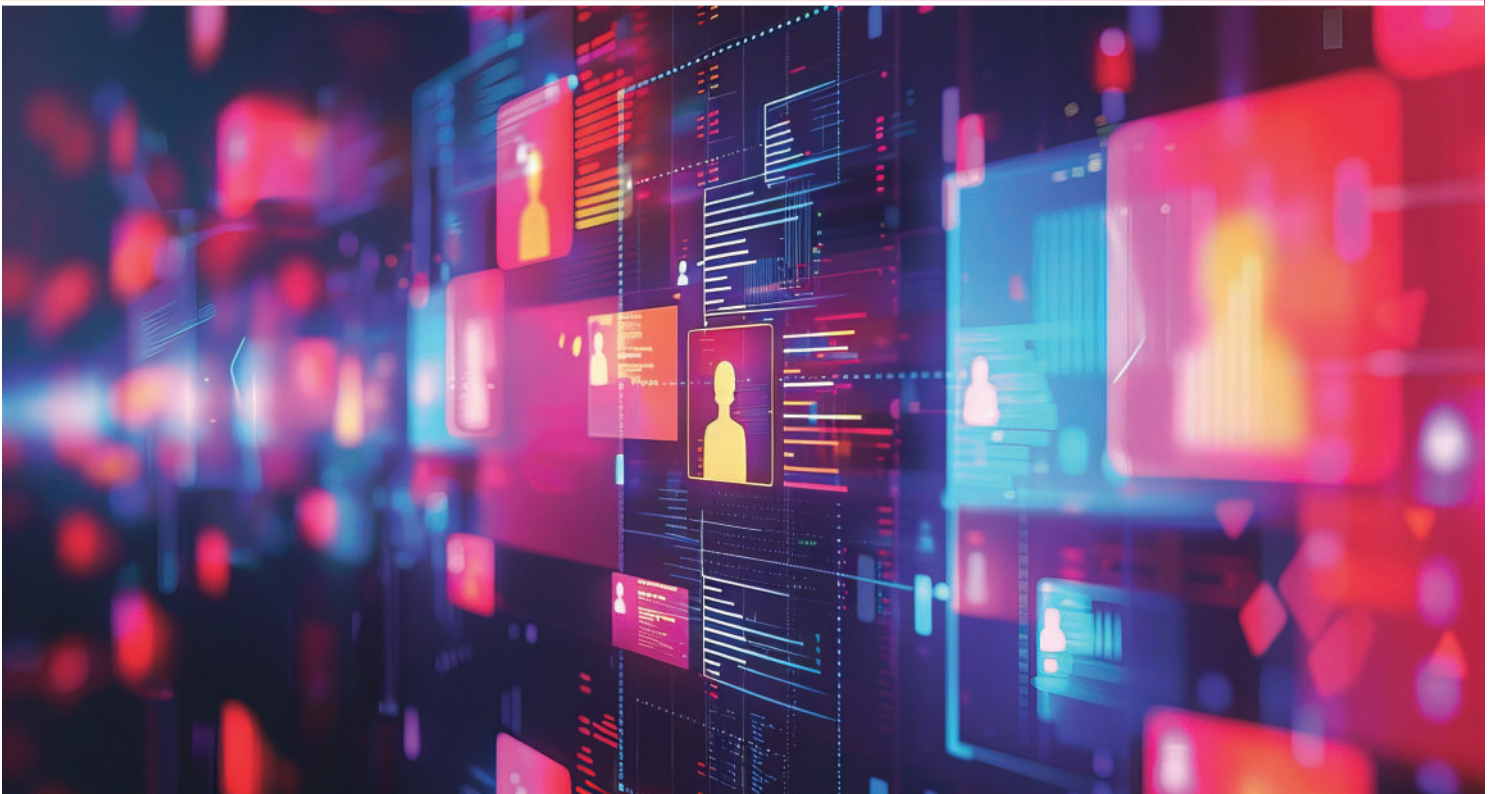


Solihull College & University Centre
and Stratford-upon-Avon College

ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

and Local Needs Duty 25/26



Solihull College
& University Centre

Stratford-upon-Avon
College





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Mission, Vision & Values

OUR MISSION

To be a reflective and progressive organisation which supports and inspires everyone to succeed.

OUR VISION

To position Solihull College & University Centre as a confident, fully inclusive, forward-thinking organisation, with a strong reputation for innovation and excellence.

OUR VALUES

Our guiding principles are a commitment to be:



INSPIRING

Motivating others to excel

We recognise and celebrate achievement, and empower staff and learners to exceed their perceived potential.



INNOVATIVE

Transforming our ideas

We seek continuous improvement, and use innovation to adapt to change.



COLLABORATIVE

Working together to achieve shared goals

We operate as one team, valuing the contribution each of us makes.



CARING

Making a difference

We care about the wellbeing of our staff, learners and communities by trusting, listening to, engaging with and supporting each other.



RESPONSIBLE

Making things happen

We are open, honest, and take full responsibility, individually and collectively, for our decisions, actions, performance and results.



RESPECTFUL

Welcoming others into our college community

We celebrate difference and diversity. We value others and recognise that their thoughts and feelings are as important as our own.



Purpose

The Solihull College & University Centre (SCUC) Strategic Plan (2022-2025) sets out our purpose, mission, vision and values, strategic ambitions and operational pillars.

The College ensures that a comprehensive and inclusive curriculum offer is in place providing students with clear progression opportunities into further study and / or employment and aligned to local, regional and national skills needs. This reflects our position in responding to the needs of the two local authority areas that we reside in, Solihull Borough and Stratford-Upon-Avon, part of the wider West Midlands and Warwickshire region.

Our offer is in line with our mission to provide the highest quality of education and training to all our students and employers through our commitment to an inclusive and career focused curriculum. The College's vision is to support community cohesion and to drive local and regional productivity; ultimately our 'Inspire Success for All' strategic plan 2022-2025 reflects an inclusive and discursive planning process that encompasses the collective contributions of Governors, staff, learners and employers.

The College's approach to providing an inclusive and career focused curriculum as part of our strategic intent means that a broad and balanced curriculum offer is provided across all levels (Entry Level – Level 7) and across academic, foundation, professional, technical and vocational learning.

It is a fundamental aim of Solihull College & University Centre to be at the centre of initiatives to drive economic growth. Through our agile and responsive curriculum, our objectives are to continue to adapt and invest in key priorities provision, delivering the skills agenda to meet local and national economic priorities and employer needs.

We respond to the current and future skills demands of local employers, whilst widening opportunities and access to increase adult learner participation. As evidenced in Appendix one, our accountability objectives for 24-25 provided a pipeline of talent to shape the skills landscape.

Our Accountability statement is aligned with our strategic ambitions. A twice yearly report on our progress is published on our website.

Strategic Ambition SA1 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 which we work.

SA2 Secure the future of our organisation in a fast-changing sector through careful and appropriate income diversification and growth.

SA3 Create a high-performing culture that attracts and retains the best people, is fully inclusive, and produces a happy and proud workforce.

SA4 Deliver a considered but ambitious programme of investment underpinned by financial stability.

SA5 Sustainability: Net zero by 2030.

National skills policy has continued to develop. This annual accountability plan takes account of these changes, including the implementation of Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs).

SCUC prides itself on working in partnership with employers locally, regionally and nationally across the full range of our subject areas, delivering apprenticeships, tailored workforce development and an extensive professional course programme. This approach, alongside continuous curriculum review ensures that our programmes and facilities match what is needed in our local and regional economy. Our staff are highly trained and have CPD opportunities to upskill in industry whilst also holding staff development days to improve pedagogy.

We work with over 500 employers in sectors reflecting the make-up of our local communities and national footprint including SME's, this reflects that of the 8,025 active businesses in Solihull - only 11% employ more than 10 people:

- Engineering and manufacturing including electric vehicle training
- ICT, Digital and Cyber including AI (Artificial Intelligence) development
- Land-based including animal welfare
- Health, Science and Social Care including partnerships with the NHS
- Construction including groundworks and rail
- Business, management and professional including cross-sector training in leadership and management.

The College's governing body has a duty to keep under review its provision in relation to local needs. Governors are assured that the College is committed to addressing local needs by engaging with a broad range of external stakeholders—from meeting current and emerging skills and growth demands of employers, to tackling educational gaps, supporting civic priorities, and collaborating with community groups and charities.

As well as engaging regularly with stakeholders including: employers, education, civic and community, the College relies upon a number of key research documents to gain an understanding of the wider picture, and to rationalise its planned offer every year (included in the supporting documentation section). These include the **Solihull Council Plan** which states: Financial and business services are by far the largest sector in Solihull, accounting for 41% of all employee jobs compared to just 24% across England. With the following economic assets of regional importance: Birmingham Airport, the NEC and Birmingham Business Park. The development of HS2, adding to Solihull's extensive national and international infrastructure links. Also included is the **Warwickshire County Council (WCC) Plan** which highlights the largest employment growth being in real estate, electronics, head offices and management consultancy and food and beverage industries.



Context and Place

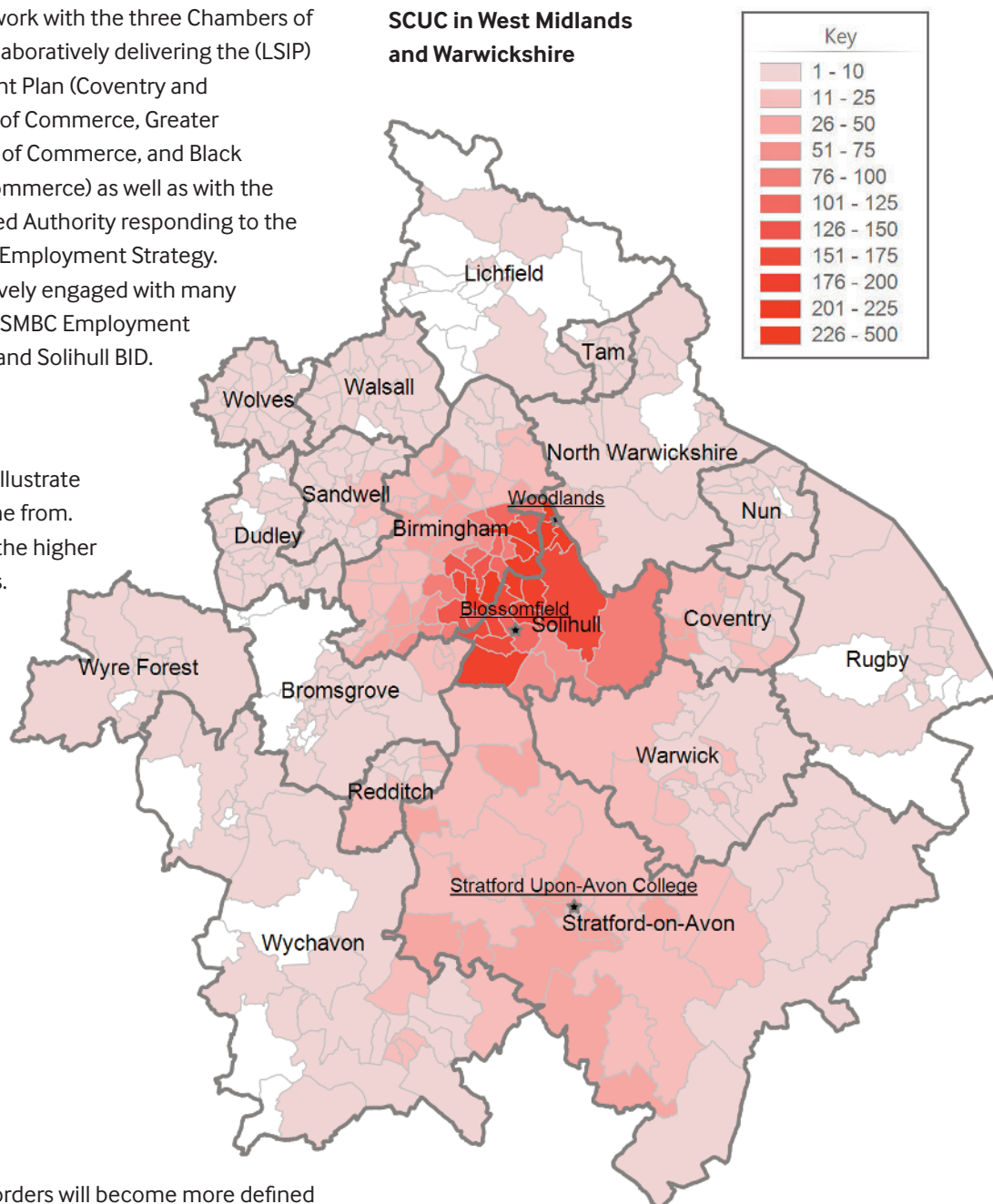


Solihull College and University Centre is a three campus General Further Education (GFE) provider situated to the southeast of Birmingham. Our geographical location enables us to work with the three Chambers of Commerce that are collaboratively delivering the (LSIP) Local Skills Improvement Plan (Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce, Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce, and Black Country Chamber of Commerce) as well as with the West Midlands Combined Authority responding to the Employment and Skills Employment Strategy. College leaders are actively engaged with many Council boards such as SMBC Employment and Skills, Visit Solihull and Solihull BID.

Heat maps

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

**Heatmap 1:
SCUC in West Midlands
and Warwickshire**



Since devolution the borders will become more defined with Warwickshire becoming a devolved mayoral authority in 25/26, separate and distinct from the WMCA. The single settlement agreements should ultimately simplify the process of funding although we will have separate regional strategies and potentially new LSIFs with different skills priorities to navigate.

Blossomfield Campus

The College's headquarters and largest campus housing 6000 learners is close to the shopping centre, council offices and railway station in Solihull. Whilst firmly rooted in the economically affluent centre of Solihull it is interesting to note that half of the student body travel from other areas of Birmingham to study at the College.

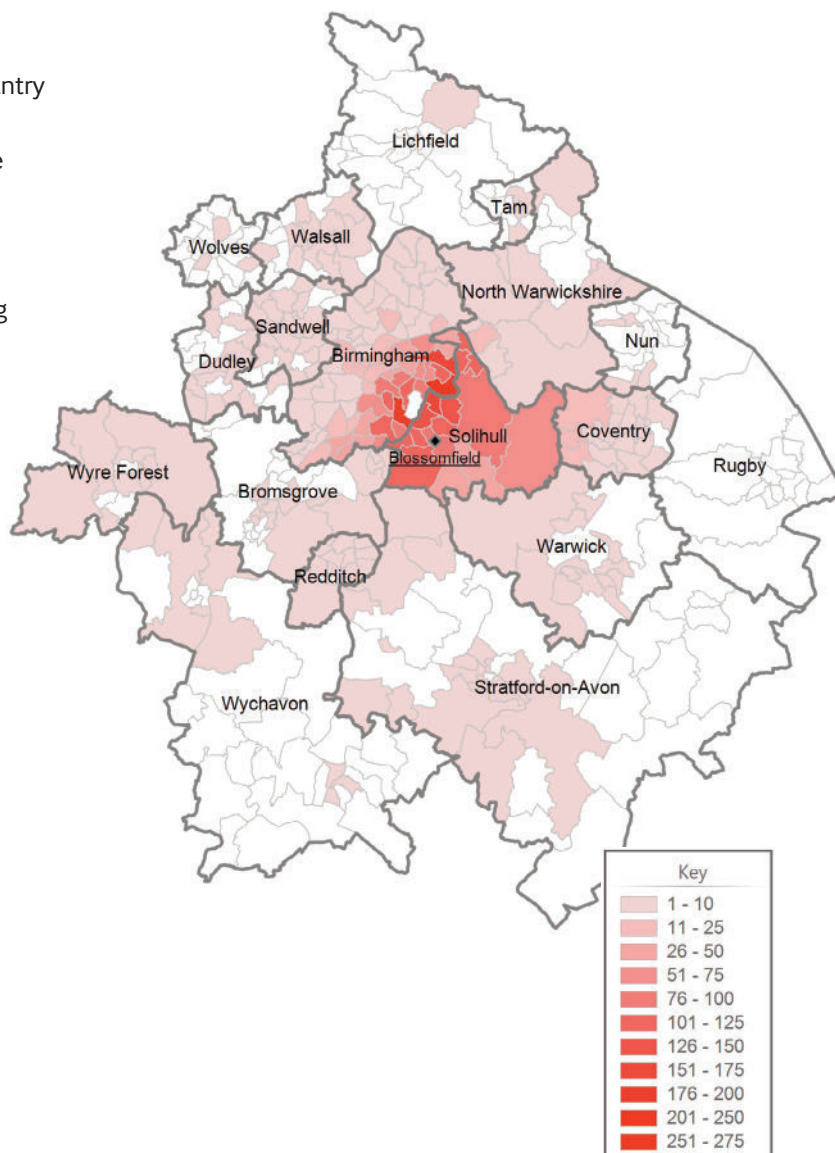
Centrally located, this campus is a short walk from Solihull town centre.



Heatmap 2: SCUC Blossomfield Campus

The unique selling points of this campus are:

- Wide range of vocational programmes from Entry Level to Level 7
- Industry standard technical facilities 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.



Woodlands Campus

Woodlands Campus is in the heart of North Solihull and is a predominantly STEM campus focussing on engineering, advanced manufacturing and construction. North Solihull is an area created on open land during the 1960's to provide overspill housing for the inner-city areas of Birmingham. The residential development of North Solihull, which was predominantly council owned, included 42 tower blocks. With the decline of manufacturing industries in the area and difficulties in developing the skills required to access new jobs, unemployment increased. The area became part of Solihull in the 1970's boundary changes and remains an area of deprivation in contrast to our other Blossomfield campus. Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) recognised that regeneration of the North Solihull area was required to address the health, education and housing imbalance with the rest of the Borough, and the college is an anchor partner in this regeneration. Skills and training for the two key developments in the area will support the employability, health and wealth of residents in the area. These key developments are the HS2 Interchange (Arden Cross), sited next to the NEC and Birmingham Airport, and an extension of the Metro route between East Birmingham and the Interchange. This will create an opportunity to link the development of additional homes with the new transport routes, which will increase value, density and enable hubs of complementary development to provide facilities in key locations. The growth in construction training from Woodlands campus reflects our commitment to the local needs of employers and residents.

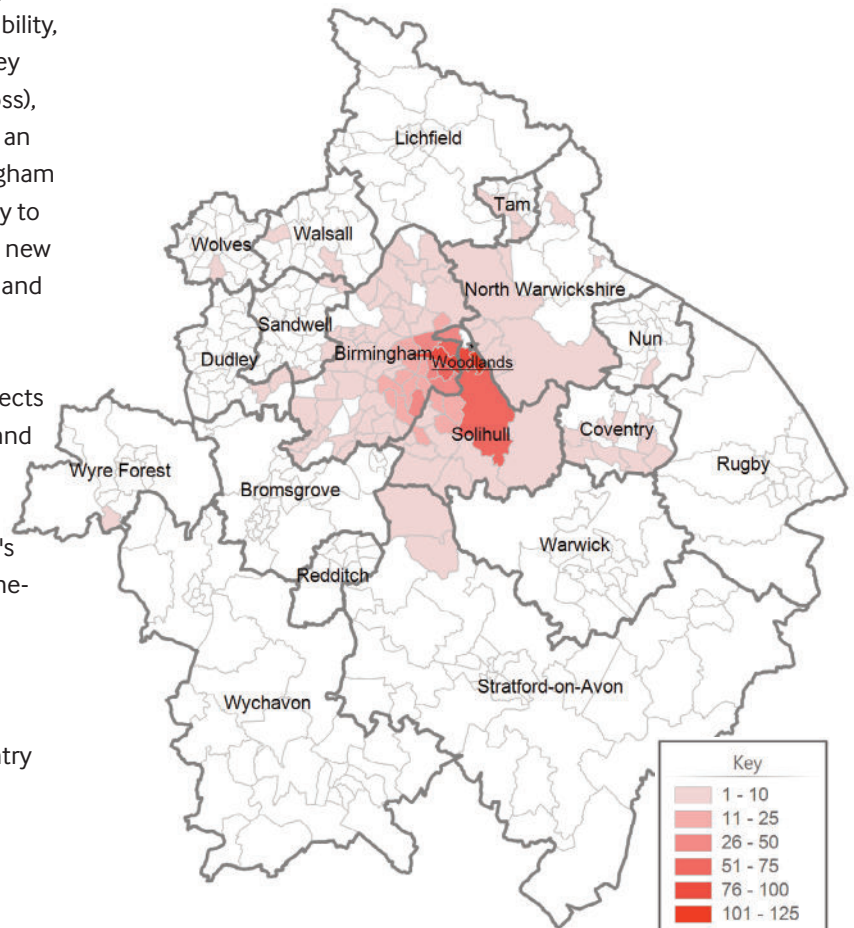
Woodlands Campus is located in the ward of Smith's Wood in North Solihull, one of the 20% most income-deprived wards in England.

The unique selling points of this campus are:

- Wide range of vocational programmes from Entry Level to Level 6
- Home to the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Institute of Technology (GBSIOT) 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.



Heatmap 3: SCUC Woodlands Campus



Stratford-upon-Avon Campus

Stratford-upon-Avon College offers a variety of specialisms, including motor vehicle, with investment in electric vehicle maintenance, new resources for construction trades such as electrical, plumbing, bricklaying and a brand-new heat-pump installation training centre, business, health and social care. The College is growing its reputation as a centre of excellence for performing arts and digital media with industry-quality TV studios and theatres. The success and growth of our bootcamp provision in this subject has been extremely successful winning many accolades with great outcomes for our learners with strong employer links with local production companies and the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC). We offer hospitality apprenticeship training for employers in this region as it is a recognised skills need into the local WCC Plan.

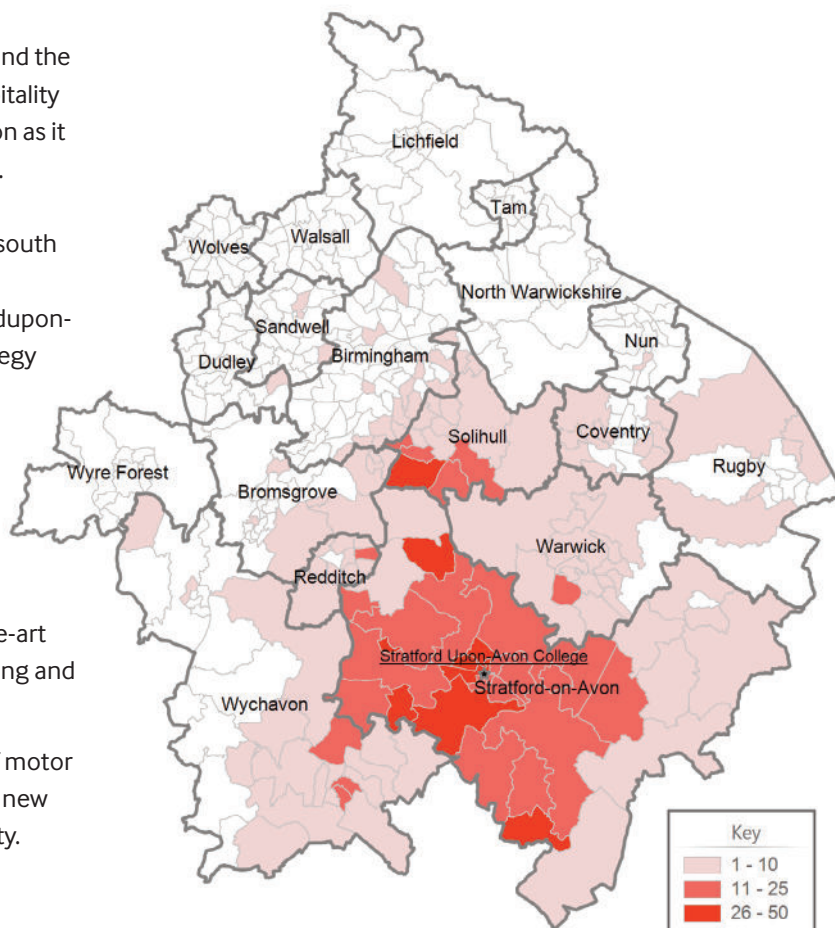
Stratford-upon-Avon College is located 20 miles south of Blossomfield Campus in Warwickshire. The curriculum offer is closely aligned to the Stratford-upon-Avon District Local Industrial and Economic Strategy 2018-2031.

The unique selling points of this campus are:

- Longstanding national reputation for creative and performing arts education
- 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 including a new heat pump and electric vehicle training facility.



Heatmap 4: SCUC Stratford-Upon-Avon Campus





Approach to Developing the Annual Accountability Statement

The college works with multiple stakeholders to achieve our strategic priorities and to contribute to this Annual Accountability Statement. Our partnership-working is a key strength of SCUC. Our impact on the West Midlands is far-reaching, influential and core to our ability to deliver training and skills specific to the needs of the local economy and community we serve. We are active participants and/or project-managers of the following regional groups demonstrating how we collaborate with other local providers in the area to review and create provision, and to identify collective actions planned to better meet local needs:

CWM: SCUC are a core member of Colleges West Midlands. This is a formal partnership of 17 colleges across the West Midlands united in our aim to create an integrated further education ecosystem which delivers the contemporary skills for business growth, and which empower our residents, regardless of their background, age or circumstances, to progress and prosper in life through the transformational power of learning.

Skills WM&W: SCUC are a founder member of the Skills West Midlands & Warwickshire. This LSIF-funded, collaborative partnership between local employers and further education providers working to improve access to technical skills provision. The Skills WM+W website serves as a directory for training initiatives in the region, helping businesses develop the skills they need to grow, innovate and thrive.

GBSIoT: The College is the lead partner in The Greater Birmingham and Solihull Institute of Technology a collaboration of 7 educational partners, led by the College and including:

- Birmingham Metropolitan College
- South & City College Birmingham
- Aston University
- Birmingham City University (BCU)
- University of Birmingham
- University College Birmingham

The GBSIoT Hub in central Birmingham houses the largest Cyber Physical Manufacturing Rig in Europe and boasts an impressive list of Employer Board Advisors chaired by Bosch Thermotechnology Ltd. As lead provider, the College ensure that the IoT collaboration:

- Addresses sector skills shortages in advance manufacturing and engineering
- Designs and delivers high quality training which specialises in the higher technical qualifications in short supply, particularly at levels 4 and 5, focusing on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects
- Creates seamless progression to work, through academic, technical and vocational pathways which develop higher technical skills.

Projects: The College leads the West Midlands and Warwickshire Local Skills Improvement Fund (WMW LSIF) - the largest in the UK, worth £10.3m. As lead provider, the College works with the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce, and the Employer Representative Body (ERB) of employers, to invest in capital and curriculum which addresses skills shortages identified through the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP). As lead provider, SCUC coordinates the project across 23 FECs (Further Education Colleges) and ITPs (Independent Training Providers) to deliver the LSIF priorities which:

- Helps residents to gain the skills needed to secure jobs in industries such as electric vehicle and battery technology, sustainable construction, and the creative/gaming sector.
- Expands the regional electrification and engineering offer
- Develops skills provision in low carbon/sustainable construction
- Supports the professional development of teachers to embed green skills in all curriculum areas
- Delivers digital skills training to hard-to-reach communities, as individuals with digital skills needed for employment in WM region is half of the national average
- Improves employer engagement
- The College engages in strategic partnerships to support businesses to grow.

A full Progress Review of the LSIP will be published at the end of June 2025 and will show all of the skills priorities with what has been achieved so far with SCUC being present in all major work strands.

To complement the LSIF, SCUC has worked effectively with other college partners to secure a successful Further Education Innovate UK bid where we are leading on establishing Local Innovation Centres. These have become catalysts for local business growth by engaging with businesses in key priority sectors of their local economies to help them understand how they can adopt innovations in technologies, business models and processes.

Three consortia teams were formed, with Solihull College & University Centre and Stratford-upon-Avon College sitting in the 'Greater Birmingham' and the 'Coventry & Warwickshire' consortia respectively. This has been extended for a further year with additional funding until 31st March 2026.

IWRAP (Inclusive Work Readiness Accelerator Program): SCUC has been selected to manage this program which aims to address employment barriers for young people with low-level mental health needs and neurodiverse conditions. Through tailored support for students and employer engagement, IWRAP will foster an inclusive employment landscape that bridges the transition to meaningful work. Solihull will work across the region with seven college partners throughout April-October 2025.

Key Stakeholders:

1. **Civic:** SCUC works closely and continuously with employers and civic stakeholders including Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC), Warwickshire County Council and West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) to design ambitious and adaptable adult learning programmes across the Into Work, Upskill and Reskill offer. Learners with a wide range of starting points develop the skills and knowledge they need to access university courses, secure promotions at work, change careers, return to the workplace, or settle in the UK. The ESFA and WMCA are the core funders of our provision and to meet our local needs duty we liaise closely with the Combined Authorities to follow the principles of their employment and adult skills strategies. Over the next three years our delivery of adult skills will align to the following four key pillars:
 1. building strong and inclusive communities.
 2. providing a good education up to level 2.
 3. supporting residents into-employment and supporting career progression.
 4. meeting future skills needs at level 3 and above through upskilling and reskilling.

2. Education Partnerships: our marketing team manages Schools Liaison staff that regularly visit schools across our region to encourage Year 10 and Year 11 to explore college courses. Open events, school assembly talks, taster days and apprenticeship awareness events are frequent throughout the year. We also promote Solihull's HE (Higher Education) to sixth form students that are considering progression to higher education.

Through our involvement with the GBSIoT we have strong partnerships with universities enabling our learners to progress to a HE pathway after they complete their studies with SCUC. Our own degree level programmes are validated by Oxford Brookes University, Coventry University and Birmingham Newman University allowing local residents to successfully achieve a degree or degree-level apprenticeship whilst remaining here at SCUC.

3. Employers: SCUC works exceptionally well with employers to plan and teach an ambitious curriculum that responds to local needs. Long-standing employer panels support the design of a responsive work-based curriculum optimising the student experience and employer responsiveness. Our employer services team focusses on an OFSTED inspected "Good" provision of apprenticeships that are agile enough to respond to the needs of local businesses as well as meeting skills needs of the national and regional economy. The College's Business Centre provides a professional physical space to host events for employers, conferences and networking spaces for employers to utilise and grow their businesses.

4. Community Stakeholders: Solihull has large parts of the Borough that rank amongst the least deprived areas of England, and a concentration of neighbourhoods in North Solihull that are amongst the most deprived. SCUC is highly effective at ensuring that curriculum meets the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and secures excellent outcomes for the hardest to reach learners. We have two strategic subcontracting partnerships to supplement our offer for hard-to-reach learners. The first is RMF, a local private training provider that specialises in construction for diverse learners, including ex-offenders and the long term unemployed. This partnership has been highly effective in providing a workforce for large regional infrastructure projects such as HS2 with over 1100 learners trained. The College, RMF and employers have worked closely to support learners into employment.

The second is Colebridge Trust, a specialist community provider in North Solihull where there are a high number of economically deprived wards (ranked amongst the most deprived 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; to be empowered to improve health and well-being; 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

Skills for Jobs (January 2011): The College has used this paper as the blueprint for the development of a curriculum that meets the needs of learners, employers and the community. Through a rigorous curriculum development and quality assurance process, the College has built an agile, responsive and engaging curriculum.

National Priorities (April 2023): These national skills priorities take into account the Skills England report, Industrial Strategy Priorities and Plan for Change and 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 jobs² and net zero, creative industries and science and technology (including AI and quantum computing). These sectors are:

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

LSIP March (May 2023): The West Midlands and Warwickshire LSIP represents comprehensive mapping of existing research, meaningful collaboration between regional stakeholders and educators, and over one thousand engagements with local businesses. From this research, the Plan sets out actionable priorities and a clear roadmap for the region to support providers of post-16 technical education and training in aligning provision with current and future employer need. To support the growth of the region, the LSIP recommended that the following key sectors are given primary importance. With cross-cutting themes of

digital and green skills underlined with essential skills for employment “soft skills”:

- Engineering and Manufacturing
 - Construction
 - ICT and Digital
 - Logistics and Distribution
- (scope for in-work L&M training skills)

There are a number of cross-cutting themes which run through all of our provision types helping us to contribute towards meeting national, regional and local priorities. These themes are for all our learner-types: Young People, Adults, Apprentices and Higher Education students. They include: social mobility including widening participation; sustainability based around our strategic Sustainability Development Goals; transferable ‘soft’ skills which are employer and sector neutral but are identified as critical to employability including green / low carbon and digital; leadership and management critical for improving productivity; raising skills levels to L3 and above with focus on progression from T Levels, apprenticeships, Free Courses for Jobs (FCFJ), Skills Bootcamps to L4/5 through Higher or Degree Apprenticeships, HTQs (Higher Technical Qualifications).

Our Curriculum Strategy is developed with a clear purpose to support positive progression, co-designed with employers and stakeholders for credibility and delivered and supported by outstanding professionals in class leading facilities with the highest quality resources focusing on the personal development of our students as individuals to give them a competitive advantage.



SCAC has set the following Strategic Objectives for 2025-2026 to ensure it continues to meet local, regional and national priorities:

Aim/Objective	Impact and/or Contribution towards National, Regional and Local Priorities for Learning and Skills	Targets
1. Bootcamps	<p>Key Activity: Co-Create with employers a suite of bootcamps across the Creative Media, Digital, Construction and Leadership and Management sectors.</p> <p>Impact/Contribution: Create a skilled work force for our region's employers training boot campers in skills specific to the sector. Create positive progression outcomes.</p> <p>This links to: Regional Priorities and Local Priorities for Learning and Skills</p>	<p>1) Minimum of 10 different bootcamps using £602,000 of WMCA Bootcamp allocation</p> <p>2) Target 180 bootcamp learners with 95% progression rates.</p> <p>NB: Bootcamp timeframe is 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026</p>
2. Adult Skills, including Community Learning and Higher Education	<p>Key Activity: Continue to grow our responsive Adult Skills Department to co-create upskill-training for the employed, into-work training for the unemployed and L3+ training for the under-employed focussing on local and regional skills needs.</p> <p>Amplify our Community Learning portfolio planning a bespoke series of 6 week training blocks with key input from the SMBC.</p> <p>Embed ESOL and adult maths & English into our adult learning programs including those delivered by our subcontract partners</p> <p>In response to the introduction of the Lifelong Learning Entitlement from January 2027, we will develop modularised learning opportunities to enable students to study in smaller, more manageable units of 30 credits.</p> <p>Impact/Contribution: Improve outcomes for the following populations: Adults living in disadvantaged wards with low socio-economic status.</p> <p>Hard-to-reach individuals who may have disengaged from education or employment support services.</p> <p>People with low or no formal qualifications.</p> <p>Digitally excluded individuals with limited access to technology or digital skills.</p> <p>Adults with low level health conditions and/or moderate disabilities.</p> <p>Long-term unemployed adults.</p> <p>Create a flexible higher level.</p> <p>This links to: Local Priorities for Learning and Skills.</p>	<p>3) Ensure 100% of our WMCA and DFE ASF allocation is drawn down. Grow our direct delivery to reduce dependency on subcontracting partners.</p> <p>4) Create a minimum of 3 hubs with community outreach workers. Engage 320 economically inactive residents per year across the North Solihull area.</p> <p>5) HE - We will provide part-time, blended, and online learning options to support students with varying commitments in the Business and Animal Welfare subject areas.</p>

Aim/Objective	Impact and/or Contribution towards National, Regional and Local Priorities for Learning and Skills	Targets
3. Curriculum Skills alignment to Priority areas curriculum reform	<p>Key Activity: Ensure that the College's curriculum offer provides opportunity for learners to develop technical skills aligned to national and regional priority areas with recognition of local specialisms such as Animal Welfare and Hospitality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advanced manufacturing • creative industries • defence (aerospace & cyber) • digital and technologies • financial services • life sciences • professional and business services • clean energy industries • construction • health <p>Develop and grow the volume of T-Level provision in other subject areas where alternative L3 qualifications are defunded.</p> <p>Adapt and grow our apprenticeship offer and increase new start numbers across all schools.</p> <p>Impact/Contribution: We will develop an agile and ambitious curriculum plan that keeps pace with, local, regional and national needs whilst proactively identifying new funding opportunities that support income diversification and growth.</p> <p>This links to: Regional Priorities and Local Priorities for Learning and Skills</p>	<p>6) Ensure our achievement and retention targets are above national average, with attendance increasing by 2%.</p> <p>7) T-Level Targets: meet our plan to deliver to 218 T-Level students in 25/26.</p> <p>8) Strategically analyse our apprenticeships provision to ensure that it is meeting skills needs whilst being financially stable. Gain one large employer for a whole cohort of Apprenticeships.</p> <p>9) Develop a strategy for growing our 'clean energy industries' to incorporate EV and heat pump training centre investments.</p>

Local Needs Duty

The following strategic objectives will allow us to work towards creating positive and sustainable change within our communities and employers; ultimately improving the employability and learning opportunities for all residents and meeting local skills:

- **Employer Engagement and Empowerment:** We will actively involve employers in decision-making processes to address local needs. This includes establishing employer forums, workshops, and advisory boards to consider diverse perspectives.
- **Capacity Building:** We will invest in long-term capacity building to empower local institutions, Organisations, and individuals to address their own needs. This includes providing training, resources, and support to community leaders and Organisations.
- **Sustainable Development:** We will develop sustainable solutions that not only address immediate needs but also promote long-term resilience and development. This includes projects focused on environmental sustainability, economic development, and social well-being.
- **Collaborative Partnerships:** We will foster partnerships and collaborations between colleges, universities, non-profit Organisations, businesses, and employer groups to combine resources and expertise in addressing local needs more effectively.
- **Data-Driven Decision Making:** We will use data and evidence-based approaches to identify, prioritise, and address local needs. This includes conducting comprehensive needs assessments, tracking progress, and adjusting strategies accordingly.
- **Equity and Inclusion:** We will ensure that our strategies and interventions are inclusive and equitable, taking into account the needs of marginalised or vulnerable populations within the community. We will enhance our efforts and resources for targeted outreach, promote diversity in decision-making, and address barriers to access and participation.
- **Long-Term Planning and Adaptation:** We will develop long-term strategic plans that anticipate future challenges and opportunities within the community. We will also assess risks and incorporate flexibility into our strategies to adapt to changing circumstances.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** We will improve our mechanisms for monitoring progress and evaluating the impact of interventions aimed at addressing local needs. This will help us continuously improve our strategies.

Governing Body Statement

Statutory Duty: We are committed to complying with our duty under section 52B of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 to review provision in relation to local needs, as proposed in the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill 2022. We will review our Accountability Agreement every year to ensure our Curriculum is meeting the needs of learners, employers and the communities we serve.

Corporation Statement and Sign-Off: At a quorate meeting of the Board of the Corporation held at 4.00pm on Thursday 22nd May 2025, it was unanimously resolved that the College's Annual Accountability Statement 2025/26, as presented by the Principal and Chief Executive Officer, be approved and submitted to the relevant authorities.

Chair of Governors - **Paul Assinder**



22.05.25

Principal and CEO - **Dr. Rebecca Gater**



22.05.25

This plan will be published on the College website: [Policies - Solihull College & University Centre](#)

Supporting Documentation

Solihull Council Plan - 2024/25 Update

<https://www.solihull.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-04/Solihull-Council-Plan.pdf>

Council Plan 2023 - 2027 | Stratford-on-Avon District Council

<https://www.stratford.gov.uk/council-democracy/council-plan-2023--2027.cfm>

Warwickshire County Council Plan 2020 -2025

<https://democracy.warwickshire.gov.uk/documents/s4319/Appendix%20Council%20Plan%202020%20-2025.pdf>

Invest 2035: the UK's modern industrial strategy - GOV.UK

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/invest-2035-the-uks-modern-industrial-strategy/invest-2035-the-uks-modern-industrial-strategy>

Get Britain Working White Paper - GOV.UK

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/get-britain-working-white-paper>

Homepage - Skills WM+W

<https://skillswmw.com/>

SCUC Strategic Plan and Updates

<https://www.solihull.ac.uk/about-us/policies/#strategy>

Skills for Jobs Whitepaper (January 2021)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-for-jobs-lifelong-learning-for-opportunity-and-growth>

West Midlands and Warwickshire LSIP (May 2023)

<https://www.cw-chamber.co.uk/media/13214/west-midlands-and-warwickshire-lsip-final-030823-amends-highlighted.pdf>

Whitecap Report Skills West Midlands & Warwickshire (March 2024)

<https://www.whitecapconsulting.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Skills-WMW-Employer-Skills-Report.pdf>

WMCA Employment and Skills Strategy 2024-27

<https://www.wmca.org.uk/documents/productivity-skills/employment-and-skills-strategy-2024-2027/employment-and-skills-strategy-2024-2027/>

SCUC Annual Accountability Statement 2024-25

<https://www.solihull.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/annual-accountability-statement-2024.pdf>



Appendix 1: Review of 24/25 Accountability Statement

Review of 24/25 Annual Accountability Statement shows 90% positive progress against our goals:

Aim/Objective	Target	Progress	Comment
1. Ensure students on Study Programmes develop digital, business, and industry related employability skills so they progress to employment, self-employment, and further learning. (SA1)	1a - Introduce opportunities for learners to gain access to learning opportunities within our CISCO academy. Target of 35 learners in 24/25	Complete	The college is on track to meet its target for CISCO Academy, with 22 enrolments in terms 1 and 2.
	1b - Develop the tutorial programme across key priority areas so that learners recognise the value of their digital skills.	Complete	All learners engaged in the Solihull Unplugged event to gauge their resilience to a cyber-attack in college/workplace. The impact on learners were evaluated during Digital Wellbeing Week in February. From January, the tutorial programme moves into a "responsive phase" whereby tutors deliver a range of activities based on the specific needs of learners. Digital resources created for this include Social Media, LinkedIn, Online Scams, Grooming, Cyberbullying, Digital Resilience, phishing and digital safety. All engage in Digital Wellbeing workshops w/c 10 Feb 2025. Additional digital skills training planning for 25/26 including staff development.
	1c - Create opportunities within the study programme for learners to recognise and develop industry related employability skills and, where relevant, business and entrepreneurship skills.	Complete	The college is providing strong opportunities for learners to develop industry-related employability skills, with examples such as the Turing Scheme for work experience abroad, career talks, and placements with employers like 'Footprint Forensics'. University visits, guest speakers, and units focusing on soft skills are also contributing to this goal.
	1d - Create Digital Bootcamps for adult learners x 12 learners	Complete	18 learners have already completed digital bootcamps.

Aim/Objective	Target	Progress	Comment
2. Ensure the College's T Level, Higher Education HTQ and Apprenticeship offer provides opportunity for learners to develop technical skills aligned to national and regional key priority areas (SA2)	2a - Continue T-Level launches in Animal Welfare, Media Broadcast & Production, Education & Childcare and new A-Level launch.	Complete	T-Level launches have taken place in Animal Welfare (15 students), Education & Childcare (71 students), and the new A-Level launch (34 students). There were no enrolments in Media Broadcast & Productions, so a target of 12 is now in place for Sept 2025, with additional bespoke marketing activity planned ahead of next Open Event in April.
	2b - Fully align the whole College technical offer against the 24-25 Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) career routes.	Ongoing	The college is continuing to align its technical offer against the 24-25 IfATE career routes, however, IfATE is being transformed into Skills England, and we await further information on new reforms.
	2c - Targeted recruitment strategies to secure enrolments onto courses in Engineering, Built Environment and Health & Social Care mapped against the identified key priorities career routes in Digital, Sustainable/Low Carbon/Life Sciences/Manufacturing/Health & Science Industries	Ongoing	Through the establishment of the Adult Skills directorate, the college is launching a series of new responsive programmes that have been advertised in partnership with the DWP in key sectors, including Engineering, Construction, Health and Digital. Starting in January 2025, each sector has a target of £120k to deliver responsive programmes, including Guide to Social Media, Digital Functional Skills for Business, Health and Safety in the Workplace, Engineering Studies for Work, Social Care Diplomas, Heat Pump Installation etc. Programmes have been launched under the "New Year, New You" campaign.
	2d - To keep the curriculum up-to-date and relevant to the local skills needs by co-creating with local employers	Complete	Following achieving "Strong for skills" in the last Ofsted inspection, the college continues to work with local employers to ensure the curriculum is up-to-date and relevant to local skills needs. Skills analysis is also completed with employers to design relevant courses. The college continues to build and enhance a culture that celebrates and prioritises excellence and digital innovation in Teaching, Learning and Assessment.

Aim/Objective	Target	Progress	Comment
3. Continue to build and enhance a culture that celebrates and prioritises excellence and digital innovation in Teaching, Learning and Assessment (SA3)	3a - Create an internal and external network of Advanced Practitioners to identify strengths and areas for development within all subject areas through the collaboration with other colleges.	Ongoing	An internal and external network of Advanced Practitioners is being created through collaboration with other colleges. Specifically, the college is collaborating with Ofsted Outstanding providers including East Kent College Group, Burton and South Derbyshire College, Waltham Forest College and Riverside College.
	3b - Innovation in Teaching, Learning and Assessment to support students to develop skills beyond their core programme.	Ongoing	Innovation in teaching, learning and assessment is ongoing, with examples including LSIF-funded technical courses for staff to upskill and staff training in green skills.
	3c - Innovation in curriculum design enabling the creation of new, flexible programmes to meet sector and employer needs including launch of digital bootcamp and HND L5.	Ongoing	New, flexible programs are being created for adults as part of a new Adult Skills Directorate in the college. These responsive programmes are designed to address skills shortages locally. For example, the college has now launched an electrification programme with industry leader SERTEC.
	3d - To widen access to professional and management programmes by offering more flexible and modularised programmes	Ongoing	Not yet complete. A hybrid Team Leading Apprenticeship is ready for delivery from Feb 2025, and a flexible roll-on-roll-off ILM Level 3 programme is currently delivering with 4 enrolled learners, with a target of 20 by Aug 2025. The college is reviewing its wider delivery model for L4 and L5 management programmes and considering a change of awarding body to facilitate the change to modularised programmes. However, these programmes will not enrol until Sept 2025 and have been included in the college's normal business planning cycle as funding is also not secured.

Aim/Objective	Target	Progress	Comment
4. Extend the range and reach of the curriculum offer relating to sustainability and carbon literacy. (SA5)	4a - Pro-actively promote an enhanced offer of Adult Education focused on sustainability in conjunction with other subject areas.	Complete	Innovate UK Project has enabled us to engage with businesses to explore the barriers they face with regards to innovation – specifically digital transformation. The college is actively promoting an enhanced offer of Adult Education focused on sustainability, engaging with businesses to explore barriers to innovation. Bidding for two sustainability community grant-funded projects from Severn Trent and Npower.
	4b - Target 100 learners to be taught in the new EV/Hybrid (Electric Vehicle/Hybrid) centre for a suite of EV Hybrid maintenance and safety	Ongoing	The new EV/Hybrid centre is nearing completion. The first 40 learners are targeted to be taught in this unit by the end of March 2025 on an EV Safety qualification. 28 Achieved by May 2025.
	4c - Deliver Skills Bootcamps in Green Skills for example heat pump installation.	Ongoing	Skills Bootcamps in Green Skills (heat pump installation) have been developed to be delivered from a new specialist centre in Stratford upon Avon Campus. The new build is nearing completion and a cohort of 16 learners is planned in March 2025.

Aim/Objective	Target	Progress	Comment
5. Continue to provide an extensive range of Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) activities to ensure people get valuable information to help them make informed decisions about the subjects to study and the career pathway to follow. (SA1)	5a - Further develop relationships with schools to ensure learners understand the options available to them when they leave school.	Complete	The college has developed relationships with schools, with representatives attending over 150 events in term one, providing careers events, assemblies and CV writing workshops.
	5b - Renewed focus on engaging learners with non-traditional areas of learning for example males into health and care, females into digital, engineering and construction.	Complete	<p>The college marketing team prioritise diverse case studies and marketing collateral which is distributed via traditional and social media to attract applicants. The college has delivered some taster workshops focused on providing opportunities to applicants not represented in specific curriculum areas. For example, Construction has just completed taster workshops in plastering skills and a video will be published in February 2025. These actions have reduced the year-on-year gender gap in terms of enrolments as follows: Computing (-5%), Construction Trades (-4%) and Hair & Beauty (-5%). However, the gender gap has increased in Engineering (+7%), Early Years (+2%) and Health and Social Care (+1%).</p> <p>In conjunction with Solihull Employment and Skills Board, a specific campaign is in development to encourage women into the motor vehicle and construction sectors.</p> <p>In April the College's Student President Hyaat Hussain (studying motor vehicle) organised the 'FutureHER' conference at Blossomfield Campus, bringing together students from a range of disciplines, industry leaders, and guest speakers for an empowering day focussed on diversity and inclusion in STEM.</p>
	5c - Develop a career-focused strategy for adults working with employers to promote opportunities across the life sciences sector.	Complete	The college is developing a career-focused strategy for adults through its newly implemented Adult Skills Directorate. This team are introducing 'into employment' courses in Health & Social Care and working with domiciliary care companies to align courses with vacancies. Key programmes starting in January include Into Social Work Employment (will run three times per year with a target of 45), Adult Social Care Refresher for Employers (target of 20), Disability Awareness (target of 40) and Intro to Nero Diversity (target of 10).
	5d - Increase IAG availability to HE Students	Complete	<p>IAG availability to HE Students has been increased through a presentation with course specific detail which will be sent to applicants before their interview and Higher-Level Skills Match Plus project with local universities.</p> <p>The college has applied for funding to develop a peer mentoring scheme to help learners into HE. Presented to HE Strategy 8th May 2025.</p>

Aim/Objective	Target	Progress	Comment
6. Participate in opportunities for funding a variety of courses to engage hard to reach adult learners appropriate to build routes of referral to other local providers. (SA4)	6a - Planned Functional Skills courses at levels 1 and 2 to enhance English and Maths skills	Complete	A range of Functional Skills courses in English and Maths at levels 1 and 2 are being delivered, with face-to-face and online options available. As of January 2025, 256 adults are studying English and 357 are studying Maths.
	6b - Planning and project management of the development of a new 'Pre-Access' provision to provide a route through to Access to HE courses for Community Learners.	Complete	The college has developed a pre-access programme in Health & Social Care to support learners who want to complete an Access programme. The aim is to improve retention on Access programmes by improving the skills and knowledge of learners at the pre-access stage. The college has currently enrolled 30 learners to this programme across two campuses.
	6c - To increase the number of pre-employment and pre-apprenticeship opportunities offered to residents to meet the local skills gap in care	Complete	Through the establishment of the Adult Skills directorate, the college is launching a series of new responsive programmes in the care sector. These have been advertised in partnership with the DWP and local employers. Key programmes starting in January include Into Social Work Employment (will run three times per year with a target of 45), Adult Social Care Refresher for Employers (target of 20), Disability Awareness (target of 40) and Intro to Nero Diversity (target of 10).
	6d - Fully utilise the Adult Education Budget, 'Multiply' and Skills Free Courses for Jobs so that Adults can progress from a point of low prior attainment to at least level three.	Complete	The college has successfully utilised the Free Courses for Jobs scheme, achieving 100% of the WMCA allocation and 72% of the ESFA allocation to date, and is therefore on track to achieve 100% by the end of the academic year. The new Adult Skills Directorate has designed responsive programmes to address skills shortages locally.

Aim/Objective	Target	Progress	Comment
7. Maximise existing approaches to training by diversifying into new subjects and geographies (SA2)	7a - Replicate the model of Skills Bootcamps to make training more convenient and easily accessible to those with other commitments, especially where there are skills gaps in roles such as mechanics and technicians.	Ongoing	The college has introduced some new bootcamps, but not all of the planned provision achieved enough enrolments to be viable (Business Bootcamps and Engineering Bootcamps). To mitigate, a new bootcamp in Digital Support Technician has been introduced and is on track to enrol 12 learners in Jan 2025. In addition, a new 'Get Gallery Ready' bootcamp has been launched which has attracted a full cohort of learners. The college has made a request to WMCA to move 42 planned engineering bootcamps for SERTEC to the AEB funding stream on request of the employer. This is because the bootcamp model does not meet their skills needs. The revised delivery model has now been agreed with the WMCA and delivery is due to start in Spring 2025.
	7b - Development of a new bootcamp designed to support 42 existing engineers to upskills in specific areas of specialism.	Complete	As above, SERTEC have requested the bootcamp model to be revised to support the development of electrical skills for their employees. This revised delivery model has now been agreed with the WMCA for delivery in Spring. The employer has committed to providing 42 learners for upskilling.
	7c - Development of a new Bootcamp in Heat Pump Systems to support 16 learners, designed to give installers the necessary skills and knowledge required to correctly install heat pumps.	Ongoing	Construction of the specialist building is nearing completion. The curriculum design to train installers of heat pumps is now complete and awaiting delivery in the new building. A cohort of 16 learners is was planned in March 2025 but did not recruit. Further courses over evenings and weekends will be planned for the 25/26 year.
	7d - Expand Bootcamp provision for 100 learners to prepare them for work in the creative sector.	Complete	18 learners have been enrolled to Wave 5 bootcamps in term one. More creative bootcamps are scheduled for term two. These are Development/Researcher Bootcamp (Jan), Filming Performance Bootcamp (Jan), Podcast Content Creation Bootcamp (Jan), Get Gallery Ready Bootcamp (Feb), Live Stream (Feb) The combined target of the above creative bootcamps is 75. The need to mitigate the shortfall of 7 is not required as the Get Gallery Ready Bootcamp already has +40 applications against a target of 15, ensuring the overall target will be met.



Annual Accountability Statement and Local Needs Duty 25/26

June 2025

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