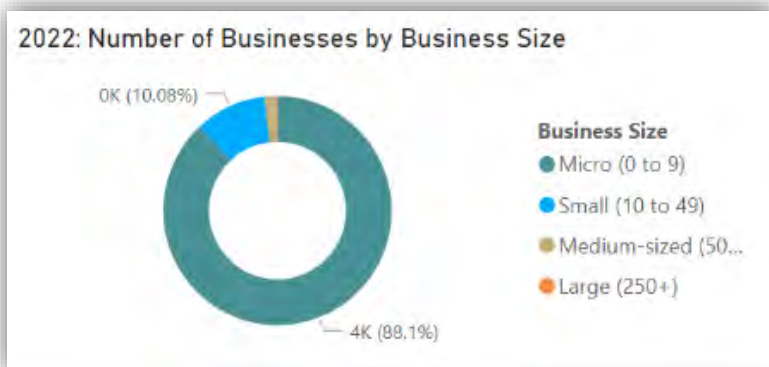
TRAVEL TO LEARN AND WORK - RURAL HINTERLAND

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.

2.0 DEVELOPING THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

The process of developing an Accountability Statement for Lancaster and 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.

SKILLS ACCELERATOR PILOT

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT FUND (SDF)

As part of The Lancashire Colleges (TLC) group, the College has had significant involvement in delivering the single largest Strategic Development Fund pilot of circa £9m+ in 2021/22.

Led by local employer need, this has shaped new provision, qualifications and resources, underpinned with extensive staff development. The most notable element of this was a new 'Sustainable Energy Centre', co-created to support a major local employer in Heysham 1 and 2 power stations, but, importantly, to future support skills' development for defueling, decommissioning and deconstruction. The Centre will also support the skills development in preparation for 'next generation' low carbon energy production, whether that be nuclear, hydrogen, fusion or renewables.

The College, alongside TLC partner colleges, has successfully concluded delivery of SDF2 across Lancashire, meeting the employer need for development of provision around sustainability and digital. The College has led on a pan-Lancashire initiative to formally train over 20 college lecturers in 'sustainable teaching and learning', not only adding to their knowledge, but fostering great collaboration across the county.

The College has worked alongside its TLC peers to prepare a submission against the Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) to address the emerging priorities of the latest Lancashire LSIP programme.

LOCAL SKILLS IMPROVEMENT PLAN (LSIP)

During both the pilot phase 2021/22 and the current phase 2022/23 of the Lancashire LSIP, the previous Principal of the College sat on the LSIP Board for the county, alongside key employers. This College presence on the LSIP Board has been 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 has supported the LSIP process through hosting a range of forums and events with both employers and apprentices. In addition, the emerging priorities of the LSIP were delivered directly to Governors during their strategic planning day by the LSIP team, prompting developmental, two-way strategic discussions.

DATA ANALYSIS

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's data analyst.

This LMI data has not only informed two successive whole College Strategic Plans, but also curriculum 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 the LMI data discussed above.

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. Since 2017, 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 plays 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 and supporting work-readiness.

The next iteration of this relationship will see closer working relations between the Chamber, College, Local Authority and local universities in collaboratively and coherently supporting local economic development and inward investment.

EXAMPLE 2 – ELECTECH INNOVATION CLUSTER AND TECH LANCASTER

Over the past 18 months, 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 recently commended in a Westminster Hall debate by the local MP and Skills Minister.

This close working relationship has led to the creation of new resources, equipment and provision, within a 12-month period, generating new interest and awareness in electronics careers with world-beating local companies.

A strong Employer Advisory Group is now in place to lead curriculum progression, including from Tech Lancaster's Bootcamp provision. The group will shape the curriculum priorities for new T-Level provision from 2024, including the formulation of an associated capital strategy. The group will also offer extensive work placement, masterclasses and donate specialist resources to support student work-readiness.

EXAMPLE 3 – MORECAMBE BAY CURRICULUM

News broke in late 2018 as to the potential for an Eden Project North to be based in Morecambe. As a significant opportunity for inward investment, a new anchor employer and a catalyst for change, the College previous Principal immediately travelled to Cornwall to establish a 'values aligned' relationship with Eden Project to develop their future workforce.

During 2019, 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 North. 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.

This project has gathered significant national attention as an example of systems leadership. When announcing the £50m Levelling Up Fund for Eden Project North, the Prime Minister met with College senior leaders and students to recognise the educational impact that had already been achieved.

3.0 CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL, REGIONAL, LOCAL PRIORITIES

Strategic Plan Reference	KEY AIM	TARGET OUTCOME	PRIORITIES ADDRESSED
PEOPLE Safer College Community – a respectful, welcoming safe space to work, learn and thrive with high expectations of all Clear Career Pathways – high quality technical education which drives progress, skills, ambition and talent toward sustainable and fulfilling careers Opportunity for all – an accessible and aspirational ladder of opportunity, ensuring no one is left behind and all are stretched and challenged to excel.	Develop prestigious new technical education offer.	Successful launch of Lancashire & Cumbria Institute of Technology: • Increased recruitment at Levels 3, 4 and 5 in technical education. • All curriculum is employer endorsed. National College for Nuclear • Plan new degree apprenticeship provision in energy related qualifications, gain employer support for launch in 2024.	National priorities, LSIP priorities, LMI employer data, direct employer feedback
	Curriculum reform and T-Level implementation.	T-Levels successfully launched for September 2023 in: - Business - Health - Childcare All pathways have employer endorsement, sufficient placement opportunities, recruit viable cohorts, progression opportunities mapped. T Level in Engineering developed and in recruitment for September 2024.	National Priorities, LSIP priorities, LMI employer data, direct employer feedback
	Develop Resilience for Work and Employability Skills.	• Work placement for all students. • Work-related activity. • Tutorial package focusing on powerful skills. • Further develop tracking of skills progress and learner confidence levels. • Employer masterclasses and on-site engagement.	LSIP priorities, LMI employer data, direct employer feedback

PLACE	Drive local prosperity and sustainability through collaboration.	• Further development of the Morecambe Bay Curriculum (MBC) governance, rollout and quality assurance. • Launch a new MBC Apprenticeship to drive social action projects. • Further embed sustainability in all curriculum areas. • Support local employers to understand and reduce their carbon impact, driving renewables and retrofit as specialist areas.	LSIP priorities, LMI employer data, Direct employer feedback
Growing Local Partnerships – employer led and community-based partnerships creating significant new opportunities Lifelong flexible learning – excellent learning available to all, delivered flexibly, when and how to best meet need	Reduce NEETS and those not economically active.	• Increased school engagement. • Revised 14-16 offer. • Close working with DWP/JCP/Bootcamps. • Deliver Multiply project effectively. • Utilise UKSPF for NEET engagement. • Work to raise aspirations and ease of entry for disadvantaged young people and adults.	LSIP priorities, LMI employer data, direct employer feedback
Place-based curriculum – understanding, celebrating and valuing the special place where we live, learn and work	Ensure accessible and impactful community education opportunities.	• Accessible locations for community education identified and utilised. • Strong partnership working is developed through Community Learning Networks. • Community learning is 'easy to reach' for all community members.	LSIP priorities, LMI employer data, direct employer feedback

PRODUCTIVITY	Review of Apprenticeship offer to maximise employer impact, drive recruitment and outcomes for apprentices.	• Address lack of valuing of EPA by employers. • Improve Apprenticeship Matching. • Drive effective IAG in schools and for FT students. • Increase apprenticeship recruitment during 2023/24. • Increase in apprenticeship outcomes during 2023/24.	LSIP priorities, LMI employer data, direct employer feedback
Supporting local business – supporting diverse, entrepreneurial and sustainable local businesses Technology and digital development – delivering outstanding skills for future jobs, nurturing innovation and creativity Local sectors for growth – celebrating the district's unique specialist industries; supporting tenacity, enterprise and high-quality skills for the businesses of the future	Investment in industry standard resources and specialist equipment.	• Invest £1.5m for 2023/24 in the development of facilities, specialist resources and equipment to ensure currency and drive standards in teaching and learning. • Utilise employers to shape and co-create fit for purpose learning environments to meet learner, curriculum and local industry need. • Develop long-term plans for the College estate and resources.	National priorities, LSIP priorities, LMI employer data, direct employer feedback
	Further develop place specific curriculum pathways to meet local business needs and opportunities.	**Eco-Environmental Tourism** • Workforce development pathways are refined for Eden Project North and wider visitor economy. • Hospitality, Catering and Tourism provision are updated and rebranded. **Electech Innovation Cluster** • Electronics offer is embedded into T-Level Engineering for 2024. • Capital and resources proposal developed in partnership with the industry. • Progression routes mapped from local Bootcamp provision. **Supply Chain and Logistics (SCL)** • T-Level in Business is co-created with employers to drive local SCL opportunities. • Progression routes to university are identified and locally accessible.	National priorities, LSIP priorities, LMI employer data, direct employer feedback

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 23 May 2023.

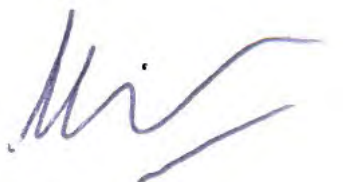The plan will be published on the College's website within three months of the start of the new academic year and will be accessed from the following link:

https://www.lmc.ac.uk/about/governance/governance-papers

Chair of Corporation
Dated:

Principal, Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

5.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Appendix 1 – LSIP Emerging Priorities
Appendix 2 – TLC Collaborative Project Work

INTRODUCTION

The Lancashire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) gives employers a platform to inform skills providers about their requirements of the skills system.

Difficulty recruiting and skills gaps have been problem raised by employers for years. LSIPs aim to understand not only where the gaps are but why those gaps exist. Working in collaboration with employers, skills providers and other local stakeholders the LSIP will help develop and co-ordinate solutions to these problems.

The North & Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce is lead employer representative body designated to deliver the LSIP in Lancashire, supported by the East Lancashire and Lancaster & District Chambers, and working with range of local stakeholders and national trade bodies.

The NWL Chamber was first awarded the LSIP as one of only eight Trailblazer areas across the country. Activity took place between November 2021 and March 2022.

LSIPs have since been rolled out across all areas of England with this phase of activity starting in November 2022. The LSIP will be delivered to the Department for Education (DfE) at the end of May 2023. Activity will continue, including an annual review and update, until May 2025.

Activity has to date included surveys, focus groups, roundtables, roadshow events, and one-to-one interviews. This activity has garnered responses from in excess of 1,200 separate employers of all sizes and sectors.

Lancashire Local Skills Improvement Plan

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report shares with providers the responses from employers and highlights the main issues around getting people in key roles with the right skills.

Wherever possible occupation and skills needs have been linked to the IfATE occupational pathways.

Using the feedback from local employers, using LMI data provided by the Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub, and referring to regional and national trends, providers are tasked with detailing their response to employer needs.

This will be featured in annual accountability agreements and will help instruct applications to new funding streams such as Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF), Skills Bootcamps and UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF).

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

Sector specific findings:
- Occupation shortages
- Upskilling opportunities
- Skills priorities
- Key challenges

Cross-cutting issues:
- Employability & soft skills
- Green skills
- Understanding the skills system
- Course delivery

Provider priorities:
- Collated priorities
- Addressing challenges
- Future collaboration

North & Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce

East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce

Department for Education

THE LANCASHIRE ECONOMY

The Lancashire economy and labour market is characterised by a population of 1.5million people, with 940,000 working age residents, of whom around 700,000 are in the workforce. 660,000 of Lancashire's workforce are in employment, many of whom work in one of Lancashire's 55,000 businesses.

Lancashire is home to some 730,000 jobs, and has an economy worth £33.3bn in 2020. Lancashire is characterised as having a lower job density than is typical nationally (77 jobs for every 100 working age people compared to 85 in Great Britain), and a workforce that has a lower proportion of residents with higher level qualifications, trailing the national average by 8.6 percentage points in the context of those with Level 4 or above qualifications.

Despite challenging economic circumstances, Lancashire businesses are still trying hard to recruit skilled workers in the job market, this comes alongside high labour market churn, with some 10% of workers having changed jobs in the last 12 months, and increasing economic inactivity which is shrinking the talent pool.

Throughout 2022, there were almost 140,000 job vacancies in Lancashire according to Lightcast data from the Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub. Businesses in some sectors are experiencing challenges finding workers who are appropriately qualified or have the qualities that they are looking for. This is the intention of the LSIP, to explore with businesses and colleges how labour market demand and the supply of skills and qualifications can be more closely aligned, to make sure that Lancashire has a skilled and productive workforce for those businesses to draw upon.

OVERVIEW

The information in each sectoral analysis is built upon LMI data and responses from employer engagement activity. Each sector analysis will be structured accordingly.

Rationale	A brief overview explaining why this has been included as a sector.
Labour Market Information	Data on employees, GVA etc.
Industry Challenges	Information from employers about the biggest challenges facing the sector

Shortage Occupations	Upskilling Needs
"Job roles" (IfATE occupations where possible) • IfATE Pathways and standards	Priorities for upskilling existing staff linked to existing IfATE standards where applicable

Throughout the sector analyses reference is made to LQ. This stand for "Location Quotient" which shows the significance of a particular statistic compared to national figures i.e. 15% locally compared to 10% nationally, LQ = 1.5.

MANUFACTURING & ENGINEERING

Rationale	Manufacturing has been identified as a local priority sector featuring as one of the LEP's pillars of growth. Lancashire's 3rd largest employment sector and most highly value-added sector.
Labour Market Information	Employment: 80,000 jobs, 12.5% of all employment in Lancashire (LQ=1.64) Businesses: 3,750 GVA: almost £6bn, 17.7% of Lancashire GVA (LQ=1.84), almost double the typical national proportion • Particular specialisms, such as Aerospace and "Other Transport Equipment Manufacturing", worth £1.3bn to Lancashire's economy in 2020, more than 4 times as concentrated in Lancashire as is typical nationally. • Other aspects more heavily concentrated in Lancashire than is typical nationally include Textiles (LQ=1.88), Furniture (LQ=1.8), and Rubber and Plastic Products (LQ=1.42).
Industry Challenges	• Aging workforce • Lack of diversity i.e. low numbers of women and those mainly employed in support roles • Industry not well promoted in schools; teachers and parents don't know enough about industry • Still has the image of a dirty, manual industry despite not always being the case • Not much thought from smaller companies about moving to net zero • Moving to newer technologies while still operating traditional machines simultaneously

MANUFACTURING & ENGINEERING

According to current vacancy data, in the main, the hard to fill jobs centre around "Engineering Technicians", "Maintenance Technicians" and "Manufacturing Engineers".

Shortage Occupations	Upskilling Needs
"Manufacturing Engineers", "CNC Machinist" • *Machining Technician (L3)* "Electrical & Multi-Skilled Maintenance Engineers" • *Maintenance & Operations Engineering Technician (L3)* "Tool Maker" • *Engineering Operative (L3)* • *Engineering Technician (L4) - Toolmaker and Tool and Die Maintenance Technician* "Data Analyst" • *Data Technician (L3)* • *Data Analyst (L4)* "Procurement Manager" • *Procurement & Supply Assistant (L3)* • *Commercial Procurement & Supply (L4)* • *Senior Procurement & Supply Professional (L6)*	Procurement and supply chain personnel • *understand carbon and sustainability impact of products, materials, transportation and supplier emissions.* Project and change management • *leaders dealing with technological change;* • *greater understanding needed of how to prepare and plan for the move to net zero.* Leadership, management and supervisory • *particularly for machinists and engineers moving from the shop floor into supervisory roles.* Digital confidence and competence • help those with limited digital and computing experience cope with increased digital processes.

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CONSTRUCTION

Rationale	While not among the LEP's priority sectors, Construction is considered a strategic enabler. 7th biggest employment sector and 6th highest contributing sector to GVA.
Labour Market Information	Employment: 39,000 jobs, 5.8% of all Lancashire employment (LQ=1.18) GVA: £2.2bn, 6.6% of Lancashire's output (LQ=1.13) • In Mid-Lancashire (Preston, South Ribble etc), the Construction sector accounted for 9.5% of total GVA in 2020 (LQ = 1.63). • Lancashire has a much higher proportion of Construction sector GVA that comes from Civil Engineering, more than 70% above the national average (32.7% of Construction Sector GVA vs 19.1% nationally – LQ=1.71).
Industry Challenges	• Difficulty attracting people into the sector • Not seen as an aspirational career; only for those who don't succeed at school • People (young people, teachers, parents, unemployed) not aware of the range of opportunities available in the sector e.g.difficulty attracting people into digital roles • Assumption industry is low paid, unsafe and dirty • Not enough awareness among companies of opportunities available with the move to net zero

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CONSTRUCTION

Shortage Occupations	Upskilling Needs
"Plumbing, Heating and Ventilation Engineers" • *Plumbing & Domestic Heating Technician (L3)* • *Low Carbon Heating Technician (L3)* "Quantity Surveyors" • *Quantity Surveying Technician (L4)* • *Construction Quantity Surveyor (L6)* "Carpenters and Joiners" • *Carpentry & Joinery (L2)* "Construction Managers"; "Construction and Building Trade Supervisors" • *Construction Site Supervisor (L4)* • *Construction Site Management (L6)* "Electricians/Electrical Engineering" • *Domestic Electrician (L3)* "Groundworkers" - *Groundworker (L2)* "Scaffolders" - *Scaffolder (L2)* "Roofers" - *Roofer (L2)*	Retrofit • Some companies are, as yet, unaware of what retrofit opportunities they could take advantage of and the strong growth expected in this area. • Domestic electricians – to understand the different types of environmental technologies that may be found in a domestic dwelling including solar photovoltaic systems, heat pumps, micro wind turbines and domestic battery storage and their interaction with conventional electrical installations • Plumbing & domestic heating technicians – to understand the principles of selection, installation, testing, commissioning and service and maintenance techniques on solar thermal, heat pumps and water recycling systems Roofers • only training available locally is for Roof Slater & Tiler. Requirement for upskilling option for that but also for Sheeter & Cladder / Waterproof Membranes Installer.

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HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE

Rationale	Health & Social Care is not one of the LEP's economic priorities as a pillar of growth. However, it is a key sector due to employment size and significant difficulties with staffing over recent years. Largest employer in Lancashire and 3rd highest contribution to GVA.
Labour Market Information	Employees: more than 100,000, 16.4% of all Lancashire employment (LQ=1.19) GVA: £4.3bn, almost 13% of Lancashire's output (LQ=1.42) • Lancashire has a higher percentage of GVA that comes from Residential and Social Care (29.4%) than is typical nationally (25.9%) – contributing almost £1.3bn to Lancashire's economy in 2020. • Despite Lancashire having a higher proportion of GVA that comes from Residential and Social Care, Healthcare still represents more than 70% of the total economic output of the sector.
Industry Challenges	• Massive recruitment problems, especially in social care. Jobs are in high demand and are hard to fill, with the average role having to be posted 6 times in order to be filled, twice as often as is typical across the wider labour market. • Struggles retaining staff due to pay, hours and stress. • Having to recruit overseas workers but facing problems with qualification equivalency and funding any required training.

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HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE

Shortage Occupations	Upskilling Needs
"Health Care Assistants" • *Healthcare Support Worker (L2)* "Staff Nurses" & "Registered Nurses" • *Registered Nurse (L6)* "Mental Health Practitioners" • *Senior Healthcare Support Worker (L3) – Mental Health Support* "Occupational Therapists" • *Occuptaional Therapist (L6)* "Midwives" • *Midwife (L6)* "Registered Mental Health Nurses" • *Registered Nurse (L6) – Mental Health* "Adult Care Workers" • *Adult Care Worker (L2)* • *Lead Adult Care Worker (L3)*	Leadership & management training, especially for staff moving into supervisory and management roles: • *Lead Practitioner in Adult Care (L4)* • *Leader in Adult Care (L5)*

Lancashire Local Skills Improvement Plan

TRANSPORT & DISTRIBUTION

Rationale	Whilst not one of the LEPs pillars of growth the logistics and passenger transport industries are important supports to other sectors such as manufacturing and hospitality, leisure & tourism.
Labour Market Information	Employees: 22,000, 3.5% of Lancashire's workforce GVA: approx. £1bn • In Lancashire, the shape of the transport and logistics sector differs to what is typical nationally, with a higher proportion of economic output coming from Land Transport and Postal and Courier Activities (a combined 68%) compared to the national average (54.8%). • Pre-pandemic, Lancashire's Transport and Logistics sector grew economic output faster than the national average (+3% year on year vs +2.2% nationally). • Forecasting from the Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub and Cambridge Econometrics projects the Transport and Logistics sector will grow to account for 4% of total employment in Lancashire by 2050.
Industry Challenges	• Struggles attracting people into the industry; people not aware of range of opportunities in the industry and have perceptions of low pay. • Not supported by teachers and parents as an option for young people. • Challenges of moving to electric vehicles due to cost and range of new vehicles.

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TRANSPORT & DISTRIBUTION

Shortage Occupations	Upskilling Needs
"Large Goods Vehicle Drivers" • *Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) Driver C+E (L2)* "Vehicle Technicians, Mechanics and Electricians" • *Autocare Technician (L2)* • *Heavy Vehicle Service & Maintenance Technician (L3)* "Van Drivers"; "Couriers" • *Urban Driver (L2)* • *Express Delivery Operative (L2)* "Warehouse Operatives"; "Fulfilment Associates"; "Pickers/Packers" • *Supply Chain Warehouse Operative (L2)* "Transport Managers" • *Transport & Warehousing Operations Supervisor (L3) –* *Transport Operations Supervisor* • *Supply Chain Leadership Professional (L6)* "Coach and Bus Drivers" • *Passenger Transport Driver (L2)*	Electric vehicles • There are limited moves within large goods delivery companies to introduce electric vehicles into fleets. • The passenger transport industry is seeing a greater growth in electric vehicle fleets and will see much more need for electric vehicle maintenance technicians over the next 1-2 years. This is largely centred on Blackpool with a large electric vehicle expansion getting underway. Digital confidence and competence • Help those with limited digital and computing experience cope with increased digital processes. Materials Handling Equipment (MHE) • Entry-level warehouse operatives such picker/packers would benefit from access to quick upskilling training on specific MHE, especially forklift trucks.

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HOSPITALITY, LEISURE & TOURISM

Rationale	Hospitality, Leisure & Tourism is linked to the LEP pillar of growth, Tourism, Culture & Place.
Labour Market Information	Employees: almost 70,000, more than 10% of Lancashire employment GVA: approx. £1bn, 3% of the county's economic output • Lancashire has a higher proportion of jobs that are in Accommodation and Food Services (8.3%) than is typical nationally (7.5%) and a lower proportion in Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (2.2% vs 2.3% nationally). • Lancashire has particular pockets of high employment in the Hospitality, Leisure and Tourism sector, most notably in Blackpool, where around 16% of employment comes from this sector.
Industry Challenges	• Struggle to recruit and retain staff to the sector. • Not seen as a career and is something people fall into or only do while waiting to start a planned career. • Seasonal work is not attractive. • Young people not directed towards the sector; need to appeal to teachers and parents as well as young people.

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HOSPITALITY, LEISURE & TOURISM

Shortage Occupations	Upskilling Needs
"Kitchen Porters" & "Kitchen and Catering Assistants" • *Hospitality Team Member (L2)* - Food Production "Chefs" • *Commis Chef (L2) & Production Chef (L2)* "Catering and Bar managers" • *Hospitality Supervisor (L3)* • *Hospitality Manager (L4)* "Bar Staff"; "Waiting Staff"; "Housekeeping Staff"; "Receptionists" • *Hospitality Team Member (L2)* "Business Administrators" • *Business Administrator (L3)* "Digital Marketing" • *Digital Marketer (L3)* "Events Managers" • *Hospitality Management (L4)*	IT skills • Excel and other basic software packages • general digital competence so they're comfortable with things like booking systems or tills. Cellar management • for alcoholic beverage service team members and bar supervisors. Leadership & management • especially for team members moving into supervisory and management roles.

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IT & DIGITAL

Rationale	This a LEP priority sector. There is a huge growth in digital jobs with opportunities coming from significant future inward investment. The impact of digital skills goes far beyond the sector with all sectors requiring some of these skills to a greater or lesser extent.
Labour Market Information	Employees: 20,000 in digital businesses / 33,000 digital workers across all sectors GVA: Information & Communications - £1bn / E-Commerce & Creative - £1.3bn • The National Cyber Force investment in Samlesbury will bring 2,000 new jobs by 2030 and will catalyse digital investment, clustering and agglomeration in Lancashire as a result. The Lancashire LEP digital strategy cites a feasible scenario of digital employment growing to over 50,000 by 2050 as a result, but highlight skills gaps and shortages of people with digital skills as constraints to growth of the sector.
Industry Challenges	• The growth of the digital sector and digital roles more widely is creating a pressure on available people with the right skills. • The diversity of Lancashire's digital sector means that the range of skills provided need to be varied. • Challenge to keep up with the rapid pace of change in both new technologies and growth of digital jobs presents.

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IT & DIGITAL

Digital roles are already in high demand and are forecast to be increasingly so, looking at a cross section of high-level digital occupations, we can see a number of high demand roles.

Shortage Occupations	Upskilling Needs
"Software Developer/Engineers"; "Web developers" • *Software Development Technician (L3)* • *Software Developer (L4)* "Computer Support Specialists" • *Digital Support Technician (L3)* • *Information Communication Technician (L3)* "Computer Systems Engineer/Architect" "Cyber Security Technician" • *Cyber Security Technician (L3)* • *Cyber Security Technologist (L4)* • *Cyber Security Technical Professional (L6)*	Within digital roles the most requested skills are: • SQL (Structured Query Language) • Agile Methodology • JavaScript • Microsoft Azure • CSS" • C# (Programming Language) Within non-digital businesses the most frequently requested skills are: • Data analysis • Web design • Digital marketing • Excel

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FARMING & AGRICULTURE

Rationale	Farming & Agriculture forms part of the LEP growth pillar of Food & Agriculture. The sector's activities are also strategically critical in terms of food resource and environmental protection.
Labour Market Information	Employees: 12,000, 1.8% of Lancashire employment (LQ=1.38) Almost all of these jobs are in "Crop and Animal Production and related Service activities", which is more concentrated within Lancashire's Farming and Agriculture sector than is typical nationally. GVA: £217m, 0.7% of Lancashire's output, which is in line with what is typical nationally 95% of Lancashire's GVA from the sector comes from Agriculture and Hunting (£207m), compared to 89% nationally (LQ=1.06).
Industry Challenges	• Attracting new people into the industry is difficult; poor industry image and low pay are big issues. • The issue has been exacerbated over recent years due to access to seasonal, overseas workers being more difficult. • Decarbonisation and environmental protection are becoming much bigger issues within the sector, requiring new skills sets for those already working in the sector and new job roles being created. • Many of those trying to enter the industry did not succeed at school but vocational training in the sector frequently requires grades they will struggle to achieve just to start. • Courses tend to require a crop or livestock specialisation which doesn't work for many mixed farms

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FARMING & AGRICULTURE

Looking at the occupations that make up Lancashire's Farming and Agriculture sector show a certain concentration of occupations that are different to what is typical nationally. Specifically, Lancashire has around 3,800 farmers working in the sector, constituting some 45.9% of total sector employment, compared to 40.9% nationally, showing an LQ of 1.11. Similarly Lancashire has a higher proportion of Farm Workers, with 1,900 (23.2%) of the sector workforce working as a Farm Worker, compared to 17.4% nationally, yielding an LQ of 1.32. Lancashire has almost 500 people working in Horticultural Trades specifically (5.5% of the sector workforce), which is more than twice as concentrated as is typical nationally (2.5% nationally, LQ=2.13). Lancashire has a lower proportion of Agriculture and Horticulture Managers or Proprietors, with 5.1% of the sector workforce compared to 6.2% nationally (LQ=0.82).

Shortage Occupations	Upskilling Needs
"Farm Worker"; "Farm Hand" • *General Farm Worker (L2)*	Low carbon and environmental management:

Lancashire Local Skills Improvement Plan

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

Throughout all activity the biggest need of employers across all sectors relate to what are termed 'employability skills'. Typically this relates to:

- The right attitude for work;
- Basic communication skills;
- Time management & organisation;
- Resilience;
- Adaptability.

Employers are, for the most part, adamant that these skills are lacking in new recruits, especially young people first entering the workplace. In some cases, a lack of these skills is preventing people being offered work because they can't communicate their abilities and interests, or because employers don't have sufficient confidence in their attitude.

During the Trailblazer 84% of employers responded that employability skills were the most important attribute they were looking for in a candidate, over experience and qualifications/training. Asked more recently how important certain considerations were when recruiting the right attitude to work was deemed essential by 86% of employers with almost all of the rest saying it was very important.

Most employers consider these behaviours and attributes to be the building blocks of successful employment. So much training is done internally on machines and processes that it is more important to have a willingness to be there, to learn and progress.

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EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

The difficulty is how can employability be dealt with in post-16 education and skills training.

Employers and providers have both commented that discussing these behaviours in a classroom setting is not always the most productive way get their importance across to learners. The key is for employers to demonstrate them in the workplace and reinforce what is being done in the classroom.

A common complaint from employers is how those coming from full-time courses are not 'work-ready'.

This backs up the feeling that the dual-approach between employer and provider is essential. However, for those on full-time courses it is difficult to gain that employer interaction and feedback.

Provider Priorities
- **A joined-up approach between employer and provider to work actively work on employability skills is essential.**
- **It would be beneficial to learners on full-time courses to have more interaction with the workplace, whether through placements, work experience or employer visits.**

GREEN SKILLS

The feedback from employers about their response to net zero goals and improving sustainability was very mixed.

Larger companies have frequently hired an individual to manage all of these aspects. In smaller companies there is often little understanding of what will be required.

Many smaller employers are in need of basic training on the fundamentals of the low carbon economy, the impact on their business and how they will need to adapt. This is needed before they can start to consider the big issues of whether new job roles will be needed or whether the workforce requires new skills.

Where smaller companies have started to pay attention to low carbon issues it often ends as an extra task on top of someone's existing role.

Highlighted in the Manufacturing sector analysis, there is an increasing awareness in other sectors that procurement and supply chain management is an important element in the move towards net zero.

Provider Priorities
- **Leadership and management teams will benefit from carbon literacy training and support to understand the changes they can make.**
- **Support and training for people taking on low carbon issues as part of their existing role to understand the different areas this can impact and how to develop a decarbonisation and sustainability plan.**
- **Upskilling training for procurement and supply chain personnel to understand carbon implications of contracts and tenders.**

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AWARENESS

Employers have repeatedly stated that they struggle to navigate the skills system. This includes:
- not knowing what courses are available,
- deciding which is the most suitable course to achieve specific aims,
- accessing and applying for funding,
- feeling they have been sold what a provider can offer rather than being made aware of the best option on the market.

Provider Priorities
- **Employers require greater support to navigate the skills system and providers need to build trust with employers.**
- **Providers can work closely with other orgainsations operating within the skills system to further understanding and engage with employers they don't currently work with.**

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RESPONDING TO SHORTAGES

Align provision with shortage occupations (see sector analyses).

Where a provider is already running the course, **can more places be made available to help service employer needs?**

Where a provider is not running the course, **based on localised LMI data is there a need for the course in that geography and can the provider deliver it if so?**

Where courses have been dropped due to learner demand, **work with local employers, schools and job centres to help create the demand.**

Develop new shorter courses reacting to upskilling needs and changing employer requirements.

Employers have been clear that they wan to see more training available outside of existing lengthy qualifications. It is difficult for employers to commit to courses such as apprenticeships for at least one year when there are only one or two elements that are relevant to the employee's role.

There are opportunities through new funding models such as LSIF, Multiply, UK SPF, and Skills Bootcamps, to develop and deliver standalone courses that sit outside traditional qualifications and funding.

Ensure employers continue to be engaged during course development.

While paying attention to what employers have stated they need and setting up new courses is, of course, a positive step, it is important that employers are involved with their development to ensure they meet needs and are delivered to best effect.

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CONCLUSION

SUMMARY

While there are specific gaps in occupations and skills many issues are actually caused by a lack of people coming through to those sectors. There is a genuine opportunity for providers to foster ongoing relationships with employers and work collaboratively with them to promote the variety of roles alongside the skills training pathway.

The relationships providers and those employers who don't currently engage with them can be improved significantly with more dialogue and communication in responding to employers needs.

This provides an excellent opportunity to develop those relationships and deliver on employer needs. The LSIP will continue to work with all parties to make the changes we all want to see.

NEXT STEPS

By May 2023, the LSIP report must be produced and delivered to the DfE for approval from the Secretary of State. At the same time providers must finalise their accountability agreements detailing, in part, how they will respond to local employer needs. It is also expected that LSIF applications will need to be made during this time.

This means that a lot of work will be done in a short space of time to determine the skills landscape in Lancashire. The LSIP team remain available throughout to assist providers with their agreements and applications.

As the LSIP enters the next stage in June, lasting until May 2025, it will important to continue the sense of collaboration to engage more employers with the skills system and agree areas to do more in depth research and analysis.

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APPENDIX TWO

THE LANCASHIRE COLLEGES – WORKING COLLABORATIVELY

Lancaster & Morecambe College has been an active partner in a wide range of pan-Lancashire TLC projects:

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

In just a short period, the colleges collectively engaged over 800 local businesses and worked together with them to develop 37 new short and very-short courses that directly responded to their skills' needs. TLC also identified at least eight courses where unnecessary duplication could be reduced through joint work. TLC worked with industry specialists to provide CPD to hundreds of tutors and teachers, ensuring their skills keep pace with technological developments. Across Lancashire at least 2,500 students immediately benefitted from access to new, industry-standard equipment and teaching facilities which are now being used by many thousands more.

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

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

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

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