



Accountability Statement

May 2026

Our Purpose

West Herts College Group Vision

Our vision is to transform life chances and create a better everyday life for many people.

Mission

Our Mission is to provide high-quality education and training in a safe, respectful and inclusive environment that prepares people for success in work and life and builds a foundation for lifelong learning.

Public Value Statement

We will provide a broad range of provision and services to meet the needs, interests and aspirations of the communities we serve.

The College

Will inspire interest in lifelong learning, working with employers to develop the skills needed for success in life and at work. We commit to this in the knowledge that:

- Professional skills are central to individual earning power and the collective productivity of our local, regional and national economies
- English, Maths and Digital skills are essential to accessing opportunities
- The aspirations of many in our communities are challenged by economic, health and social pressures.

We will engage with as many people and organisations as possible, working in partnership to maximise benefits across our communities, with the views of stakeholders represented at College Board level.

We recognise our responsibilities as a community asset for the people we serve, understanding community issues and making a meaningful contribution to providing solutions to these challenges.

We will maintain a thorough understanding of local labour markets and facilitate positive relationships between employers and prospective employees.

We value community well-being and are fully committed to providing lifelong learning opportunities through a range of courses.

We ensure the College secures and develops a workforce that is able to provide the skills and experiences required to deliver provision of the highest quality.

We will be professional in all undertakings and accessible wherever possible, providing a safe and welcoming place for people to gather and engage in learning and recreational activities

We will take responsible decisions, utilising public funds appropriately and always seeking to prioritise expenditure and investment to benefit local people.

We will play our part in the net zero economy – taking action to reduce our climate impact, calculating our emissions annually and taking action to reduce them.

Relationship between strategic plan and annual Accountability Statement

Our Strategic Plan sets the direction for all work. This Accountability Statement offers a top-level summary of the way in which we work to meet local and national skills needs. Beneath this sit sector-level skills plans for the implementation of our strategic planning.

Context and Place

West Herts College Group is a large, general Further Education college group comprising Barnfield College in Luton, and West Herts College, with campuses in Watford and Hemel Hempstead. Annually, we deliver a broad range of full- and part-time courses, across most employment sectors. In the academic year 2025-26, we enrolled around 8,000 16-18 year-olds, 480 apprentices, 1,700 adults, and 200 HE students. In addition, we provide courses for around 1,000 learners who pay their own fees.

Geographical areas we serve

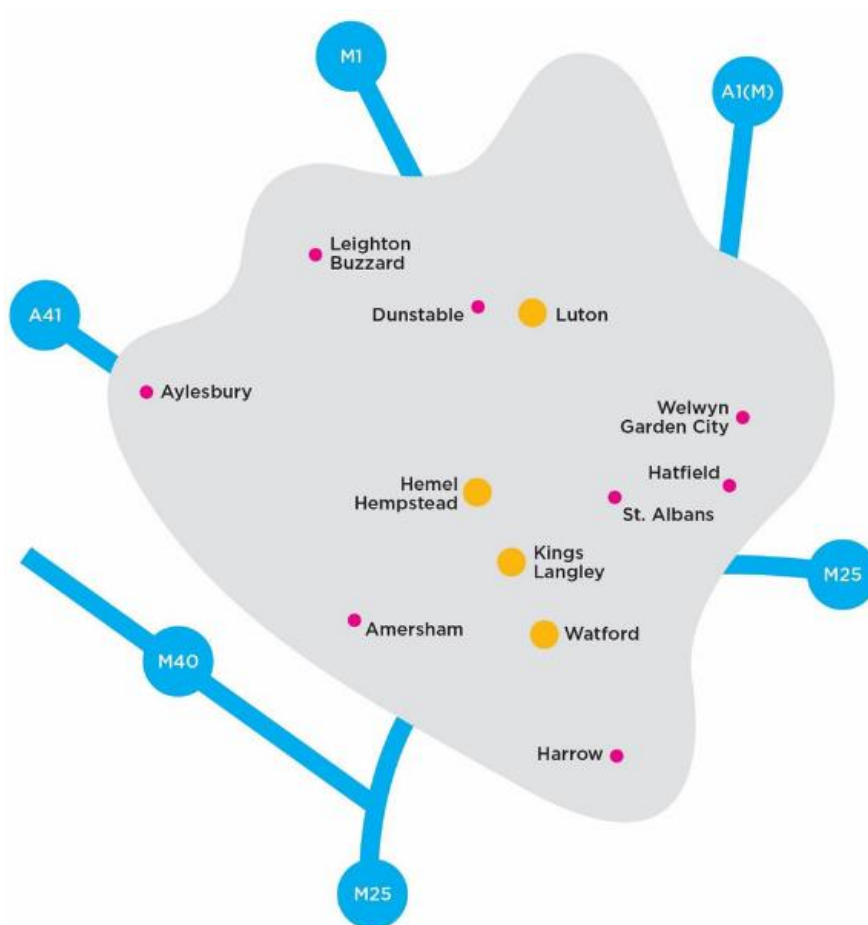
The college group falls into two Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) regions: Hertfordshire, and the South Midlands. The main geographical areas served by the group are Dacorum District (including Hemel Hempstead), Watford, the wider Hertfordshire area, North London, Luton, Dunstable, and the wider South Midlands.

This diagram shows the areas within one hour's travel of our campuses by public transport.

Transport links are good. Where travel costs are a barrier to attending college, we provide financial support;

in the academic year 2025-26, we provided 2,379 learners with a bursary to enable them to attend college (an increase from 1,500 in 2024-25).

Our regions do not yet have a mayoral strategic authority. Bedford, Luton and Milton Keynes bid for fast-track devolution but were not successful; there is not yet agreement about whether or not a new strategic authority for Hertfordshire will include neighbouring counties. Hertfordshire is also currently undergoing local government reorganisation, with a decision about the new unitary authority areas expected soon, and new unitary councils due to become operational in 2028.



Economic and social characteristics of the areas we serve

Both Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire are a mix of semi-rural areas and towns. Luton is a large town with a population of over 239,000 people. Watford, with a population of 107,000 people, is the smallest of the College's three main boroughs, with its eight square miles dominated by the town centre and surrounding mixed-use areas. Our Hemel Hempstead campus lies in Dacorum, which has a population of 162,000. In Dacorum, the requirement from central government for substantial house building has led to the development of a 25-year plan of building and infrastructure expansion, including developing Hemel Hempstead into a Garden Community.

The lower tier local authority district of Luton ranks in the second decile in the 2025 Index of Multiple Deprivation (this ranks local authorities by deprivation; decile 1 is the most deprived, decile 10 is least deprived). Dacorum, in decile 8, and Watford, in decile 6, are comparatively less deprived. Despite this, there are pockets of deprivation in all of the regions we serve. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) published data (2024) show that the percentage of children under 16 living in relative poverty in Luton, at 31.7%, is substantially higher than the UK average of 16.5%. In Watford 13.6% of children are in relative poverty, and in Dacorum the figure is 11.3%. We offer a range of financial support and other assistance to learners according to need.

The ONS data (2024) show that the economic inactivity rate in Luton, at 25.4%, is higher than the UK average (median) of 20.8%. In Watford economic inactivity is lower than the UK average, at 18.8%, and in Dacorum economic inactivity is close to the average, at 20.3%. The ONS modelled unemployment rates are 5.1% in Luton, 4.2% in Watford, and 4.0% in Dacorum, all higher than the UK average of 3.4%. Luton Council and Hertfordshire County Council are working to reduce economic inactivity in their regions. A priority within this work is reducing the number of young people who are Not in Employment, Education or Training (known as NEETs).

Employment and skills in the areas we serve

In Luton, data from the labour market intelligence company Lightcast show that the top three industries are currently General Cleaning of Buildings, Temporary Employment Activities, and Hospital Activities. Elementary jobs are high compared to the national average. The next largest occupation after elementary jobs is professional, followed by associate professional, reflecting that the largest industries are administrative and support service activities, followed by human health and social work activities. The top in-demand skill is auditing (above the national average) followed by finance.

Lightcast data for Watford show that the top three industries are currently Accounting, Bookkeeping and Auditing Activities (Tax Consultancy), Activities of Head Offices, and Hospital Activities. The

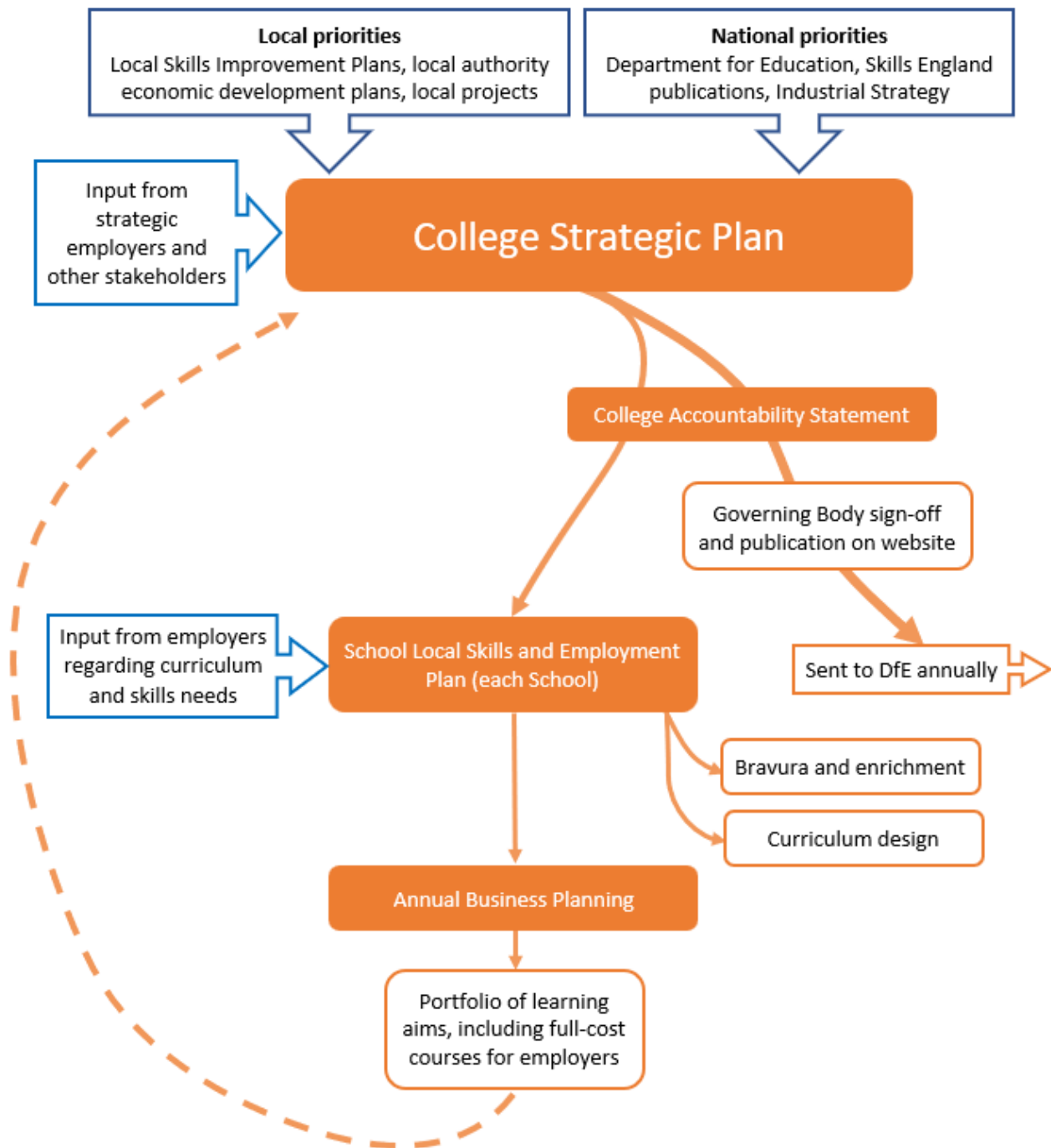
largest occupations are Professional, then Administrative and Secretarial, followed by Associate Professional. The largest industries are Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities, followed by Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles, and then Human Health and Social Work Activities. The top in-demand skill is finance, followed by auditing.

Dacorum has a slightly different employment picture. Here, Lightcast data show that the top three industries are Temporary Employment Agency Activities, Computer Consultancy Activities, and Activities of Head Offices. The largest occupations are professional, elementary, then associate professional. The largest industries are administrative and support service activities, followed by Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles and professional, scientific and technical activities. The top in-demand skills is finance, followed by marketing.

Across both regions we serve, transport links are strong and residents often travel to work in London and other major cities such as Milton Keynes. There will be substantial construction across both our regions over the next few years. Both are home to large NHS hospital trusts. In Luton, the expansion of the airport is anticipated to create up to 11,000 new jobs, increasing the opportunities locally for employment in roles such as aeronautical maintenance operations, baggage handling, customer service, business, cabin crew, and hospitality. In both regions, businesses are predominantly small, with fewer than ten employees: there are some large but few medium-sized businesses.

Approach to developing annual Accountability Statement

We undertake annual business planning to evaluate and develop our response to national and local priorities. This process is shown here:



Our business planning process considers a range of intelligence on skills and training needs. It also takes account of the UK government's Missions, for example in our work to support and promote social cohesion, and publications from Skills England. Staff at all levels are involved in this planning. In addition, input is sought from stakeholders and employers to inform curriculum portfolio planning, curriculum design, work-related learning, and enrichment.

A key driver for our business planning process is the list of national priorities published by the DfE, which are:

- advanced manufacturing
- creative industries
- defence
- digital and technologies
- financial services
- life sciences
- professional and business services
- clean energy industries
- construction
- health

English, maths and digital skills remain a fundamental priority. We also focus on helping our learners understand the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), and sustainability considerations, in the industries into which they plan to progress.

Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) were published in both Hertfordshire and the South Midlands in Spring 2023. The second cycle of work on the LSIPs is happening in Spring 2026, and final versions have not yet been published. We work closely with the Employer Representative Bodies (ERBs) who are writing the LSIPs in both Hertfordshire and the South Midlands, including meeting regularly and advising on drafts and the selection of priorities. We hosted the ERB's 2026 Hertfordshire Aviation and Defence Employer Summit, and routinely attend employer consultations and other events run by the ERBs. The new priorities from both drafts have been taken into account in our business planning and are reflected in this Statement.

LSIP priorities across both regions are not dissimilar to national priorities published by the Department for Education. They include:

- construction
- health and social care
- education and childcare
- hospitality, retail and logistics
- professional and business services
- creative industries
- defence and advanced manufacturing

- life sciences
- digital and technology
- clean energy industries

Both LSIPs also emphasise the importance of soft skills for employment, particularly communication skills. English, maths, and digital skills for work are important in both regions. Other priorities are helping businesses, particularly small businesses employing fewer than ten people, to understand qualifications and access training.

Employer input into the curriculum

Employer input into the curriculum occurs at strategic level, confirming local needs and priorities. This helps to shape our curriculum portfolio, the learning aims and other courses which we offer. A key part of this employer input is through the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), described above; this complements our own extensive employer engagement.

As well as influencing the portfolio of qualifications that we offer, employer input into curriculum design shapes the structure of our courses (including the units or modules offered within a qualification), the content we teach (such as topics and scenarios), and the way in which training is delivered (for example, the equipment used). Employers are involved in delivering training and assessment, as well as providing on-the-job training, through placements and other workplace experiences. Employers also help with upskilling teaching staff, to ensure they are updated in new skills and knowledge in their industry sectors.

Each subject area within the College Group prepares a 'Skills and Employment Plan' which considers sector-specific skills priorities for the curriculum area. Heads of School work together on these across colleges. These plans are live documents which record new information and activity throughout the year. This process informs decisions about the courses we offer as well as the content of these courses plus any additional skills delivery, and guides planning for the future.

Although a formal annual activity, our business planning is an iterative process. Employer input is routine, whether through our own strategic engagement, forums and consultations, and ongoing dialogue with the large number of employers with whom we have sustained relationships, or through informal conversations, such as with employers seeking assistance with recruitment or enquiring about commercial training. For example, we work with local leisure centres in both Watford and Luton to provide our sports learners with the National Pool Lifeguard Qualification to enable them to work in hard-to-fill vacancies for these businesses; we have an ongoing relationship with an innovative construction company who supports training our carpentry learners in Modern Methods of Construction (MMC).

At a strategic level, we have been developing Career Partnerships with employers who are able to

offer high quality, developmental careers for our leavers and who are well regarded in their sectors. We work with these employers to develop routes into employment which meet local skills needs. These employers are keen to work with us as a means for securing their workforce pipelines for the future. These Career Partnerships do not only benefit the learners who progress to employment with specific employers: they also establish the relevance and validity of our training programmes and the qualifications our learners achieve, provide a guide for other employers about the suitability of leavers for roles in their own organisations, and help to raise aspirations for other learners. Career Partnerships with employers have so far been set up in aeronautical engineering, life sciences, health, and hospitality.

We deliver a formal programme of work-related skills for our full-time learners, which provides skills that extend beyond the core content of technical and vocational qualifications. It also includes English and maths skills informed by what employers in different sectors have told us are important in their industries. Through this programme, learners complete activities to gain a set of skills and knowledge related to their chosen occupational pathway. These are shaped by employer input and other priorities (such as digital skills needs and English and maths development), and they are designed to help learners close the gap between completion of their main learning aim and readiness for work.

Examples of these activities include:

- Level 1 Award in Health and Safety in a Construction Environment, for learners taking the T Level in Civil Engineering, and other construction learners on maintenance operations, site carpentry, and bricklaying courses
- Essential Digital Skills qualifications, for ESOL learners
- 18th Edition Wiring Regulations, for electrical installation level 3 learners
- Safeguarding, first aid, and the Level 1 Award in Assisting Sport and Physical Activity coaching qualification, for sports learners
- Air Cabin Crew course readiness, for travel learners
- Level 2 Award in Health and Safety for the Hair and Beauty Sector taken by learners on our hairdressing and barbering courses
- Self-employment masterclasses
- Retrofit installation, for plumbing and electrical learners
- Mindset and resilience virtual reality courses
- Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering, taken by learners on our Food and Beverage Service and Professional Cookery courses, and also by our T Level Education and Childcare learners
- Level 3 Paediatric First Aid, taken by learners on our Early Years Educator course

Learners also participate in World Skills, other national skills competitions, and industry-led competitions. We collaborate with six other local colleges in the South-East Midlands Inter-College Competitions (SEMICC) project, which provides additional opportunities for students to participate in skills competitions, including a wider selection of competitions and more accessible opportunities,

and promotes competitive activity as an effective and important method of teaching, learning, and assessment for skills development, and attitudes and behaviours. We lead on the SEMICC competition for learners with SEND; this year our learners will also participate in the Hertfordshire inter-college SEND sports competition and other projects in Hertfordshire as part of Hertfordshire's Year of Disability Sport & Physical Activity.

Our provision covers all national priority sectors. While we do not offer courses badged as 'logistics', employers in this sector have reported through the LSIP consultation that they do not require training with a narrow logistics focus, but instead prefer to access business and digital courses, which give learners better prospects. We offer a broad portfolio of business and digital courses across a range of levels.

Work with stakeholders

The College has very strong links with regional employer groups and these have been extended through our participation in preparing the Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs). We maintain situational awareness of the local and regional economy and labour market through our work with Chambers of Commerce (Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Hertfordshire), and councils (Luton, Hertfordshire, Watford Borough, Dacorum Borough). We also make use of labour market intelligence services such as Vector and Lightcast, and through commissioning research where appropriate. We are represented on a very wide range of local skills panels and other groups.

We work with a wide range of other stakeholders including:

Local councils

We work closely with Hertfordshire County Council including meeting regularly with Hertfordshire Futures, the Council department which continues the work of what was the Local Enterprise Partnership. We are involved in the Hertfordshire Social Value project for construction developments, which looks at skills training and employment alongside other social value considerations.

In Watford, we have worked closely with the Borough Council on the development of the Watford Local Skills and Employment Plan and are integral to the ongoing work to implement, report on, and update this plan. West Herts College continues to support this work by hosting meetings and convening local stakeholders. We are also part of the Watford Developer Forum, a construction sector group which meets to oversee the response to skills needs for major construction projects in the town, and Watford Business Connect, which connects us to a wide range of employer stakeholders.

In Luton, we chair Luton Council's Employment and Skills Partnership Board, which brings stakeholders together to operationalise the town's 2040 Vision. We are part of the Inclusive Economy Board which aims to build an inclusive economy that delivers inward investment to support the growth of businesses, jobs and incomes. The board oversees the development of the Economic Strategy and detailed delivery plans.

In Dacorum, we sit on the Borough Council Economic Board, and lead its employment and skills aspect; we are also represented on the Hemel Place Board and Dacorum Strategic Business Board.

Other groups

We are involved in work under the Get Britain Working agenda in both Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. In Hertfordshire we attend the Get Hertfordshire Working stakeholder meetings and the Youth Guarantee, and Work and Health, sub-groups. In Bedfordshire, we attend the Get Britain Working meetings convened by the South Midlands Authorities as well as the Future Planning group hosted by Job Centre Plus (JCP). We have developed employability training workshops for clients referred by our local JCP offices. We will also run training for JCP staff in July 2025 on good practice in supporting young people into work. We have also been working with JCP on the development of SWAPs including in social care, with a range of local social care providers and experts, and construction, with Herts JCP and a large construction company. We deliver King's Trust programmes for young learners who are not yet ready to access our mainstream provision and we are developing a new NEET programme for September 2026, which will help those who need additional support to be able to access further study.

We chair the Hertfordshire Local Skills Advisory Board for Sport, which is run in partnership with Hertfordshire Sports Partnership and the Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA).

Partnerships with Watford's key cultural employers and organisations are strong and are sustained by the Watford Cultural Leaders Group (Watford Palace Theatre, The Pump House Theatre, Watford Museum, the Colosseum, Watford Football Club, Warner Bros, the Pumphouse, Hertfordshire Libraries, and Visit Watford).

We work with employers to ensure that our equipment, facilities and workshops are kept updated to reflect industry needs. For example: we have worked with a modern methods of construction (MMC) company to install a model MMC house in the construction and homebuilding hub at our Hemel Hempstead campus; we consulted with our local NHS hospital Trust on equipment for our Training Ward facilities; and have worked with Sky Studios to ensure our creative media equipment reflects industry training needs.

We work closely with Luton Council on issues relating to skills and employment, for example the Vauxhall Task Force which focused on actions in response to the closure of the town's Stellantis factory, and the group this subsequently became, the Luton Skills Tiger Group. We also work with charitable organisations in the town, including Love Luton, Community Interest Luton, Keech Hospice, and the homeless charity Noah. We work to support other groups in Luton: for example, we provide community provision for ESOL learners, and our Foundation learners contribute to the upkeep of Luton's natural environment through the Luton Orchards Project.

Through our Civic Service project, 176 our 16-18 learners have been trained as CPR trainers by East Anglian Air Ambulance and Essex and Herts Air Ambulance Trust; these learners have so far trained 660 of their peers to deliver CPR if they are a bystander in an emergency situation.

We support national work to which we feel we can contribute positively, or where we can learn from our participation. For example, we attended the Independent Commission on Community and Cohesion roundtable on lifelong learning held by Ruskin College Oxford and we are participating in The Gatsby Foundation's T Level curriculum design project for health.

Work with the other local providers

We work with a range of local providers, including:

Universities

We provide a range of courses through our Consortium with the University of Hertfordshire as part of our wider HE offer, and work with the university on initiatives including learner progression opportunities. We also work with the University of Huddersfield to deliver teacher training. We work with the University of Bedfordshire as part of our widening participation strategy in Luton, to help our learners prepare for progression to Higher Education.

We are working with the University of Hertfordshire to develop new SEND-focused continuous professional development for senior education leaders to help them prepare for the SEND reforms arising from the government White Paper 'Every child achieving and thriving'.

Local schools

We run careers events for pupils and career advisors, taster sessions promoting specific occupations and skills, and events in collaboration with employers to break gender stereotypes across specific occupations.

In the South Midlands, strategic engagement with schools centres on the Secondary Heads Networks and Luton Progression and Transition Board, where the focus is on supporting school children to transition from school to college and establishing alternative provision for 14 to 16 year-olds.

We are part of the steering group for the Hertfordshire Cultural Education Partnership, which comprises schools, the County music service, and a range of creative providers, and which works to develop cultural education across the region.

This year we have begun work with Luton Sixth Form College (LSFC), to develop progression agreements with local universities, and opportunities for learners at both colleges to access a combination of enabling A Levels and vocational/occupational courses.

Further Education colleges

We have established a routine of collaborative working with the other FE colleges in our regions and have developed strong relationships between college leaders. We routinely support each other with referrals and guidance to employers, where another college is best placed to assist with their skills needs. We also work to avoid overlap in our provision, so that colleges have specialist provision or lead on particular areas of focus. For example:

- Bedfordshire College Group is the national TEC for construction and we have met at strategic level to agree joint work to pursue the CTEC aims.
- Hertfordshire Regional College led one of the projects within the LSIF on capacity building for the creative industries, including sustainable ways of working in this sector.
- Milton Keynes College has recently been selected as the Technical Excellence College (TEC) for the digital sector.
- Moulton College delivers specialist agricultural provision in the South Midlands.
- Northampton College is the regional specialist in international logistics. We do not deliver haulage (driver) training because this is provided by private training providers.
- North Herts College leads on work with life sciences employers in Hertfordshire due to the college's proximity to the Gene and Stem Cell Therapy Catapult in Stevenage.
- Oaklands College is leading on the development of the town planning curriculum in Hertfordshire and also delivers Hertfordshire's land-based provision.
- West Herts College is leading on improving partnership working across SEND provision. We led the SDF projects in Hertfordshire and the South Midlands, and the LSIF project in Hertfordshire. We are the Further Education representative for the NHS Central East Integrated Care Board Education Partnership and are participating in the Gatsby Charitable Foundation T Levels curriculum design projects for health and science, which seek to foster collaboration between FE providers in the implementation of curriculum reform.

We are committed to collaborating as a spoke with our regional Construction Technical Excellence College (CTEC), West Suffolk College. This work has begun with initial discussions about priorities and good practice, and staff training is scheduled for the summer.

Private training providers

We work with private training providers where this enhances our offer to local people. For example, we work with the Code Institute to offer specialist high-level digital skills and have had initial discussions with them about a possible Sector Work Academy Programme (SWAP) in digital skills. We have worked with Bodyswaps, a leading international provider of immersive skills development software, on several bespoke projects in response to employer demand. We have strong links with our local NHS Integrated Care Board healthcare academy.

Inclusive Mainstream Fund

We will use our Inclusive Mainstream Fund in the 2026/27 academic year to transition to the reformed SEND system and to continue to provide highly effective support to all learners.

We will use the Inclusive Mainstream Fund to upskill staff in good practice for providing support, as well as ensuring effective transitions from school. In particular, we expect the fund to enable the College to:

- Strengthen systems for data collection and analysis to better understand the needs of students
- Explore how different models of support can be delivered, and to inform the development of new evidence-based support solutions
- Support the implementation of training focusing on new approaches to enhance teachers' inclusive pedagogy
- Provide a broad range of opportunities that enable learners to prepare for adulthood and independence
- Provide the training and resources needed to maintain a culture of continuous improvement, such as understanding individual learning goals and adapting to learner needs
- Support onboarding for new learners and transitions, with graduated exposure for those who need it, including joint transition planning with local schools
- Support with transitions and outreach to feeder schools

Contribution to national, regional, and local priorities

These short-term objectives reflect provision planned to meet specific national and/or local skills priorities in the academic year 2026/27, including new provision or growth. This list is therefore not an exhaustive picture: the wider, ongoing work of the college, not detailed here, also relates closely to skills priorities. The college will continue to recruit to a curriculum portfolio aligned to a wide range of national and local skills priorities and will deliver training to over 10,000 learners. In addition, further work targeted at specific priorities will be developed during the course of normal college business as the academic year progresses.

Our performance against targets set last year is also detailed in the table below.

We have planned for growth next academic year in our provision for young people. Our overall target enrolment for our 16-18 programmes in 2026/27 is 7974, compared to a target of 7547 in 2025/26, which we exceeded (enrolling 7921 learners). Only a portion of the expected growth in 2026/27 relies on recruiting new learners to the College group: the higher than planned enrolment in 2025/26 means that we can already forecast higher numbers of learners either continuing onto the second year of a course begun last year or progressing with us to a higher level of study. To increase our capacity to accommodate larger numbers of applicants, we have submitted bids for the Post-16 Capacity Fund (for a new building at Barnfield College) and the Construction Skills Fund (for a new construction facility at our Hemel Hempstead campus). We are not planning for growth in our adult provision because this is constrained by our Adult Skills Fund (ASF) allocation.

	Priority				Objective	Achieved to date	Target output 2026/27
	Skill	National	S Mids	Herts			
1	Health Also Mathematics Childcare		✓	✓	a. Support the government's mission to strengthen the early years system, by providing high-	a. Level 3 T Level in Education and Childcare - Early Years Educator was introduced in 2023 and continued to be	a. and b.: These will continue to be part of our offering in 2026/27

	Priority				Objective	Achieved to date	Target output 2026/27
	Skill	National	S Mids	Herts			
					<p>quality routes for school leavers and adults to train for careers in health, education, and childcare</p> <p>b. Deliver skills training to 16-18 year-olds on health and care programmes which provides a secure pathway into the health sector workforce</p> <p>c. Provide training in priority skills in science, maths, and health</p> <p>d. Provide route-into-work training for adults to support the NHS workforce pipeline, through our innovative NHS Careers Gateway programme</p>	<p>part of our offering in 2025/26 (16 new learners recruited)</p> <p>b. This skills training was delivered to those taking health and social care courses for 16-18 year-olds</p> <p>c. We decided not to extend our A Level science and maths provision in 2025/26</p> <p>d. The first two cohorts of NHS Career Gateway learners are now employed at the West Hertfordshire Teaching Hospitals Trust. The first leaver from this course to take advantage of the progression agreement with the University of Hertfordshire (UH)</p>	<p>c. n/a</p> <p>d. The NHS recruitment freeze has meant that there has not yet been a Career Gateway course this academic year; we plan to run a cohort in summer 2026 provided the hospital can secure funding for new staff appointments.</p> <p>New courses or increased enrolments planned for 2026/27 (subject to enrolment):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 3 T Level Health: Supporting Adult Nursing – new course at

	Priority				Objective	Achieved to date	Target output 2026/27
	Skill	National	S Mids	Herts			
						has progressed to the UH Level 4 course, which will lead to the Level 6 Degree Apprenticeship.	<p>West Herts College for 16-18 year olds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 2 Technical Occupational Entry for the Early Years Practitioner (Diploma) – increase of one cohort at West Herts College for 16-18 year olds <p>We have successfully bid to deliver modular HTQs. We will test the market for HTQs in Medical Tech, Early Years Professional, and Healthcare.</p>
2	Clean energy industries	✓	✓	✓	<p>a. Train school leavers in the skills for the installation of clean energy technologies, to support their transition to this sector's workforce</p> <p>b. Support the local workforce and local businesses to make the most of the opportunity for growth in the clean energy and low-</p>	<p>a. Skills training on green technologies in EV charging, solar PV and heat pumps was introduced in 2023 for 16-18 year-olds on construction trades programmes in electrical installation and plumbing and continues to be included in these courses</p> <p>b. Two new courses (Level 3 Technical Occupational Entry in Electrical Installation (Diploma) and Level 3 Award in the Installation and</p>	<p>New courses or increased enrolments planned for 2026/27 (subject to enrolment):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 2 Maintenance learners will also now be trained on use of the solar PV installation rigs. We have secured approval to deliver Apprenticeship Units in Electric vehicle charging point installation and maintenance and Solar PV Installation and Maintenance and have begun marketing these to employers. We are also considering a new course: L2 Introduction to Retrofit for 16-18 year olds, and will explore learner demand for this.

	Priority				Objective	Achieved to date	Target output 2026/27
	Skill	National	S Mids	Herts			
					carbon industries, enabling those working in construction trades in electrical installation and plumbing to gain the qualifications they need to install clean energy technologies	Maintenance of Small Solar Photovoltaic Systems) were advertised as part of our adult provision, but there has been no uptake. We have upskilled the teaching team to include F Gas, as unvented systems are now part of the heat pump qualification. We are part of the Green Skills Advisory Panel and, in Hertfordshire, sit on the Retrofit Steering Group, and hope to drive uptake of retrofit skills training over time through this work with stakeholders.	
3	Construction	✓	✓	✓	a. Support the government's homebuilding plans by preparing young people and adults with the skills, knowledge, and behaviours they need to join the construction workforce in a wide range of roles	a. We recruited 8 learners in September 2025 onto our new T Level in Design, Surveying and Planning for Construction	a. This course will continue to be part of our offering in 2026/27 New courses or increased enrolments planned for 2026/27 (subject to enrolment): • Level 2 Extended Diploma

	Priority				Objective	Achieved to date	Target output 2026/27
	Skill	National	S Mids	Herts			
							<p>Technical Occupational Entry for Bricklaying – new course at Barnfield College for 16-18 year olds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 2 Diploma in Electrical Installations (Buildings and Structures) – increase of one additional cohort at Barnfield College for 16-18 year olds • Level 3 Advanced Technical Diploma in Electrical Installation – new course at Barnfield College for 16-18 year olds • Level 3 T Level Design, Surveying and Planning for Construction: Civil Engineering – increase of one additional cohort at Barnfield College for 16-18 year olds • Level 2 Diploma in Maintenance Operations (Construction) – new course at West Herts College for 16-18 year olds • We have several Foundation apprenticeships advertised and will approach this as an enrolment option when conducting initial guidance with applicants and employers
4	Defence and Advanced manufacturing	✓	✓	✓	a. Support the government's mission to strengthen our armed forces, by providing training programmes which prepare our	a. We provide a comprehensive suite of courses from Level 1 to Level 3 in public services and uniformed protective services, and work with the armed forces	<p>a. and b.: These will continue to be part of our offering in 2026/27.</p> <p>New courses or increased enrolments planned for 2026/27 (subject to enrolment):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engineering Foundation Year delivered through our Higher

	Priority				Objective	Achieved to date	Target output 2026/27
	Skill	National	S Mids	Herts			
					<p>learners for careers in the armed services, as well as high-quality information and guidance on careers in the armed forces, and support for those applying for roles in defence-related industries</p> <p>b. Provide training in engineering, science, technology, and mathematics which supports defence industry and advanced manufacturing employment locally as well as preparing learners to progress to higher-level study in these priority areas</p>	<p>on delivery, enrichment, and careers guidance</p> <p>b. We provide a very wide range of science, maths, and engineering courses. In particular, we introduced aeronautical engineering in 2023 and this supports progression to employment in aerospace and defence sectors as well as higher education. We introduced two new courses in September 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engineering with Foundation Year (Higher Education course through 	<p>Education Consortium with the University of Hertfordshire – increase of one cohort at West Herts College</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have three new engineering apprenticeships planned for 2026/27.

	Priority				Objective	Achieved to date	Target output 2026/27
	Skill	National	S Mids	Herts			
						<p>University of Hertfordshire Consortium): 17 learners were enrolled</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 2 First Extended Certificate in Engineering/ Civil Engineering: 23 learners were enrolled 	
5	Digital and technologies	✓	✓	✓	<p>a. Train young people in digital skills which employers need, supporting the adoption of technology in our workforce, including cyber skills</p> <p>b. Provide basic digital skills for employment for</p>	<p>a. We provide a wide range of digital qualifications including employability-related skills, and Level 2 and 3 courses which prepare learners for progression to employment or higher education, for example to continue the study of computing. All young learners also complete bespoke digital skills training on top of their main learning aims.</p> <p>b. Adult learners taking English as a Second or Other Language</p>	<p>a., b. and c.: These will continue to be part of our offering in 2026/27</p> <p>We have successfully bid to deliver modular HTQs. We have an application for approval submitted for HTQ Digital Technologies (AI Solutions and Applications).</p> <p>We have changed our Computing L1 learning aim to cyber security, in response to employer demand.</p> <p>New courses or increased enrolments planned for 2026/27 (subject to enrolment):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 3 Extended Certificate Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Information Technology – new course for 16-18 year olds at West Herts College (cohorts at both Watford and Hemel campuses)

	Priority				Objective	Achieved to date	Target output 2026/27
	Skill	National	S Mids	Herts			
					<p>adult learners, as well as higher-level training in software development</p> <p>c. Provide higher-level training in digital skills including those necessary to make the UK more resilient to cyber threats</p>	<p>courses take Essential Digital Skills qualifications which give the digital skills for life and work. 123 were enrolled in total in 2025.</p> <p>c. A Level 5 software development course was introduced in 2023. We enrolled 5 learners onto this in 2025.</p>	
6	Life sciences <i>also science</i>	✓		✓	Provide a workforce with skills fit for the future, including supporting Hertfordshire's world-leading green technology and life sciences employers	<p>We provide a full range of science courses at levels 2 and 3.</p> <p>We also offer an 'Extended Degree Year 1' course through our consortium with the University of Hertfordshire</p>	<p>These will continue to be part of our offering in 2026/27</p> <p>New courses or increased enrolments planned for 2026/27 (subject to enrolment):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 2 First Extended Certificate in Applied Science – new course (one cohort of 15) at Barnfield College and increase of one cohort at West Herts College for 16-18 year olds • Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Applied Science Year – increase of one cohort at West Herts College for 16-18 year olds
7	Creative industries	✓		✓	Support local people to gain the skills they need to work in this key	This is a specialism at West Herts College Group and we hold	This portfolio of courses will continue in 2026/27.

	Priority				Objective	Achieved to date	Target output 2026/27
	Skill	National	S Mids	Herts			
					<p>sector in our region</p> <p>Screen Skills endorsement which recognises the very high quality of our provision.</p> <p>In recent years we have extended our creative provision, aligned to the fast growth in demand for creative skills in motion capture, animation, digital media, interior design/architecture, TV and film.</p> <p>In 2024 we introduced new courses in Digital Illustration and Animation, Interior Design, Game Design and Game Development, Music Production and Technology, Film and Television, and increased our capacity in Luton.</p> <p>We introduced a new course in September 2025: Interior Design – Intermediate. We enrolled 221 learners in interior design courses in 2025.</p>	<p>Screen Skills endorsement which recognises the very high quality of our provision.</p> <p>In recent years we have extended our creative provision, aligned to the fast growth in demand for creative skills in motion capture, animation, digital media, interior design/architecture, TV and film.</p> <p>In 2024 we introduced new courses in Digital Illustration and Animation, Interior Design, Game Design and Game Development, Music Production and Technology, Film and Television, and increased our capacity in Luton.</p> <p>We introduced a new course in September 2025: Interior Design – Intermediate. We enrolled 221 learners in interior design courses in 2025.</p>	<p>New courses or increased enrolments planned for 2026/27 (subject to enrolment):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 3 Diploma in Art and Design - Prop Design and Modelmaking – new course at West Herts College for 16-18 year olds • Level 2 Diploma in Photography – increase of one cohort at West Herts College for 16-18 year olds • Level 2 Diploma in Creative Media Skills – increase of one cohort at West Herts College for 16-18 year olds <p>We are working to develop new HND courses in Music, and Film and TV.</p>

	Priority				Objective	Achieved to date	Target output 2026/27
	Skill	National	S Mids	Herts			
8	Professional and business services	✓	✓	✓	<p>a. Full-time learners will gain a set of skills and knowledge related to their chosen occupational pathway, informed by employer input, which will help them close the gap between completion of their main learning aim and readiness for work.</p> <p>b. We will provide courses to meet the fast-growing demand for a range of business roles, as well as entry-level employment</p>	<p>a. Full-time learners complete a portfolio of Bravura activities.</p> <p>b. We offer a range of business learning aims from L1 to L4 including specialisms in law, marketing, enterprise, accounting, management, and human resources. In September 2024, we created additional capacity in our courses in Business, Personal and Social Development Skills, and Employability Skills.</p>	<p>This portfolio of courses will continue in 2026/27.</p> <p>New courses or increased enrolments planned for 2026/27 (subject to enrolment):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 1 Introductory Diploma in Business – increase of one cohort at West Herts College for 16-18 year olds • Level 2 First Extended Certificate in Business – – increase of one cohort at West Herts College for 16-18 year olds • Level 3 Diploma in Skills for Business: Enterprise – new course for 16-18 year olds at West Herts College (cohorts at both Watford and Hemel campuses) <p>We have successfully bid to deliver modular HTQs. We will test the market for HTQs in Leadership and Management, and Marketing Management.</p>
9	Financial services	✓		✓	Provide training in skills and knowledge which supports financial services employment	Our business and A Level provision align to this need and learners on relevant courses	<p>New courses or increased enrolments planned for 2026/27 (subject to enrolment):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association of Accounting

	Priority				Objective	Achieved to date	Target output 2026/27
	Skill	National	S Mids	Herts			
					locally as well as preparing learners to progress to higher-level study in this priority area	benefit from masterclasses from the financial services industry, which develop their skills and knowledge beyond their qualification specifications. We decided not to extend our provision of Economics A Level.	Technicians (AAT) L1 and L2 – new courses for adults at Barnfield College, including evening provision for accessibility to learners in work
10	Other: inclusion, and employability including NEET provision	✓	✓	✓	To support those furthest from work, those who are economically active, and those who are vulnerable or disadvantaged, to move to suitable employment or training.	Delivery of employability workshops for JCP clients and development of SWAPs (detailed above)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are developing a L1 programme for NEETs for 2026-27 • We are piloting a workers' rights qualification, to help learners protect themselves from exploitation • Level 1 Award in British Sign Language (new full-cost course)

Local Needs

The Corporation has reviewed the curriculum offered by the College and considers that it meets local needs.

West Herts College Group offers a broad range of academic, vocational, and professional training from foundation level to level 5, including apprenticeships and non-accredited provision. The college continues to develop courses identified by the DfE as priority high quality provision including apprenticeships and T Levels, and is working on the introduction of apprenticeship units and modular HTQs.

West Herts College provision aligns to the skills required for the national priority sectors for growth identified in the Modern Industrial Strategy. The college also focuses on meeting local needs, working with other providers to avoid overlapping curriculum offers. The college has been responsive to employer feedback through the LSIP consultation, as detailed in this Statement, and works with a range of stakeholders on other local needs, some of which arise quickly and require a rapid response, such as workshops for clients of Job Centre Plus through the Get Britain Working agenda.

The table on pages 17-27 of this Statement outline our longer-term strategic outcomes and actions.

Corporation statement

On behalf of the West Herts College Group corporation, it is hereby confirmed that the college plan as set out above reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the corporation at their meeting on 13th May 2026.

The plan will be published on the college's website within three months of the start of the new academic year and can be accessed from the following link: <https://www.westherts.ac.uk/about/policies-statements>

Chair of Governors



Dr Tony Breslin

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer



Gill Worgan

Dated: 13th May 2026

Supporting documentation

Hertfordshire [Local Skills Improvement Plan](#)

South-East Midlands [Local Skills Improvement Plan](#)

The college was inspected by Ofsted in April 2024; the report is here:
<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/31/130720>

West Herts College Group [Strategic Plan](#)

Contact us

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