



Accountability Statement 2025/26

CONTENTS.

1.	College mission & purpose	03
2.	Context & place	05
3.	Approach to developing the statement	08
4.	Contribution to national, regional & local priorities	10
5.	Corporation statement	14
6.	Links to related documents	15



1.

COLLEGE MISSION & PURPOSE.

Gateshead College is a provider of high-quality education with a strong focus on vocational and technical education which prepares people for work and meets local, regional and national skills needs.

The college serves Gateshead and the wider region with provision for young people, adults and employers which gives individuals the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need for their next steps in education, training or employment whilst addressing social barriers and social mobility.

The Board of Governors approved a new Strategic Plan in July 2022 which you can find [here](#). This followed a robust programme of consultation which resulted in a mandate from our community to focus on four key strategic priorities: Learners, People; Partnership and Sustainability and a collective ambition to make sure everyone can thrive and benefit from the opportunities available at Gateshead College.

This is underpinned by a strong set of values which shape not just what we do, but how we do it. Our longstanding ethos of Employment Edge is embraced by everyone across Gateshead College, it is the constant that will ensure our learners have the best chance of getting a job, starting a business and progressing their career.

Our contribution to developing a stronger, fairer and greener North East is significant and whilst our environment is constantly changing and challenging we continue to adapt, working with partners to ensure our learners, colleagues and communities can flourish now and in the future.

We want our culture to reflect the joy of learning and being in Gateshead College; providing an environment where everyone feels valued for being themselves and can enjoy studying and working with dedicated colleagues is fundamental to our ambitions.

OUR PURPOSE.

To develop skilled, confident learners who succeed in work and life.

OUR VISION.

To be at the heart of a thriving community, helping people to achieve their full potential and gain the employment edge.

OUR ETHOS.

Employment edge – industry inspired education that combines high quality learning with real world skills helping all learners, whatever their age, background or starting point, develop the confidence, personal and professional skills to be successful. Gateshead College learners will have the best chance of getting a job, starting a business and progressing in their career; an employment edge that will set them apart.

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES.

Learners

To support and inspire every learner to make the most of their talents, skills and opportunities. We will encourage them to work hard and enjoy their time with us.

People

To be the place where people want to work, feel valued and share a passion to help our learners succeed.

Partnership

To work in partnership with organisations, businesses and communities to create the best opportunities for our learners.

Sustainability

To be a resilient organisation which takes positive action to address climate change, creating a better environment for our learners, our people and future generations.

The college reviews its Strategic Plan annually, updating partners and stakeholders on progress and providing the opportunity to take account of changing needs and developments including the introduction of Local Skills Improvement Plans, Duty to Review and changes in the regional context.

**COMMUNITY
CONVERSATIONS &
CONSULTATIONS.**

**DUTY TO
REVIEW.**

**STRATEGIC
PLAN.**

LSIPS.

**ACCOUNTABILITY
STATEMENT.**

2. CONTEXT & PLACE.



Gateshead College is at the heart of its community and offers high quality provision developed to meet its unique and diverse needs.

Gateshead covers 55 square miles, two thirds of which is rural, and is the largest of the five Tyne and Wear authorities. The college's sites are situated alongside industry and employment hubs and enable effective engagement with industry. The Skills Academies for Construction and Automotive Engineering are located on Team Valley Trading Estate and the Baltic Campus, is in Gateshead's urban centre, the focus for regeneration and growth in the digital economy and cultural-led regeneration. Venues such as the Glasshouse, BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art have been complemented by further investment to support the digital tech industry. The college's Academy for Sport is based at Gateshead International Stadium.

Business and Economic Profile

Gateshead College operates within the North East Combined Authority (NECA) area, with most learners and apprentices being from Gateshead, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, Newcastle, Sunderland, County Durham and Northumberland.

The area is split between two Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) and the college leads on digital for the North East LSIP.

The college is heavily integrated into the regional skills system and is working proactively with the LSIPs with the North East Automotive Alliance (NEAA) and the North East Chamber of Commerce (NECC).

Demographics

Gateshead has a population of 197,722. 80% of the population are adults and 23.1% of the population are aged 65 and over. The overall population in Gateshead is expected to grow by 5% by 2043 and it is projected that the population of people aged 65 and above will increase by 29% within that time.

The population of Gateshead is predominantly white with 7% identifying themselves as an ethnicity other than white, which has increased from 1.6% in 2001. The minority ethnic population is made up of people from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds. There is a large orthodox Jewish population in the borough.

In Gateshead, 31% of the population live in the 20% most deprived areas in England. Gateshead is ranked the 43rd most deprived out of 317 local authorities in England. Much of this deprivation is based within the central and eastern urban areas of the borough. 45% of the college's full-time learners live in the most deprived quintile.

Employment

71.3% of working age (16-64) Gateshead residents are in employment which compares with an average of 75.1% for England as a whole and 5.2% are unemployed, claiming jobseekers' allowance or universal credit compared to an average of 3.8% for England. The student population of Gateshead is 7,900. Students account for 24.8% of the economically inactive population aged 16 to 64.

The average household income is just over £30,004 per year, Salaries in Gateshead are 10.12% less than the national average of £33,384. 85.6% of the people in Gateshead have an NVQ1 qualification. 73.9% have an NVQ2 qualification. 55.1% have an NVQ3 qualification. 36.6% have an NVQ4 qualification. 9.2% of the people in Gateshead have no qualifications. The national average for people with no qualifications is 6.6%

Refugee Resettlement Area

The college has learners from 58 countries across the world. Gateshead actively supports the resettlement of refugees and has accommodated amongst the highest number of families in the country. The college plays a central role, in partnership with the Local Authority and JobCentre Plus, supporting young people and adults to develop the language skills they need to function socially and live independently.

Travel to Learn

The geographical nature of Gateshead College and its sites alongside the excellent transport links including the Tyne and Wear Metro, mean that the demographic of people attending the college are much wider than Gateshead.





3.

APPROACH TO DEVELOPING THE STATEMENT.

The Statement has taken account of the national priorities as identified by the Department for Education and the Local Skills Improvement Plans.

National Priority Sectors

These are:

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

Industrial Strategy Growth Driving Sectors

These are:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Digital and Technology
- Life Sciences
- Clean Energy Industries
- Creative Industries
- Defence
- Financial Services
- Professional & Business Services

Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs)

College leaders continue to work closely with those leading the LSIPs – the North East Automotive Alliance who are leading the North East LSIP and the North East Chamber of Commerce (NECC) who are leading the North of Tyne and Tees Valley LSIPs.

NE LSIP	North of Tyne LSIP	Tees Valley LSIP
Advanced Manufacturing	Green Transport/ Net Zero manufacturing	Green Energy
Digital	Construction – new technology	Green Transport/ Net Zero manufacturing
Health & Life Science	Health & Social Care	Construction – new technology
Construction	Culture, Creative & Tourism	Health & Social Care
Transport & Logistics	Transferable skills – digital, professional, project management & finance	Transferable skills – digital, professional, project management & finance
Work readiness/ reskilling/ upskilling	Work readiness/ reskilling/ upskilling	Work readiness/ reskilling/ upskilling
Sustainability	Sustainability	Sustainability

Ofsted

Between the 7 and 10 March 2023, the college was subject to an enhanced inspection from Ofsted. The inspection validated the high quality of education, including recognising the outstanding provision for adults, personal development, and behaviours and attitudes of students and apprentices. The overall grading of the inspection was Good. Ofsted also has been charged with forming a judgement on the contribution that the college makes to meeting skills needs and concluded that the college makes a Strong contribution to meeting skills needs.

Community Conversations

First held in 2022 to inform the development of the Strategic Plan, these are repeated annually so the college can report on progress and demonstrate accountability for achieving its goals and, importantly, listen and respond to any changes in the needs and priorities of its community. Bringing together colleagues, partners and learners, the views of more than 100 people were gathered and the results considered as part of this year's Accountability Statement.

Community Conversations and interviews with regional stakeholders highlighted Gateshead College as a respected organisation known for strong leadership, community focus, and reliable delivery. The Employment Edge ethos remains a strength, although there is a clear need to adapt it for future economies shaped by AI and automation.

Key themes included the importance of bold ambitions, continuing to prioritise wellbeing, active listening, managing growth and complexity, and reinforcing equality, diversity, and inclusion. Areas of focus to prioritise included strengthening leadership through greater regional influence, specialising in emerging sectors such as defence and cybersecurity, embedding innovation across operations, and a deeper commitment to tackling regional inequalities and sustainability.

Wider Engagement

The college is fully embedded into the region and its businesses. It is well represented by members of the senior team across key organisations and employer representative bodies. This includes representation on the NECC Education and Skills Forum; NECC Further Education Strategic Partner and member of NECC Tyne & Wear Council; member of the strategic advisory board of the NewcastleGateshead Initiative (NGI); member of the Entrepreneurs' Forum; member of the Northern Screen Skills regional group; member of North East Automotive Alliance and advisory board member of Dynamo.

Involvement in these groups and the broader partnerships which exist with a wide and diverse range of organisations, including the third sector, across all levels of the organisation has enabled the college to have a clear understanding of regional and national priorities and local need.

Duty to review

The duty to review is a statutory requirement introduced under Section 52B of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, as amended by the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022. It mandates that governing bodies of further education institutions must Review how well their education or training provision meets local needs and consider actions to better meet those needs. Governing bodies must undertake a review at least once every three years. A comprehensive review was undertaken in 2022/23 and 2023/24.

4.

CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL, REGIONAL & LOCAL PRIORITIES.

Gateshead College is recognised by employers as the college which gives learners the employment edge. We have a proven track record of being responsive by creating bespoke curriculum and training solutions, with many of our 1,200 employers using the college as an extension of their learning and development function. This service is particularly important to the significant number of SME and micro businesses in the region.

The college's robust curriculum planning cycle is informed by labour market intelligence (LMI), employer voice and local and regional priorities. It is focused on intent and ensuring the offer is fit for purpose, viable and responsive to the local, regional and national economy and the changing workforce. Software such as Vector and Insights provide labour market intelligence and reveal the skills DNA of the region across sectors.

Each curriculum area has a skills advisory board which works with staff to regularly review their offer so they can then skilfully craft and sequence the curriculum in response to feedback. Employers engage with learners and apprentices in various ways including guest lectures, workplace visits, setting and providing feedback on employer-led projects, work experience, hackathons, trade shows, industry placements and employer mentoring. These engagements are vital for learners but also provide opportunities for employers to identify future talent and secure learners as apprentices.

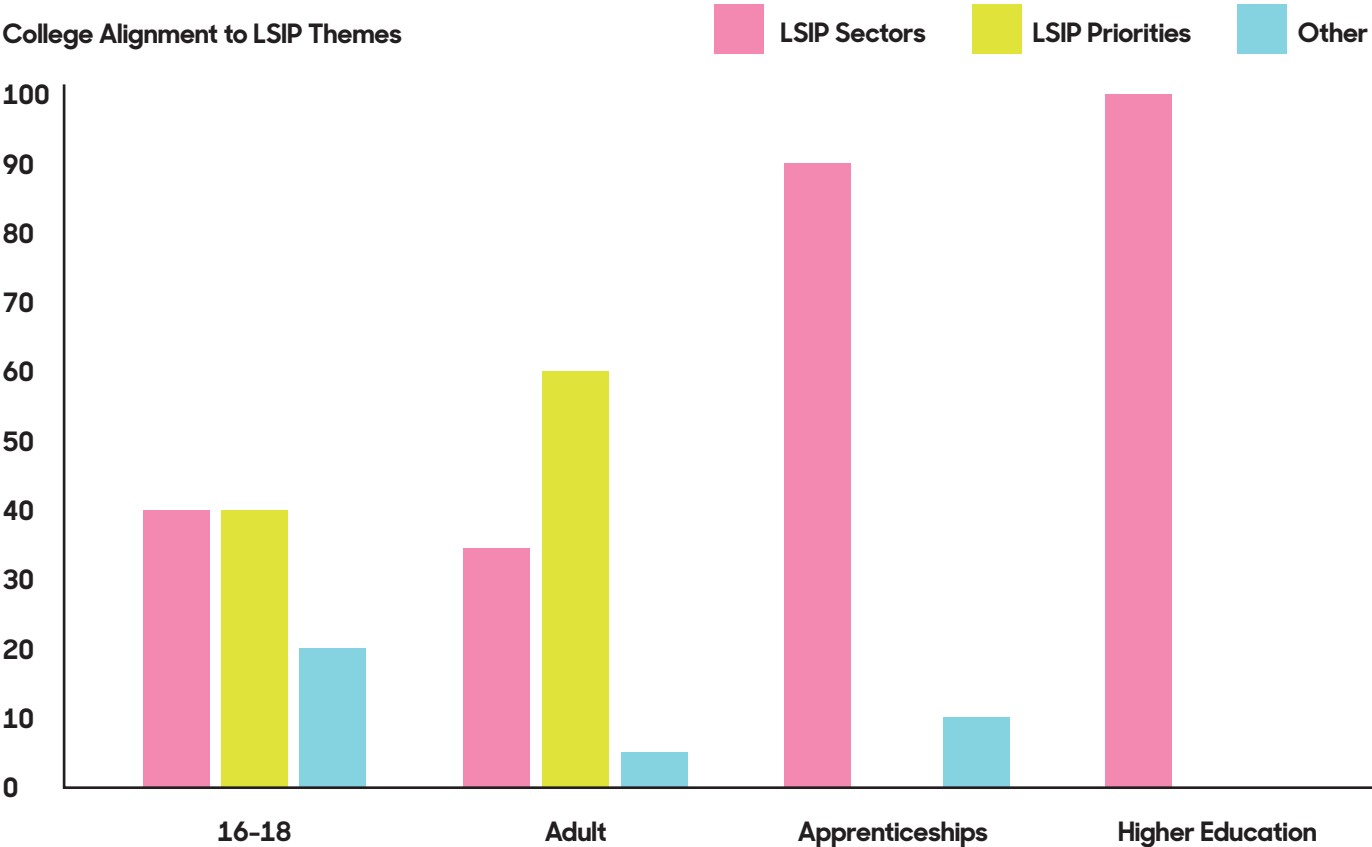
The college understands its role as a local and regional anchor institution is to support the development of skills and raise aspirations and we are fully embedded into the heart of the community.

The college support around 3000 young people, 5000 adults and 500 apprentices each year with results consistently in the top quartiles of educational attainment. Positive progression rates are consistently above 90%. Provision in progressive and innovative as a T level pilot college, a trailblazer in bootcamps and early adopter of HTQs. The PlanBEE initiative is providing solutions to skills shortages in the construction, rail and digital sectors.



Curriculum Alignment to LSIP priorities

Gateshead College serves North of Tyne (NoT) and North East LSIP learners. The effective transport infrastructure and new ways of working in many industries, will mean the workforce north and south of the Tyne will be transient and a pragmatic approach to considering both LSIPs’ priorities will be needed. There will be a single LSIP developed for the region aligned to the geography of North East Combined Authority.



The college’s provision is significantly aligned to the identified LSIP priorities. This is not by accident; the college has long considered regional priorities and LMI as part of its effective integrated curriculum and business planning process.

For young people, 40% of core aims align to LSIP sectors and 40% to LSIP priorities. 20% of the provision, the same as 2022/23, is in other sectors including Hair & Beauty, Uniformed Public Services and Sport, Torah Studies and A Levels with high levels of positive destinations. All study programmes are influenced by industry panels which dictate the essential employability, basic and digital skills required for their sector which are integrated into the programmes. 31% of young people are working to improve their formal mathematics qualifications and 26% are improving their English qualifications.

36% of adult learners are studying provision aligned to the LSIP sectors, and 61% to LSIP priorities with the majority being Mathematics, English and ESOL qualifications. 3% are not aligned to LSIP priorities however this is down from 4% in 2022/23.

The significant proportion of apprenticeships – 91%, an increase of 1% from 2022/23 – are aligned to LSIP sectors. The balancing 9% includes Hair and Beauty, Safety, Health & Environmental Technical apprentices and Early Years Educator.

100% of the college’s higher education provision is aligned to the LSIP sectors.

5. STRATEGIC AIMS & OBJECTIVES.

ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT AIM	CONTRIBUTION TO MEETING REGIONAL/ NATIONAL PRIORITIES	OUTCOME/IMPACT Target date 2023/24 unless otherwise stated.
Increase the digital skills of employees in the region.	<p>Hold employer events in the Digital Up North hub to showcase digital provision.</p> <p>Deliver digital employee training to upskill existing employees.</p> <p>Hub to be used for fulltime learners to access digital learning to prepare for employment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deliver 10 employer events ● Deliver 300 digital bootcamps ● Upskill 200 employees
Grow Higher Skills Learning in key sectors	<p>Increase level 4 learner numbers, prioritising HTQs.</p> <p>Source extended placements for HTQ students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase HE learner numbers from 119 to 150
	Create a detailed plan for modular delivery in preparation for the Lifelong Learning Entitlement.	
	Develop the HTQ in cyber security.	
Increase numbers of T levels students whilst maintaining and improving quality of results	To deliver results in top quartile nationally for T levels students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase T level numbers from 132 to 150 ● Maintain Pass Rate at > 95%
	Increase T level learner numbers.	
	Monitor and align T levels where qualifications are defunded – ensuring positive destinations for all students.	

ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT AIM	CONTRIBUTION TO MEETING REGIONAL/ NATIONAL PRIORITIES	OUTCOME/IMPACT Target date 2023/24 unless otherwise stated.
Increase the number of skilled learners entering the construction sector	Engage in the construction Technical Excellence College initiative seeking to be an active partner in the initiative.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase construction leavers from 578 to 650
	Deliver skills bootcamps in retrofit and modern methods of construction.	
	Increase the range of full cost courses in plumbing, gas and electrical.	
Increase the number of learners whose first language is not English achieving qualifications that prepare them for the world of work	Develop a clear understanding of the challenges faced by ESOL learners as part of the self-assessment process to increase pass rates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase the number of learners who achieve an ESOL qualification from 1342 to 1450 ● Increase ESOL achievement rate from 79% to 85%
	Implement a flexible assessment model which better fits with the needs of current learners.	
	Invest in additional support for adult ESOL learners in targeted sessions.	
Improve all learners' readiness for their positive next step in education and/or employment.	Conduct a skills panel review for each curriculum area in the 2025/26 academic year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● End of year survey question "The Knowledge and Skills I have learnt on my course are relevant and has prepared me for my future" >92% ● "My learning programme was designed to give me the knowledge and skills for my future career" >93% ● Increase work placement opportunities from 1347 to 1475
	Implement employers feedback into tutorials and curriculum for learners.	
	Increase the amount of work experience and industry placement opportunities.	
	Pilot more flexible provision for learners who struggle to engage in current models of education.	

6.

PROGRESS AGAINST ACCOUNTABILITY AIMS 2024/25.

Gateshead College Strategic Priority	Aim	Outcome	Narrative	RAG
Learners Partnership	Stimulate demand in high quality level 3 technical routes in priority sectors to increase participation in these areas.	In crease the number of learners on level 3 courses in priority sectors by 5% by 2025/26.	Current applications up by 19%. predicted growth 8.9%. Strong demand in Digital and Construction.	
		Deliver a programme of targeted engagement events with school leavers focused on T levels to all Gateshead secondary schools.	Programme being delivered by the school liaison & transitions team	
		Develop awareness initiatives in conjunction with key partners targeting adults to raise participation in 2025/26 by 10%.	Transitions planned with Gateshead Council. Increased presence and awareness with the JCP. Current enrolments ahead of profile however funding increase for engineering qualifications will reduce headcount.	
Learners Partnership Sustainability	Further develop the CoLab initiative to enhance collaborative experience for learners and apprentices to enhance work and life skills.	Develop a sustainable infrastructure for CoLab.	Implementation of full time coordinator.	
		Design and deliver 3 projects that benefit learners, the community and employers using the Co Lab model.	Sunday for Sammy. Chamber Summer Dinner and House Party and Greece the musical delivered.	
		Generate opportunities to deliver Co Lab projects to meet regional and national skills needs.	Virtual production and Screen Skills aligned to regional priorities.	
People Learners	Continue to embed dedicated mental health and wellbeing resources and support for students.	Train all student facing support staff in mental Health First Aid.	Sessions planned for development week including remaing and newly recruited learning facilitators.	
		Improve use of data to better understand the challenges faced by learners and apprentices.	New system 'MyConcern' fully embedded with better intelligence on specific issues. Data for learners who access mental health now available in pro solution.	
		Improve student attendance by 1 % and retention rates by 1 %.	Current attendance static (87%) and retention +1.5 (94.6).	
		Invest in addition al support for ESOL learners who are presenting with increasing wellbeing challenges.	Additional resource in place having a significant impact. Attendance +7%.	

Gateshead College Strategic Priority	Aim	Outcome	Narrative	RAG
Learners Sustainability People	Take positive action to attract, retain and develop staff to deliver the highest quality industry driven curriculum.	Develop a programme of targeted and appropriate training, mentoring and support.	Development days themed with wellbeing, skills and awareness sessions offered. Curriculum Leader training in place. Scoping of SMT training is progressing.	
		Promote industry placements and insight days to increase currency of staff.	Industry days are effective in many sectors (Engineering, Health care, Early Years and Catering) but not yet consistently embedded.	
		Develop recruitment strategy and a talent pool increasing the number of quality applications for posts.	Recruitment project completed increasing applicants by 43% identifying best route to candidates. Candidate packs developed.	
Learners Partnership Sustainability	Develop Higher Technical Qualifications in Early Years, Leadership and Management and Mechanical Engineering for delivery in September 2025.	Develop the curriculum in conjunction with employers to include an outline scheme of learning endorsed by at least one employer.	Employer panels convened and programmes endorsed by Siblings Nursery, Fenwick's and ACT UK.	
		Gain approval to deliver HTQs internally and from the appropriate awarding organisation.	All HE validation/approval taken place and AO validation progressing. Mechanical Engineering approved, challenged with EY & LM course duration.	
		Identify capital requirements and produce a capital bid to ensure technical resources are available to deliver HTQs.	Progressing as part of curriculum and business planning.	
		Market and recruit a minimum of 12 learners in each pathway by 2025/26.	Progressing as part of curriculum and business planning.	
Learners Partnership	Increase participation in work related activity including work experience, industry placement and apprenticeships for learners with SEN.	Engage with an additional 30 employers to support learners with SEN.	32 new employers engaged this year.	
		Increase the number of learners with SEN securing supported internships.	95% supported internship learners engaged in 2/3 day work experience up from 65% in 2023/24.	
		Increase the number of learners with work experience of greater than 30 hours by 10%	55% on track to complete work experience an increase of 7% from 2023/24. More are planned in year.	

5. CORPORATION STATEMENT.

On behalf of Gateshead College, it is hereby confirmed that the plan as set out above reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the corporation at their meeting on 2nd July 2025. The plan will be published on the college's website within three months of the start of the new academic year.



6. LINKS TO RELATED DOCUMENTS.

[Gateshead College Strategic Plan](#)

[Ofsted Report](#)

[North East LSIP](#)

[Tees Valley LSIP](#)





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