

## **Local Needs Duty & Accountability Agreement**

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

June 25

### **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 raise 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, inclusivity, 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:

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 has been recognised and rated by Ofsted as Good:**

*'Leaders have in place a curriculum offer that successfully contributes to meeting skills needs across the region and beyond. They provide apprenticeships in response to the specific needs of employers and have clear progression routes to employment from education programmes for young people. Leaders ensure that they provide a flexible suite of adult learner courses that are responsive to skills needs and learner demands.'*

**Ofsted inspection March 2025**

Ofsted recognised the following at the College of West Anglia:

- Learners develop a range of knowledge, skills and behaviours that support their success.
- Adult learners increase their confidence and are prepared effectively for their next steps.
- Apprentices quickly develop their knowledge and practical skills, which they can apply in a range of scenarios and contexts.

- Learners with high needs thrive in the college, they achieve well and develop friendships.
- Staff have developed a supportive and encouraging culture where learners and apprentices develop the positive traits that they need to flourish.
- Young learners participate in purposeful work experience which helps them to develop skills, build character and gain insight into their chosen industry.
- Leaders and staff have created a welcoming and inclusive environment for learners and apprentices.
- Learners and apprentices take part in a wide range of purposeful and interesting enrichment activities.
- Learners and apprentices value the subject expertise that teachers have which brings their learning to life.
- Learners and apprentices who remain on their course, achieve their qualifications, and move onto positive destinations.

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 with some of the latest success outlined below:

- The College of West Anglia (CWA) achieved outstanding success at the prestigious WorldSkills Competition, where its talented students, Charlie Moore and Kaitlyn Fisher, earned a gold medal in Electrical Installation and a silver medal in Health and Social Care respectively in 2024.
- 61 students registered to compete in WorldSkills UK 2025 competitions across 11 vocational areas, with over a 3<sup>rd</sup> progressing to the national qualifying events (June 2025)
- Millie Seekings, a Level 3 Art & Design student, won a national competition to illustrate Dan's Magic Pegs, a children's book by Jonathan Howe. (2024)
- Electrical Apprentice, Charlie Moore, won the Apprentice of the Year award at the Apprenticeships Norfolk Awards (February 2025)
- 10 catering and hospitality learners competed at the International Salon Culinaire (achieving 1 silver, 10 bronze and 7 merits)

- Photography student, Toma Toricina, won the Norwich University of the Arts 'Beyond the Frame' photography competition (April 2025)
- Apprentices Charlie Conway and Ben Clarkson competed in the regional finals of the National Seafood Chef of the Year competition, achieving merit certificates of recognition (May 2025)
- An enterprising group of students from the College of West Anglia's (CWA's) Developing Work Skills and Bridge to Education programmes were runners up in the Peter Jones Foundation Tycoon competition. (2024)
- Hair and Beauty students from the King's Lynn campus showcased their incredible skills at the Association of Hairdressers and Therapists national finals in Blackpool, achieving fantastic results in a tough competition, for the second year running.

## **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 in 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% higher than 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 at NVQ level 4, some 6% lower than the rest of the UK.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation score is high in both King's Lynn and Fenland, and the 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 the national average. Key challenges have been identified with certain cohorts of Neet, those who are economically inactive and King's Lynn has been identified as the 50th Marmot place in the UK, evidencing high levels of health inequality. West Norfolk is adopting eight evidence-based principles to reduce health inequalities, our principal sits on the local Marmot advisory board.

### **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.

*Senior leaders took an active role in the development of two local skills improvement plans and supported the local skills improvement fund in areas such as green skills, advanced manufacturing and digital. They lead on the Future Technicians project which focuses on technical skills shortages in the life sciences sector and environmental sciences. In response to growing demand for green skills in the region, leaders work very closely with employers and key stakeholders in their development to provide training opportunities in areas such as renewable energy, water efficiency and environmental technology. Leaders have established an advisory board to ensure that the curriculum remains relevant, such as exploring the retrofitting installation of air source heat pumps in homes.*

#### ***Ofsted inspection March 2025***

Our approach is based on partnership, collaboration, research and networking with employers, 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  
Norfolk County Council (Local Growth Plan)  
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Chamber of Commerce (LSIP)  
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (LSIP,  
Growth Plans)  
King's Lynn Neighbourhood Board  
Marmot Place Board  
Queen Elizabeth Hospital King's Lynn  
Anglian Water, @One Alliance partnership  
Freebridge Community Housing Association  
Over 700 other employer partners  
Anglia Ruskin University (ARU)  
ARU Peterborough  
University of East Anglia (UEA)  
University of Suffolk  
Open University  
Landex  
New Anglia Colleges Group  
Cambridge & Peterborough  
Colleges King's Lynn Skills Group  
Fenland District Council  
Cambridgeshire County  
Council Department for  
Education Department for  
Work & Pensions  
Apollo Project steering group  
Membership of the National Farmers Union  
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Youth Guarantee Programme Board  
Norfolk For Jobs project steering group

Our approach to employer engagement is long standing. In 2023 CWA was highly commended for its engagement with employers



In 2019, CWA was the first ever UK College to achieve the Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme, Gold Award; the covenant was reaffirmed in 2024 and Gold Award status re-accredited in 2025.



**The CWA accountability agreement statement has been informed by national policy such as the Industrial strategy, Skills England remit, the plan for change, and aligned to regional and local policy. The statement has evolved as a natural extension of our regular dialogue and focuses 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
- Ofsted inspection feedback
- Self-Assessment report and Quality Improvement plan
- Performance data and learner outcomes
- LMI (Labour Market Intelligence) – Vector and Lightcast reports, Chamber, government and national data report analysis (including the national industrial strategy)
- LSIP focus groups Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, Norfolk and Suffolk.
- Local network group meetings NCC/CPCA events and business board reports
- Collaboration with the New Anglia College and CPCA Groups

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

CWA contribution intent for 2025/26 is based on the successful implementation of our annually reviewed strategic plan, and targets which align with local, regional, and national skills market intelligence, local employer voice and themes from the LSIPs (Local Skills Improvement Plans) and the key sectors from the industrial plan and LSIP Agri-Technology, Advanced Manufacturing, Net Zero, Life Science, Digital, Construction. The wider regional plans, local growth plans, getting Britain Working and further locally identified areas of skills shortage as outlined in the NHS Long Term Plan, including dentistry, skills shortage arising from industry 4.0, regional projects such as Sizewell C and global themes such as Carbon Net Zero are also considered.

There has been significant political change, and subsequent policy shift, the industrial strategy, Skills England report, Get Britain Working white paper, and Norfolk's approach to devolution have all to be considered in both our strategy planning and local needs accountability statement review. We will be working regionally and Collaborating with our FE colleagues to support the policy with Technical Excellence Colleges.

This approach is underpinned by our robust curriculum planning strategy and learner and employer/stakeholder feedback. The impact of what we do is the focus for our reporting to governors. Impact is the central theme of our self-assessment and quality improvement 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 has four key themes for implementation across 2025/26, aligned directly to the four Strategic Ambitions.**

**1. Build learners' career and next step confidence and opportunity.**

*Staff provide useful and relevant careers information, advice and guidance which enables learners and apprentices to make informed decisions about their next steps. Learners and apprentices attend a wide range of events and activities, facilitated by the college. For example, learners and apprentices attend a range of careers fairs with representatives from universities and local employers in addition to individual meetings with careers advisors where learners and apprentices identify the skills needed for their chosen career. Ofsted inspection March 2025*

**Intent: Continue to 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. Our approach is one of 'Careers, not Courses'.**

- Co-ordinate and support a minimum of 80% of study programme learners to achieve appropriate placement/work experience and complete associated

reflections.

- Further enhance the portfolio of employers with targeted marketing campaigns and direct engagement with employers who will provide meaningful opportunities for work experience, particularly in the key areas of health, technology and science.
- Gain feedback from employers on their business' skills needs and suitability of applicants from CWA for their vacancies, with regards to their work readiness skills; analyse the findings to inform the design and delivery of the curriculum.
- imperative that our ethos of '**careers, not courses**', continues to be embedded in our offer to learners to enable them to effectively plan their career and to gain vital future relevant skills, including those highlighted by employers as key for the future workforce including digital, green, sustainability and building on basic essential skills.
- As part of their vocational studies, teaching teams will refer to LMI and different career opportunities available; they will encourage learners to be aspirational with their career plans and will also challenge stereotypical thinking.

## **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.**

- Use business intelligence and labour market information to plan a curriculum that is responsive to the training needs and skills priorities of the regional economy, building a sustainable future for our students, employers, and the communities we serve.
- Work collaboratively with strategic partners, including businesses and other education providers, to contribute to socio-economic prosperity, in line with the Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) to meet learner engagement and retention targets.
- Revise and implement our Higher Education Strategy to meet the needs of our local

and regional stakeholders, in the context of national policy.

- Maximise return on investment within key sectors including construction, green skills, advanced manufacturing, (Wisbech and KL investment) health and social care, (Apollo project and School of Nursing investment) life science (Bioscience Build) through development and delivery of relevant curriculum.
- Work with the local and national networks to influence the Skills England Agenda and maximise the opportunities to deliver against the growth and skills levy changes, and other relevant initiatives such as Get Britain Working trailblazers and the Youth Guarantee.
- **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 in driving the green skills agenda.

Our intention for the coming year is as follows: -

- Finalise the building and curriculum for the new £4m **green construction skills centre** at the Wisbech campus, in conjunction with the stakeholders, in readiness for delivery from November 2025
  - Engage with employers and students to develop and deliver relevant **retrofit and green skills**, utilising the equipment and building funded by LSIF at the King's Lynn campus, establishing a local reputation for course relevance and excellence.
  - Continue to embed sustainability into the design and curriculum delivery and engage staff and students in driving the carbon reduction agenda in relation to the usage of each campus and associated activities.
3. **Collaborate extensively to enable CWA to inform and influence the skills agenda and meet the skills need.**

**Intent: Further develop collaborations with employers, stakeholders, 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) and Growth Plans.
- 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), Skills Boot Camps, LSIF etc.)

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

- Create and implement an AI (Artificial Intelligence) strategy to support and underpin the curriculum and drive efficiency of resources.
- Use our resources wisely for minimum environmental impact in line with the implementation of the revised Sustainability Strategy to achieve an annual 4% reduction in carbon (CO<sub>2</sub>e) against the base line year of 2009/2010, in line with our aim to achieve Net Zero for Scope 1 & 2 by 2030.
- Consider and respond to the output from the FE (Further Education) Commissioner's Curriculum Efficiency and Financial Sustainability Support Review.
- Maintain staff absence at an average of fewer than five days per employee and voluntary staff turnover for those with less than 2 years employment to 10%
- 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
- Ofsted research and publications
- National Progress Measures
- Utilisation of information from UKCES data for key employment areas and specifically local information
- Norfolk devolution and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority priority areas for employment and future growth
  - Norfolk Business Board Strategy
  - Business Board Strategies | CPCA | The Combined Authority
- 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
- The Ofsted Education Inspection Framework which contains a strong focus on curriculum 'intent, implementation and impact.'
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-level-3-qualifications-reform-provisional-outcomes>

## **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 provision for future skills needs as a priority.

As with any mature organisation, the College is subject to internal and external audit. There is a 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 enables us to reflect on any changes required, informed by our internal process, labour market research (local, regional, national, and global trends) and stakeholder intelligence.

*Governance processes are effective. Governors are highly trained, experienced individuals from a variety of backgrounds including finance, education, and health. Governors have effective oversight of the quality of the provision at all college sites and subcontracted provision. They use their breadth of experience to provide support and rigorous challenge to senior leaders and hold them to account. Governors ensure that the college remains responsive to local and regional needs.*  
Ofsted March 2025

CWA works closely with the regional educational providers to address and meet local needs and avoid duplication of provision. (e.g. Principals group discussions, LSIF project, AOC membership group) This is underpinned by collaboration with employers/stakeholders which informs the strategic direction of travel, along with government policy.


[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 and Risk 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 25 June 2025.

Signed Off: 

Chair of Governors:

Principal: 

Dated: 25/06/2025

6. **HYPERLINK:**

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

## **7. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

- a. CWA Strategic Plan 2025 – 2028
- b. Meeting Skills Needs: The College of West Anglia Curriculum Planning Strategy.
- c. 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:
  - i. <https://www.facebook.com/cwacollege/>
  - ii. [https://twitter.com/cwa\\_college](https://twitter.com/cwa_college)
  - iii. <https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-college-of-west-anglia/>
  - iv. [https://www.instagram.com/cwa\\_college/](https://www.instagram.com/cwa_college/)
- d. CWA - Career Development Plan
- e. CWA - Sustainability Strategy
- f. Norfolk and Suffolk LSIP  
<https://norfolkchamber.co.uk/homepage/norfolk-and-suffolk-lsip/what-is-a-local-skills-improvement-plan/>
- g. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough LSIP  
<https://www.cambridgeshirechamber.co.uk/sectors/localskills/>
- h. Norfolk Business Board -  
<https://www.norfolkbusinessboard.co.uk/article/61526/Norfolks-Local-Growth-Plan>
- i. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority -  
<https://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/>
- j. Annual financial plan
- k. Ofsted Inspection Report - <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/31/130763>