

## Local Needs Duty & Accountability Agreement

<https://cwa.ac.uk/about/governance/policies-and-statements>

June 24

### 1) PURPOSE

#### **Mission:**

The College of West Anglia (CWA) provides many identifiable public benefits through the advancement of education which is included in the delivery of its strategic plan and its public value statement. We aim to create public value through, amongst other things:

- Working with learners to develop their skills and personal confidence and raising their aspirations and employment opportunities.
- Displaying and promoting local leadership through our relationships and collaboration with other organisations leading to the enrichment of the economic, social, cultural, and physical well-being of our communities.

#### **Our Vision:**

Changing lives through learning.

#### **Strategic Ambitions:**

1. Deliver outstanding learner success.
2. Impact positively on local social and economic prosperity.
3. Develop a culture of support, empowerment, and high performance.
4. Use our resources to achieve maximum impact.

#### **Our Values:**

We recognise that learners must be central in all that we do and aspire to the following values:

1



INCLUSIVENESS  
RESPECT  
ASPIRATION  
INTEGRITY  
INSPIRATION  
ENTERPRISE  
COLLABORATION

**Why College of West Anglia (CWA) provision is important and the contribution it makes:**

CWA has an excellent track record with learners and employers and been recognised and rated by Ofsted as Good:

“CWA is an inclusive and supportive culture and the extent to which we have together created a welcoming and friendly place to study, where learners feel safe, are well behaved and motivated, have high attendance and develop substantial new skills, and that the vast majority of the learners progress into employment, apprenticeships, or higher education.” Ofsted 2019 Inspection Report

Ofsted recognised College of West Anglia as:

- housing some of the best facilities in the country
- providing high-quality resources in inspiring environments
- delivering excellent tutor knowledge and skills

- preparing learners and apprentices for the workplace
- offering a safe environment where learners are well-behaved and motivated.
- offering comprehensive work experience opportunities and effective careers advice.

CWA learners have an excellent track record of competing in skills competitions and have a superb record of achievement demonstrated across many years at local, national, and international competitions. This includes WorldSkills UK, where in 2022, CWA achieved more medal points than the combined total from all other East of England colleges. We have a very strong reputation for achieving finalists and medal points topping the regional points table in 9 of the last 10 years.

## **2) CONTEXT & PLACE**

CWA is one of the largest providers of education and training in rural Norfolk and Cambridgeshire, with additional employer-partner provision delivered in Lincolnshire and across England.

The College provides programmes across all 15 sector subject areas (SSA). The main teaching estate includes campuses in King's Lynn, Wisbech and Milton (Cambridge), along with several smaller venues. Approximately 75% of all full-time learners live in the West Norfolk and Fenland areas.

### **Challenges of the local area which inform our strategy, and curriculum planning.**

The proportion of pupils reaching five or more GCSEs at Grades 9 - 4 including English and mathematics in local schools is below the national average. Additionally, the

number of learners who need to achieve their basic skills in English and maths is 3% above similar providers.

A far smaller proportion of the local population is educated to Levels 3 and 4 than is the case nationally. Around 37% of the workforce in Norfolk and Cambridgeshire are educated to NVQ level 4, some 6% lower than the rest of the UK.

Skill levels are markedly lower in Fenland and West Norfolk. East Cambridgeshire constituency is identified as one of the ten worst affected areas in the Government's Opportunity Gap Ranking. The number of learners with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is above national average.

The New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has identified the region as having low higher education (HE) participation with only 29.8% of the area's population educated to degree level compared with England's average of 34.2%. Participation in HE is particularly poor in King's Lynn and Fenland which have been identified as Higher Education 'cold spots,' where local opportunities are poor.

### **3) APPROACH TO DEVELOPING THE ACCOUNTABILITY AGREEMENT**

CWA worked closely with the Chambers of Commerce in Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, and Peterborough in the development of the *Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIP)*, including representation on working parties for sector specialisms.

Our approach is based on partnership, collaboration, research and networking with employer, education, community and civic organisations and other relevant stakeholders such as those listed below:

Norfolk Chamber of Commerce (LSIP)

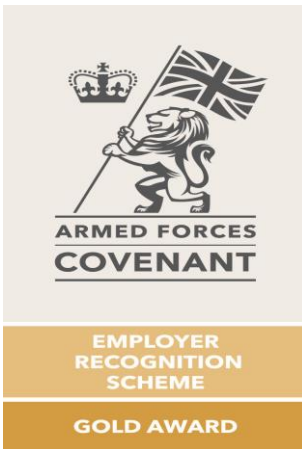
Suffolk Chamber of Commerce (LSIP)

Norfolk Business Board  
Cambridge and Peterborough Chamber of Commerce (LSIP)  
Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority  
Kings Lynn Town Deal Board Norfolk County Council  
Queen Elizabeth Hospital Kings Lynn  
Anglian Water @One Alliance partnership  
Freebridge Community Housing Association  
Over 700 other employer partners  
Anglia Ruskin University (ARU)  
ARU Peterborough  
University of Suffolk  
Open University  
Landex  
New Anglia Colleges Group  
Cambridge & Peterborough Colleges  
King's Lynn Skills Group  
Fenland District Council  
Cambridge County Council  
Department for Education  
Department for Work & Pensions  
Norfolk for jobs project steering group  
Apollo Project steering group  
Membership of the National Farmers Union

Our approach to employer engagement is long standing. In 2018, CWA achieved regional and national recognition.



In 2019, CWA was the first ever UK College to achieve the Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme, Gold Award.



In 2023 CWA was highly commended for its engagement with employers.



**The accountability agreement statement has been developed as a natural extension of our regular dialogue and focus on continuous improvement and meeting skills needs with input from:**

- Employer focus groups, and networking with large and SME, locally and regionally with regards to skills needs through our extensive network of employer contacts and partners which has been established over many years.
- Robust implementation of our curriculum planning strategy and subsequent operational planning meetings
- learners and parent voice
- CWA team
- CWA Governing Board scrutiny & training sessions
- Continued scrutiny and feedback from internal and external bodies.
- College leadership team discussions
- Senior management team agenda – strategy discussions
- Employer focus groups and discussions
- LMI (Labour Market Intelligence) – Vector reports and operational discussions
- LSIP focus groups.
- Local network group meetings NCC/CPCA events
- Collaboration with the New Anglia College and CPCA Groups

#### **4) CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL PRIORITIES**

CWA contribution intent for 2024/25 is based on the successful implementation of our annually reviewed strategic plan, and previously outlined targets which aligns with local, regional, and national skills market intelligence, local employer voice and themes from the LSIPs (Local Skills Improvement Plans) discussion such as Agri-Technology/food processing, Advanced Manufacturing, Net Zero, Life Science, Digital and locally identified areas of skills shortage such as dentistry, public service and animal care. The impact on skills shortage arising from industry 4.0, regional projects such as Sizewell C and global themes such as Carbon Net Zero are also considered.

This approach is underpinned by our robust curriculum planning strategy and learner and employer feedback. The impact of what we do is the focus for our reporting to governors. Impact is the central theme of our self-assessment processes. We ensure that through self-assessment we continually review the relevance and effectiveness of the curriculum offer to our communities. Through self-assessment we also hold ourselves accountable for the effective use of public funds.

**CWA have four key themes for implementation across 2024/25 aligned directly to the four Strategic Ambitions.**

##### **1. Build learner career and next step confidence and opportunity.**

**Intent: Build on our current delivery of excellent careers education and work experience opportunities to enable learners to confidently take their next step with the right skills and understanding to maximise the opportunities available to them and provide employers with a pipeline of suitable candidates.**



- Ensure a minimum of 85% of study programme learners achieve appropriate placement/work experience and complete associated reflections. Further develop a portfolio of employers who provide meaningful opportunities for work experience.
- Gain feedback from employers on suitability of applicants from CWA for their vacancies, with regards to their work readiness skills, analyse findings to inform the curriculum.
- Extend engagement with WorldSkills and external showcasing opportunities across vocational areas.
- As part of their vocational studies, teaching teams will refer to LMI and different career opportunities available to the learners, they will encourage learners to be aspirational with their career plans and will also challenge stereotypical thinking. It is imperative that our ethos of '**careers, not courses**' continues to be embedded in our offer to learners to enable them to effectively career plan and to gain vital future relevant skills, including those highlighted by employers as key for the future workforce including digital, green, and building on basics such as communication skills.

## 2. Enable learner progression and widen participation.

**Intent: Enhance our current offer to drive progression, and develop the talent, skills, and knowledge available to the local economy. Widen participation in Higher Education to meet local and regional employer demand.**

- Meet learner engagement and retention targets:
  - Pre-census study programme withdrawals below 3%
  - Overall retention 92% or above (Education and Training; Adult Courses; Apprenticeship Provision)
  - Attendance at maths and English below 5% of main programme attendance (Study Programmes only) and vocational studies 85% or above.
- Maintain effective Blue, Red, Amber, Green, Purple (traffic light system) rating of all learner's progress and ensure that appropriate support is available and in place to enable learners to achieve their potential in a timely manner:
  - At least 95% of study programme learners to have the BRAGP status reviewed within 20 teaching days.
  - At least 90% of Purple BRAGP rated learners to be supported to a resolution within 30 days.
  - Meet or exceed all Apprenticeship Accountability Measures.
- Implement the Higher Education strategy.
- The University Centre West Anglia aims to create public value by:
  - Working with learners to raise aspirations, enhance employment opportunities developing their skills and personal confidence, to help them thrive.
  - Modelling and promoting positive local leadership through our relationships and collaboration with external stakeholders, leading to the enrichment of the economic, social, cultural, and physical wellbeing of our communities. CWA aims to **develop higher technical education** (Level 4 and 5), higher and

degree apprenticeships including Diploma in HE, Computing and IT with Cyber Security and a Diploma in Health Science, leading to skilled employment. Level 4 and 5 qualifications will be supported by the availability of learning loans, applications expected from September 2025 (*Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth January 2021*)

- These qualifications will offer progression opportunities from T-Level qualifications currently being rolled out at the College and meet the needs of employers in the region who are seeking higher technical skills in their workforce.
- Building on our current offer at Levels 4 and 5, we see higher and degree apprenticeships as a natural area for development given the College's enduring, successful experience of apprenticeship delivery and the scope of our employer engagement.

A key aspect of our rationale for planning pathways in and out of Levels 4 and 5 is to raise aspirations across a high employment, low wage workforce.

- **School of Nursing Studies (SoNS) King's Lynn** - to provide local training to address the NHS workforce plan priorities within the area. The School of Nursing studies benefits from a full time, permanent Head of Nursing studies, two job coaches and a clinical skills educator enabling CWA to significantly extend the scope of provision from SoNS. Substantial funding from the Apollo project since September 2023 has supported outreach careers work across North Norfolk, promoting careers within the care sector. New courses offered provide a vital pipeline into paid employment as healthcare support workers at Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) and within the local social care sector. Training of level 5 trainee nursing apprentices continues with

plans for 2025 / 26 to include level 6 nursing apprenticeships, level 3 dental nursing apprenticeships (through partnership with University of Suffolk), levels 2 and 3 healthcare support worker apprenticeships and a comprehensive CPD (Continuing Professional Development) package of courses to support upskilling of the NHS workforce at QEH. The wider range of programmes will be enabled by a £1m+ extension to the centre.

- **Green Skills and Net Zero Agenda** – CWA is committed to the Carbon Net Zero agenda and has a clear sustainability strategy. We have several projects underway with local employers, including Anglian Water @One Alliance and a team trained and driving the green skills agenda. Our intention for the forthcoming year is as follows: -
  - Continue to raise learner and staff awareness **of relevant sustainability and environmental issues and the United Nations sustainability development goals** using new resources, equipment and classroom space funded through Local Skills Improvement Funding (LSIF). This will be achieved via tutorials, assignments, and competitions, so students and staff understand their impact on changing attitudes.
  - Following an external review, finalise a strategy for our Cambridge campus, including potential for **green energy generation**.
  - Build a new £4m **green construction skills centre** at the Wisbech campus partly funded by employer partners.
  - Continue to develop and deliver the related sustainability and green agenda training materials, training, upskilling, and promotion linked directly to the CWA sustainability strategy. Accredite the courses through the relevant awarding organisations.

- Continue to upskill the teaching staff with relevant CPD (Continuing Professional Development) aligned to **retrofit and green skills**.

**3. Collaborate extensively to enable CWA to inform and influence the skills agenda and meet the skills need.**

**Intent: Actively collaborate with employers, stakeholder, and strategic partners to drive the local, regional, and national skills agenda, with the aim of impacting positively on economic prosperity. Be responsive to identified need, widen participation, and provide a quality of provision that meets economic and Learner requirements.**

- Work collaboratively with local and regional strategic partners, including businesses and other education providers, to contribute to socio-economic prosperity, in line with identified need and the Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs).
- Actively seek collaborative projects aligned with the local skills improvement plans; upskilling, reskilling the community, increasing our learner numbers in areas of identified need. (e.g. Health and social care workforce development project - Apollo, Visitor Economy Network Initiative, (VENI), Government, Skills boot camps, LSIF etc.)
- Further develop the use of business intelligence and labour market information to establish an accessible gap analysis report that regularly updates Senior Management Team (SMT), College Leadership Team (CLT) and program teams and stimulates discussion that informs and enables the planning of a curriculum that is responsive to the training needs and skills priorities of the local, regional, and national economy, building a sustainable future for our learners, employers, and the

communities we serve, e.g., Anglian Water @One Alliance partnership, and Queen Elisabeth Hospital.

Design learning opportunities with **local businesses through proactive engagement in 'Employer and Stakeholder voice'** and develop a range of complementary provision, underpinned by alternative funding, to **support their training and development needs.**

**4. Fully utilise our resources to deliver maximum impact and value for money.**

- Create an AI (Artificial Intelligence) strategy to support and underpin the curriculum and drive efficiency of resources.
- Share, celebrate and promote excellent practice by making it a central feature of existing cross-college forums (e.g. curriculum & quality management development sessions, college community conference, Research & Innovation Forum, etc) and by creating new mechanisms.
- Consider and respond to the output from the FE (Further Education) Commissioner's Curriculum Efficiency and Financial Sustainability Support Review.
- Reduce staff absence to an average of fewer than five days per employee and voluntary staff turnover for those with less than 2 years employment to 10%.
- Develop and implement a staff communication and engagement strategy to ensure staff voices are heard and their views acted upon.

Whilst planning and shaping the skills curriculum, we must be responsive to funding income streams. The main external influences arise from:

- [Department for Education](#)
- The National Government education agenda e.g., [Post-16 Skills Plan](#), [Augar Report](#), [Apprenticeship Reforms](#), [Sainsbury Review](#) and [T Levels](#)
- [Ofsted research and publications](#)
- [National Progress Measures](#)
- Utilisation of information from [UKCES data](#) for key employment areas and specifically local information
- Norfolk devolution and Cambridge and [Peterborough Combined Authority](#) priority areas for employment and future growth
  - [Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Strategy - New Anglia](#)
  - [Business Board Strategies | CPCA | The Combined Authority \(cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk\)](#)
- Demand and specific local requirements through [sector-based work academy programmes \(SWAP\)](#).
- [Overall demographic trends for 3-5 years](#)
- Demographic and transition information on individuals' specific needs from feeder schools
- [SEND \(Special Educational Needs and Disabilities\) reforms and 'The Local Offer'](#)
- Availability of specialist and technical resources, including staff, where required to underpin curriculum delivery.
- Historic application, enrolment, and retention trend information
- English, maths, and information communication technologies (ICT) skills development
- Promotion of equality of opportunity and diversity, employability skills and British Values within the curriculum

- o The [Ofsted Education Inspection Framework](#) which contains a strong focus on curriculum 'intent, implementation and impact.'
- o <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-post-16-qualifications-at-level-3-in-england--2>

## 5) **CORPORATION STATEMENT & ADDRESSING THE LOCAL SKILLS NEEDS DUTY**

CWA have worked closely with the local Chambers of Commerce, employers, and FE/Training Provider to ensure our provision aligns to the outcome of the Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIP) and national sector priorities to enable local skills needs to be met, and ensure we are planning for future skills needs provision as a priority.

As with any mature organisation, the College is subject to internal and external audit. There is highly robust governance approach which drives regular dialogue and challenge ensuring CWA is serving the local community, and meeting skills needs.

Our self-assessment process, quarterly performance review and quality committee ensures regular oversight and review of the relevance and value of our delivery. This is underpinned by the annual curriculum and strategic planning cycle which enable us to reflect on any changes required informed via our internal process, labour market research (local, regional, national, and global trends) and stakeholder intelligence. An external governance review was undertaken during 2024, with a subsequent report concluding that ***“There is strong evidence that the Board is highly proficient and consistently impacts positively on college strategy, effectiveness, and outcomes.”***

CWA work closely with the regional educational providers to address and meet local needs and avoid duplication of provision. (e.g. Principles group discussions, LSIF project,



AOC membership group) This is underpinned by collaboration with employers/stakeholder which informs the strategic direction of travel, along with government policy. This year will see a Norfolk devolution deal, the impact of which is being planned for.

[Corporation – Our Board.](#)

**Corporation Documents:**

- [Corporation Minutes](#)
- [Search and Governance Committee](#)
- [Performance Review and Quality Committee](#)
- [Rules, Regulations and Policies](#)
- [Published Accounts](#)
- [Governance Reports](#)
- [Instruments and Articles of Government](#)
- [Audit Committee](#)
- [Chairs' Meeting Group](#)
- [Employment Policy Committee](#)
- [Finance and General Purposes](#)

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 look to hold a review at least every three years to identify how well we are meeting local needs associated with securing suitable employment. We will publish our reports on our main website following this review.

On behalf of the College of West Anglia Corporation, it is hereby confirmed that the college plan as set out above reflects an agreement statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the corporation board on 24 June 2024.

Signed Off:

Chair of Governors:



Principal:



Dated: 24 June 2024

6) **HYPERLINK:**

<https://cwa.ac.uk/about/governance/policies-and-statements>

7) **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

- [Meeting Skills Needs: The College of West Anglia Curriculum Planning Strategy](#).
- CWA Strategic Plan 2024 - 2027
- Our [College of West Anglia \(CWA\)](#) and [University Centre West Anglia \(UCWA\)](#) marketing brands are both mature and robust in terms of regional breadth and depth of reach; campaigns are informed and updated by relevant LMI and Office for National Statistics (ONS) data. Social media platforms include:
  - <https://www.facebook.com/cwacollege/>
  - [https://twitter.com/cwa\\_college](https://twitter.com/cwa_college)
  - <https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-college-of-west-anglia/>
  - [https://www.instagram.com/cwa\\_college/](https://www.instagram.com/cwa_college/)
- CWA - Career Development Plan

- CWA - Sustainability Strategy