



# Kendal College Accountability Statement 2025-2026

## Purpose of this accountability statement:

The aim of our annual Accountability Agreement is to provide a succinct and focussed overview of why our curriculum delivery and skills provision is important and the contribution the College makes to the communities and stakeholders we serve.



This document outlines our new statutory duty to review our provision annually through links to our College business cycle, our skills development strategy and the overall impact on our curriculum planning and development.

## Introduction to the College:

The January 2021 Skills for Jobs white paper set out the government's plans for changes to further education, with the aim to ensure that the sector meets the skills' needs of the local, regional, and national economy.

We are pleased to set out our contribution to meeting the skills agenda in this document. It sets out the initiatives being undertaken to contribute to the economy by continuing to help our learners develop the skills they will need to succeed in work and higher education.

Kendal College's accountability statement sets out our aims for addressing the skills' needs of Cumbria and our wider locale, as we aim to meet our mission and vision for those we serve, our students, our employers, and our communities.

Having consulted widely with an ever-growing number of stakeholders, this statement sets out the College's priorities giving detail of how we will work towards these priorities, and how we will assess our progress using key performance indicators, where relevant.

Kendal College is a general further education college, with three sites in the town of Kendal in South Lakeland, Cumbria, namely the Milnthorpe Road Campus, the Arts and Media Campus as well as the new Westmorland Campus.

Recognising its role as one of four general further education colleges in Cumbria and with a wide catchment area, the College offers a broad curriculum from foundation level to higher education, to meet the needs of employers and the local community in a broad range of sectors.

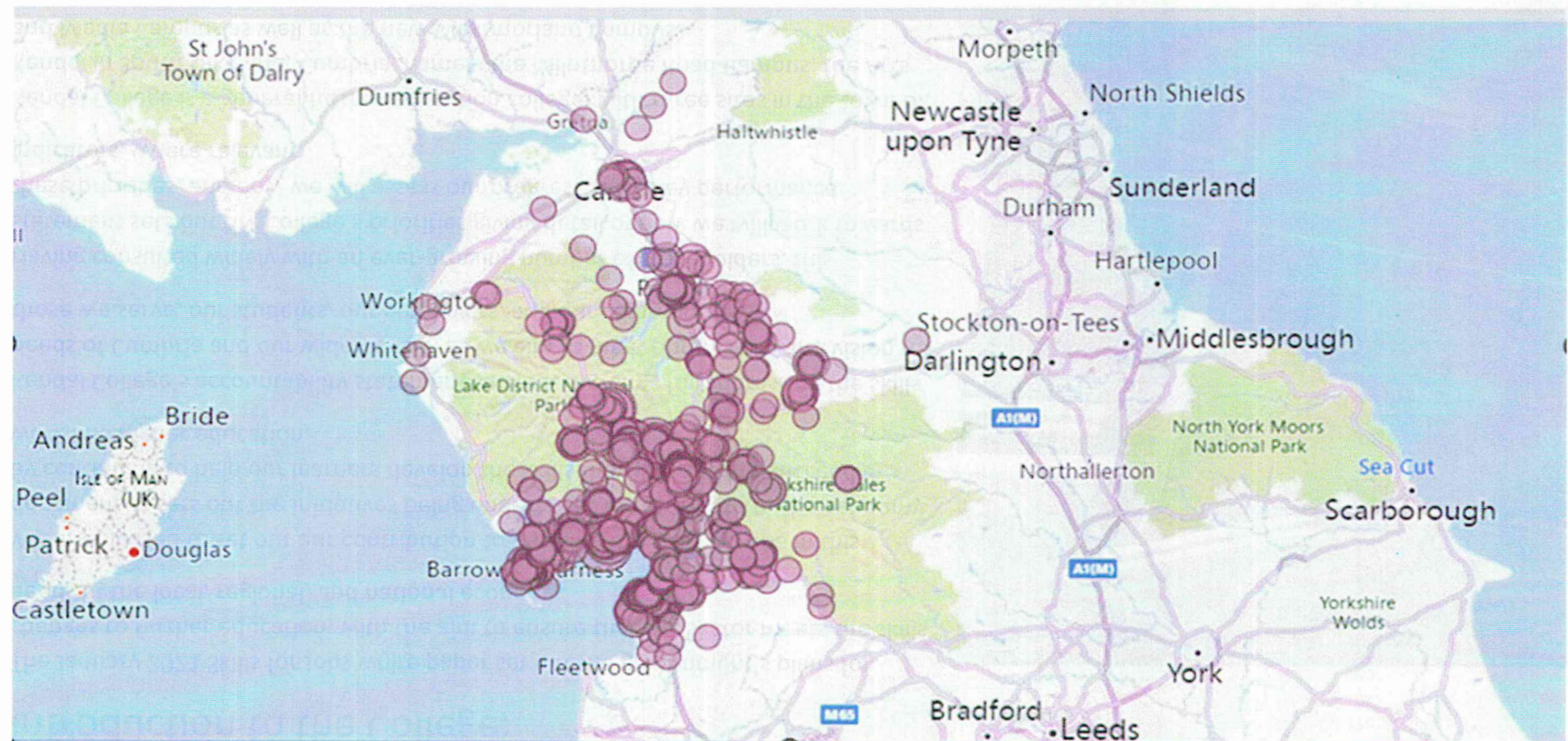
By national comparison, the College is 'medium' size with approximately 1,500 students aged 16-19, 2,000 adults and just under 1,000 apprentices learning each year. The College employs circa 300 teaching and support staff in a variety of full and part-time roles.





## Travel to learn patterns:

Whilst most of our full-time learners are Cumbrian based, we have approximately 20% of our learners who come from Lancashire. This is due to our proximity to the county boundary, the connectivity provided by the M6 and the appeal of our educational offer. With our enrolment and travel to learn patterns crossing county borders we must cater for a wide demographic and their skills needs in the planning of our curriculum.



## College purpose: OUR VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

The mission of Kendal College is: **Unlocking Potential - Transforming Lives - Creating Bright Futures**

The vision of Kendal College is: **Kendal College will provide outstanding education and training opportunities that are responsive to the needs of our students and our community. All Kendal College actions will help develop our students to deliver positive economic and sustainable environmental change both now and in the future.**

Our mission and vision influence the College's approach and sets the tone for the ways in which we work and the culture in which we operate, which are further supported by our core College values.

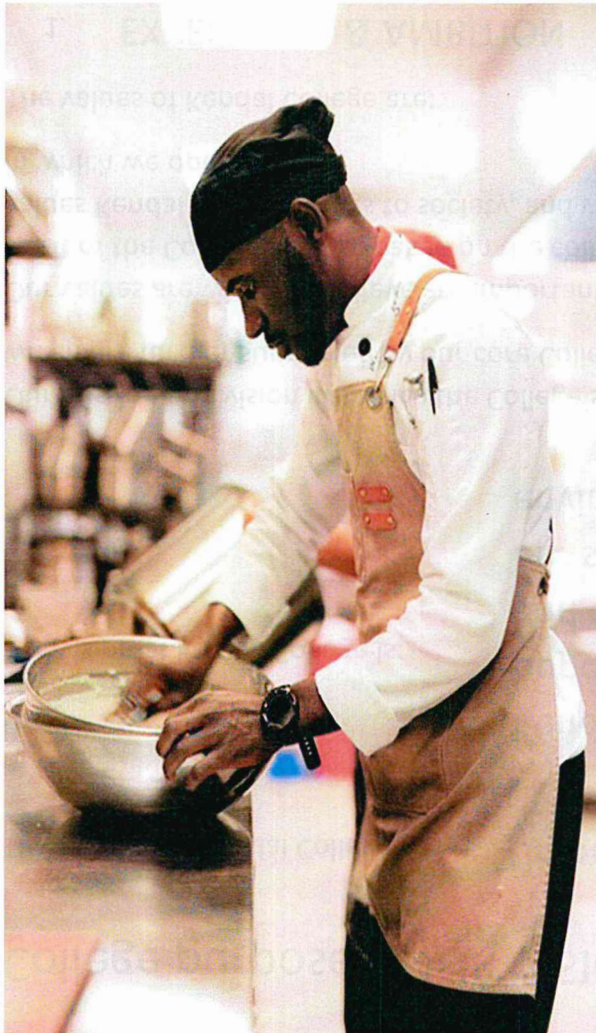
Our values are what we believe are important in the way we work as an organisation and for those we serve. The College values embrace the spirit of the College and are based on the collective views of staff, students and governors and inform how we do things. We recognise the values Kendal College brings to society, and we are committed to the protection of the environment and the development of the communities in which we operate.

The values of Kendal College are:

1. **EXCELLENCE & AMBITION**
2. **RESPECT & HONESTY**
3. **DIVERSITY & INCLUSION**
4. **LOYALTY & COMMITMENT**
5. **A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT**



## Kendal College as a strategic partner:

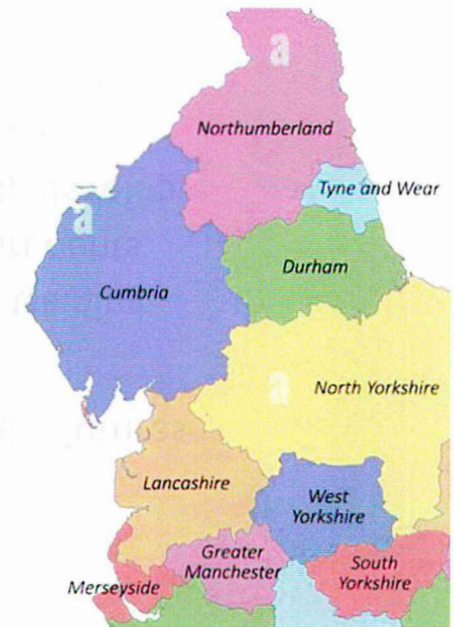


Kendal College is an active participant in supporting the economy of Cumbria and South Lakeland and work alongside key stakeholders including Westmorland and Furness Council, the Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership, and Cumbria Chamber of Commerce amongst others. In working with these organisations, the College is a key strategic partner, delivering against Cumbria wide skills plans to include the local industrial strategy as well as the local skills improvement plan as a contributory factor to the supply of skills.

The College works closely with the other Cumbrian Colleges and has membership of the Cumbria LEP skills and employment panels and the LEP board via the FE4 group of colleges and is represented on Cumbria Careers Hub representing all young people to support the achievement of the Gatsby Benchmarks. More locally the College are represented on the Kendal Futures Board, the South Lakes Federation as well as various other groups such as Cumbria Tourism.

As approximately 20% of our students travel to study at Kendal College from Lancashire postcodes, we have also considered the needs of the Lancashire region in meeting the needs of skills. Kendal College work with Lancashire Colleges such as Lancaster and Morecambe College and Myerscough College on elements of curriculum design such as the Morecambe Bay Project as well as the sharing of good practice between institutions.

The college puts employers firmly at the heart of its skills and enables the employer to be an active participant in setting out the College's strategic direction as well as our curriculum and operational plans. This work forms a large part in the development of our strategic plan and its implementation up until the year 2025, which further helps to support the College to deliver demonstrable positives to the economy of Cumbria and into Lancashire through our intent, implementation, and impact.



## Kendal College is well connected to the skills needs of our stakeholders.

- Work with over **500 employers** across Cumbria including employers in all the identified areas from the LEP and LSIP.
- In addition, **national employers** such as National Trust, Marie Curie, Balfour Beatty, NHS
- Work closely with **Westmorland and Furness council** on projects such as the town centre strategy and economic development.
- Member of **Kendal Futures** Board delivering Kendal Vision.
- Member of the **Cumbrian work-based learning providers** forum
- FE member of **South Lakes Federation**.
- **FE4 college consortium** member.
- Member of the **Morecambe Bay Eden Project** and the **Bay Cultural Compact Reference Group**.
- Part of the Chamber of Commerce '**Power 40**' network of Cumbrian employers.
- Work with **Cumbria Chamber of Commerce and LSIP contributor**.
- Delivered against county wide bootcamps, **local skills improvement plans**, its **implementation offer** and **multiply** projects.
- Strong contribution to **community events** - Comic Arts, Torchlight, Mountain Fest, Cumbrian Food Awards and Kendal Pride.
- **Hello Futures**, Executive Committee member.
- **Careers Enterprise Company** Educational Leaders Advisory Group
- **Northwest Apprenticeship Ambassadors** Network
- Cross border working on initiatives such as the **Morecambe Bay plan**.



The strategic priorities for 2022-2025, as set out in the College's Strategic Plan and supporting strategies and operating plans, are:

STRATEGIC FOCUS AND PRIORITIES				
OUR QUALITY	OUR REPUTATION	OUR ENVIRONMENT	OUR FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY	OUR PEOPLE
MAIN AIMS				
Consistently deliver a high-quality learning experience and environment, where we innovate, develop, and improve our curriculum offer	Further develop and grow our partnerships and engagement, helping to secure a reputation as the best education and training for our community.	Develop the business to ensure we are bound by the highest level of ethical values and behaviours which develops the colleges environment practices and awareness.	Develop the business to ensure we are resilient, future proof and financially sustainable.	Continually develop and invest in our people and teams. Supporting learners and staff to be active partners in our work.

The College's Strategic Plan 2022-2025 was developed in consultation with key stakeholders through our annual strategic planning event and included a review of the curriculum. We have ensured that the aims and objectives in this accountability statement align with our Strategic Plan.



## Cumbrian Strategic Context:

Cumbria is a rural county, with pockets of significant, entrenched deprivation and multigenerational unemployment alongside areas of high pay/high employment rates. The supply of workforce and skills are not always geographically located where demand is highest.

Despite a large geographic area (6,800 sq. kms, second largest county) Cumbria has the lowest population density and economic output density per hectare of any LEP area. The resident population is almost 500,000 with a working age population of 294,500. 53% of the population lives in a rural community.

Our 23,530 PAYE/VAT registered businesses include fifty-five large employers (0.2%) with the balance SMEs and primarily micro-businesses (89.8%). Just over half are classified as companies, with the rest primarily partnerships and self-employed sole traders. 64% are rural, including 60% of manufacturing businesses.



On the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 the previous six district councils and Cumbria County Council were replaced by two new unitary authorities within that boundary: namely Cumberland (East of the County) and Westmorland and Furness councils (West of the county).

Whilst Kendal College operates across Cumbria, the College itself sits within the Westmorland & Furness Council.



Cumbria is the most self-contained area in terms of travel-to-work flows with the 2011 Census showing that 96% of Cumbria's residents worked in the county and 94% of all jobs in Cumbria were filled by Cumbrian residents.

There are four general Further Education (FE) colleges (in Carlisle, Kendal, Workington, and Barrow), several independent training providers and a university delivering skills at a level relevant to the LSIP, plus specialist provision. There is well established cooperative working between the FE colleges, universities and independent providers operating in the county.

Cumbria's GVA and workforce are spread across a range of industries. The county has significant strengths and activity in manufacturing (25% of GVA), including nuclear, advanced manufacturing and food & drink, with Sellafield Ltd and BAE Systems our two largest business employers. Agriculture/land-based businesses and the visitor economy are also key. Over 16% of our workforce is in manufacturing, 17% in wholesale and retail, and 11% in accommodation and food services. The county's expertise in the nuclear sector also provides an important source of employment in Cumbria, alongside traditional industries such as agriculture, forestry, and fishing.



Cumbria has significant issues in developing and retaining higher level skills. The proportion of the working age population with Level 4 qualifications, whilst improving, continues to be below the national average and one of the lowest rates in England. The proportion of young people in apprenticeships is above average (11%). The 2020 Cumbria Business Survey cites 20% of private sector businesses identifying skills gaps.

Cumbria's working age population fell by 6% (20,000) over the last 10 years and this is projected to continue over the next 10 years (-15,000).

Productivity per hour is 17% below the national average (only in part due to industrial structure). The county has few fast-growing firms (relatively and absolutely). Skills shortages are impacting negatively on productivity and growth. Physical and digital infrastructure remains a challenge, impacting on travel to learn as well as on accessing online options.

Post-Brexit Cumbria has lost much of its European workforce (vital to the visitor economy, important in food & drink etc) exacerbated by workers leaving the visitor and care sectors during the Covid-19 pandemic.



Our accountability statement and strategic plan is also drawn from sectors that are outlined within the LSIP and are important to the Cumbrian economy, in terms of business population, number of employees and GVA.



These sectors are:

- Visitor Economy – representing accommodation providers, visitor attractions, food and drink providers, culture and heritage venues and the retail sector.
- Land-Based Economy – broken down into three separate segments for the purposes of this work; farming enterprises, forestry/woodland, and nature recovery, each of which is inextricably linked at landscape scale.
- Social Care – encompassing residential care, nursing care, domiciliary care, and other ancillary services.
- Manufacturing – by far the most diverse sector, this covers an extremely wide range of activities, the large bulk of employers (90%) being in the micro to small size range. There are also a small number of medium/large and a small number of highly significant manufacturers, each of which employ a large workforce and make a significant contribution to the economy of Cumbria.

- Energy – based primarily in West Cumbria, this sector covers nuclear, wind power and other renewable technologies, as well as ancillary services, which cross over into manufacturing and other services.
- Built Economy – covering all construction types including major housebuilding, general and commercial construction, and fabrication as well as services such as groundworks, utility services, and professional services.



The strategic context and underpinning rationale of Kendal College strategic planning is based its knowledge of Cumbria and on a set of chosen sectors outlined above, that encompass a range of industries, geographies, size, demographics, and business activity.

These sub-sectors of the Cumbrian economy allow Kendal College to focus its curriculum and offer on an extensive range of employer/employment types, occupations, levels of educational achievement and cross cutting skills that are transferrable across sectors.



## Lancashire Strategic Context:

With 20% of our students travelling from Lancashire postcodes to study at Kendal College, we have also considered the needs of the Lancashire region in meeting the needs of skills and the accountability that we have as a college in meeting those skills.

The Lancashire Local Authority Leaders has in place the Lancashire 2050, which sets out shared ambitions for the future of Lancashire against eight priorities, including employment and skills. The Lancashire 2050 Vision has an ambition to 'support people to develop their skills throughout their lives and attract business to the county because of our highly skilled workforce'.



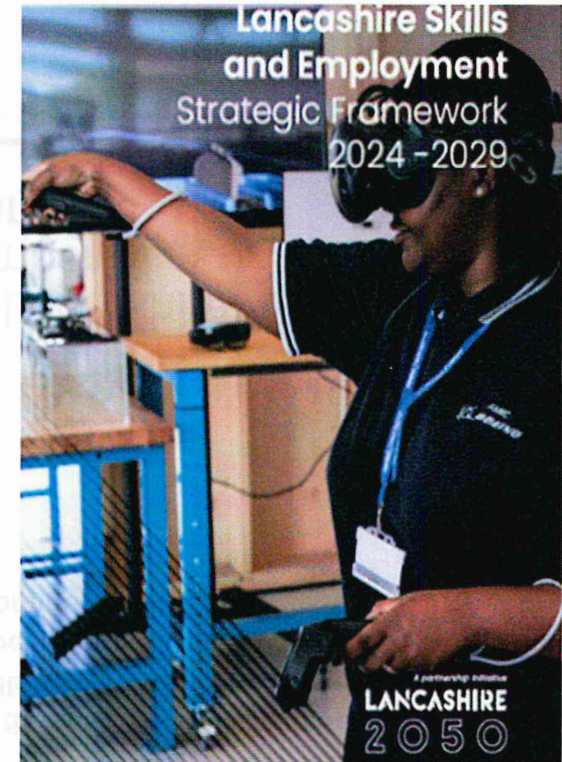
In Lancashire, the Local Skills Improvement Plan and the Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework 2024-2029 is being led by North and Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce and East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce.



The Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework (issued by the LEP) identifies the key priorities and actions required to drive up skills and employment in Lancashire, enabling Kendal College to work with Lancashire based colleges to assist in jointly and directly aligning skills with the needs of local business.

The College use Skills and Employment Strategic Framework, along with relevant Labour Market Information, to inform our planning.

Whilst there is a strong partnership approach in Lancashire with The Lancashire Colleges (TLC) group working in partnership with the LEP, the Lancashire Local Authorities, the Skills Hub and the Chambers of Commerce, Kendal College are not directly engaged in these discussions due to the college not being part of the Lancashire Colleges Group; however we continue to monitor the outcomes of the skills needs across the border and utilise the intelligence gained into curriculum plans and delivery.





The identified growth pillars for Lancashire in terms of skills needs are as follows.



Four of the six identified needs of Lancashire closely relate to the skills needs of Cumbria namely, health, energy, tourism, and manufacturing.

Over the last year Kendal College has pro-actively worked with neighbouring Lancashire colleges and Lancashire based stakeholder groups such as the Morecambe Bay Anchor Collaborative to develop new courses and curriculum that align with employer needs particularly in reference to tourism, the county's nuclear ambitions and the Morecambe Bay Project.

Through Communities of Practice and investment in joint Continuing Professional Development (CPD), we have been able to jointly meet challenges and build on best practice to ensure our teaching keeps apace with technological and other developments.

## Developing the Accountability statement - Market intelligence and key positioning:

To understand our position within the county and our key customer markets, the College uses demographics data from a variety of sources (Cumbria and Lancashire) including Office for National Statistics, (ONS) Cumbria LEP, Chamber of Commerce and Westmorland and Furness Council, including reference to the county wide local industrial strategy and the local skills improvement plan as well as the more local Kendal town centre strategy and the Kendal Futures plan and the Cumbria tourism destination plan.

This intelligence informs the College as to the geographical areas and customer markets that are showing decline or potential growth as well as emerging sectors such as health, hospitality, science, technology, engineering, and maths (STEM). This knowledge is used to support the development of our Kendal ambition via our strategic plan and our actions over the coming years.

The College has a range of stakeholders, all of whom have a significant role to play in helping us plan, create and deliver high quality education and training. These stakeholders include:

- Employers/businesses and business groups
- Other partners (colleges, schools, universities, other local organisations)
- Local community
- Funders
- Other statutory bodies.
- Students
- Apprentices
- Prospective students/apprentices
- Parents/carers
- Staff

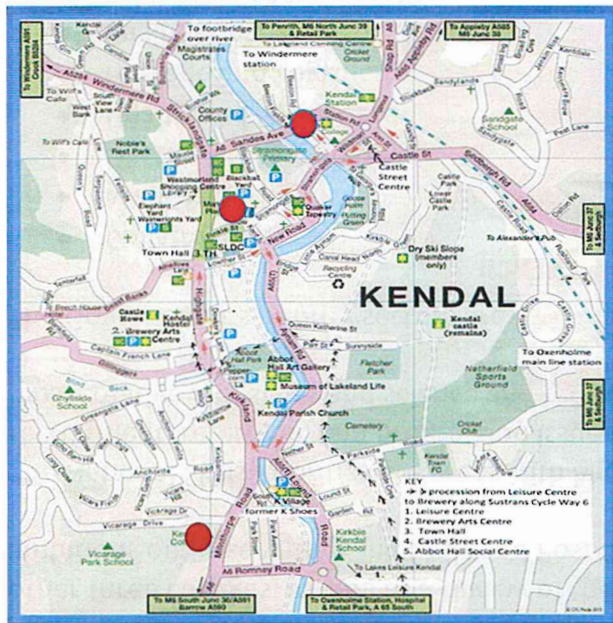
Stakeholders form an integral part of our strategic development and during 2024/2025 the College invited employers, and Cumbria Chamber of Commerce amongst others to support governors training and strategic planning events.

Aside from analysis of data to inform our markets and positioning, our accountability statement and subsequent strategy and plan was developed with the involvement of key stakeholders (including staff and students) to focus specifically on our actions to reach out to the key markets.



## The communities we serve:

Kendal College operates from three main sites (as indicated by the red markers below) in the market town of Kendal, and several satellite sites and community venues across the county of Cumbria.



Kendal College and the curriculum that we offer is aimed at all our current student markets as indicated below.

- 16–18-year-olds
- Adult provision
- Apprenticeships
- Business and commercial development
- Higher Education and professional studies

## The communities we serve - our key areas:

Aside from our national delivery contracts, Kendal College attracts most of its students from a wide catchment area which has shaped the nature of the curriculum and the culture in which we operate. Due to our positioning within the county and our road networks, this catchment area includes Cumbria, North Lancashire, and over into the Yorkshire borders.

## Meeting national, regional, and local needs:

Kendal College is one of the largest FE colleges in Cumbria and our Strategic Plan, the Kendal Ambition, sets out a wider range of longer-term goals and objectives. These include goals and objectives related to the College's commitment to our stakeholders, our environment, and our sustainability.

In developing the aims and objectives in this Accountability Plan, the College has carefully considered national, regional, and local priorities, particularly where these directly align. Kendal College completed a review of further education provision within Cumbria working with the other three colleges, as well as a review of the National Skills Priorities to ensure that our targets and priorities link to the Government's ambitions outlined within The Skills and Post-16 Education Act.

The National Skills Priorities are areas with high volumes of vacancies which are expected to increase; long-term structural barriers to recruitment, retention, and progression issues; and are important in providing opportunities for employment in key growth areas such as green jobs, creative industries and science and technology (including AI and quantum computing).

The Government's priority sectors are:

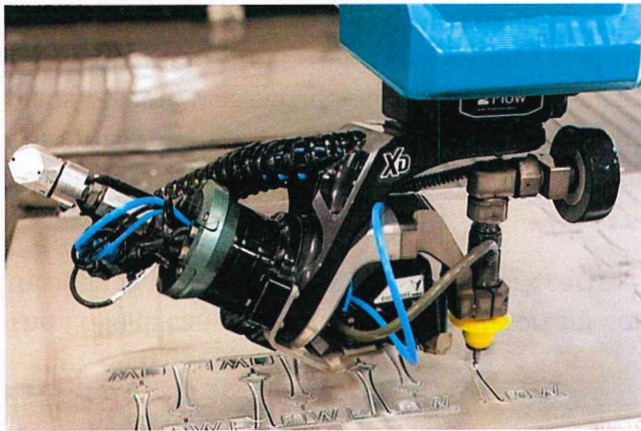
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Digital and Technology
- Health and Social Care
- Haulage and Logistics
- Engineering
- Science and Mathematics

As part of skills reform the Government would like colleges to prioritise delivery, through a small number of high-quality programmes that have been co-designed with employers and have a strong track record of delivering good outcomes for learners. Green Jobs are also seen as vitally important and there also remains a significant focus on key initiatives including T levels, Apprenticeships, Free Courses for Jobs, Skills Bootcamps, and Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs) as well as essential skills up to Level 2 in English, mathematics, and Level 1 for digital.



Cumbria Chamber of Commerce (CoC) have well developed local skills reports which identifies some of the main skills issues and needs locally. In Lancashire, similarly, developed plans are summarised within the Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework 2024-2029 which is being led by North and Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce and East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce. The Lancashire Skills and Employment. The College is well placed to support these skills needs through its curriculum plans and delivery as well as collaborative working and projects such as skills bootcamps and multiply.

The College have developed an estates and capital plan to ensure that we are able to resource the new courses and projects which include the purchase of a new 5 axis water jet cutter, 3D scanner and resin printers, micro PV generators and drones to support a range of cutting edge skills development in areas such as including sustainable manufacture, engineering, catering, construction, and land-based programmes.



5 axis water jet cutting machine



3D resin printer.



Drone with infra-red sensor and GPS guidance

There will be a need for high level technical skills, for example in STEM and digital and skills which are relatively new in sectors such as green technologies and low carbon. There is also a need to reskill existing workers to meet areas of demand, for example hospitality, health and care roles and logistics, and raise skills levels across the area, reducing the number of residents with no qualifications and helping to support younger people to stay in Cumbria through sustainable employment options.

The Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) has also reviewed the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to meet employers' growth aspirations, focussing on the visitor economy, manufacturing, social care, and land-based sectors. The LSIP also makes a series of recommendations designed to support the development of candidates better prepared with the knowledge, skills, and behaviours to meet the needs of employers, and for the Cumbrian skills system to better meet the workforce development needs of businesses.

## Local Needs Duty:

The College can and does make an important contribution to the county of Cumbria and our wider catchment across border into Lancashire through the implementation of the work carried out by the various LEPs and the CoC reports and recommendations positively impacting on the skills of the local workforce.

To further support the development of our accountability statement, the College completed a review of further education provision within Cumbria working with the other three colleges through the FE4 meetings, to understand the gaps, duplication, and opportunities; a less formal piece of work was carried out across Lancashire with Lancaster and Morecambe and Myerscough College curriculum. Within the College's own self-assessment process, it was identified that employability skills, behaviours and attitudes, literacy, and numeracy are areas in which we contribute to social and economic health of the area and are key drivers that need to be considered in the development of our Accountability Targets.

In summary, the analysis provides the following considerations:

- Further growth opportunities for apprenticeships
- Opportunities for CPD and Adult provision
- Demand in digital developments and cyber technologies
- Demand for professional and management qualifications
- Further development of employability (all ages)
- Recruitment of 16–18-year-olds onto T levels.



## Our Accountability Targets:

- **Ensure students on Study Programmes gain core transferable skills so they can progress to positive destinations.**  
Links to College strategic plan - P1, R2, R4, Q1, Q3, Q5
- **Embedding of preparation for Work Experience within all programmes with greater co-delivery from employers.**  
Links to College strategic plan - Q1, Q3, R1, R2, FS2, FS3
- **Ensure the College's T level and apprenticeship offer addresses local priority sector needs with removal of overlapping L3 provision.**  
Links to College strategic plan - Q3, Q4, R2, R3, FS1
- **Engage with the LSIP to facilitate better engagement with employers and involvement in the development of the curriculum.**  
Links to College strategic plan - Q4, R1, R3, R4, FS3, P1
- **Provide greater opportunities for adults to develop key employability skills including upskilling and retraining.**  
Links to College strategic plan - Q2, P1, P4, FS1, R3
- **Review expansion of professional services portfolio to include lower-level entry qualifications.**  
Links to College strategic plan - Q2, R3, R4, FS1
- **Expansion of adult apprenticeship options**  
Links to College strategic plan - Q2, R3, R4, FS1
- **Work with local, regional and national partners to foster innovative developments including growth skills bootcamps.**  
Links to College strategic plan - Q1, Q3, R1, R2, FS2, FS3

## Corporation statement:

On behalf of the Kendal College 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 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025.

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: [www.kendal.ac.uk](http://www.kendal.ac.uk)

**Chair of Governors – Dr Rob Trimble**



**Interim Principal/Chief Executive and Accounting Officer – Richard Evans**



**Dated: 8<sup>th</sup> July 2025**

**Relevant supporting documentation:**

- Kendal College curriculum plan
- Kendal College financial statements
- Kendal College Strategic plan 2022-2025 – The Kendal Ambition
- Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)
- Cumbria Chamber of Commerce reports
- Cumbria Local Enterprise local skills report
- Westmorland and Furness Council economic data
- Office for National statistics data
- Lancashire 2050 strategy
- Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework 2024-2029