

2025



**ACCOUNTABILITY  
ACTION  
PLAN**

The Wigan & Leigh College Accountability Statement has been prepared in response to the Department for Education: Meeting skills needs; Guidance on annual accountability agreements 2025-26 & the Local Needs Duty.

<https://www.wigan-leigh.ac.uk/about/vision-and-values>

The Accountability Action Plan responds to the Local Skills Improvement Plan 2023 and January 2024 update, GM regional priorities as identified within the GM Local Skills Report & Labour Market Plan 2022 including the recently launched 10-year economic plan, and the Wigan Council Employment & Skills Strategy 2020-2030, the Economic Strategy refresh 2023 and the Progress with Unity vision for the borough.



**Winstanley College**  
EXCELLENCE SUPPORT INSPIRATION



### Statement and endorsement from Wigan Council

We are delighted to be working in partnership with our colleges across the borough as they work to provide excellent education and training, which enables the young people of Wigan to fulfil their potential. Through this active partnership working, which aims to build strong relationships with employers, institutes of higher education, schools and community partners, we are working together to address the skills needs of employers and drive socio-economic growth in our borough. Through Progress with Unity and our Economic Strategy we want to grow an economy that works for everyone, building on strengths and creating opportunities for all our young people to thrive and grow. Wigan Council values the partnership that we have with all our colleges to achieve this shared goal.

Cllr David Molyneux MBE  
Leader, Wigan Council

### Statement from Wigan Colleges

Building on a long tradition of working in partnership, the Wigan colleges work together to ensure that we co-ordinate our work to offer high quality education and training to the young people of our borough which addresses the skills needs of employers locally, regionally and nationally, at all levels. Through this active collaboration and sharing of curriculum planning, we aim to ensure that we work successfully together and with Wigan Council in the delivery of the Wigan Economic Strategy and Greater Manchester LSIP.

Simon Lett  
Principal – Winstanley College

Paula Nolan  
Principal – St. John Rigby College

Anna Dawe  
Principal – Wigan & Leigh College

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## 1. Local Needs Duty

This year's Accountability Statement focuses on addressing the priority skills needs of local communities as identified in the Local Skills Improvement Plan and supports longer term plans to ensure that provision addresses local skills gaps, avoiding duplication through collaboration with local and sub-regional partners.

The College's Governing Board regularly reviews how Wigan & Leigh College is meeting local, regional and national skills needs through several mechanisms that enable both long-term strategic planning and ongoing oversight.

In December 2022, Ofsted found that the College makes a strong contribution to meeting skills needs, which is the highest sub-judgement that inspectors can make.

The College sets out its intent in its Annual Stakeholder Engagement Report and uses the Good Governance Institute's Stakeholder Engagement Maturity Matrix as a tool to guide and measure its development and impact in this area.

Key processes include the annual curriculum planning cycle, which ensures alignment to priority sectors and labour market demand, the development and monitoring of the College's three-year strategic plan, which takes an outward-looking approach to position the College at the forefront of changing skills needs, the Careers Strategy which provides a longer-term approach to curriculum and skills development and a dedicated Task and Finish Group of Governors who review key documents such as the local Economic Strategy, the Local Skills Improvement Plan, attend meetings with employers and report back their findings to the full Board.

As part of the College's independent external governance review undertaken between November 2023 and March 2024, the Board requested a focus on whether the College was providing the right information and the right opportunities to Governors to strategically influence how the College responds to skills needs and the Reviewer found that there is strong evidence that the Governing Board has extremely good oversight of how the College meets skills needs, locally and regionally. Examples include discussions on local skills needs at meetings of committee when reviewing curriculum development, and at Board during the Principal's update and when reviewing and approving the Accountability Statement.

A number of Governors are able, through their personal and professional experience, to challenge the Executive regarding provision for local skills, both with regard to local employers e.g. the NHS, and other stakeholders such as students with SEND. The main opportunities to shape strategy are through the Governors' Skills Review Task and Finish Group, at the strategic workshop and through Governors' own professional roles and networks.

Governors also have opportunities to develop their understanding internally through Link visits where they can discuss with curriculum staff how employers are engaged in developing the curriculum and offering student work placements. They also attend external stakeholder engagement events, for example Business Breakfasts hosted by the College and are also invited by members of the Executive to attend some stakeholder meetings with them.

In conclusion, the Review found that there is strong evidence that the Governing Board has extremely good oversight of how the College meets skills needs, locally and regionally and the impact of governance is evident through changes to strategy and through advocacy

## **CORPORATION STATEMENT**

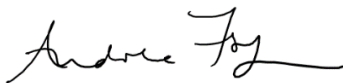
On behalf of the Wigan & Leigh College Governing Board, it is hereby confirmed that the Corporation conducts reviews in line with the local needs duty.

The College's annual Accountability Statement for 2024-25 sets out an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the Governing Board at its meeting on 11 June 2024, alongside the approval of the College's Strategic Plan for 2024-27.

The plan will be published on the College's website within three months of the start of the new academic year and can be accessed from [this link](#).

**ANDREA FERGUSON**

**CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**



**ANNA DAWE**

**PRINCIPAL**



## 2. Our Purpose

### Vision

As a centre of technical educational excellence, we are committed to raising learning aspirations and helping our community thrive socially and economically.

### Values

- We are learner centred - our learners and their lifelong learning experience, well-being and safety are always our first priority.
- We are ambitious and courageous – our creative and innovative approach focuses on the needs of our community and supports our learners to achieve excellence.
- We are partners in the success of our organisation - through open and honest communication we challenge each other and support individual and collective development. We achieve success together.
- We are collaborative - we work with all our partners to positively contribute to local, regional and national economic development.
- We are inclusive - we recognise and value equality, celebrating diversity in our community.
- We are sustainable - we are working towards a cleaner and greener environment as an anchor institution in our community.

Wigan & Leigh College is a general further education college situated in the Borough of Wigan. Wigan is a town and metropolitan borough in the northwest of Greater Manchester, bordering Merseyside, Lancashire and Cheshire. As a border college, Wigan and Leigh serves a wide and varied community aligned to a local and regional footprint. We have developed our skills response to address local, regional and national socio-economic challenges and ambitions. The College is dedicated to delivering economic and social value and a pipeline of skilled talent.

The impact of de-industrialisation has created socio-economic challenges for the Wigan Borough including:

- High employment in areas that provide low paid work
- Low levels of productivity, below the average in the UK and that in Greater Manchester
- Below national average educational attainment at level 4 and above
- Low levels of social mobility

Our role as a provider of skills and technical education is pivotal in responding to these challenges. With an increased policy focus on the importance of skills, we play an important part in shaping a local economy for the future, defined by increased productivity and inclusivity. As an anchor institution with Wigan Borough, the College is vital to economic growth and community wealth. Along with local partners, we are actively engaged in delivering a co-ordinated and collaborative skills solution for our borough.

The college operates from two towns:

**Wigan:** where there are 5 sites, Parsons Walk, Pagefield – the home of our Centre of Excellence in Engineering & Construction, CATS - the Centre for Advanced Technical Studies, The Skills Academy – our specialist centre of construction trades and Wigan Adult Learning Centre.

**Leigh:** where the college has two sites one being a dedicated adult learning centre with a recently re-purposed estate for Allied Health and Care.

Collaboration and partnership is central to everything we do. We are committed to building and extending relationships to ensure the success of our strategic vision. We operate within devolution, which provides a real opportunity to develop a co-ordinated approach to skills and training and work alongside our partner GM Colleges Group (GMCG) and Greater Manchester Combined Authority to define the devolved skills system and realise the benefits.

We have now entered a new phase of collaborative work taking place around the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) developed and delivered by Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce. A significant skills development resulting from the LSIP was the Local Skills Improvement Fund partnership project work we delivered together with GMCG, which allowed us to develop targeted short course provision for employers in green technologies. Further collaborative work with GMCG recently launched is the Further Education Innovation Programme (FEIP) funded through Innovate UK. Greater Manchester has been asked by UK Government to pilot the Innovation Accelerator programme alongside Glasgow city-region and the West Midlands. It is a unique opportunity for local and national government and innovation agencies to work with businesses to co-design, deploy, and evaluate new approaches to place-based innovation. The programme provides a total of £100m shared across the three regions, as well as support for developing each area's innovation ecosystem. The FEIP programme has now secured funding for a further year (25-26).

The Greater Manchester Institute of Technology (GMiOT) opened its doors in September 2023, with Wigan & Leigh College as lead FE partner. The partnership involves a number of education partners; Ada, the national college for digital skills, Bury College, Tameside College, Trafford College and the University of Salford as well as our employer partners; BBC, GCHQ, Laing O'Rourke and Siemens. The GMiOT is leading the way in the provision of high-quality, higher level technical education and training, with specialisms in construction, engineering, computing, creative media, business and health science sectors.

Within Wigan, we share a close partnership with Wigan Council, partner schools and sixth form colleges. We are invested in the Wigan Education Strategy and champion the role of technical education in offering opportunity and raising aspiration and achievement. The newly launched Progress with Unity plan has 2 central missions:

- Create fair opportunities for all children, families, residents and businesses
- Make all our towns and neighbourhoods flourish for those who live and work in them

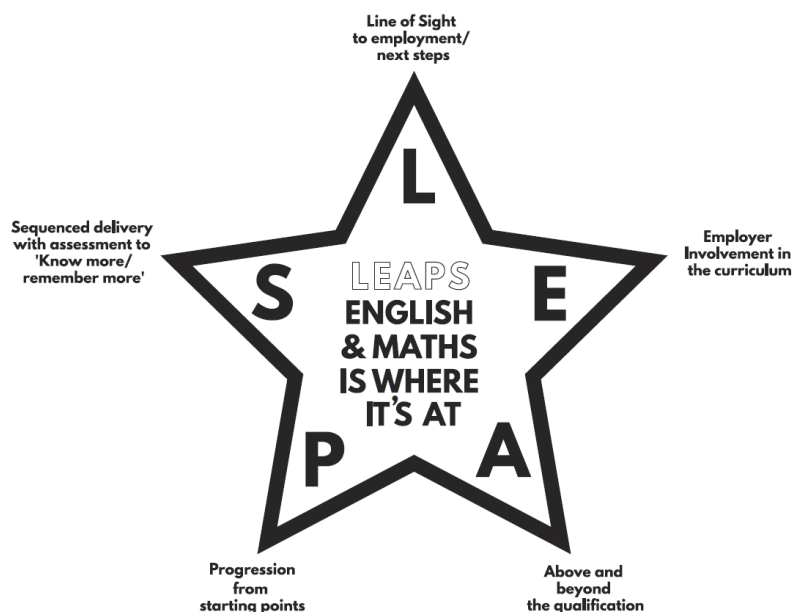
We actively engage in partnerships that focus on developing place-based skills solutions such as The Wigan Skills Partnership. This collaboration with Wigan Council, Edge Hill University, Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust aims to improve opportunities for Wigan residents, outlined in our civic agreement, by boosting education, health and economic prospects.

## Strategic Ambitions

- **Quality: providing an exceptional learning experience enabling all learners to fulfil their potential through:**
  - Inspirational and innovative teaching, learning and training, which removes barriers to learning and raises aspiration and attainment.
  - An inclusive curriculum committed to personal development, wellbeing and resilience, that provides excellence in knowledge and skills acquisition and work readiness.
  - Highly personalised, proactive careers guidance inspiring learners to take advantage of opportunities, make informed choices and secure positive and sustained outcomes for their future.
  
- **Place & Productivity: as an anchor institution in our community, increase local productivity, innovation and social inclusion by:**
  - Promoting understanding of the employer led integrated technical skills system within Greater Manchester to partner schools, school leavers, parent/carers and employers and raising participation rates across all types of technical education.
  
  - Designing an ambitious and specialised curriculum offer in response to Wigan's Economic Strategy, the Local Skills Improvement Plan and the GM Economic Vision focused on frontier skill sectors in manufacturing, health innovation, digital and creative and clean growth.
  
  - Increasing level 4 and above attainment rates within Wigan Borough through the Wigan & Leigh College University Centre, The GM Institute of Technology and collaborative partnerships with higher education institutes.
  
  - Creating a stronger, safer and healthier local community through partnership working with Wigan Council, partner schools, employers, health partners and the voluntary sector so engagement and attainment gaps are eliminated.
  
- **Investment for the Future: invest in the workforce, learning environment and the curriculum of the future by:**
  - Investing in the development and wellbeing of our workforce, creating a sustainable, highly skilled further education staff community that recognises and prioritises the professionalism of the FE workforce.

- Reshaping the College estate to meet the demands of future work and learning practices, responding to the climate crisis and preparing for the net-zero economy.
- Prioritising the digitalisation of learning and College business operations to promote efficiency and enhance the experience for our students and workforce.
- Create learning environments that inspire and equip students for the seamless transition into the world of work and future skills needs.

## Curriculum Intent



**Line of sight to employment** directly or via the next stages in learning. Our curriculum planning is data informed to address local and regional need while never restricting ambition and aspiration.

**Employers** play an important part in the curriculum design and enhancement of programmes, ensuring that learners develop the skills, attitudes and behaviours required in the workplace.

**Above and beyond** the qualification we take a holistic approach to delivering a fit for purpose provision promoting **English and maths**, enrichment activity, skills, knowledge and behaviours.

**Progression** is a key focus of qualification design and skills development content. The starting point of learners informs the individualised nature of planning and delivery.

**Sequencing** of planning and provision is logical, holistic and provides opportunity for regular and varied assessment ensuring learners know more and remember more.

## Learner Volumes

Our curriculum offer comprises 16-19 study programmes including supported internships, AEB and advanced learner loan provision, apprenticeship provision, including higher and degree apprenticeships and higher education. The college has seen growth in 16-18 study programmes and apprenticeship participation consistently over 8 years. 26% of 16-19 enrolments are from outside Wigan Borough. Levels of activity for 24-25 were:

	TOTAL	%
<b>Young People</b>	<b>4,159</b>	
Level 1 and below	1,001	24%
Level 2	1,266	30%
Level 3	1,892	46%
	TOTAL	%
<b>Adults</b>	<b>3,229</b>	
Level 1 and below	1,339	41%
Level 2	1,649	51%
Level 3	241	8%
	TOTAL	%
<b>HE Adults (CBL)</b>	<b>307</b>	
Level 4	234	76%
Level 5	43	14%
Level 6	30	10%

	16-18	19-23	24+	TOTAL	%
<b>Apprentices</b>	1,129	537	325	1,991	
Level 2	361	81	38	480	24%
Level 3	675	337	213	1,225	62%
Level 4	30	53	46	129	6%
Level 5	63	35	20	118	6%
Level 6	-	31	8	39	2%

	TOTAL
<b>High Needs</b>	<b>187</b>

## Ofsted Judgements

Judgement Type	Grade
Overall Effectiveness	2
Quality of Education	2
Behaviours & Attitudes	2
Personal Development	2
Leadership & Management	2
Education Programmes for Young People	2
Adult Learning Programmes	2
Apprenticeships	2
Provision for Learners with High Need	2
Meeting Skills Need	STRONG

### 3. Context & Place

#### Wigan Borough - The local community we serve

Wigan & Leigh College is situated in Wigan, a metropolitan borough of Greater Manchester, in North West England. With a population of approximately 330,000 residents, including 90,000 children and young people, Wigan is the second-largest and second-most populous borough in Greater Manchester and is the ninth-largest metropolitan borough (out of 36) in England, covering an area of 77 square miles (200 km<sup>2</sup>).

Wigan’s geographical location is a key strength, situated in Greater Manchester and bordering Merseyside, Lancashire and Cheshire, the borough enjoys excellent transport links in both road and rail. The borough includes the towns of Atherton, Ashton-in-Makerfield, Golborne, Hindley, Ince-in-Makerfield, Leigh and Tyldesley and the villages and suburbs of Abram, Aspull, Astley, Bryn, Hindley Green, Lowton, Mosley Common, Orrell, Pemberton, Shevington, Standish, Winstanley and Worsley Mesnes.



Wigan borough enjoys a proud industrial past and well known for its historical cotton and coal industries. Today, Wigan is home to over 9.4k businesses from a range of industry sectors. Presently, Wigan’s most dominant sectors in terms of employment are Construction, Manufacturing & Engineering, Public Administration, Health and Education.

Wigan Council has well-articulated ambitions to develop frontier sectors, identified in the GM Strategy, in the borough in order to attract the opportunity for higher skilled, higher paid employment. In addition, they have detailed intentions for the development of green skills for the construction sector in support of net zero social housing targets and are dedicated to supporting and igniting entrepreneurship that generates sustainable employment opportunities. There is a tangible commitment within Wigan Borough to tackling health inequalities through the development of a Health Strategy, which is clearly linked to the Council’s plan for sustainable economic growth detailed in their Economic Strategy.

## POPULATION

- 322,000 people live in Wigan, of which 202,500 are of working age (16-64). Wigan is the second most populous authority in Greater Manchester
- The population of Wigan grew by 5.2% (15,900) between 2005 and 2015 compared to 8.3% nationally
- Population growth across Greater Manchester was as follows:
  - Bolton — 6.3% (16,600)
  - Bury—3.8% (6,900)
  - Manchester—16.3% (74,600)
  - Oldham—5.2% (11,500)
  - Rochdale—3.4% (7,000)
  - Salford—11.9% (26,100)
  - Stockport—2.7% (7,500)
  - Tameside—3.8% (8,200)
  - Trafford—8.3% (17,900)

## ECONOMY

- Wigan's economy generates £4.2 bn of Gross Value Added (GVA) on an annual basis (a common measure of economic output), accounting for 2.8% of GVA output in the North West
- There are 158,300 people working in the Wigan Borough in 8,250 businesses. These businesses can be broken down by number of employees as follows:
  - Micro, 0-9 employees: 7,275 (88.2%)
  - Small, 10-49 employees: 825 (10%)
  - Medium, 50-249 employees: 115 (1.4%)
  - Large, 250+ employees: 35 (0.4%)
- 2,900 additional jobs are forecast to be created in Wigan between 2014-2024
- GVA is forecast to rise by an average of 2.3% per year between 2014 and 2024 in Wigan, increasing to more than £5.3bn per annum by the end of this period

## KEY SECTORS

- Business, Financial and Professional Services employ 19,800 people and generates £899m of GVA each year
- The Health and Social Care Sector employs 14,900 people and generates annual GVA of £357m each year
- Creative Digital employs 2,500 people and generates GVA of 112m each year
- The Education Sector employs 9,400 people generating £311m in GVA each year
- Manufacturing employs 14,200 people in Wigan, generating £876m of GVA every year.
- Retail employs 12,800 people in Wigan, generating £312m in GVA each year
- The Construction sector employs 10,800 people and generates £392m in GVA each year

## HEALTH

- The life expectancy of residents in Wigan at birth stands at 77.7 for males and 81.3 for females. This is slightly lower than the North West (M:78.0; F:81.8) and the England average (M:79.4; F:83.1)
- In February 2016, 15,410 people claimed Employment and Support Allowance in Wigan.
- In the 12 months to March 2016, over a fifth (22%) of people aged 16-64 in Wigan were disabled, higher than the Greater Manchester and North West average of 21.8%
- Less than half (49.7%) of all disabled individuals in Wigan were in employment, higher than the Greater Manchester and North West averages of 44.6% and 45.3% respectively
- 20,330 people in Wigan claimed Disability Living Allowance in February 2016

## SKILLS & EDUCATION

- Across Wigan 56,600 people aged 16-64 are educated to level 4/degree level or higher. This is 28.4% of the working age population. At a UK level the figure is 37.1%.
- 16,800 people aged 16-64 across Wigan have no qualifications. This is 8.4% of the working age population. At a UK level the figure is 8.6%.
- 102,000 people aged 16-64 have an NVQ level 3 (2+ A Levels) qualification only. This is 51.1% of the working age population, compared to the UK level of 57.4%.
- 141,000 people aged 16-64 have an NVQ Level 2 (5+ GCSEs at grades A\*-C) qualification only. This is 70.8% of the working age population, compared to 73.6% in the UK.
- The percentage of pupils in Wigan achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A\*-C (including English and Maths) in 2015 was 68.8%, compared to 66% in the North West and 64.9% in England.

## BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- In 2014 there were 1,195 new businesses created in Wigan, a decrease of 6% from 2013, but an increase of 36% from 2009.
- There were around 437 businesses per 10,000 resident working age population in Wigan in 2014, lower than the Great Britain average (623).
- There were 59 business births per 10,000 resident working age population in Wigan in 2014, below the Great Britain average of 86.
- In the same year, there were 810 business deaths which was a 23% decrease compared to 2009 (1,050).

## LABOUR MARKET

- Unemployment rate in Wigan is 4.9%, below the North west average of 5.3%
- Median residence based earnings in 2015 were £503 per week. Higher than North West average of £492. Residents who commute out of the borough earn, on average, £44 per week more than those working in the borough
- 5,080 Wigan residents (2.5% of the working age population) were claiming Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) or unemployment-based Universal Credit in July 2016. 1,205 (23%) of these claimants were aged 16-24
- 59,800 residents leave the borough every day to access jobs with a net outward commute of 32,186. The top 3 commuting destinations were as follows:
  - Bolton—9,110
  - Warrington—6,539
  - Salford —5,845

## HOUSING

- The average price of a property in Wigan was £120,998, below the UK average of £213,927 (June 2016)
- In 2015, the average house price in Wigan was 5.5 times the average annual salary.
- Home ownership rates in Wigan was 68% compared with the Greater Manchester average of 60%
- 12% of Wigan residents privately rent below the GM average of 16%. The private rented market in Wigan has increased 59% in the last 10 years below the average GM growth of 77%.
- 46% of housing stock in Wigan is semi-detached with 29% made up of terraced properties

## CHALLENGES

- 29% of neighbourhoods in Wigan are in the top 20% most deprived in England. Deprived areas are concentrated within Borough's urban core
- Health deprivation and employment deprivation are heavily concentrated in Wigan
- Mental Health conditions make up 33% of all out-of-work benefit claims
- Youth unemployment makes up 24% of total unemployment higher than the GM average of 23%
- The proportions of residents qualified to NVQ level 3 and 4 are below the Greater Manchester average.
- Transport infrastructure within the Borough requires development to enhance connectivity to major arterial routes in order to enable growth

\* Data as per Wigan Council data 2025

## Greater Manchester Skills

Greater Manchester is home to around 124,000 businesses and more than 2.8m residents and encompasses ten districts: Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, Wigan



The ten local authorities have worked closely together for many years however, with the formation of the Combined Authority, election of a Mayor, and six devolution deals signed, the city-region now has a unique set of functions, powers and levers across multiple policy areas including devolved adult skills functions and associated funding.

Greater Manchester has established a vision for an integrated labour market system that brings together education, skills, work and health, recognising that these factors are inextricably linked to strong communities, resilient citizens, and a thriving economy. The ambition of Greater Manchester is to create an integrated employment and skills eco-system which has the individual and employer at its heart, and that better responds to the needs of residents and businesses and contributes to the growth and productivity of the Greater Manchester economy; and to see an employment and skills system in Greater Manchester where:

- young people will leave the education system with the knowledge, skills, and attributes they need to succeed
- working-age adults who are out of work or who have low levels of skills will have access to the support they need to enter and sustain employment
- all adults have the chance to up-skill and progress in their careers

## Greater Manchester - Skills Strengths and Needs

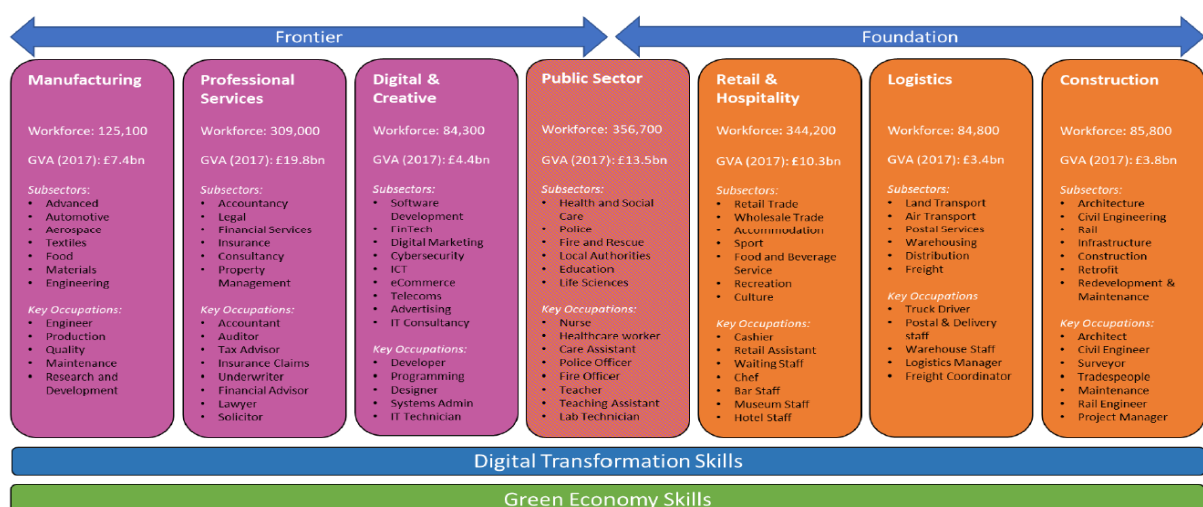
- Addressing functional numeracy, literacy, and digital skills, alongside enhancing essential skills and employability, remains a key challenge. Greater Manchester's population is lower skilled than the national average, especially in respect of the higher proportion of people with no/low qualifications and the lower proportion of residents with level 4+ qualifications.

- The 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) data shows, over a fifth of the neighbourhoods in Greater Manchester fall into the bottom 10% of most deprived neighbourhoods nationally in respect of employment and income.
- In terms of skills deprivation, 13% of Greater Manchester neighbourhoods fall into the bottom 10%, although this masks significant variation between districts (in Oldham, for example, 30% of neighbourhoods are amongst the most deprived on skills).
- GM has some labour market assets of national and international significance, which are driving demand for a pipeline of higher level technical skills. However, 40% of GM employment is in the foundation and service sectors, where roles are often low paid and opportunities for productivity gains and in-work progression are limited.
- These matters and inequalities more generally, were brought into sharper focus by the Covid-19 pandemic, with Greater Manchester experiencing some of the longest periods of the most severe restrictions in the country.

### GM's Priority Sectors

The GM Local Industrial Strategy focuses on priority sectors; many of which also reflect national priorities:

- Four **'frontier sectors'** – those industries seen as fundamental to our future economic well-being: Health Innovation, Advanced Materials and Manufacturing, Digital, Creative & Media, and 'Clean Growth'.
- The **foundational economy** – those sectors with significant employment volumes but not necessarily productivity-transformative potential: Retail, Social Care, and Hospitality & Tourism.
- A number of **key in-demand occupations** within each sector have been identified and are summarised below.



### Integrated Technical Education - City Region

The Trailblazer Devolution Deal for Greater Manchester is now in place and a key element is the Mayor's stated ambition for an Integrated Technical Education City Region. This new approach backed by devolved powers and funding has the GM LSIP at its heart and will ensure that future provision matches demand better and has the flexibility to respond quicker to employers' needs. Initiatives to promote technical education include a

commitment to launch the GMBacc at key stage 4, improve employer engagement and participation in the shaping of curriculum and support for T levels and to promote apprenticeship pathways.

### **Greater Manchester Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)**

Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce is the designated Employer Representative Body (ERB) for developing and delivering the LSIP for Greater Manchester (GM LSIP), which was developed to identify and respond to local labour market needs that can best meet the relevant needs of businesses in the different local authorities within Greater Manchester. Engagement with the LSIP process has been primarily through a business survey, employer interviews, analysis of open data from the UK's ONS and labour market intelligence sourced from Adzuna.

Approval of the LSIP was granted in August 2023 and has since been implemented within the skills system. An update to the LSIP was published in January 2024. The LSIP identified 5 strategic priorities as well as geographic priorities for each of the 10 GM districts. Sector specific priorities were also identified, which reflected current skills gaps and future demands.

## 1. Strategic priorities

Evidence gained through the LSIP development process identified 5 cross cutting priorities related to skills shortages and barriers to recruitment. Some of which were recognised as longstanding. These Strategic Priorities form a framework around which sector-specific skills and training can be built:

1. Basic IT/Digital Skills
2. Essential literacy, numeracy and digital skills
3. Leadership and Management
4. Net Zero/Sustainability
5. Basic, soft skills specific to the workplace

### Recommendations for change

1. Build a Strategic Priority Framework that supports occupation/sector specific training
2. Greater focus on technical and vocational skills and training for young people
3. Workforce development and upskilling must be significantly improved/enhanced
4. Develop and deliver more, shorter courses to support in-work training and employee development
5. Use economies of scale - build on existing collaboration
6. Ensure that the local elements of the LSIP remain an integral part of the work
7. Employers need to be more aware of existing provision and access points into it
8. Better tracking and forecasting mechanisms built on research and analysis
9. Expand involvement and engagement between employers and education
10. Ensure there is sufficient funding to cover requirements for new training resources
11. Improved definition and understanding of what the skills requirements are around retrofit and the expected growth in net zero
12. Significant uplift in the way that careers advice and guidance is given

## 2. Geographic and sectoral priorities

### Summary of findings for Wigan

Employment in Wigan (BRES 2021): 108,950

Sectors with the largest employment

- Health & Social Care: 17,000
- Construction: 11,000
- Retail: 11,000
- Manufacturing: 10,000
- Business administration and support services: 10,000

Largest sector in employment which marked a decline in jobs (BRES 2021)

- Manufacturing jobs decreased by 17%
- Wholesale jobs declined by 10%
- Retail jobs declined by 15%

Largest sector in employment which marked an increase in jobs (BRES 2021)

- Health jobs increased by 13%

- Business administration and Support services jobs increased 11%
- Construction jobs increased by 57%

Largest sector in employment which marked no change in jobs (BRES 2021)

- Education jobs reported no change for the year 2021.

Top 3 sectors with high Gross Value Added (GVA) according to 2020 data

- Manufacturing
- Health and Social care
- Construction

LA priorities

- Logistics
- Manufacturing
- Retail
- Health and Social care
- Construction

Future investment / projects<sup>1</sup>

Wigan is part of Wigan & Bolton Growth Corridor (Nothfold). The key priorities for this growth cluster and the implication for employment / skills development are laid out in the table below.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>Project Priorities</b>
Northfold- Wigan and Bolton Growth Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Northfold is one of six Growth Locations in Greater Manchester's, and as such, there are plans to develop the area further to include more industrial units and housing developments. Northfold covers Wigan and Bolton and is founded on Wigan's existing strengths in food manufacturing.</li> <li>• Status: The area is undergoing further development.</li> <li>• Commercial space: The target is to develop 1million sqm of employment space between 2022 and 2039. Most of this space will be for manufacturing (especially</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential development</li> <li>• Industrial units</li> <li>• Hospitality and retail</li> <li>• Transport infrastructure</li> </ul>

	<p>food manufacturing), logistics and distribution businesses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential space: 13,000 homes would be delivered in the period 2022-2039.</li> <li>• Transport infrastructure: The project includes new roads and highways to connect the M6 and the M61, increased bus provision, increased rail lines use and potential new stations along the Wigan-Manchester railway line.</li> </ul>	
Galleries Shopping Centre Transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wigan Council partnered with Cityheart Limited to redevelop Galleries shopping centre in the Wigan town centre.</li> <li>• Status: Construction work started in October 2024.</li> <li>• Commercial space: The redevelopment will include a six-screen cinema, ten-lane bowling alley, indoor mini golf, music and e-sports venues, food and drink venues, and a new market hall.</li> <li>• Accommodation: It will include a new 144- bedroom hotel.</li> <li>• Residential space: 464 homes will be built.</li> <li>• Economic impact: Once finished, the scheme will create 660 jobs and generate £26.5m per year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential development</li> <li>• Hospitality and retail</li> <li>• Leisure</li> <li>• Hotel</li> </ul>
Mosley Common Housing Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peel L&amp;P has plans to build a housing development in Mosley Common</li> <li>• Status: Planning applications were approved by Wigan Council in January 2024.</li> <li>• Residential space: It will include 1,050-1,100 homes, which will be a mix of houses and apartments.</li> <li>• Transport infrastructure: Developers will build a bus stop, roads, bicycle paths and pedestrian paths.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential development</li> <li>• Retail</li> <li>• Transport infrastructure</li> <li>• Health facilities</li> <li>• Primary school</li> <li>• Green infrastructure</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial space: There will be space for retail businesses.</li> <li>• Community facilities: There will be new health facilities, a community hub and the St John's Mosley Common Primary School will be expanded.</li> <li>• Green space: The development includes the creation of a green infrastructure corridor.</li> </ul>	
Worsley Mesnes Housing Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keepmoat and Jigsaw Homes Group are building a residential development at Worsley Mesnes.</li> <li>• Status: First 33 homes were delivered in 2023, but the whole development is expected to be completed in 2026.</li> <li>• Residential space: The development consists of 169 homes.</li> <li>• Commercial space: The project will include new shops.</li> <li>• Green space: Green space will be created.</li> <li>• Sustainability: Homes will have insulation and energy-efficient designs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential development</li> <li>• Retail</li> <li>• Green infrastructure</li> <li>• Sustainability</li> </ul>
Ince-in-Makerfield Residential Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hive Homes will build a housing development in the Ince-in-Makerfield Area.</li> <li>• Status: The development was approved by the Council in September 2024.</li> <li>• Residential space: They will build a mix of 101 detached, semi-detached and terraced houses.</li> <li>• Transport infrastructure: The development will include new roads.</li> <li>• Sustainability: The development will feature sustainable drainage systems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential development</li> <li>• Transport infrastructure</li> <li>• Green infrastructure</li> <li>• Sustainability</li> </ul>

Sector	Job Titles
FBPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Software Developer</li> <li>• Manager</li> <li>• Administrator</li> <li>• Recruitment Consultant</li> <li>• Project managers</li> <li>• Credit manager</li> <li>• Accountant</li> <li>• HR</li> <li>• Business development Manager</li> </ul>
Health and Social care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social care worker</li> <li>• General nurse</li> <li>• Healthcare assistant</li> <li>• Mental health nurse</li> <li>• Personal Trainer</li> </ul>
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching assistants</li> <li>• Primary School teacher</li> <li>• SEN Assistant</li> <li>• English teacher secondary School</li> <li>• Cover Supervisor</li> <li>• Mathematics teacher</li> </ul>
Transport and storage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warehouse worker</li> <li>• Cleaner</li> <li>• Driver</li> </ul>
Manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Production Operative</li> <li>• Engineer</li> <li>• Machine Operator</li> <li>• Technician</li> <li>• Product designer</li> <li>• Electrical maintenance engineer</li> <li>• Field service manager</li> <li>• Purchasing Manager</li> </ul>
Hospitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer assistant</li> <li>• sales executive</li> <li>• Chef</li> <li>• Shift managers</li> </ul>
Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quantity surveyors</li> <li>• Labourers</li> <li>• Site managers</li> </ul>

### Jobs that are difficult to recruit

Businesses were asked “What were the job title(s) that you faced difficulties recruiting for?” The table below shows the most cited job titles for the largest sectors in Wigan.

Sector	Job Titles
Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Construction Labourer</li><li>• Project Manager</li><li>• Engineer</li></ul>
FBPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Manager</li><li>• Administrator</li><li>• Accountant</li></ul>
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Care Worker</li><li>• Support Worker</li></ul>
Hospitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Manager</li><li>• Chef</li></ul>
Manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Production Operative</li><li>• Welder</li><li>• Engineer</li></ul>

### Key causes of recruitment difficulties

Businesses were asked “What are the main reasons why you are facing recruitment difficulties?” The top reasons were:

- Low number of applicants with the required skills
  - Not enough people interested in doing this type of job
  - Lack of qualifications the company needs
- 
- *71% of businesses in Wigan reported recruitment difficulties making it the local authority area with the third highest level of recruitment problems in Greater Manchester. Difficulties revolved around ‘skilled and technical’ and ‘professional/managerial roles’, with 42.4% and 30.4% of businesses saying such roles were hard to fill. This was followed by ‘clerical’ (22.8%) and ‘unskilled and semi-skilled’ (20.7%). Notably, recruitment difficulties were elevated for all types of roles.*
  - *Skills shortages amongst candidates in Wigan were similar to that of Greater Manchester. “Specialist skills/knowledge to perform the role” was the most difficult technical skill to find in candidates, with 43% of respondents reporting this.*
  - *In second and third came “reading and understanding operating instructions” (27.8%) and “knowledge of products/services offered by their organisation” (26.6%).*
  - *Regarding soft skills, “ability to manage own time and prioritise own tasks” (45.6%, 36), “managing own feelings or the feelings of others” (26.6%) and “team working” (25.3%) were the hardest to get from candidates.*

- *Employers in Wigan required “reading and understanding operating instructions” and “team working” in higher proportions than the overall Greater Manchester average.*
- *The training area of greatest interest was “basic functional skills for business”, with 27.7% of businesses indicating they would provide this type of training to their staff. This was followed by “soft skills” (25.2%), “customer service” (23.9%) and “digital marketing” (20.6%). “Business leadership and management” came fifth but it was less popular in Wigan than in the other local authorities.*

## **Recommendations**

1. The manufacturing sector is one of the priority areas in Wigan with food and drinks manufacturing being a particular strength. Research conducted for the development of the LSIP identified numerous labour and skills shortages in the manufacturing and engineering sector. For example, survey respondents identified that trained welders and engineering fitters were extremely difficult to recruit across multiple LAs in GM. Current training provision in the borough includes courses for metal fabricators, engineering technicians, fitters etc. Expanding this offer could address the shortages reported by employers in not only Wigan but also employers in other parts of GM.
2. Linked to the above is an increasing demand for reskilling from one role to another especially around the move away from ‘heavy’ industry, engineering and other roles in ‘decline’. The availability of workers with skills in operating advanced machinery and using hand/power tools means they could work in the construction, logistics and manufacturing sectors. Job roles such as steel fabrication and welding are in demand and the combination of existing soft skills, experience and new skills taught through new courses will mean new roles are accessible.
3. The manufacturing sector is expected to undergo largescale digitalisation and the adoption of automotive technologies including robotics is set to increase further. Future training in manufacturing will need to include computing, IoT sensors and manufacturing data analytics.
4. With construction activity needing to ramp up for future investment projects, demand for all construction trades is likely to go up. This includes the skills needed for house building but also for commercial and office space development - for e.g., structural and steel erecting.
5. The LSIP survey showed that bricklayers amongst other traditional trade roles in construction were both in demand and difficult to recruit. There are vocational qualifications and apprenticeships in this area and considering the number of house building projects, provision must be maintained and even expanded.
6. The Construction Pipeline Analysis shows that there is demand for workers in woodwork trades, plasterers etc. Although there is provision in the borough for carpentry and joinery, there is a potential gap for advanced content tailored to building envelop and carbon neutrality. This could also apply to roles in painting and decorating.
7. Overall, there appears to be ample provision available for “construction crafts/construction studies” which will help towards the massive 12% increase in employment in the last 5 years. With construction being one of the three biggest contributors to GVA and a priority for this local authority, this should remain constant. These courses should, increasingly, implement technology influencing factors such as

the growth of solar energy and energy regulation, computer literacy with regards to architecture/engineering and green skills.

8. There are currently many courses in Health & Social Care, an area that is likely to see a lot of demand given the estimated increase in population of older age groups. Current provision covers level 1 to degree level. However, updating the curriculum to cater to the growth of technology in hospitals and health facilities should be considered.
9. Within Health & Social Care, there will need to be training in technology-based skills to build fluidity between different care providers. Technology is underutilized in the care professions and many still operate on paper. Implementing IT into the care sector will mean smoother communication and an increase in transferable skills such as working with smart technology.
10. Management roles are in demand for many sectors including construction and manufacturing which are both priority sectors and 2/3 of the biggest contributors to GVA. Due to the broad nature of the role of management, courses should be implemented to teach more specific duties and skills tailored for the respective industry. This could be warehouse management and site management which will teach existing management soft skills along with specific industry management skills. These should also contain awareness of green skills such as waste management and energy consciousness to contribute to meeting net zero targets.

## 4. Stakeholder engagement and collaboration

Wigan & Leigh College is committed to the needs of all stakeholders and understands the importance of listening and responding to their views and ambitions for the College and its students. This commitment is clearly articulated in our vision, mission and strategic ambitions, which were developed through consultation with internal and external stakeholders. They detail a commitment to partnership, collaborative working and engagement in pursuit of informed curriculum planning aligned to local skills needs.

The college has developed a rigorous, impactful and systemic approach to stakeholder engagement over many years. Leaders set high expectations of all staff in relation to engagement, collaboration and partnership in order to assure the relevance, currency and quality of our offer with a clear focus on the avoidance of duplication. The College's approach to stakeholder engagement seeks to:

- Identify the college's wide range of stakeholders
- Understand our stakeholders' needs and their potential to influence the College
- Provide a framework for managing our relationships with stakeholders that delivers collaboration, partnership and external influence on offer
- Deliver mechanisms for feedback on the quality and impact of our service

We have shaped our methodology to respond to the guiding principles laid out in two key documents: The Governors' Council Code of Good Governance for English Colleges (Section 5: Responsiveness) and the Stakeholder engagement maturity matrix, recently published by the Good Governance Institute.

The College's Stakeholder Engagement Report, which is approved by governors annually, details our approach to stakeholder engagement and uses interest/influence mapping and stakeholder maturity matrix to direct our response and map and assess our current key competencies. The report presents the College's stakeholders, which are organised into 2 groups: Internal/External and separately Skills Stakeholders (Civic, Community, Employer, Education) as detailed in the enhanced inspection guidance from Ofsted. Stakeholders are organised into priority groups and our strategic response to each is detailed including our methods for relationship management and development, strategic management, engagement systems, processes and procedures and feedback and improvement mechanisms.

Wigan & Leigh College addresses local, regional and national skills needs via a range of stakeholder engagement and shared planning activities including:

- Delivery of the Wigan Employment & Skills Strategy and Wigan Education Strategy
- Active membership of the Wigan Enterprise Board
- Active membership of the Greater Manchester Colleges Group, chaired by Wigan & Leigh College's Principal
- Lead FE partner in the GM Institute of Technology
- Active engagement in collaboration and strong partnership working with local and regional stakeholders

### Strategic Partners and Key Stakeholders

<b>Civic</b>	Key stakeholders include: Wigan Borough Council, Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, Local MPS and Elected representatives, DWP and JCP, the ESFA and DfE.
<b>Community</b>	Key stakeholders including stakeholder groups include: Community Wealth Building partnership; Community Health Building partnership; Leigh sports village; Wigan Youth Zone; Haigh Hall; Groundwork; Platt Bridge Community Zone; Local Primary and High Schools; Wigan Family Welfare; Wigan Borough Council community, culture and arts teams.
<b>Education</b>	Key stakeholders and providers include: College Governors; Greater Manchester Colleges group; partner high schools including primary and nursery schools; local 6 <sup>th</sup> form Colleges (Wigan College's Partnership) and Training providers; The Careers and Enterprise Company & GM Careers Hub; Universities including key partners: Edge Hill University (Education Skills Partnership), Salford University (GM IoT); Wigan Borough Councils education teams.
<b>Employers</b>	We have extensive employer relationships throughout the North West which includes 1000+ companies across key sectors including large corporates such as Sellafield Limited, Electricity North West Limited, KraftHeinz and a host of local authorities and NHS Trusts, including Wigan Borough Council and Wrightington Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust as well as supporting a high numbers of small, medium and micro sized businesses, representing 97% of our employers overall.

## 5.1 24/25 Action Plan Update

Aim/Objective	Key Action /Impact 2024-25	Update & Performance
<p><b>AA1:</b> Deliver a responsive 16-18 study programme curriculum that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expands T level delivery</li> <li>• Responds to curriculum reform</li> <li>• Prioritises soft-skills and employability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce new T level programmes for Sept'24 in Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, Animal Management and Craft and Design. T level numbers will increase from 218 to a targeted 322.</li> <li>• Enrol to T levels with new entry qualification requirements around M/E enabling key stage 4 students wider access to level 3 T level study.</li> <li>• T Level roll out continuing where the offer is right and meets student need.</li> <li>• English and maths one to one tuition for T Level learners; support to be delivered to 20 learners.</li> <li>• Increased focus on Industry Placements to develop scale and quality.</li> <li>• CSCS card attached to Level 2 Construction qualifications.</li> <li>• Licence to practice attached to Level 2 Early Years qualifications.</li> <li>• AAQ specifications and A Level pathways reviewed and AAQ pathways introduced in 2025.</li> <li>• Technical education in schools Engineering Level 2 pilot.</li> <li>• Upscale maths teaching capacity for increase in entitlement in September'25. Initially filling vacancies and then investing in additional posts. 8 additional maths teachers to be recruited.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New T level programmes in Electrotechnical, Business Support, Engineering Manufacture, Textiles and Fashion &amp; Animal Management successfully recruited to. T level numbers have increased from 218 to 298.</li> <li>• 21 students enrolled to T levels with lower GCSE results (M/E GCSE grade 4 attainment not already met). 13 successfully secured GCSE grade 4 at resit stage.</li> <li>• 100% of required placements for T learners secured. 100% successfully completed.</li> <li>• 120 students are expected to complete CSCS card accreditation this year.</li> <li>• 56 16-19 students and 4 19+ will complete level 2 Early Years with license to practice this year</li> <li>• AAQ pathways not introduced for 2025 and not intended to introduce for 2026 as a result of pause and review outcome.</li> <li>• GCSE Maths delivery hrs meet entitlement for Sept'25. Additional maths teachers still needed to respond to growth in student numbers.</li> </ul>

<p><b>AA2:</b> Deliver learning opportunities for young people that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond to an increased 16-18 demographic</li> <li>• Reduces NEET</li> <li>• Provides targeted curriculum solutions for the most vulnerable in our community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further increase 16-18 apprenticeship participation rates for the fourth year running. Increase starts from 421 in 23/24 to 496 in 24/25 with a specific focus on engineering and construction sectors.</li> <li>• Expand bespoke care leavers programme working in partnership with Wigan Council.</li> <li>• Expand provision in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increase enrolment in Foundation Studies from 283 to 352</li> <li>○ Expand ESOL study programme from 64 enrolments to 78.</li> <li>○ Expand Pre-Apprenticeship and pre-employment programmes from 7 cohorts to 8.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Secure additional premises for expansion in the delivery of study programme construction trades to meet increased demand for brickwork, plastering, electrical installation, painting and decorating including apprenticeship provision (capacity 250 students).</li> <li>• Following on from pilot expand Elected Home Educated maths and English programme for yrs10-11 increasing enrolments from 35 to 50.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16-18 starts to date are 439 compared to 380 at the same point last year (+59)</li> <li>• 16-18 starts in construction and engineering sectors are 341 compared to 284 at the same point last year</li> <li>• Study programme enrolments in construction and engineering have grown from 946 last year to 1,170 this year.</li> <li>• Foundation studies enrolment has expanded by +23, with 352 enrolments and ESOL study programmes have expanded by 17, with 114 enrolments. Pre-apprenticeship enrolments are 33 and are in line with previous years whilst curriculum is reviewed.</li> <li>• 16-18 enrolments have grown by 487. The areas with the most significant growth are: Construction +85, Engineering (+66), Art &amp; Design (+55), Early Years (+47).</li> <li>• Additional premises secured allowing for growth at 16-18 in key sectors. The Skills Academy opened in Sept'24 and currently there are 194 students studying in the facility in construction trades and electrical installation.</li> <li>• Elected Home Educated programme has been very successful with high attendance and achievement from 23-24. 50 students have been enrolled in 24-25, attendance is 78.5% and predicted grade 4 achievement is 43% for English and 30% maths with 100% overall pass rate.</li> </ul>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NEET rates in the borough are below national and GM averages on each 3 month period.</li> <li>• EHCP numbers have increased from 158 to 177. Request for further increases in place change process have been submitted.</li> </ul>
<p><b>AA3:</b> Utilising all funding streams, develop and deliver training solutions to respond to workforce/skills shortages in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Engineering</li> <li>• Green technologies</li> <li>• Education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch Leigh Adult Learning Health Care Academy in collaboration with partners (Wrightington Wigan &amp; Leigh Hospital Trust, Wigan Council, Edge Hill University). Complementing Centre of Excellence based in Wigan with a specific focus on primary, community, domiciliary and mental health care.</li> <li>• Deliver DfE RIPP (Regional Improvement Plan Pilot) Children’s Sufficiency Programme in collaboration with Wigan Council to develop workforce training for residential childcare. Wigan and Leigh College will be the lead provider in GM and will develop network of provision.</li> <li>• Expand apprenticeship provision in health and care with a specific focus on Primary Care – Pharmacy and Optometry and Senior HealthCare Support workers in Midwifery, Theatre, Adult Nursing, Radiology.</li> <li>• Working collaboratively with GM Combined Authority and National Skills Academy in Food &amp; Drink Manufacturing develop GM roll out model for college developed bespoke multi-skills engineering programme targeted at food and drink manufacturers.</li> <li>• Launch new Manufacturing Academy as part of the Centre of Excellence in Engineering, expanding higher</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LALC Health Care Academy launched with expansion of delivery in the following programmes: L2&amp;3 Counselling, HNC/D Counselling &amp; Applied Psychology, Access to Health, Level 2 Mental Health &amp; Wellbeing, Level3 Adults Health &amp; Social Care and L3 Children’s Residential Care Worker</li> <li>• DFE RIPP project programmes have been delivered with 20 enrolments and 10 students have secured employment to date. The project has been expanded through partnership working throughout NW working with 3 partner colleges. Another cohort is planned over the summer term.</li> <li>• The following standards have been developed: Florist, Power Industry Overhead Linesperson, Power Industry Substation Fitter, Power Industry Distribution Cable Jointer &amp; Pastry Chef and this has resulted in 29 starts.</li> </ul>

	<p>level technical programmes in engineering and further extending specialisation in power including new technologies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver new short provision developed as part of Local Skills Improvement Fund. This will focus on green technologies in engineering and construction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bespoke food and drink programmes have expanded with 94 enrolments. Further accredited provision has been delivered for food and drink manufacturing companies and this is expanding. Facility dedicated to this area of work is opening September'25.</li> <li>• Short courses developed under LSIF are in: L3 Award in Component Removal &amp; Replacement in Electric &amp; Hybrid Vehicles &amp; L5 Lean Manufacturing Enrolments to date are: 39</li> </ul>
<p><b>AA4:</b> In partnership with Wigan Council increase AEB engagement and progression and further develop a fully integrated community AEB offer that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Reduces the % of Wigan residents that have no qualification</li> <li>(ii) Increases level 3 qualification attainment levels</li> <li>(iii) Target employability and 'back to work'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase 16-18 participation rates from 3,161 in 23/24 to 3,240 in 24/25. Over delivery of core GM AEB budget will be repeated with funding activity staying within tolerance of allocation. Additional activity will be Level 3 and GM flexibility programmes.</li> <li>• Increase use of devolved flexibilities and L3 flexibilities to fund bespoke employer courses and priority area provision e.g. engineering (multi-skills), residential childcare, early years, teaching assistants and welding.</li> <li>• Extend Care Leavers Skills Passport programme and expand engagement of employer organisations in-borough</li> <li>• Manage growth in ESOL provision with recruitment and programme start dates each month and through the GM ESOL Advisory Pathways officer post maximise retention and progression. Implement a revised strategy to progression from ESOL programmes to level 2 study.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16-18 enrolments have increased to 4,156 (+491 over allocation). NEET figures in Wigan Borough are below NW and GM averages.</li> <li>• AEB budget will be utilised to 114% with a focus on ESOL, entry level M/E skills and IT. Off-site community programmes have commenced working in partnership with community venues and the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector. To date this has resulted in 772 enrolments and is due to expand next year.</li> <li>• Level 3 adult provision has shown a small increase from 100 enrolment to 130.</li> <li>• Local flexibilities activity has expanded from 11 enrolments to 22. This has been in response to key sectors such as food and drink and engineering.</li> <li>• New courses in Animal Management, Modern Construction Methods &amp; Esports to start in Sept'25</li> </ul>

<p>programmes in skill shortage areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New level 3 programmes in Early Years, Welding, Electric Vehicle Charging, Battery Storage and Solar Photo Voltaic; Digitalisation of HealthCare to commence in September'24.</li> <li>• On-line learning offer to be reduced and curriculum to focus on Health &amp; Care related courses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The GM Institute of Technology target enrolments of 192 achieved</li> <li>• Online programme range has been reduced with specific focus on Health &amp; Care related programmes.</li> <li>• 13 SWAP programmes have been completed in key sectors such as health, horticulture, customer service, residential childcare and care services and to date 24 students have moved into employment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>AA5:</b> Increase level 4+ attainment rates within Wigan Borough</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing classroom based HE activity from 319 enrolment to 431.</li> <li>• Expand GM Institute of Technology course offer with the introduction new programmes including: HTQ/HNC Automation and Control for England; HTQ/HNC Electrical Systems Engineering for England; HTQ/HNC Mechanical Engineering for England; HTQ/HND Digital Technologies (Artificial Intelligence Solutions and Applications) some of these will enhance higher and degree apprenticeships' content. This will meet the enrolment target of 172 in 24/25 increasing from 162 in 23/24.</li> <li>• Raise awareness of level 4/5 higher level study opportunity through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increasing access to local provision through the Civic University Agreement with Edge Hill University increasing numbers on the PT</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HE classroom based enrolments have declined from 330 to 304. There has been a corresponding increase in higher/degree level apprenticeship activity with 118 starts and 286 in-learning.</li> <li>• New Provision in HNC HTQ Modern Methods of Construction, HND HTQ Construction Management (Design &amp; Build), and (Construction Site Supervisor), HNC/D Esports, HNC/D in Animal Management.</li> <li>• Raised awareness of level 4/5 higher level study opportunity through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increasing access to local provision through the Civic University Agreement with Edge Hill University increasing numbers on the PT Primary Teaching Degree and higher level counselling provision.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>Primary Teaching Degree and higher level counselling provision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Working collaboratively through the GM Institute of Technology to develop a robust strategy to CEIAG and remaining a key partner in the development of the Wigan Borough Higher Education Careers Fair.</li> <li>○ Promoting new LSIF short courses including: Level 5 Lean Manufacturing and Level 4 Award in Diagnosis and Rectification of Faults in Electric and Hybrid Vehicles.</li> <li>○ Working with the University of Salford, explore the potential for bespoke HTQ qualifications.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Working collaboratively through the GM Institute of Technology to develop a robust strategy to CEIAG and remaining a key partner in the development of the Wigan Borough Higher Education Careers Fair.</li> <li>○ Promoting new LSIF short courses including: Level 5 Lean Manufacturing and Level 4 Award in Diagnosis and Rectification of Faults in Electric and Hybrid Vehicles.</li> <li>● Outreach activity promoting L4/5 has increased and there is improved engagement with Yr13 6<sup>th</sup> form provision. This has resulted in applications being ahead of the previous year for entry in September'25 (+35)</li> </ul>
<p><b>AA6:</b> Expand apprenticeship participation rates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase starts for 16-18 from 421 in 23/24 to 496 in 24/25 and 19+ from 256 to 293.</li> <li>● Start new standards including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ L2 Science Manufacturing Process Operative</li> <li>○ L2 Horticulture or Landscape construction operative</li> <li>○ L2 Dog Groomer</li> <li>○ L2 Florist</li> <li>○ L2 Pharmacy Services Assistant</li> <li>○ L3 Food and Drink Engineering Maintenance Engineer</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Starts for 16-18 are; 439 and 19+ 329. Achievement rates are on track to remain well above national averages.</li> <li>● New standards in Dog Grooming, Floristry, Facilities Services &amp; Pastry Chef have successfully enrolled this academic year.</li> <li>● Starts in priority areas are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Construction 258</li> <li>○ Engineering 283</li> <li>○ Health 34</li> <li>○ Higher apprenticeships 118</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ L3 Power Network Craftsperson – 3 new pathways</li> <li>○ L3 Senior HealthCare Support</li> <li>○ L3 Healthcare Engineering Specialist Technician</li> <li>● Increase starts in priority areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Construction 219 to 264</li> <li>○ Engineering 240 to 250</li> <li>○ Health 16 to 43</li> <li>○ Higher apprenticeships 61 to 92</li> <li>○ Internal progression from study programmes &gt;100</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Internal progression from study programmes 190 in 23/24 , 71 so far in 24/25.</li> </ul>
<p><b>AA7:</b> As an anchor institution within the borough of Wigan the college will actively engage and provide leadership in skills development with the intention of improving GVA and productivity, raising qualification attainment levels and helping to deliver the Wigan Economic Strategy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Collaborate effectively with education partners in Wigan and across GM through the Wigan Education Partnership and the GM Colleges partnership.</li> <li>● Through the GM Colleges partnership actively engage with the development of the GM integrated technical skills system.</li> <li>● Work collaboratively with the Wigan Borough Council and the Education Skills Partnership to impact positively on the economic opportunities and life chances within the borough.</li> <li>● Through our curriculum intent provide a comprehensive curriculum offer for employers via study programmes, apprenticeship training, AEB activity and higher education, ensuring that the needs of current employers are being met as well as helping attract new higher skilled employment opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● College continues to work with partners and the LA on 16-18 provision. This has seen: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Shared Accountability Statements with LA sign-off</li> <li>○ Borough wide careers event for YR12</li> <li>○ Construction initiatives with LA and local employers to create new employer led construction facilities (opening 25-26)</li> <li>○ Development of shared careers programme across the borough</li> <li>○ NEET initiatives via programme design and support including increases in EHCP place planning and joint delivery of supported internships</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ EHE programme delivered in partnership with the LA.</li><li>● Jointly planned AEB offer with LA. Utilising devolved budget to target most disadvantaged neighbourhoods, promoting progression from LA provision to college provision and producing a joint programme prospectus.</li></ul>
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## 5.2 25/26 Action Plan

Aim/Objective	Key Action /Impact 2025-26	Completion Date
<p><b>AA1:</b> Deliver a responsive 16-18 study programme curriculum that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expands T level delivery</li> <li>• Responds to curriculum reform</li> <li>• Prioritises soft-skills and employability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce new T level programmes for Sept'25 in Media and Law. T level numbers will increase from 298 to a targeted 425.</li> <li>• Enrol to T levels with new entry qualification requirements around M/E enabling key stage 4 students wider access to level 3 T level study.</li> <li>• Continue to utilise November resit opportunities for GCSE resits for grade 3 candidates and review use of Functional Skills modular model for occupational courses. Transfer awarding body for GCSE Maths.</li> <li>• Review and refresh tutorial content with greater focus on career and destination planning.</li> <li>• Delivery to a new suite of NOCN Construction qualifications for September 25, moving away from C&amp;G Technical qualifications that no longer have a broad impact. The qualifications will have clear progression routes between levels and within levels. Wherever possible, the updated qualifications will cover the Apprenticeship Standard's knowledge, skills, and behaviours.</li> <li>• Introduction of a new groundwork apprenticeship offer in conjunction with Wigan Council and LCS pipework's to ensure we can supply the demand of the borough.</li> </ul>	<p>Sept'25</p> <p>Sept'25</p> <p>Nov'25</p> <p>June'26</p> <p>June'26</p> <p>June'26</p>

<p><b>AA2:</b> Deliver learning opportunities for young people that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond to an increased 16-18 demographic</li> <li>• Reduces NEET</li> <li>• Provides targeted curriculum solutions for the most vulnerable in our community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain 16-18 apprenticeship participation rates with a specific focus on engineering and construction sectors.</li> <li>• Expand bespoke care leavers programme working in partnership with Wigan Council and partner employers</li> <li>• Introduce Foundation Apprenticeship programmes and review offer in conjunction with Pre-apprentices</li> <li>• Expand provision in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increase EHCP from 158 to 177</li> <li>○ Increase pre-advanced engagement with a specific focus on Level1 occupational programmes</li> <li>○ Increase enrolments across ESOL study programme, EHE maths/English programme and supported internships.</li> <li>○ Expand facilities to accommodate growth across the whole of the curriculum but with a specific focus on Construction crafts (Multi-skills, brickwork, electrical installation and plumbing). Key actions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Expansion of workshop space and classrooms at The Skills Centre</li> <li>▪ Re-purposing workshop space at Pagefield Campus (Centre of Excellence; Engineering &amp; Construction)</li> <li>▪ Creation of an Adult Learning Centre (additional premises) to create an additional 10 classrooms at Parsons Walk for 16-18 activity</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Increase data monitoring of engagement and achievement levels of service children, developing a co-ordinated GM response for this group of learners.</li> </ul>	<p>July'26</p> <p>July'26</p> <p>July'26</p> <p>July'26</p> <p>July'26</p>
<p><b>AA3:</b> Utilising all funding streams, develop and deliver training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidate and expand Leigh Adult Learning Health Care Academy in collaboration with partners (Wrightington Wigan &amp; Leigh Hospital Trust, Wigan Council, Edge Hill</li> </ul>	<p>July'26</p>

<p>solutions to respond to workforce/skills shortages in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Engineering</li> <li>• Green technologies</li> <li>• Education</li> </ul>	<p>University). Complementing Centre of Excellence based in Wigan with a specific focus on primary, community, domiciliary and mental health care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver DfE RIPP (Regional Improvement Plan Pilot) Children’s Sufficiency Programme in collaboration with Wigan Council to develop workforce training for residential childcare. Expand delivery of the programme with NW partner colleges and pilot expansion across GM.</li> <li>• Expansion of apprenticeship provision in health and care with a specific focus on Primary Care – consolidate delivery of new standard in Senior Health Care Support in Theatre and progress development of Pharmacy and Optometry standard.</li> <li>• In response to the development of Northfold (formerly Wigan and Bolton Growth Corridor) we will continue working collaboratively with GM Combined Authority and National Skills Academy in Food &amp; Drink Manufacturing. This includes the development of a dedicated Food &amp; Drink Manufacturing facility at the Pagefield campus. Developing bespoke training packages to support the national need for developing engineering skills in food manufacturing.</li> <li>• The development and launch of The Power House will see curriculum developments in Green Energy to support the boroughs net zero carbon strategy by 2038. New technologies such as Solar Thermal Domestic water systems, Electrical Energy Storage Systems.</li> <li>• Continue to work in partnership with Gatsby and Edge Hill University on developing and piloting the Industry Associates programme. This programme aims to attract up to 10 industry skilled participants from areas which are challenging to recruit from, such as construction, and provide an insight into Further Education. It aims to equip them with the confidence and skills to inspire students and transfer industry knowledge into classrooms. This is a 12-week programme which will start in Sept 2025.</li> </ul>	<p>July’26</p> <p>July’26</p> <p>July’26</p> <p>July’26</p> <p>July’26</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pilot PhD engineering students workforce scheme in partnership with University of Manchester and GM Colleges</li> <li>• To respond to Borough developments such as the development of Fettle and substantial housing developments the college aims to further expand construction. Premises have been secured to ensure study programme, AEB and apprenticeship activity growth an specific projects are as follows; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Working in partnership with LCS Pipeworks on a groundwork apprenticeship.</li> <li>○ Expansion of HE with the Modern Methods of Construction HTQ</li> <li>○ Introduction of the Mechatronics maintenance technician standard.</li> <li>○ Short courses to meet the demand of net zero carbon (LSIF programmes)</li> <li>○ Developing a response to national investment programme in the construction sector. This will be co-ordinated through GM Colleges, with Wigan Council and GMCA.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>July'26</p> <p>July'26</p>
<p><b>AA4:</b> In partnership with Wigan Council increase AEB engagement and progression and further develop a fully integrated community AEB offer that:</p> <p>(i) Reduces the % of Wigan residents that have no qualification</p> <p>(ii) Increases level 3 qualification attainment levels</p> <p>(iii) Target employability and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase 16-18 participation rates from 3,665 allocation in 24/25 to new allocation of 4,194 and maintain 16-18 apprenticeship engagement.</li> <li>• Increased AEB allocation will deliver growth in adult engagement at levels 1-3 and curriculum will continue to be planned with Wigan Borough Council. Opening of a new dedicated Wigan Adult Learning Centre will provide adult specialist facilities.</li> <li>• Increase use of devolved flexibilities and L3 flexibilities to fund bespoke employer courses and priority area provision e.g. engineering (multi-skills), residential childcare, early years, teaching assistants and welding.</li> <li>• Extend Care Leavers Skills Passport programme and expand engagement of employer organisations in-borough</li> <li>• Continue to manage growth in ESOL provision with recruitment and programme start dates each month and through the GM ESOL Advisory Pathways officer post maximise</li> </ul>	<p>July'26</p> <p>July'26</p> <p>July'26</p> <p>July'26</p> <p>July'26</p>

<p>'back to work' programmes in skill shortage areas</p>	<p>retention and progression. Implement a revised strategy to progression from ESOL programmes to level 2 study.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver newly accredited innovation short course provision developed via Innovation Hub</li> </ul>	<p>July'26</p>
<p><b>AA5:</b> Increase level 4+ attainment rates within Wigan Borough</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New courses in Animal Management, Modern Construction Methods &amp; Esports to start in Sept'25</li> <li>• Meet GM Institute of Technology target enrolments of 192</li> <li>• Raise awareness of level 4/5 higher level study opportunity through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increasing access to local provision through the Civic University Agreement with Edge Hill University increasing numbers on the PT Primary Teaching Degree and higher level counselling provision.</li> <li>○ Working collaboratively through the GM Institute of Technology to develop a robust strategy to CEIAG and remaining a key partner in the development of the Wigan Borough Higher Education Careers Fair.</li> <li>○ Promoting new LSIF short courses including: Level 5 Lean Manufacturing and Level 4 Award in Diagnosis and Rectification of Faults in Electric and Hybrid Vehicles.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Dec'25</p> <p>July'26</p> <p>July'26</p>
<p><b>AA6:</b> Expand apprenticeship participation rates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain 16-18 starts and expand 19+: target total starts: 784</li> <li>• Start new standards including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ L2 Science Manufacturing Process Operative</li> <li>○ L2 Horticulture or Landscape construction operative</li> <li>○ L2 Dog Groomer</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>July'26</p> <p>July'26</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ L2 Florist</li> <li>○ L2 Pharmacy Services Assistant</li> <li>○ L3 Food and Drink Engineering Maintenance Engineer</li> <li>○ L3 Power Network Craftsperson – 3 new pathways</li> <li>○ L3 Senior HealthCare Support</li> <li>○ L3 Healthcare Engineering Specialist Technician</li> <li>○ Mechatronics maintenance technician standard</li> <li>○ Level 3 diploma in engineering and manufacturing support technologies</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase progression from study programmes from 189 to 200 during 25-26</li> <li>● Start Foundation Apprenticeships with a specific focus on Construction.</li> </ul>	<p>July'26</p> <p>July'26</p>
<p><b>AA7:</b> As an anchor institution within the borough of Wigan the college will actively engage and provide leadership in skills development with the intention of improving GVA and productivity, raising qualification attainment levels and helping to deliver the Wigan Economic Strategy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Collaborate effectively with education partners in Wigan and across GM through the Wigan Education Partnership and the GM Colleges partnership.</li> <li>● Through the GM Colleges partnership actively engage with the development of the GM integrated technical skills system.</li> <li>● Work collaboratively with the Wigan Borough Council and the Education Skills Partnership to impact positively on the economic opportunities and life chances within the borough, focusing specifically on the Progress with Unity missions.</li> <li>● Through our curriculum intent provide a comprehensive curriculum offer for employers via study programmes, apprenticeship training, AEB activity and higher education, ensuring that the needs of current employers are being met as well as helping attract new higher skilled employment opportunities.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p>



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