Solihull College & University Centre
and Stratford-upon-Avon College

ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

2023

Solihull College & University Centre

Stratford-upon-Avon College

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Solihull College & University Centre | Stratford-upon-Avon College

Purpose

Solihull College and University Centre's key purpose is to inspire learning and improve lives through education, training, and skills development. We support the social and economic success of the communities we serve in Solihull, Greater Birmingham, Stratford-upon-Avon and Warwickshire.

We achieve this through our core values. In everything we do, we strive to be inspiring, innovative, responsible, caring, collaborative and respectful.

We collaborate with stakeholders, leveraging their specialisms, to make a strong contribution to skills needs, for example:

- The Greater Birmingham & Solihull Institute of Technology (GBSIoT) specialises in engineering and manufacturing. Solihull College & University Centre leads the consortium, comprising Aston University, Birmingham City University, and South and City College Birmingham as core partners. Leading the GBSIoT enables us to strategically steer local skills planning and gain insight directly from stakeholders on emerging skills needs.

- The College collaborates on key investment projects to drive the skills agenda in the region. We have worked collaboratively with partners as part of the Strategic Development Fund (SDF) and Colleges West Midlands (CWM) on improving skills in electrification, battery technologies and construction. Our strong reputation for collaborative work has led to the College being appointed to deliver the Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) across the West Midlands and Warwickshire. This is potentially the largest LSIF in the country.

The key objectives of the Annual Accountability Statement are:

- To ensure a strategic response to the skills needs laid out in the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP). This ensures we prepare learners for the emerging skills demands of employers
- To drive co-creation and co-delivery of curriculum with employers, for example, pre-employability programmes such as Sector Work-based Academy Programmes (SWAP's), and Bootcamps, developed in partnership with employers to ensure meaningful outcomes for learners
- To build a successful industry placement model to support the "scaling up" of T-Level provision
- To invest in the development of staff to maintain industry-standard delivery of skills and qualifications
- To increase the reach and impact of our employer engagement model, building relationships around our core values.

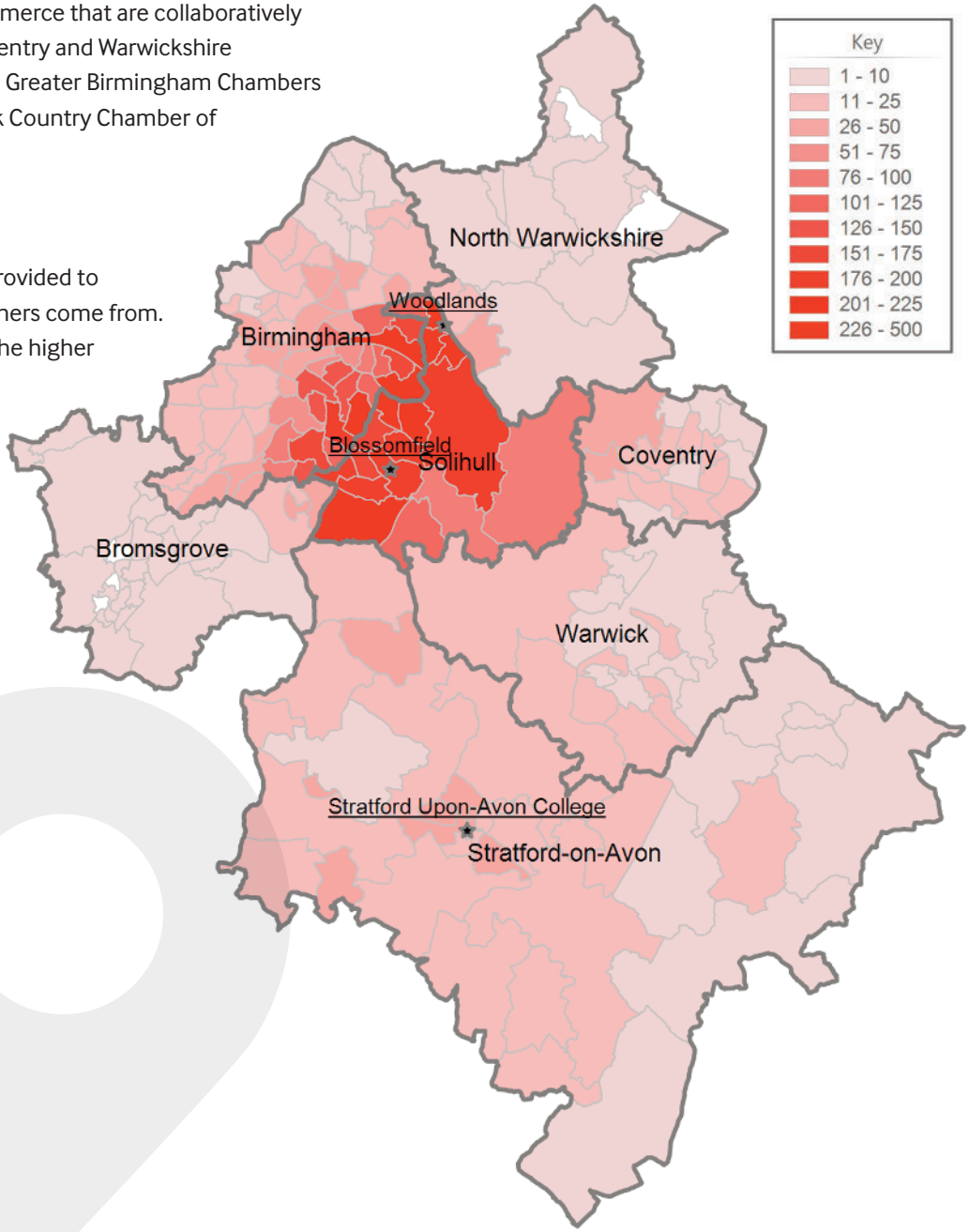
Context and Place

Solihull College and University Centre is a three-campus General Further Education (GFE) provider situated to the southeast of Birmingham.

Our geographical location enables us to work with the three Chambers of Commerce that are collaboratively delivering the LSIP (Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce, Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce, and Black Country Chamber of Commerce).

Heat maps

Heat maps have been provided to illustrate where our learners come from. The darker areas show the higher numbers of enrolment.



Woodlands Campus

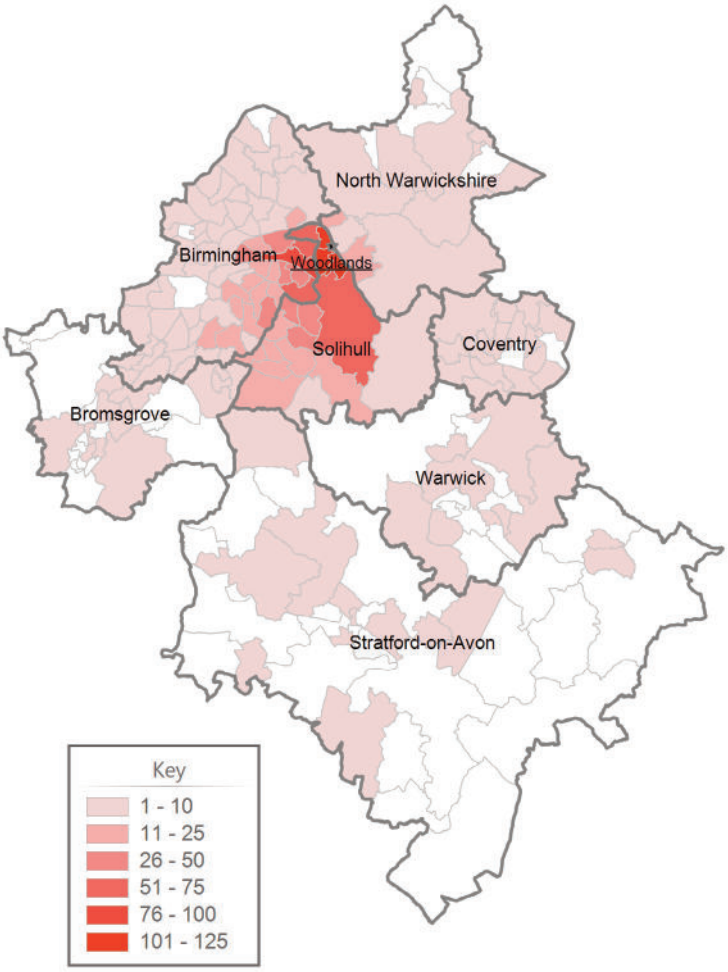
Woodlands Campus is located in the ward of Smith's Wood in North Solihull, one of the 20% most income-deprived wards in England.

1,500 learners

The unique selling points of this campus are:

- Wide range of vocational programmes from Entry Level to Level 6
- Home to the Institute of Technology (IoT) which directly supports the engineering curriculum
- Industry standard aeronautical equipment is available, including a BAe Jetstream T Mk2 aircraft and a full Boeing 737 flight simulator
- State-of-the-art specialist construction workshops for painting & decorating, plastering, bricklaying, and property maintenance
- Specialist motor vehicle workshops for mechanical and hybrid technologies.

Heat map showing where our learners come from



Blossomfield Campus

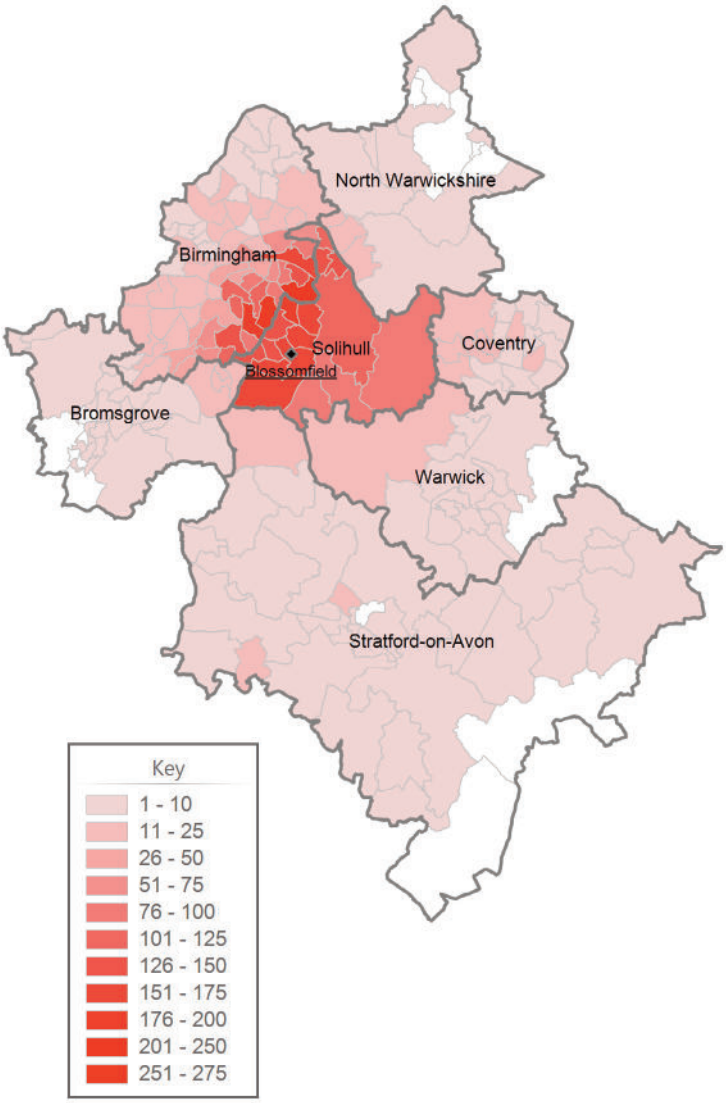
Blossomfield Campus is the College's largest campus with 5,500 learners. Centrally located, this campus is a short walk from Solihull town centre.

5,500 learners

The unique selling points of this campus are:

- Wide range of vocational programmes from Entry Level to Level 7
- Industry standard technical facilitates include applied science laboratories, IT networking laboratories, and a centre for virtual reality and robotics
- On-site Animal Centre with veterinary training facilities
- Commercial hair and beauty salons open to the public.

Heat map showing where our learners come from



Stratford-upon-Avon Campus

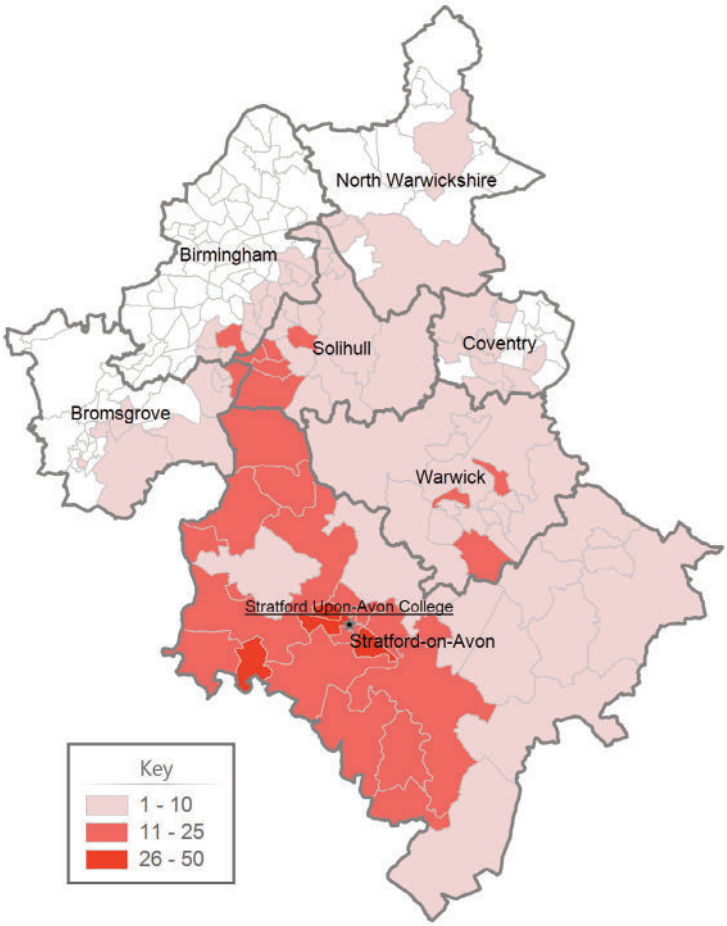
Stratford-upon-Avon College is located 20 miles south of Blossomfield Campus in Warwickshire. The curriculum offer is closely aligned to the Stratford-upon-Avon District Local Industrial and Economic Strategy 2018-2031.

1,000 learners

The unique selling points of this campus are:

- Longstanding national reputation for creative and performing arts education
- Currently undergoing a £12m redevelopment to install state-of-the-art TV/radio studios and a fully equipped plumbing and electrical installation facility
- Specialist workshops for the development of motor vehicle, brick and carpentry skills are available.

Heat map showing where our learners come from



Approach to Developing the Annual Accountability Statement

Collaboration is at the core of Solihull College & University Centre's approach to this accountability statement.

Development has been informed by the West Midlands and Warwickshire LSIP, which focuses on the themes of digital skills, green skills and leadership and management capabilities.

The LSIP aims:

- To develop an understanding of the immediate and future skills needs of employers
- To facilitate the development of an agile and responsive workforce
- To stimulate investment in skills, creating meaningful employment and in-work progression opportunities for residents. The LSIP focuses on providing an innovative curriculum offer that reflects the current and future skills demands of the region.

Solihull College & University Centre will continue to align its adult education provision with the needs of the local communities and the priorities set out in the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Skills Strategy for the devolved Adult Skills Budget (AEB) and the Solihull Economic Delivery Plan.

This includes working closely with Jobcentre Plus, to reduce barriers to the labour market for residents for example, poor digital literacy. These partnerships will enable us to grow pre-employment offers for example, SWAPs and Bootcamps and progress residents into good jobs in line with local, regional, and national needs.

Engagement with charities and local community groups enables the College to target bespoke training to micro communities to deliver specific regional priorities.

Our agile and ambitious curriculum plan ensures that we are well-positioned to deliver on the government's programme of technical reforms for example, Higher Technical Qualifications, T-Levels and Transition to T-Level Programmes. Keeping pace with the technical reforms has led to more innovative interactions with employers, increased professional development for teachers and a curriculum that more closely aligns to skills needs.

Annual Accountability Statement

Solihull College & University Centre is making a strong contribution to the skills needs and priorities identified by our key employers, Local Authorities (LA), Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCA), Chambers of Commerce and the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP).

This contribution is delivered through the College's curriculum areas, the largest of which are engineering, construction and the built environment, creative arts, animal care, business and management, and health and social care. The curriculum leads in all areas have closely aligned their strategic curriculum intent with priority skills needs.

Sectors identified by the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP (GBSLEP) and Coventry and Warwickshire LEP (CWLEP) are aligned to our largest curriculum areas:

Area	GBSLEP	CWLEP
Business, Professional and Financial Services	✓	
Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering	✓	✓
Energy Technologies and Services	✓	
Creative industries	✓	
Life Sciences	✓	
Culture and Tourism		✓

The College has developed a reputation for excellence in vocational and technical education. This was endorsed by Ofsted, who judged the College to be Good in Spring 2022. In particular, the Ofsted inspection report noted that the College's culture is "caring, purposeful, and professional" and that learners "acquire substantial new skills and knowledge during their studies."

The College's high-quality and ambitious curriculum that supports the economic prosperity of learners, local employers, and communities is driven by the "Inspire Success for All" Strategic Plan 2022-25.

The strategic plan sets out five clear ambitions:

1. Deliver a high-quality curriculum that enhances the life opportunities of our learners, the inclusive growth of our communities, and the productivity of the employers with whom we work
2. Secure the future of our organization in a fast-changing sector through careful and appropriate income diversification and growth
3. Create a high-performing culture that attracts and retains the best people, is fully inclusive, and has a happy and proud workforce
4. Deliver a considered but ambitious programme of investment underpinned by financial stability

Click here to view the College's Strategic Plan

In a small number of highly specialist areas, the college has partnered with a subcontractor to meet the diverse needs of local communities and/or engage hard-to-reach adults who may not otherwise engage with traditional college provision.

Partnerships

- **RMF:** The College's key partnership is with RMF, a local private training provider that specialises in construction for hard-to-reach learners.
  - Funded by the West Midlands Combined Authority's Construction Gateway initiative, this partnership has been highly effective in providing a workforce for large regional infrastructure projects such as HS2 (over 900 learners now trained).
  - All learners are guaranteed a job interview upon completion, and leave with skills in groundworks, rail and plant operations.
  - The College, RMF and employers have worked in close partnership to support progression into employment.
  - Curriculum design and delivery is employer-led to ensure that industry needs are met and that there is a clear career pathway for all learners.

- **Colebridge Trust:** The College has also partnered with Colebridge Trust, a specialist community provider in North Solihull where there are a high number of economically deprived wards (ranked amongst the most deprived 5%-10% in England). This partnership supports the wellbeing and economic potential of hard-to-reach learners who have been marginalised due to disability, health conditions, and other limiting circumstances, such as care responsibilities. Through direct intervention work, linking people to local work, volunteering, and training opportunities, the partnership has enabled:
  - More local people to find work, training, and self-employment
  - More local people to be empowered to improve health and well-being
  - More people to be supported in tackling the effects of deprivation
  - Improved inclusion and diversity to ensure that a breadth of opportunities is readily available.

Contribution to National, Regional, and Local Priorities

Working collaboratively across the region to meet skills needs, Solihull College & University Centre provides a high-quality and ambitious curriculum that supports the economic prosperity of our learners, local employers, and communities – all in line with the skills priorities identified by the LSIP, WMCA and other stakeholders.

The College has robust systems to ensure curriculum is built around clearly defined skills needs. Specifically, curriculum intent is aligned to LSIP priorities in leadership and management, digital skills, and green skills. This process is used to deliver on the following Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) from the College's Strategic Plan 2022-2025:

- Increasing our 16-18 numbers by 10%.
- Increasing apprenticeship income by 20%.
- Increasing adult income by 10%.
- Increasing success rates in winning LSIP strategic priorities bids by 10%.
- Achieving our implementation plan for technical education transaction programmes (T-Levels and HTQs).

The following tables explain how each curriculum area meets the skills needs.

Curriculum Aim / Objective	Skills Contribution	LSIP Local, Regional, National Priority
Skills focus of our Computing curriculum is: • To create a CISCO academy and a flexible reskilling offer for adults by January 2024 • To deliver a WMCA-funded Bootcamp in digital by January 2024 • To deliver and significantly grow Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs), creating a Cyber Security specialism from Level 3 to Level 5.	The school of computing and emerging technologies focusses on a range of qualifications from entry level to advanced level. As identified within the LSIP the West Midlands is significantly behind the rest of the UK with basic digital skills. As a result the school have developed and are running an essential digital skills curriculum to support people into work or upskill current employers with the skills their workforce needs to be successful in the digital arena. These skills also underpin the provision in the school through Level 1 and Level 2 to support learners overall digital skills before moving into technical higher-level skills. With the advanced digital skills, it is clear from the LSIP that the West Midlands has one of the fastest growing technology sectors, with the top demands including Network Engineers and IT Consultants as well as with data analytics which is prevalent, running through many different sectors. As part of the curriculum reforms, the school has firstly developed a T-Level at level 3, supporting learners to develop and build the underpinning knowledge and skills required for success, including Networking & Cyber Security, Programming & Coding, and Data Analytics. This then feeds in to the HTQ in Cyber Security which develops higher level skills in Data Analytics and Coding. High proportions of UK businesses lack staff with the technical, incident response and governance skills needed to manage their cyber security. Research from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport revealed that: 48% of businesses have a basic skills gap in cyber security, including setting up configured firewalls, storing or transferring personal data, and detecting and removing malware; 30% of businesses have more advanced skills gaps, in areas such as penetration testing, forensic analysis and security architecture; and 27% do not have the skills to respond to cyber security incidents. This skills gap is addressed by the T-Level and HTQ. The school's adult offer clearly addresses the skills shortages identified above by offering a range of vendor qualifications through Cisco and Microsoft. These programmes support both employed and unemployed adults to upskill, gaining relevant, industry standard qualifications that are nationally recognised. .	LSIP Draft Priority (Leadership and Management capabilities) Regional National

Curriculum Aim / Objective	Skills Contribution	LSIP Local, Regional, National Priority
Skills focus of our Engineering curriculum is: • To deliver high-quality and innovative provision at the forefront of technological advancements in the engineering sector, ensuring that learners are placed in the best possible position as they transition into employment or onto higher-level skills • To become the region's leading provider for Advanced Manufacturing through our work as lead partner on GBSIoT.	The engineering and manufacturing sectors account for 18% of all UK employment, and 21.4% of the UK's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The curriculum aims to focus provision around key areas of sector growth: green skills e.g new and emerging battery technology; artificial intelligence; and robotics, automation, and control. Clearly defined pathways support learners to progress into careers which fill skills gaps I.e., T-Level in Engineering and Manufacturing at level 3, Higher Technical Qualifications at levels 4 and 5, and Advanced / Higher-level Apprenticeships in electrical/electronics, mechanical/manufacturing and aerospace engineering up to level 6. The school's curriculum is endorsed by employers through employer boards and through their work with the GBSIoT which is a powerhouse for advanced manufacturing and engineering, bringing together a partnership of the leading further education colleges, universities, and employers for the region. The employers we work with include Sonic Communications, DPD Group, Power X, Filta Group and Aston Martin for example. In Aerospace, we work with two large employers: STS Aviation Services who focus on nose-to-tail aircraft maintenance, operating from specialist bases with three sites in the UK (Birmingham, Manchester and Newquay); and West Atlantic, an air logistics business working with a large set of companies including DPD and FedEx, offering support and maintenance in over 20 airports around Europe. The LSIP for the region has a focus on digital skills and specifically the skills requirements for engineers as they transition through the fourth industrial revolution and new and emerging technologies.	Regional
Skills focus of our Construction curriculum is: • To refocus our curriculum on decarbonising construction • To launch T-Levels in Civil Engineering, as requested by employers • To create new career pathways to Level 5 by introducing HTQs in modern construction methods.	The Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP's Priority Sectors Skills Research suggests that there could be as many as 694,000 direct jobs (relating to designing, manufacturing, constructing, operating, and maintaining a particular technology or energy source directly) employed in the Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy (LCREE) by 2030 in England, rising to over 1.18 million by 2050. The contribution to these figures made by the West Midlands is estimated to be a total of 97,000 in 2050, accounting for 8.2% of the total number of Low Carbon jobs in England that will be required in the future. This curriculum area aims to meet the needs of HS2 recruitment by offering Civil Engineering from T-Level to HTQ. The skills needs have been identified through the LSIP and are driven regionally by HS2 demands (Europe's largest construction project). continued on next page...	LSIP Draft Priority (Essential skills and practical experience) Regional National

Curriculum Aim / Objective	Skills Contribution	LSIP Local, Regional, National Priority
	Alongside delivering on these higher-level skills, the construction curriculum has a strong focus on the necessary skills and knowledge required to enter employment in a range of trade areas, including brick, carpentry & joinery, painting & decorating and plastering. The Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) research forecasts increased recruitment across these trades in the UK. The curriculum delivers the fundamental hand skills required by learners to be successful and move to higher level programmes or into employment.	
Skills focus of our Health and Social Care curriculum is: • To increase the number of pre-employment opportunities offered to local residents to meet the local skills gap in care • To deliver a full suite of technical qualifications from Level 3 to Level 5, including the launch of T-Levels and HTQs in Healthcare.	The curriculum area is focusing efforts on increasing the starter rate of carers into the social care sector. Research shows that the starter rate has fallen from 36.7% in 2018/19 to 28.5% in 2022, and our employers that they are losing staff at the fastest rate ever. Therefore, the strategy is to focus on developing pre-employment opportunities for local residents and ensuring that a full suite of technical qualifications is available to develop the skills that are expected of health care workers. Valuable work experience as part of these qualifications is key, to ensure learners are meeting the skills needs of specific local employers. Another area of focus is on in-work upskilling opportunities for individuals working for our local employers. The final objective is to begin delivering T-Levels in health and science. These programmes aim to develop the next generation of skilled employees. Content taught in lessons will then be demonstrated in placement by learners to evidence the knowledge and skills they have developed.	Local Regional
Skills focus of our Business curriculum is: • To widen access to professional and management programmes by offering more flexible and modularised programmes • To enable employers wishing to upskill their workforce to higher-level skills in business, management, finance, and people development • To benefit the local economy by allowing individuals to upskill whilst in work.	The WMCA's 2020 Local Skills Plan Evidence Report cites evidence collected by a 2019 Employer Skills Survey, on the proportion of skills-shortage vacancies which are reportedly made difficult to recruit to due to a lack of specific IT skills. Surveying found that basic IT skills such as Microsoft Office were still cited as a major constraint in the Black Country (39% of posts), but less so in Greater Birmingham (30%) and Coventry and Warwickshire (20%). Greater Birmingham also had a notable shortage of data analysis and data science skills, likely reflecting its concentration of professional services firms. The density of game development firms in Leamington Spa in Coventry and Warwickshire has also contributed to a far greater shortage of skills in online transactions, data science, and social media/marketing in this LEP area than Greater Birmingham or the Black Country. continued on next page...	LSIP Draft Priorities (Essential Skills and Practical Experience, and Leadership and Management capabilities) Regional Local

Curriculum Aim / Objective	Skills Contribution	LSIP Local, Regional, National Priority
	Therefore, this curriculum area's strategy is to focus on offering professional programmes that allow for in-work upskilling and progression to meet growing demands in the local community. This approach will also deliver on the WMCA Regional Skills Plan by delivering inclusive growth and giving more residents the skills to get and sustain good jobs and careers. It also responds to GBSLEP's Strategic Economic Plan by offering employers and employees the opportunity to progress into higher skilled positions within their current workforce or additional responsibilities within their roles. Due to the nature of their work, employees can't be released as part of an apprenticeship, however more flexible delivery approaches will enable them to gain the necessary skills and knowledge whilst in work.	
Skills focus of our Motor Vehicle curriculum is: • To invest in and deliver on electrification technologies • To ensure all learners entering the sector are skilled in electric and hybrid competence, ADAS calibrations and diagnostics, Four Wheel Alignment and F Gas • To keep the curriculum up-to-date and relevant to the local skills needs of employers by co-creating with local employers.	There is an anticipated shortfall of 35,700 technicians in this sector, and the skills shortage is more acutely felt in the West Midlands. The UK's automotive industry has become increasingly concentrated in the West Midlands, with 32.6% of jobs located in the region as of 2018, more than double the next region. This was up from 29% in 2008 whilst the overall number of jobs grew by 19% over that period. As a leading region for the manufacture of motor vehicles, the transition to low emission models is both a risk and opportunity. The region's leading brands have already announced plans for electrification of future models, including Jaguar Land Rover32, Bentley33 and Aston Martin34. The supply chain will be supported by plans for a gigafactory located south of Coventry which is targeted for production from 2025. According to the IMI, 90,000 technicians will be needed to service the volume of electric/hybrid vehicles on the road by 2030. There is an anticipated shortfall of 35,700 technicians. The College will work to ensure technicians are trained to meet this demand.	LSIP Draft Priority (Essential Skills and Practical Experience) Local Regional
Skills focus of our Travel and Tourism curriculum is: • To establish a Travel and Tourism offer at the college's Stratford upon Avon campus, aligned to the Economic Development Strategy for Stratford on Avon and Warwickshire District • Build and nurture strong links with Stratford based employers by September 2023.	We are launching a new offer of Travel and Tourism at our Stratford campus, which reflects the recovery that is taking place within the sector, and the increasing number of job vacancies that need filling. Through the economic development strategy it has been identified that there are fewer young people in the labour market. As the majority of individuals working in tourism and service sector jobs are in this age bracket, the decline exacerbates the staff shortage in the sector. The new curriculum offer at Stratford Campus offers the opportunity to work collaboratively with local and regional partners to match local skills supply to their demands.	LSIP Draft Priority (Essential Skills and Practical Experience

Curriculum Aim / Objective	Skills Contribution	LSIP Local, Regional, National Priority
Skills focus of our Hair and Beauty curriculum is: • To work closely with local hair and beauty employers to ensure they have suitable candidates to fill their vacancies and grow their businesses.	The Hair and Beauty Curriculum has been influenced by pre-pandemic and post-pandemic requirements. There were more than 46,000 hair and beauty businesses operating in the UK in 2021, a 3% rise on the previous year. Despite the pandemic, salon numbers have continued to increase year on year. 2021 report by the National Hair & Beauty Federation (NHBF) identified the industry as one of the hardest hit by the UK's pandemic lockdowns, with turnover falling by an average of 45% in 2020 compared to 2019. Salon capacity fell to 70% of its pre-pandemic level due to social distancing and enforced closures. Full-time employment was also down 21% on 2019's figures. The Hairdressing and Beauty Curriculum is focused on raising the standards within the local industry developing progression pathways to Level 3 which will stimulate growth in the local hair and beauty markets, ensuring that the skills employers need are met, leading to a more productive and better qualified workforce.	LSIP Draft Priority (Essential Skills and Practical Experience)
Skills focus of our Animal Welfare & Veterinary Nursing curriculum is: • To deliver high quality CPD and progression opportunities to the growing canine and veterinary nursing profession whilst also providing skilled young people to enter the workforce in the field of animal welfare.	This curriculum area is responding to the growing skills needs in pet care and health industry following a sharp period of national growth. In the UK, the average annual pet market growth is 3.9% (2012-2018) but pet grooming services and veterinary services have seen significantly higher rates of growth during the same period. The industry body, Lantra, state that "Growth in spending on companion animal services and products in the UK, is thought to be increasing annually. This growth has been aided by the advancement in animal health and nutrition products available, but also due to increasing media interest towards companion animals and rising concern for animal welfare."	National Regional Local
Skills focus of our Creative Arts curriculum is: • To Deliver WMCA funded Skills Bootcamps in TV Production, Live Stream and Content Creation to meet the industry skills needs for the region • To develop a broader range of apprenticeships to support the growing number of creative employers in the region and beyond, including content creation and design-related disciplines.	The curriculum area focuses on producing the workforce required to keep pace with growth in the national creative industries. Nationally, this sector contributes £115.9 Billion to the UK economy, accounts for 6% of the economy and employs over 131,200 individuals (excluding a large self-employed workforce). Since 2011, the creative industry has been growing faster than the UK economy. The College is the lead partner of the Royal Shakespeare Company for their apprenticeship provision, and has partnerships with over 15 TV production companies including the BBC, Rumpus, North One, Common Story BBC Three and Full Fat. continued on next page...	LSIP Draft Priority (Essential Skills and Practical Experience) Regional National

Curriculum Aim / Objective	Skills Contribution	LSIP Local, Regional, National Priority
	The curriculum area is focused on creating pre-employment opportunities and flexible programmes to support the high number of media companies establishing themselves in Birmingham. We were at the forefront of the Commonwealth Games, working with Create Central, funded by the WMCA to develop training for the host broadcast company Sunset&Vine. This training was delivered to over 150 participants to prepare them to work during the Games in Production Roles. Following the success of the Commonwealth Games the region has seen significant growth in the Film, and Television Production Sector, therefore there are more opportunities for us to continue to collaborate with Create Central and respond to the skills gaps identified in this Digital Creative Sector. The College is working with the WMCA to lead the region developing clear creative pathways for individuals from under represented backgrounds looking to re-train or upskill. The College is also working closely with ScreenSkills and has designed and developed a pilot programme for theatre companies in Live Stream, working with employers including the Birmingham Royal Ballet, The Hippodrome and the RSC to train participants who were up skilling or ballet dancers and coming to the end of their dance career to Live Stream Direct, Vision Mix and produce filmed streamed performances. The Creative Arts department has secured further funding for this skills gap from the WMCA and will continue to develop opportunities for participants seeking a gateway in to the industry.	
Skills focus of our Sports and Public Services curriculum is: • To deliver and grow high quality licence to practice courses in fitness and coaching for 16-18 year olds and adults, and in level 3 and 4 massage for adults • To deliver and grow high quality courses that deliver a skilled workforce for a range of the uniformed services.	The skills academy and curriculum in Public Services allows learners to develop outstanding skills that prepares them for higher education or a range of roles in the uniformed services where they are currently looking to recruit 20,000 police officers nationally and locally. A range of licence to practice qualifications with some key priorities through WMCA have been added to the curriculum offer in response to employers in sport specifically around fitness, coaching and sports massage for 16-18 and adults, where labour market intelligence shows a 10% growth in job vacancies.	Local Regional National

Curriculum Aim / Objective	Skills Contribution	LSIP Local, Regional, National Priority
Skills focus of our Early Years curriculum is: • To meet the workforce demands of employers responding to the government's changes to childcare entitlements • To increase the flexibility of the Early Years curriculum offer, shaped by local employers • To ensure that the sustainability development goals become an integral part of our curriculum.	This curriculum area is responding to changes in the childcare sector. In the Spring Budget 2023, UK Chancellor announced 30 hours of free childcare for every child over the age of 9 months, with support being phased in until every single eligible working parent of under 5s gets this support by September 2025. The government will also pay the childcare costs of parents on Universal Credit moving into work or increasing their hours upfront, rather than in arrears – removing a major barrier to work for those who are on benefits. The maximum they can claim will also be boosted to £951 for one child and £1,630 for two children – an increase of around 50%. These changes will compound the existing skills shortage in the sector. A skills survey by Ceeda in 2019 revealed that more than one in two settings had skills gaps in their existing workforce – over four times the 13 per cent of employers who report this across the wider economy. Our local employers are experiencing staff shortages and difficulties in releasing staff to upskill or gain higher level qualifications. As a result, the curriculum will develop a more flexible approach to enable employers to upskill their workforce.	Local

Curriculum Aim / Objective	Skills Contribution	LSIP Local, Regional, National Priority
Skills focus of our Foundation & Community curriculum is: • To offer the local community the opportunity to access courses supporting them to develop digital, language, employment, creative and artistic skills and maintain their health and wellbeing • To develop our work with supported internships to ensure the successful transition of students with Education and Health care PLans (EHCPs) in to work • To grow supported internships to provide careers for our community's most vulnerable residents.	With the increasing reliance on technology in all aspects of life, people are expected to have digital skills. Many community education programs focus on providing digital training or access to computers and the internet. As an ethnically and culturally diverse region, many people living in Solihull and Birmingham may need language skills to communicate with others in the community or in the workplace. Community education programmes could offer language classes or courses to help people learn English or other languages. Many people in Solihull and Birmingham may need to develop skills to succeed in the job market. This could include training in resume writing, job searching, interview skills, and workplace behaviours. Mental and physical health concerns are prevalent in many communities. Community education can play a role in promoting health and wellbeing by providing courses on nutrition, exercise, stress reduction, and mindfulness. Birmingham has a strong creative community, and there is an opportunity to develop skills relevant to the local creative and cultural industry, building knowledge of crafts, arts, photography, and digital media. The government has highlighted the importance of employer engagement in supported internships, and is working to encourage more employers to offer opportunities to young people with learning disabilities and autism.	Local

Corporation Statement

On behalf of the Solihull College and University Centre corporation, it is hereby confirmed that the plan as set out above reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the corporation at their meeting on 25th of May 2023. 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.solihull.ac.uk/about-us/policies/#strategy

Chair of Governors - **Barbara Hughes**

Principal/Chief Executive and Accounting Officer - **Dr. Rebecca Gater**

Dated: **25th May 2023**

Supporting Documentation

Colebridge Trust
https://colebridge.org/

Greater Birmingham and Solihull Institute of Technology
https://www.gbsiot.ac.uk/

RMF Training
https://www.rmfgroup.co.uk/rmf-training/

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council Economic Strategy
https://eservices.solihull.gov.uk/mgInternet/documents/s109734/Appendix%20C%20-%20Solihull%20Economic%20Strategy%20-%20Delivery%20Plan.pdf

Stratford upon Avon Economic Development Strategy
https://www.stratford.gov.uk/doc/211787/name/J26216 SWP Economic Development Strategy Consultation FINAL 002 .pdf/

West Midlands Combined Authority Skills Strategy
https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/2267/regional-skills-plan.pdf

West Midlands and Warwickshire draft Local Skills Improvement Plan
https://www.cw-chamber.co.uk/media/12644/west-midlands-and-warwickshire-local-skills-improvement-plan-draft-priorities.pdf

Annual Accountability Statement

May 2023

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