



# Annual Accountability Statement (Part 2)

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2023-2024

The plan will be published on City of Wolverhampton College website and can be accessed from the following link <https://www.wolvcoll.ac.uk/our-college/college-documents-policies/>

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## 1. College Purpose

City of Wolverhampton College's purpose is '*Defining Futures*'. The College develops and delivers knowledge, skills and behaviours in collaboration with local and national employers, which contributes to positive destinations and improves life chances.

Recognising the high levels of unemployment in the city for 18-24 year olds, the development of skills that are needed to gain, and sustain, employment is a focus for our full time 16-19 year olds across their: core curriculum, additional qualifications, enrichment and maths and English progress. Students with more complex high needs follow a SEN curriculum that is developed with the same focus as our main curriculum offer, but is tailored to meet individual needs with a consistent aim that they need to develop their independency and employability skills. This leads to students gaining real work experience and Supported Internships and Progression to Work placements.

In a city with an ethnically diverse population, it is essential to our communities and the city's economic regeneration that ESOL provision is developed with the skills required both academically and vocationally. As the College continues to develop an ESOL for Employment offer in major employment sectors such as care and construction this has allowed students to gain vocational language skills alongside what is usually taught, giving them increased opportunity for progression onto vocational courses or a move directly into employment.

The College plays a major role in the regeneration of the city and region meeting the recruitment needs of employers by offering adults training courses through Sector Based Work Academy Programmes (SWAP), Skills Gateways and Bootcamps that give residents of the West Midlands the skills they need to gain, and importantly keep, employment in many of the priority sectors. In 2021/22, progression into employment from these initiatives was 86%, with an additional 5% continuing with education or training.

Through scrutiny of the labour market information for the city and region and acknowledging areas with the highest labour shortfalls, the College has opened three key Centres that directly address these challenges. Centres include:

1. A Rail Training Centre in response to investment made to the West Midlands public transport system. This Centre is enabling local people to develop skills needed to build the region's expanding train and tram networks, boasting more than 40 meters of industry relevant railway track, students get hands-on learning directly developing the skills needed to build, maintain and renew rail lines. Delivering beginner to advanced level programmes in partnership with National Infrastructure Solutions (NIS), a leading training provider in the rail, civil engineering and utilities industries. Courses support newcomers to the sector who want to gain the skills employers are looking for, as well as those already working in the rail industry who want to upskill and develop their knowledge further.
2. An Electric Vehicle and Green Technologies Training Centre delivering training to technicians to work on electric and hybrid vehicles and equip members of the local community with knowledge, skills and qualifications to access new job opportunities within the sector. The innovative scheme sees the delivery of programmes from beginner to

advanced level, suitable for those new to the automotive retail and repair sector, as well as those currently working in the industry who need to retrain.

3. A Plant Training Centre supported by Sunbelt Rentals, the largest rental company in the world, is equipped with a range of JCB plant equipment including excavators, forward tipping dumpers and ride on rollers. The Centre offers sector Gateways to train new staff and upskill current employees in the construction groundworks industry. This Centre was developed by the College following a Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) report which identified a shortfall in skilled plant workers and the need to create a pipeline of trained operatives to meet the future demands of the industry.

To ensure the purpose is deliverable, there is a College strategic framework that is formed of four success areas: Student Engagement, Student Success, Business Success and People Engagement.

The strategic framework provides annual objectives, measured through headline key performance indicators (KPIs) which are progressed and supported by Quality Improvement Plans.

This strategic framework is further underpinned by a set of key values aligned to each success area.

The strategic framework is expanded through a key document called the Strategic Development Implementation Plan (SDIP), this translating how the College's purpose is built around these four success areas.

**PURPOSE:** Defining Futures




**4 KEY STRATEGIC KPIs:**

 <b>Student Engagement</b> Market Share %	 <b>Student Success</b> Positive Student Destination %
 <b>Business Success</b> EBITDA (Earnings Before Interest, Tax, Depreciation & Amortisation) %	 <b>People Engagement</b> Staff Engagement %

**CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COLLEGE**

**PURPOSE:** Defining Futures

**VALUES:**

 <b>Student Engagement</b> We value students	 <b>Student Success</b> We value success & progression
 <b>Business Success</b> We value sustainable business	 <b>People Engagement</b> We value role models

**CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COLLEGE**

## 2. Context and Place

### *College context*

Situated in the City of Wolverhampton in the West Midlands the College predominantly serves the communities of Wolverhampton and surrounding areas including Dudley, Walsall, Staffordshire and Shropshire. The city forms part of the 'Black Country' that covers most of the four Metropolitan Boroughs of Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton.

The College was formed in September 1999 as a result of a merger between Wulfrun College and Bilston Community College. It was initially known as Wolverhampton College, however adopted its current title after Wolverhampton gained city status in December 2000.

The College has two main campuses in the city – Paget Road in Compton and Wellington Road in Bilston – approximately four miles apart, as well as a stand-alone Electric Vehicle and Green Technologies Training Centre in Wednesfield (known as Bentley Bridge) – accessible within 3 miles of each campus, and a commercial Polymer Training and Innovation Centre in Telford.



The Paget Road campus has its own sixth form centre for A-level students, as well as industry-standard engineering and automotive workshops and creative arts facilities.

The Wellington Road campus has a recently extended Construction Innovation Centre with dedicated trade workshops, a professional bakery kitchen, a sports centre and hairdressing and barbering training salon, as well as an autism base. This campus also has dedicated outdoor training areas for groundworks and rail training, supported by West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and a range of provision working with leading industry partners.

City of Wolverhampton College offers education provision for young people including A levels, adult learning, apprenticeships and programmes for learners who have high needs. The

curriculum offer is ambitious and includes growth in transformational and enabling sectors to support the wider economy and quality of life in the region. College courses and qualifications range from entry level and foundation learning to subject areas covering construction trades, business and management, computing, automotive, engineering, health and social care, early years, sport, hair, beauty, uniform public services, hospitality and catering including bakery, science and various creative industries, academic and also vocational ESOL, access to HE and university-level HNCs, HNDs and foundation degrees.

City of Wolverhampton College is playing a major role in the regeneration of the city and region meeting the recruitment needs of employers by offering adults free training courses through Sector Based Work Academy Programmes (SWAP), Skills Gateways and Bootcamps, for example in such areas as rail, electric vehicle technologies and digital, that give residents of the West Midlands the skills they need to gain and, importantly, keep employment in many of the priority sectors. Our curriculum offer has included the Lifetime Skills Guarantee enabling the city's adults to gain an A-level or equivalent qualification for free.

The College apprenticeship offer covers many industry sectors offering standards in automotive, business & management, computing & IT, construction & surveying, creative, drinks dispensing, engineering, hairdressing & barbering, health & social care, hospitality & catering, polymer processing, and teaching & education - all of which are deemed either transformational or enabling sectors, aligned to existing LEP priorities and emerging LSIP priorities.

### ***The strategic vision for the estate***

The CLQ (City Learning Quarter) project was initialised in October 2016 in order to realise the vision to provide first class further education facilities in the best possible location. In the period since then significant investment of time and money has been invested into this project. The core elements comprise of:

- Exit and divestment of the College's Paget Road Campus. This is envisaged by 2024/25.
- Transfer of engineering and automotive curriculum to a new building, working title CoWTechC (City of Wolverhampton Technology Centre) at the Wellington Road Campus which is currently under construction.
- Creation of a new City Learning Quarter Campus, comprising of a fully refurbished Metro One building adjoined by new build on the East and West aspects. Progress to date has been achieved due to the partnership with City of Wolverhampton Council, with land acquired and remediated, designs completed to RIBA Stage 4, and a contractor identified. Construction is due to commence in Summer 2023, pending formalisation of legal agreements.

The Campus Transformation articulated above will have a considerable positive impact on the overall condition and location of the College's activities. By 2025, there will be a considerable proportion of the College's estate that will be newly constructed.

### ***City of Wolverhampton context***

Wolverhampton is a city which celebrates its super-diversity with a population of almost 260,000 residents, who speak many languages and are drawn from around the world. The city covers a total area of 26.81 square miles with twenty Wards.

Wolverhampton's population has been growing in recent years and now stands at over 260,000. The population is projected to further rise to 296,102 by 2043. The 15-19 cohort will grow by over 20% by 2025 (from 2021) and keeps increasing until it exceeds 30% in 2030. The city is ethnically diverse with 32% of residents (in 2011 census) identifying as non-White, which compares with a Black Country average of 23% and an England average of 15%.

The overall employment rate is lower than England as a whole, and Wolverhampton has the highest claimant count rate for all residents aged 16+ (Aug 2022) in the West Midlands, except for Birmingham. The claimant count did not compare well nationally before the pandemic, with Wolverhampton having the highest rates for the last few years. The youth (18-24) claimant count has been worsening since before the pandemic. Wolverhampton has been consistently ranked in the top 10 for youth unemployment since 2019, and at the top since June 2020 with 9.8% unemployed. East Park has the highest claimant counts, with no Wards below the national rate.

Compared to the UK average, Wolverhampton also has a larger proportion of the working age population with no or low-level qualifications, and a smaller proportion qualified at level 4 and above. Data from 2021 shows that 35% of Wolverhampton residents hold a NVQ Level 4 or above compared to 43.6% nationally, those with no qualifications at all make up 9.5%, compared to 6.6% nationally. Most Wolverhampton residents have a Level 1 qualification, 84% (87% nationally) but this decreases significantly for those with Level 3 (55%) and above.

Action is being taken to tackle the unemployment and the city's economy. The city is currently enjoying record levels of private and public investment, with £4 billion being injected into regeneration projects city-wide. An impressive and compelling mix of projects, both geographically and sectoral, are being developed so that Wolverhampton embraces future opportunities and maximises its potential as a place to live and work.

Wolverhampton's historic industrial strength influences the city's landscape and employer breakdown to this day and reinforcing this manufacturing cluster remains a priority. The local economy still has a larger manufacturing sector than most cities in the UK and relies upon jobs in the public and health sector.

### ***Black Country context***

Despite progress in recent years, stark challenges remain in the Black Country, exacerbated by the pandemic. The Black Country remains behind national comparators on prosperity, life expectancy (including healthy life expectancy) and levels of deprivation. With GVA per head growing at a slower rate than the national average, the Black Country output gap stands at £13.97bn. This reflects in high unemployment, poor skills attainment and an economy lacking in dynamism.

Qualification levels in the Black Country have improved significantly in recent years. NVQ Level 4+ qualifications increased by 16.8% (+30,300) to 210,600 people (from 180,300 in 2019) compared to a national increase of 7.2%. The number of people with no qualifications decreased from 121,800 in 2019 to 91,600 in 2020, but there is still a considerable shortage of qualified people in the Black Country compared to national averages.

The Black Country LEP are contributing to the West Midlands Local Industrial Strategy, led by the WMCA to develop and deliver a strategy for the health and care sector with similar arrangements in place for construction and metals/materials sectors. There are five priority transformational sectors to drive this change, they are manufacturing (including food and drink), transport technologies (including aerospace), construction (including building technologies), environmental technologies and business services.

The Black Country has a strong manufacturing base (14% of jobs compared to 8% in the UK) with high-growth priority sectors included advanced manufacturing, transport technologies, construction and building technologies, environmental technologies, and professional and business services. Retail, wholesale, and automotive vehicles trade account for 84,000 jobs across the Black Country. The pandemic has accelerated the adoption of technology across the sector and there is growing demand for digital skills across all roles.

The Black Country is also home to over 4,500 building technologies and construction businesses employing around 23,500 people. The sector is growing. 76,000 new homes are to be built over the next 20 years while retrofitting houses to improve energy efficiency and large-scale infrastructure projects will create many more jobs.

Health and social care represents one of the largest sectors employing over 68,000 people. Most job roles in this sector are in hospitals, social care and residential care. There are many job opportunities in the sector such as nurses, social workers, care workers, care managers and roles in patient care which are all in high demand. The local tourism, leisure and culture sector is made up of 2,220 organisations employing over 23,000 people with many more freelance workers.

Over 120,000 residents work in the public sector in local government, fire service, the police force, the RAF, the health sector, and education (42,000 jobs). The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has opened a new office in Wolverhampton with 250 staff who will be based in the city by the end of 2022, with over 500 more jobs created by 2025. There will be a demand for senior civil servant jobs and highly qualified roles in policy development and planning to service this new office as well as the local authorities and the WMCA.



### **West Midlands context**

The West Midlands Local Skills report published earlier this year by the WMCA highlights that the region has many long-standing challenges to overcome such as high unemployment, low pay and skills shortages. However, it also outlines that there are many opportunities with the West Midlands generating £99 billion of Gross Value Added (GVA) – 5% of UK output.

Prior to the pandemic, the region's economy experienced unprecedented growth with rising productivity, jobs and employment at levels that exceeded the rest of the UK, however the pandemic hit the West Midlands region hard, in part because of its dependency on automotive, manufacturing, leisure and hospitality sectors. The pandemic exacerbated existing inequalities within the region, resulting in higher levels of unemployment. Young people and those from black and minority ethnic communities were hit hardest, particularly those least qualified and living in areas with high levels of deprivation.

The West Midlands economy is now showing signs of recovery with employment levels rising and record vacancies. However, many employers are reporting significant labour and skills shortages and while some parts of the region have bounded back, others are recovering more slowly with the risk that some people and places are left behind.

Despite the stronger than average employment growth, the West Midlands still has one of the lowest employment rates of any Mayoral Combined Authority at 71%. It has a higher than average unemployment rate of 5.7%, with greater concentrations in parts of Sandwell, Birmingham and Wolverhampton.

The West Midlands also performs below the national average on educational attainment. On basic skills, some 11% of West Midlands residents had no qualifications in 2018 compared to 8% nationally, and parts of the Black Country have the highest proportion of the working age population with no qualifications or higher than NVQ Level 1 in the country.

There is a 'missing middle' of technical skills at levels 2 and 3. Less than a third of residents are qualified to NVQ Level 4+. Matching the national average will require a further 181,538 people to be qualified to this level.

The Government's announcement of its Local Industrial Strategy initiative sees employers and trainers develop a locally driven strategy to address the skills shortages in their regions. Together they will establish new market opportunities to aid future economic mobility for its communities with focus on development of new skills in areas such as data driven health and life sciences, creative content, sector specific techniques and technologies. The strategy will be underpinned by five foundations of productivity: ideas, people, infrastructure, business environment and place.

## **National context**

Whilst the UK performs well internationally on the provision of high-level qualifications, with a large proportion of the workforce educated to degree level, we record only mediocre to poor scores on most other measures. A high proportion of our national workforce has poor literacy, numeracy and computer skills, and evidence suggests that employers are training less and investing less in their workforces than two decades ago.

Therefore, improving how skills are developed, delivered and used is at the heart of addressing the UK's low productivity level and the associated high proportion of low-skilled and low-paid jobs in the economy. The government's Levelling Up White Paper demonstrates that at the centre of the UK economy sits the development of skills.

The government has also committed to delivering a net zero economy by 2050 and highlights its potential to spread economic benefits across the country. The transition to net zero creates new economic opportunities that can be harnessed to level up the country. However, to do so will require new skills in the UK's workforce, which need to be delivered with some urgency.

The Road to Zero Strategy outlines how the government want to see at least 50%, and as many as 70%, of new car sales being ultra-low emissions, with big commitments made to building the charging infrastructure. However, data highlights the skills gap that could severely undermine these ambitions. According to calculations of the Institute for the Motor Industry (IMI) 90,000 automotive technicians will be required to provide sufficient workforce to service the volume of zero emissions vehicles predicted to be on UK roads by 2030. The pace of electric vehicle adoption is accelerating, but the race is on to ensure we have a workforce adequately qualified to provide the essential servicing, maintenance and repair to keep these vehicles safe on the roads. It is predicted there will be shortfall of 35,700 technicians by 2030, with 2026 currently marking the point at which the skills gap will materialise.

Infrastructure across the nation is the foundation upon which the economy is built. There is a desire to build better infrastructure in the UK to grow the economy and improve opportunities for people across the country. One example of this commitment is The Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) which sees the biggest ever Government investment in Britain's rail network, with a £96 billion package of rail construction and upgrades for the Midlands and the North.

In addition to the IRP, the UK is also undertaking Europe's largest infrastructure project, HS2. The build for the whole line will span the next 15 years and the railway itself will be in operation well into the next century. Major civil engineering works are now underway with over 350 active sites between the West Midlands and London. HS2 Ltd and its Tier One contractors expect to recruit for thousands more roles in the coming years – offering people a route back into work after the pandemic; however, training of new skills will be essential to its long term success. There are currently over 27,000 jobs supported by the programme and over 2,550 UK businesses are working on the project, all of which have reported a lack of skills in their potential workforce. Over 950 of the 2,000 expected apprentices are already on board being trained whilst being paid. HS2 will underpin the construction and engineering sectors for the next twenty years – sectors that support nearly 10% of UK jobs and around 7% of GDP.

### 3. Approach to developing the annual accountability statement

City of Wolverhampton College is in constant dialogue with a range of local, regional and national stakeholders, so that we can give our student and apprentices the best possible learning experience and opportunities for them to define their future.

The College is one of the founder members of the 'anchor network', in addition to City of Wolverhampton Council, Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust, University of Wolverhampton and Wolverhampton Homes who have joined forces to commit to spending more money within the city and working with businesses, communities and the voluntary sector to retain local wealth, create new jobs and opportunities for residents. The Principal and CEO is also Chair of the Wolverhampton Education, Skills and Employment Board.

Leaders and managers have strong engagement with the WMCA which has led to increased funding through the success of delivered initiatives. Formed in 2016, WMCA aims to make the West Midlands a happy and healthy place to live through initiatives such as making it easier and safer to travel in and around the region, using derelict land to build homes, protecting our green spaces, making sure young people have the education and employment opportunities to make a great start in life, working together to support our communities and build a fairer, healthier and more inclusive West Midlands and tackling climate change through the WM2041 pledge. The College will continue to work closely with the WMCA on this plan to provide opportunities for residents of Wolverhampton to define their future.

City of Wolverhampton College is also part of a formal strategic partnership – Colleges West Midlands that is made up of another 17 colleges, including all colleges within the WMCA area, working together to support skills development across regions, responding as a single voice to initiatives and government reforms. This collaborative approach supports a joint promotion of the offer to all residents in the West Midlands through a centralised prospectus, whilst highlighting the specialism of the College's rail, electric vehicle technologies and plant training centres. This contributes toward a combined effort to drive up the skills base in our regions, contribute to increased economic prosperity, social cohesion and inward investment.

The College consults with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). Working with Jobcentre Plus (JCP) the College enables an offer of services to help individuals gain or change employment through specific work enabling programmes.

Through a comprehensive and challenging annual curriculum development process, the College establishes an educational offer that addresses the skills gaps for young people and adults in the city and the wider region. In collaboration with key stakeholders together with current labour market information, results in a curriculum offer that is appropriately ambitious and is mapped to priority areas such as transformational and enabling sectors identified by Black Country LEP, WMCA and the emerging LSIP priorities.

This is supporting the wider economy and quality of life in the region whilst '*defining futures*' enabled 89% of all students to progress to a positive destination in 2021/22.

#### 4. Contributions to meeting national, regional, and local needs

College Aim	Outcomes	Contribution
<p><b>1. Increase numbers of 16-18 students, including those with Special Education Needs (SEN), to meet local needs driven by demographic growth in Wolverhampton.</b></p>	<p>Baseline 2022/23 – 2,133. Achieve starts of 2,408 in 2023/24, growing to 2,440 in 2024/25*</p>	<p>Ensure an appropriate curriculum offer is established with appropriate progression routes, including how literacy, numeracy and digital skills are obtained, as identified in the emerging LSIP priorities.</p> <p>Ensure an appropriate curriculum offer is established for those students with SEN that allows appropriate progression routes and independence is promoted.</p> <p>Provide an offer that reflects the emerging national education reform, including delivery of T Levels, ensuring there is full engagement with employers that shapes the curriculum and supports growth of opportunity in sectors of regional strategic importance.</p>
<p><b>2. Increase adult participation and outcomes for programmes that meet LEP and emerging LSIP priorities.</b></p>	<p>Baseline 2022/23 – 58%. Achieve 62% in 2022/23*</p>	<p>Ensure there is relevant provision for adults to access with suitable employer links that will support a decrease in Wolverhampton Claimant Count for Youth (18-24) and Older Adults (50+).</p> <p>Ensure there is relevant provision for adults from differing communities to access. Suitable programmes supported by employers will increase opportunities for progression onto vocational courses or a move directly into employment.</p>
<p><b>3. Improve the quality of Apprenticeship provision whilst ensuring that skills gaps are addressed with apprentices achieving in line with government ambition.</b></p>	<p>Baseline 2021/22 – 45%. Achievement levels of 55% for 2022/23, improving to at least 67% for 2024/25</p>	<p>Ensure the College continues to work with employers, as identified in the emerging LSIP priorities, to progress the apprenticeship agenda through the development of essential skills and practical experience to address shortages in key sectors of construction related areas, engineering and health and social care.</p> <p>Ensure the quality of provision is GOOD through making requirement improvements identified through the 2023 OfSTED Report.</p>
<p><b>4. Develop an offer of high technical qualifications (HTQ) and professional development opportunities that leads to upskilling and career promotion.</b></p>	<p>Baseline 2022/23 – 248. Growing to 270 by 2024/25*</p>	<p>Ensure there is an appropriate offer developed in collaboration with local, regional and national employers to increase strategic leadership capabilities, as identified in the emerging LSIP priorities.</p>

		Provide an offer where students can access higher technical skills that supports career longevity and progression.
<b>5. Develop opportunities for more students to access the College’s Rail Training in response to investment made to the public transport system in the West Midlands.</b>	Baseline 2022/23 – 85% positive outcomes, increase to 90% in 2023/24*	Ensure there is relevant provision for local people to develop skills needed to build the region’s expanding train and tram networks in direct response to the national needs to Rail Plan and HS2 developments.
<b>6. Deliver the College’s Estates Strategy to develop the City of Wolverhampton Technical Centre (CoWTechC) and a City Learning Quarter to accommodate an enhanced curriculum offer.</b>	Completion of the development of CoWTechC for use by September 2024.	To provide high class, industry standard facilities for the automotive and engineering sectors that is matched with an enhanced curriculum to provide the essential skills for students.  Investment in facilities and resources will support recruiting of staff into education, as identified in the emerging LSIP priorities.

\*Adjustments may be made following curriculum planning activities.

## 5. Corporation Statement

On behalf of the City of Wolverhampton College Corporation, it is hereby confirmed that the College plan as set out above reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and outcomes as approved by the Corporation at their meeting on 15 May 2023.

The plan will be published on City of Wolverhampton College website and can be accessed from the following link <https://www.wolvcoll.ac.uk/our-college/college-documents-policies/>



Mark Taylor

Chair of Governors



Malcolm Cowgill

Principal and Chief Executive

Dated: 15 May 2023

## Supporting Documentation

City of Wolverhampton College documents:

- [Financial Statements](#)
- Strategic Development Implementation Plan
- Curriculum Strategy
- [2023 OfSTED Report](#)

City of Wolverhampton Council [Our City: Our Plan](#)

Black Country LEP

West Midlands and Warwickshire Local Skills Improvement Plan: Draft Priorities

West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) documents:

- [Strategic Economic Plan](#)
- [Regional Skills Plan](#)
- [West Midlands Plan for Growth](#)

[West Midlands Local Industrial Strategy](#)