

ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

PART 2: THE PLAN

2026/2027 Academic Year



Northern
College



WELCOME



Barnsley College is an excellent place to study and work - a real asset that the whole borough can be proud of.

Our plan is aligned to our Board Curriculum Review, 2030 Curriculum Strategy and our everyday systems, planning and review cycles that enable us to deliver a rich, tailored and highly responsive curriculum. This agreement/statement details how we will continue to meet the needs of our students, staff, stakeholders and wider community in and beyond Barnsley over the 2026/27 academic year.

Our reputation is also important to our future success. Working hand-in-hand with business, communicating effectively with stakeholders, and focussing intently on meeting the needs and interests of our local community, we will ensure that we remain the nucleus of education and training in Barnsley and across South Yorkshire.

Barnsley College is committed to creating an inclusive, equitable and respectful environment in which every member of our community is valued, supported and able to thrive.

We believe that everyone has the right to participate fully in college life, free from discrimination, disadvantage or barriers to success. We include the needs of SEN students across the college and our commitment to this is reviewed annually through all of the college metrics.

In line with our College Values; aspirational, supportive, caring, respectful and genuine, we actively promote equality, celebrate diversity and foster a sense of belonging for all. These values underpin our Vision of Transforming Lives and guide the way we work with and for our community

Transforming Lives is more than just an aim. We live and breathe our purpose every day, placing our students, staff and the community at the heart of everything we do, enabling them to gain the pivotal skills needed to go on to higher levels of study or employment. Our plan sets out how we will do this, as we look to be exceptional in everything we do and exceed both the needs and expectations of our students, both now and in the future.

I am delighted to present to you our plan and commitments.

David Akeroyd
Principal and Chief Executive Officer



Department
for Education

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE®
We invest in people Gold



OUR VISION, PURPOSE AND VALUES

Our students are at the heart of everything we do. Our committed and passionate staff always strive for excellence and this positive mindset and culture has a real impact on the aspirations of our students. We encourage our students and staff to dream big. Our vision, purpose, values and strategic priorities help to steer us and ensure that our focus is always on supporting our students to achieve the very best by transforming lives.

— OUR VALUES —

Our values serve as a compass for our actions and describe how we behave in the world.

- **Aspirational** – courage to shape a better future
- **Supportive** – encouraging, compassionate and understanding
- **Caring** – hearts and minds
- **Respectful** – inclusive
- **Genuine** – be clear, be real

— VISION —

Our vision is to **transform lives**, not just those of our students and staff, but of our external stakeholders too. It frames our ambitions and expectations and provides a clear long-term goal.

— PURPOSE —

Our purpose defines what we do every day to ensure that all of our students:

- Have a great time
- Achieve their aims
- And progress on to work or Higher Education

PURPOSE: To ensure our students:

- Have a great time
- Achieve their aims
- Progress on to work or Higher Education

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

[SP1] – Leaders of collaboration across post-16 skills in South Yorkshire.
[SP2] – Enablers towards the UK becoming a clean energy superpower.
[SP3] – Delivering skills aligned to the local growth plan.
[SP4] – Equipping staff and students with digital and AI skills for their future.
[SP5] – Working in partnership to reduce NEETs.

QUALITY

Deliver excellent teaching and learning across provision types, every day.

Foster an excellent learning culture which holistically prepares learners and apprentices for life and work.

Deliver excellent apprenticeship programmes.

Deliver excellent outcomes.

CURRICULUM

Deliver excellent education programmes for young people with clear progression pathways, that leads to further study or meaningful employment.

Deliver excellent higher level programmes that align with local and regional growth plans, providing clear pathways to skilled jobs.

Deliver excellent adult education programmes that align with local and regional growth plans, providing clear pathways to skilled jobs.

Further develop an excellent apprenticeship curriculum, meeting the needs of employers and apprentices.

SUSTAINABILITY

Continue to improve our values-based culture of openness, transparency and everyday excellence.

Maintain financial sustainability for future investments.

Improve environmental impact.

Deliver an excellent learning environment to meet the needs of students and industry.

DEPARTMENTAL PLANS

OUR PEOPLE

VALUES: ASPIRATIONAL, SUPPORTIVE, CARING, RESPECTFUL, GENUINE

— STRATEGIC GOALS —



CONTEXT AND PLACE: OUR COLLEGE



There is 64,748m² of floor space in the College across 23 buildings. Teaching and learning activities use 56,299m² of the available space, and the remaining 8,449m² is made up of the central services offices and mothballed/unused buildings.

We continue to invest in state-of-the-art facilities for students to learn in. In November 2025, our Clean Energy Training Centre (CETC) was opened. The centre showcases new sustainable technologies and is the largest and most comprehensive centre of its type in the country, offering an opportunity for retraining and upskilling.

We have recently started refurbishment of our Sports Academy by developing a new reception and student area, which will be followed by a full building refurbishment. We have also heavily invested in our STEM Centre, upgrading all major infrastructure and redecorating to provide an excellent learning environment.

Our College was proudly part of a collaboration of educators and employers in the region to establish a South Yorkshire Institute of Technology (SYIoT) in Barnsley. Our newly refurbished Barnsley College University Centre opened for students in September 2025 and provides cutting edge resources and an environment that fosters innovation and excellence. This building is dedicated to HE. It will specialise in Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs), professional training, degree level study and Higher Apprenticeships and bitesize qualifications, HN Flex modules. This directly responds to the needs of our community and employers.

The College's continued investment in digital innovation, specialist facilities and industry-standard technology has enabled us to

achieve Microsoft Showcase status for four consecutive years, and we are currently working towards a fifth successful accreditation.

We are also proud to be continuing our Microsoft AI pilot, helping us explore how artificial intelligence can improve efficiency while ensuring students are supported to use AI safely and effectively in their studies and future careers. Across the curriculum, teachers are increasingly modelling the use of AI within professional design workflows, helping students understand how these technologies are shaping modern industry practice. We are also proud to be a leading partner in the UK's first Tech Town in Barnsley. This is enabling the next steps in our commitment to ensuring staff, students and the wider community is able to adopt the new technologies for their lives

Our ongoing investment in specialist learning environments includes high specification computer suites equipped with advanced 3D design software. Our Igloo immersive classroom continues to create opportunities for collaboration across South Yorkshire colleges and has been recognised by Igloo Vision as a case study site. A wide range of vocational and academic areas use the space by adapting digital content or creating their own immersive experiences using specialist equipment and AI. These investments ensure students develop the advanced digital skills needed for current and future employment.

As a result of our ongoing commitment to investment in the infrastructure and resources of the College, 95% of the estate is deemed in good or very good condition. However, more importantly, the facilities that students get to use and learn in, reflect current industry standards in all subject areas.

OUR COMMUNITY



The map (geographically) represents the community the College serves. Our reach extends beyond these borders into other South and West Yorkshire towns and cities, and some of our provision and partnerships are designed to reach and impact further than that.

Population: According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) 2024 data, the Metropolitan Borough of Barnsley has a total population of 251,770.

Employment and Unemployment: For the year ending December 2023, the employment rate for individuals aged 16 to 64 in Barnsley was 69.7%, which is lower than the Yorkshire and Humber average of 74.2%. The unemployment rate in Barnsley during the same period was 2.9%, slightly below the regional average of 3.4%.

Educational Attainment Prior educational attainment in Barnsley is low when compared to the national figures, with only 39.8% of the population holding a qualification at Level 4 or above (compared to a national average of 47.2%). However, is a 6.4% increase on the previous year. Thanks to the work of the College, Barnsley is fast closing the gap between the proportion of residents with a qualification at Level 3 compared with the national average.

Source:
• NOMIS, Labour Market Profile
• Office for National Statistics, Labour Market Overview 2024
• English indices of Deprivation 2025
• Barnsley Council Healthy Life Expectancy Strategy 2025-2030
• Department for Education, Education Setting Survey March 2021, published August 2021

Social and Economic Deprivation: Based on the English Indices of Deprivation 2025, published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Barnsley was identified as one of the most deprived areas in the country, with an overall ranking of 40th out of 296 local authorities.

Workless Households and Child Poverty As of 2024, approximately 27.1% of Barnsley's working-age population were economically inactive, with health conditions being a significant factor. While specific numbers of children in workless households are not provided in the available sources, the high rate of economic inactivity suggests a substantial impact on child poverty.

Free School Meal Eligibility In 2024, Barnsley experienced high rates of Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility, with 18.3% of primary and 16.5% of secondary pupils eligible, surpassing national averages. These figures are part of a wider, rising trend of, with a total of 2.1 million pupils eligible for free school meals in England by January 2024.

Health and Life Expectancy: In March 2026, healthy life expectancy in Barnsley was 52.8 years for males and 52.6 years for females, both figures being amongst the lowest in England.

South Yorkshire Collaborative Annual Accountability Statement

April 2026

Introduction

Collaborative working is a core feature of the way South Yorkshire Further Education colleges operate across the region. The desire for closer partnership working was clearly evidenced by the launch of a formal South Yorkshire College Partnership (SYCP) in 2022 and this now forms the basis for considering the way colleges access and implement new curriculum and funding opportunities and how we secure the right offer for businesses and residents in the SY community.

Collaboration partners

FE colleges in the Partnership include Barnsley College, DN Colleges Group (serving Doncaster), RNN Group (Serving Rotherham and the Dearne Valley), The Sheffield College and Sheffield Hallam University.



The Partnership also includes The University of Sheffield AMRC Training Centre and The Yorkshire Rose College in Doncaster.

This partnership forms the basis for wider collaboration and strategic dialogue with stakeholders across the region, including Sheffield Hallam University and the South Yorkshire Provider Network on behalf of Independent Training Providers. Individual members also bring to the partnership experience of their own collaboration – for example, DNCG with Universities of Lincoln and Hull and specialist SEND knowledge from The Yorkshire Rose College.

Collaborative projects

Specific examples of how the collaboration has worked together to review skills needs across the region and develop approaches include:

Institute of Technology:

Led by Doncaster College, SYCP has continued to work collaboratively with Sheffield Hallam University and leading employers on development of the South Yorkshire Institute of Technology (IoT). This includes reviewing the region's skills needs, the curriculum offer, and sharing of skills across the partnership.

Higher Technical Qualifications

Development of Higher Technical Qualifications in South Yorkshire is underpinned by a formal Partnership Agreement between the SYCP and Sheffield Hallam University. The Agreement recognises the skills and expertise of respective members of the partnership and that alignment of activity is critically important in shaping the region's curriculum offer and ensuring it supports the IoT. Two rounds of HTQ delivery funding have been secured under the terms of the Agreement.

T levels

Partners across the region have collaborated to build a network of immersive and connected classrooms. This has provided a catalyst for wider collaboration around digital learning technologies, including AI.

Apprenticeship Hub

SYCP has supported SYMCA in launching South Yorkshire's first Apprenticeship Hub. Led by The Sheffield College, Colleges secured funding and approval for the Hub to address as a priority the significant drop in take up of apprenticeships by younger people, as well as taking steps to address barriers to successful completion.

The management and 'control' of the hub has now been successfully transferred to SYMCA.

Devolved Adult Skills Budget (ASF)

SYC Partners receive devolved ASF grant funding through the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA). SYCP Principals have worked collaboratively and with SYMCA to help shape the way in which more innovative funding methodologies can support the curriculum offer across the region in response to emerging skills priorities, such as the need for low carbon skills, key shortage areas such as welding and cross-cutting digital skills.

Local Skills Improvement Fund Led by Barnsley College, the Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) has been a key opportunity for collaborative activity between SYCP, the South Yorkshire Provider Network and Sheffield Hallam University responding to the Local Skills Improvement Plan.

Having reviewed recommendations, prioritisation, and responsibilities, the LSIF Partner Board has focused on opportunities to engage with employers, including further development of the South Yorkshire Skills website (initially funded through SDF2) a single-entry point for businesses to access information on skills.

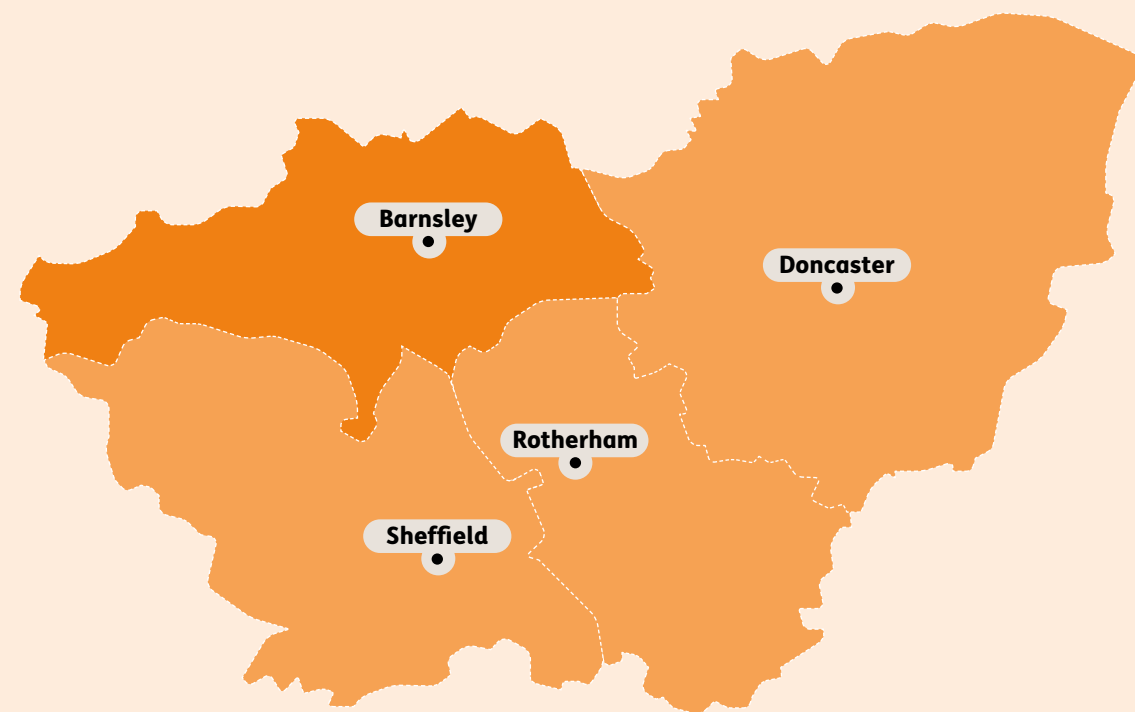
In response to the LSIP, LSIF partners have focused on digital/technical skills, including investment in a network of immersive classrooms, establishment of a digital curriculum group, exploration of digital badge accreditation and investment in digital spaces and mobile learning kit.

Future work

We expect future collaborative work to include:

- Development and delivery of Defence Technical Excellence College hosted at RNN Group.
- The SYCP group agreed a strategic approach to expressions of interest across the TEC opportunities and the successful application on the groups behalf by RNN will further strengthen collaborative working over the next academic year.
- An agreed South Yorkshire approach to future TEC opportunities linking the partnership to any bid led by one of the FE Colleges.
- Systems leadership around work aimed at reducing NEET 16-24 numbers across South Yorkshire.

OUR REGION



The South Yorkshire Skills Strategy identifies three clear Missions to deliver their objective of supporting residents to live resilient and productive lives:

Mission 1. Move those far from the labour market into work or ready for work

Mission 2. Raise attainment of core knowledge and skills

Mission 3. Increase the supply of a high-skilled workforce

The latest South Yorkshire LSIP for 2023 – 2026 has identified a strong need for digital skills in the region within the wider strategic context, reflecting the region's changing economic landscape and the objectives set out in the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP).

South Yorkshire has a population of approximately 1.4 million and consists of four largely urban boroughs; Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield. Approximately 900,000 residents are of working age and it is estimated that over the next 20 years, more individuals will leave the workforce than enter it (-27,500).

With an economic activity rate of 77%, all four areas are below the national average. The area is home to 267,000 economically inactive individuals (23%), ranking the 10th lowest performing area out of 38 LEP areas, with a high incidence of long-term health conditions. South Yorkshire suffers from above average levels of unemployment and 30% of working households claim in work benefits, compared to a national average of 24%.

The area is home to 49,020 local businesses, nine out of ten are micro businesses employing less than nine people. It has a low business density and a lower-than-average business startup rate.

South Yorkshire has a lower proportion of high skilled jobs. It faces high levels of deprivation on education, skills and training indicators. The DfE Working Futures data shows there will be a sharp increase in the qualification levels needed by employees. It also has a low skills equilibrium, with an economy based on lower value added, low skill and low wage jobs.

South Yorkshire has lower productivity levels than the England average and other mayoral combined authorities.

It has below average pay levels and a high level of low skilled low paid work. Barnsley has the lowest weekly wage in the sub-region. One third of the South Yorkshire workforce is employed in the four sectors most strongly associated with in-work poverty and low wages: wholesale and retail, accommodation and food, administrative and support services, and residential care.

It has a higher-than-average number of people aged 16 to 64 with no qualifications and the social mobility index (2020), which considers where children grow up and their opportunities in adulthood, and notes Barnsley and Doncaster as 'cold spots' for social mobility.

The demand for digital skills in South Yorkshire is rising, as technology becoming central to the business strategies of many organisations. Only half of employers feel they are currently able to recruit employees with sufficient digital skills, with emerging priorities such as AI now driving new vacancies. Specialist digital skill sets are required in 1-in-12 job vacancies, with these roles making up the second largest proportion of all vacancies in South Yorkshire after Healthcare (LSIP 2023 – 2026).

General office software skills are currently the most in-demand in South Yorkshire, followed by security, privacy and GDPR skills, data skills, social media and digital marketing skills, and skills relating to other software tools. Social media and digital marketing skills are expected to be the biggest digital skills growth area over the next two-to-five years. Since the previous LSIP report, there has been rapid growth in AI services, which within a relatively short timeframe has seen this technology applied across all digital disciplines.

Key sectors in South Yorkshire include healthcare, retail, manufacturing, and education. Growth sectors for the sub-region include energy and water, manufacturing, construction and logistics and transport. Areas for future growth include digital industries, specialised construction, low carbon, rail engineering and advanced manufacturing, not dissimilar to those identified in the mayoral combined authority's strategic economic plan.

Source: LSIP South Yorkshire Local Skills Improvement Plan 2023 - 2026

OUR OFFER

The College 2030 Curriculum Strategy has been developed to recognise, anticipate and respond to influences which will determine and shape the future educational and economic landscape and ultimately the communities and world in which we live.

The College is the main provider of Post-16 Education in Barnsley. It offers education and training programmes across all 15 subject sector areas, ranging from entry to level 6 qualifications with a strong focus on technical, applied vocational and academic specialisms. Whilst delivery differs in size and breadth of offer, the quality of education across Education Programmes for Young People, Adult Learning Programmes, Apprenticeships, and non/prescribed Higher Education, is excellent.

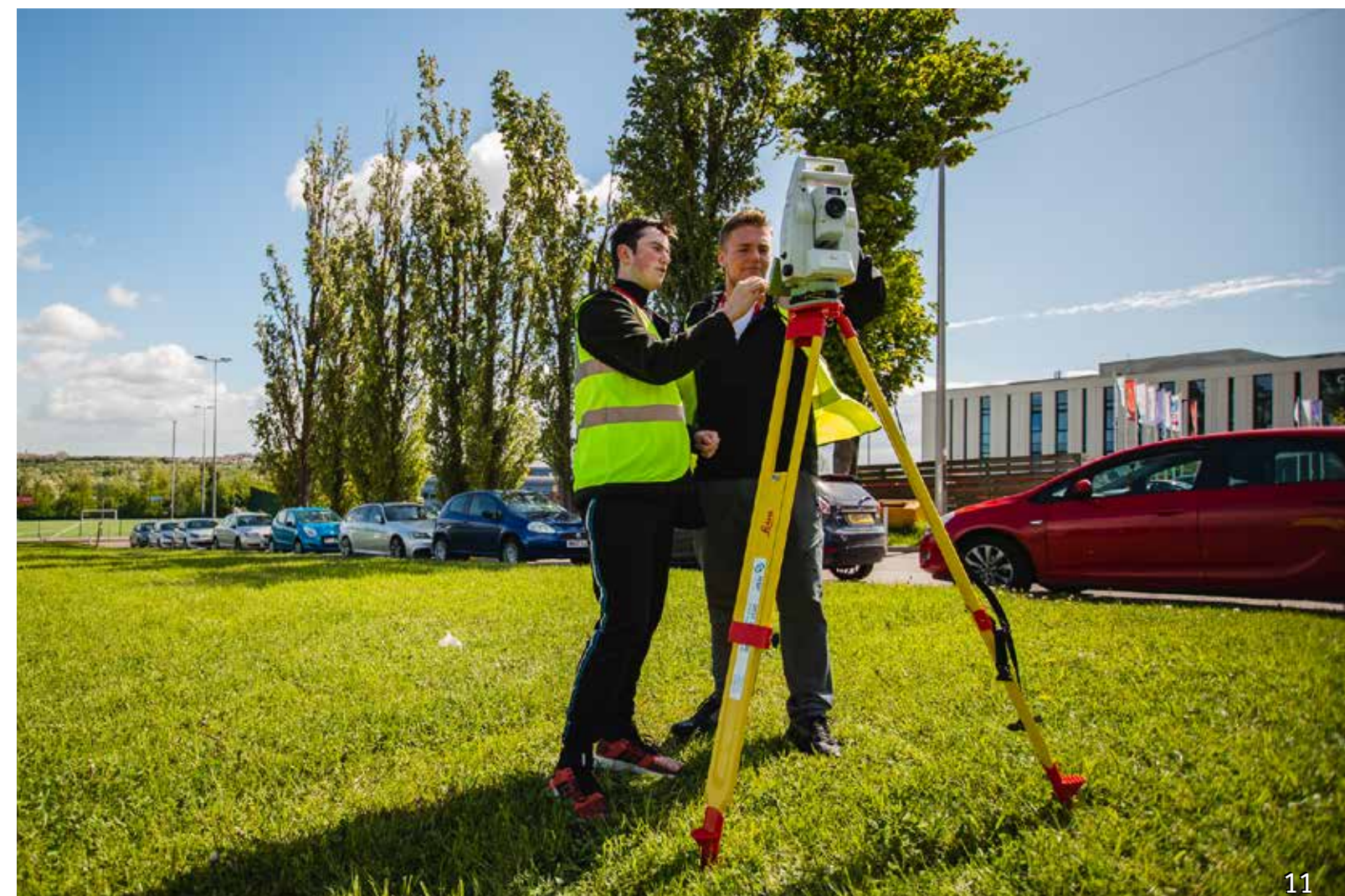
The Post-16 Education and Skills Act 2022, South Yorkshire Local Skills Improvement Plan, along with the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority's (MCA) 2021-2041 Strategic Economic Plan, Get Britain Working white paper and South Yorkshire Skills strategy shape the curriculum response detailed within this strategy.

We continue to work with Barnsley local authority and employers across South Yorkshire who also shape and support curriculum delivery. We are also proud to be a leading partner in the UK's first Tech Town in Barnsley that will shape curriculum

to ensure students and the wider community are able to adopt new technologies through their lives and in employment.

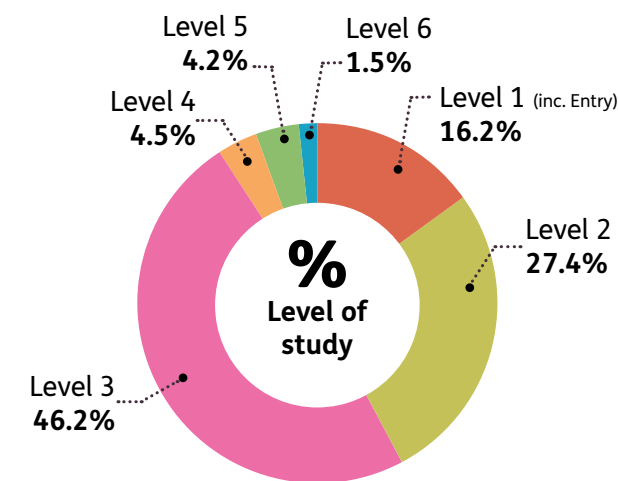
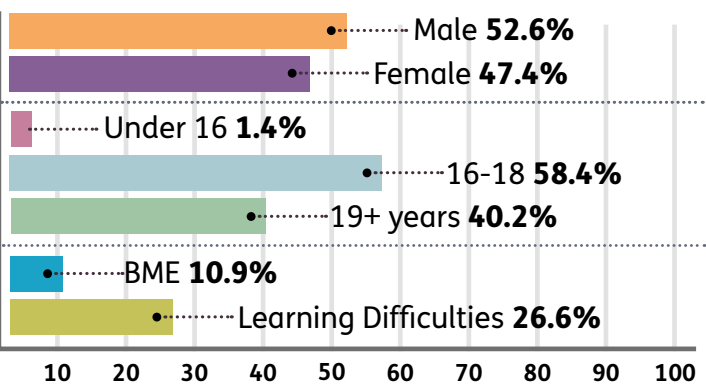
The College is proud of its tertiary status and the range and quality of provision for students aged 14+ across alternative provision, vocational, technical and academic study programmes, adult learning programmes and Higher Education, at a local and regional level. The Apprenticeship offer is similarly tailored, but also extends beyond South and West Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authorities and delivers strong collaborative models across other regions.

The distributed leadership model which is central to the College's high performance and aspirational culture, empowers curriculum heads and managers to design, develop and deliver a tailored, responsive and purposeful curriculum which effectively meets the needs and interests of our key stakeholders. The offer is highly inclusive and rich with personal development opportunities. Students across all provision types and particularly those most disadvantaged are supported to develop new skills and progress, exceptionally well.

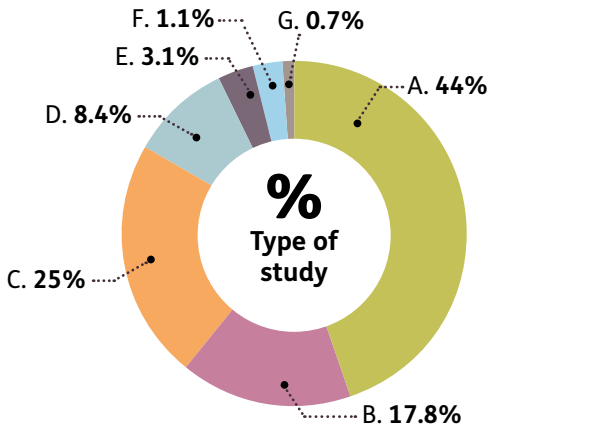
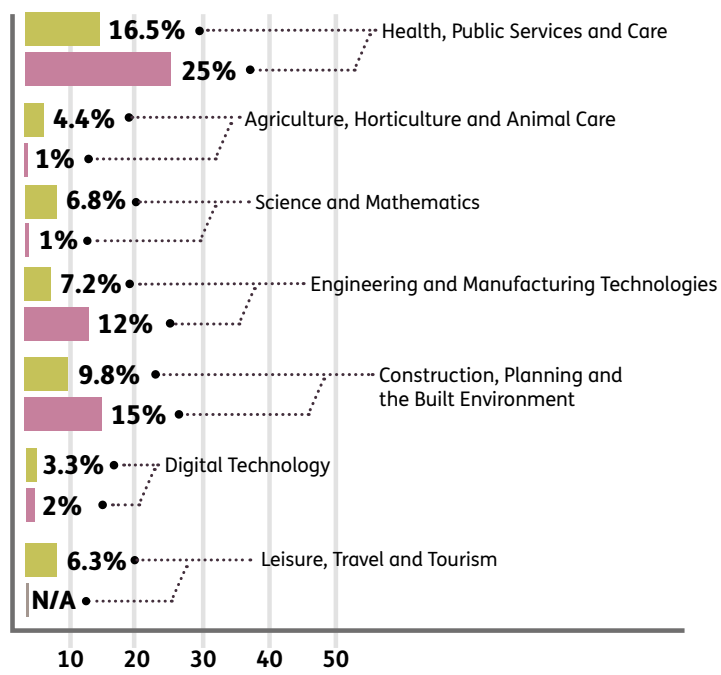


SUMMARY PROFILE

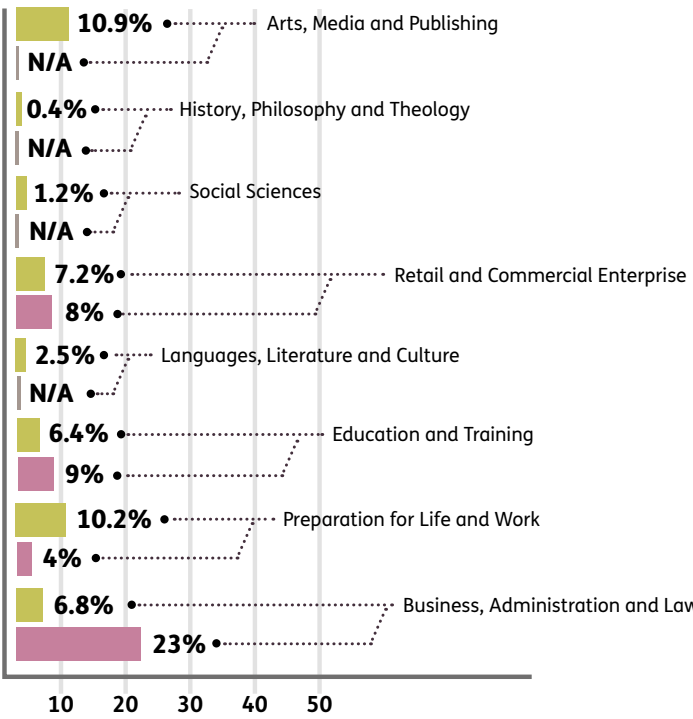
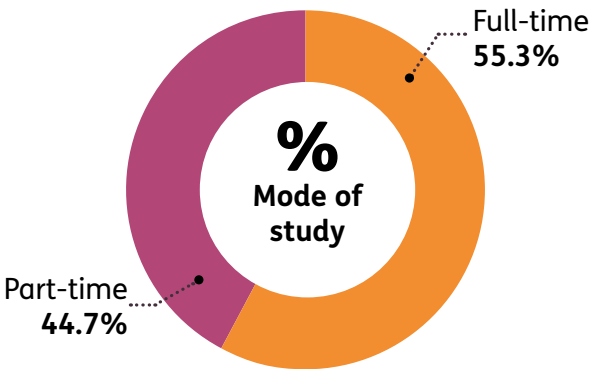
Student Demographic



Study by sector (Leavers - all ages)



Type of study	Student headcount
A. Vocational/Technical T Levels	4,233
B. Apprentices	640
C. Adult Learning Programmes	1,971
D. Academic	2,767
E. Higher Education	929
F. T Level Foundation	349
G. 14-16 Direct Entry/ 14-16 EHE	119
Total	59



APPROACH TO DEVELOPING THE PLAN: KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The College places significant value on its engagement and relationships with a wide range of stakeholders who represent the local, regional and national communities who we work with.

As an 'anchor institution', it plays an important role in contributing to success in a variety of ways, including membership of boards, as key partners and in an advisory capacity. Whilst fulfilling its civic role, the team constantly strives to drive quality and excellence, strengthen its reputation and help build a sustainable future for the College, for Further Education more widely and in particular for the communities we serve.

Our community

The Barnsley 2030 Board was established by the local authority in 2021. Barnsley 2030 is a place-based partnership focused on delivery of the levelling up agenda and the Borough's 2030 vision. The Principal and CEO (PCEO) represents the College on the Barnsley 2030 Board, working alongside partners and other local anchor institutions to promote and advance Barnsley's action plan for improving residents' lives, sustainability, learning and business growth. The College was instrumental in authoring the 2030 vision for the borough, assisting the Council in setting ambitious targets with the aim of making Barnsley the 'place of possibilities' for all with the drive to learn and progress.

The PCEO is also a member of the South Yorkshire Skills Advisory Board, Director of The Northern Skills Network, CBI Regional Council Member, South Yorkshire Provider Network, and South Yorkshire's Community Foundation, representing the College and community across the South Yorkshire sub-region. The PCEO is actively engaged as a representative on the Council of Governors of the Barnsley Hospital NHS Trust, and through this close working relationship, supports the Trust in developing their current and future workforce, particularly around non-clinical functions, apprenticeships and T Levels.

Through the board and wider community activity, the College engages at a strategic level with the Department for Work and Pensions. The (DWP) are responsible for understanding and dealing with the causes of poverty, encouraging people to work and making work pay, and encouraging those with disabilities and ill health to work and be independent. Its engagement with the DWP enables the College to develop programmes which are specifically targeted at meeting the needs of Barnsley residents.

The College actively engages with business via the delivery of skills programmes and through provision of facilities to support growth for new enterprises and start-up businesses. It is directly engaged with over 1,500 businesses of all sizes, many of whom are repeat customers from our skills programmes. It works closely with employers through key account managers and offers flexible and complete training solutions, including the opportunity to advertise vacancies free of charge through its job shop. For some businesses, where the College has identified alignment of values, it has created new employer academies which focus on delivering customised training and skills solutions.

In 2022, the Barnsley College Business Centre opened an

innovative collaboration with the Barnsley & Rotherham Chamber of Commerce. Today, the facility's incubation pods are fully occupied by start-up businesses that are looking to grow and develop in their first 12 months.



The Business Centre also provides a base for the Chamber of Commerce, with whom the College has a well-established and extremely positive working relationship. This support to business entrepreneurs is aimed at promoting enterprising spirit across our student community, reducing start-up costs and providing high-quality accommodation with access to invaluable business links and services. The Business Centre also provides conferencing facilities, collaboration space and use of a dedicated digital Fujitsu academy.

The College has fostered strong relationships and plays an influential role with schools across Barnsley to collaboratively improve educational outcomes for children and young people. The College is actively engaged in the Barnsley School's Alliance and is instrumental in ensuring all learners have the best possible educational experience and start in life. We also hold membership of local authority's Adult Skills and Community Learning Board and our strategic involvement across these boards ensures our education and training offer is aligned to address the regional skills needs.

APPROACH TO DEVELOPING THE PLAN: KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Our regional role

Following Mayoral elections and the creation of the West and South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authorities with devolved Adult Education Budgets, the College has been working closely with the regional skills leads to build relationships as both strategic and operational partners. Whilst the College primarily serves the South Yorkshire (SY) sub-region, the breadth of offer, quality of education and reputation, coupled with its geographical location bordering West Yorkshire, means it attracts a growing number of learners from the West Yorkshire (WY) postcodes.

The South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) incorporates Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield local authorities. SYMCA works collaboratively with the individual local authorities to attract investment into the region, creates economic conditions for growth and aims to make a positive impact on South Yorkshire's places, businesses and people.

The College is a key delivery partner of ASF funded provision and works collectively with other institutions and stakeholders to deliver the ambitious outputs within the regional skills strategy and make a difference to the communities we serve.

Board membership of the South Yorkshire Provider Network is held by the PCEO of the College. The network exists to strengthen the voice of providers representing the community on issues such as devolution and on the development of skills and employability provision across the region. Strategic engagement ensures the College's education and training offer maintains collaborative alignment to addressing the regional skills needs.

Our PCEO is a member of the South Yorkshire College Partnership (SYCP) group which was launched in 2022 and promotes collaborative working across the region's further education and skills delivery ecosystem. The partnership has a combined annual turnover of over £230,000,000 and is a dynamic partnership between Barnsley College, DN College Group, Sheffield Hallam University, Specialist College, Northern College, RNN Group, The Sheffield College and The University of Sheffield AMRC Training Centre. The partnership plays an important role in achieving the region's inclusive growth aspirations and through the collective expertise and ambitions are united in boosting the skills of the current and future workforce, driving the growth that is vital to the economy and further enhancing opportunities across South Yorkshire.

In 2021 the Department for Education appointed the College to lead the regional Strategic Development Fund (SDF) pilot and work closely with the designated employer representative body as part of the Local Skills Improvement Plan trailblazer project. It has engineered the SDF response and was the lead provider on two successful bids for funding (SDF1 and SDF2) on behalf of the region's college network, proactively responding to the challenges arising through the Local Skills Improvement Plan and the LSIF priorities.

Our PCEO is a member of the South Yorkshire Skills Advisory Board, which was established by SYMCA to address skills needs and drive the skills priorities to grow South Yorkshire's economy through delivery of a curriculum that is aligned to future business needs and growth. As lead provider, (working with each of the general FE colleges in South Yorkshire), we secured over £600k to support partners to take innovative steps towards meeting the priorities set out in the first LSIP report and subsequent LSIF priorities, leading future pioneering collaborative projects and the development of digital skills which impact positively on our economy and communities.

The College was integral to the development of the successful bid for an Institute of Technology (IoT) for South Yorkshire and opened the IoT in September 2025. We continue to work closely with our provider partners, commit to address the advanced and higher-level skills needed within our region.

The IoT will be instrumental in supporting our drive to transform our HE provision, quickly growing our delivery of Level 4 and 5 higher level technical qualifications in skill priority sectors such as Construction, Engineering and Manufacturing, Digital Technologies and Health. This directly responds to the Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council's Skills and Employment – More and Better Jobs Strategy, the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority's 2021-2041 Strategic Economic Plan and the priorities identified in the South Yorkshire Local Skills Improvement Plan and the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority's Skills Strategy.

We will also continue to work closely with West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) to contribute to addressing their identified skills needs. WYCA's Strategic Economic Framework (SEF) aims to meet future job demand from employers and like South Yorkshire, enables people across their respective region (Leeds City) to secure more and better jobs. WYCA aims to give people great educational opportunities linked to business needs, to build workforce skills and to attract talent to the city region. Our funded adult education offer will continue to support WYCA to achieve these strategic objectives.

The PCEO is a member of the CBI Regional Council for Yorkshire and the Humber which adds further valuable connections to the business world. The College also has strong links with the voluntary and community sector and has representation as a trustee as the South Yorkshire Community Foundation (SYCF). SYCF invests in change-making groups by distributing grants, delivering training, and sharing advice and is a catalyst for positive change across the region.

SOUTH YORKSHIRE

I N S T I T U T E O F
T E C H N O L O G Y



T-LEVELS

Our national reach

Barnsley College continues to play an important role at national level in a number of ways. We have played a leading role as a pilot provider and early delivery partner for new programmes such as T Levels and T Level Foundation Years. With these programmes now embedded within our curriculum offer.

We are a champion and ambassador for the new qualifications, have presented at All Party Parliamentary Groups, hosted the very first DfE T Level Ambassador Network event, supported many other colleges/providers across the country to integrate

T Levels into their curriculum offer whilst working with central government including the Department for Education (DfE) and the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) to heavily influence the ongoing development and shaping of these modern-day technical qualifications. Our contribution has been significant, and we commit to continuing our work across the areas/fields we can impact positively.

The College also plays a nationally influential role as an advocate for Further Education through engagement with the Association of Colleges (AoC). Our PCEO is a member of AoC's Workforce Strategy Group.

The College continues to be an active member of the Chartered Institution for Further Education and the tertiary colleges group, both of which provide opportunities for engagement across Westminster ensuring Barnsley College's voice is heard by national policy makers.



LOCAL NEEDS DUTY SELF-ASSESSMENT

The College's 2030 curriculum strategy, approved by the Board of Governors in June 2022 and reviewed April 2024, was developed to recognise, anticipate and respond to influences which will determine and shape the future educational and economic landscape and ultimately the communities and world in which we live. As the main provider of post-16 education in Barnsley, the college offers education and training programmes across all 15 subject sector areas, ranging from entry to level 6 qualifications with a strong focus on technical, applied vocational and academic specialisms.

Whilst delivery differs in size and breadth of offer, the quality of education across Education Programmes for Young People, Adult Learning Programmes, Apprenticeships and non/prescribed Higher Education is excellent. The most recent full Ofsted inspection in May 2025 agreed with the College's self assessment judging the college contribution to meeting the skills need as strong.

Technical and Professional Education

Our aim is to design a purposeful and ambitious curriculum which is distinctive, has clear progression opportunities, addresses local skills priorities and provides clear pathways to skilled jobs.

Young People

The College has developed a strong technical and professional educational plan which introduces T Levels and Transition Programmes and creates a modern, future-facing curriculum portfolio for our largest cohort of students. 81% of our 16-18 year old learners study vocational/technical programmes.

The T Level offer has grown and it now offers 17 different T Levels across digital, construction, engineering, education, business, finance and accounting sectors. Employers actively contribute to the design and delivery of our curriculum. As a result, our T Level students, develop crucial work-ready skills, behaviours and attitudes and make a valuable contribution during their industry placements. 49% of our young people cohort undertake advanced-level studies, creating a much-needed pipeline for learners to progress onto developing higher level technical skills.

Adults

The College's adult offer is carefully tailored to meet employment, social and community needs. Labour market intelligence, other insight data and key sector knowledge derived from our extensive stakeholder partnerships is used to form a strong evidence-base which then shapes both our offer and model of delivery, to make sure our programmes are purposeful and accessible for those looking to retrain or upskill.

Clean Energy

In November 2025, our Clean Energy Training Centre (CETC) was opened. The centre showcases new sustainable technologies and is the largest and most comprehensive centre of its type in the country, offering an opportunity for retraining and upskilling locally, regionally and nationally.

South Yorkshire Institute of Technology

We are proud to be bringing an Institute of Technology to the town investing in excess of £15 million into upgrading Higher education facilities which will be open to students from September 2025. We are working closely with our provider partners, through the IoT, to address the advanced and higher-level skills needed within our region.

Apprenticeships

A proportion of our IoT curriculum will include growth of our higher-level apprenticeship portfolio in line with business and employer demands. We currently have more than 1,500 apprentices studying across 80 apprenticeship programmes. Two thirds of our apprentices are enrolled to advanced or higher-level apprenticeships and more than three quarters of apprenticeship enrolments are in the region's identified key priority sectors.

Digital Innovation Hub

The community, students and employers are now benefiting from the multi-million pound investment which saw the creation of a new college Digital Innovation Centre which houses the digital and creative industries curriculum and is supporting the development of a much-needed advanced skills pipeline to boost expertise in the future digital workforce, which will in turn support Barnsley's tech town status. The hub is supporting the creation of a talent pipeline through the delivery of the Digital Production, Design and Development, Digital Business Services and Digital Support Services T Levels, alongside the College's wider creative and digital offer across its young people, adult, apprenticeship and higher-level offer.

Stakeholder and Employer Curriculum Influence

As identified during the most recent Ofsted inspection in 2025 we place significant value on our engagement and relationships with the wide range of stakeholders who represent the local, regional and national communities who we work with. We are actively engaged with over 1,500 businesses of all sizes, many of whom are repeat customers who work with us to access our skills programmes.

We design and offer flexible training solutions and have developed an effective workforce centric support service, which includes the advertising of vacancies free of charge through the college's own job shop. We have developed an employer engagement strategy which has a clear focus on co-creating a skills-rich curriculum and drives high-levels of ambition and aspiration through the development of employer boards and academies. For businesses, where the College has supported them to meet significant new demand, we continue to create new employer academies which focus on delivering bespoke training and skills solutions.



CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL PRIORITIES

The College’s key strategic goals aligned to its 2030 curriculum strategy and as approved by the governing body, are to:

- Deliver exceptional education programmes with clear progressional pathways for all young people.
- Deliver distinctive higher-level programmes that align with local and regional growth plans underpinned by both current and future economic need.
- Deliver an adult education curriculum that addresses both current and future skills priorities providing clear pathways to skilled jobs.
- Deliver a purposeful and ambitious apprenticeship curriculum which meets the needs of employers and apprentices.

For the academic year 2026/27, the College will focus on delivering the following key strategic aims/objectives.

College Strategic Goal 1	Contribution to College Long term strategic Priority	Aim	Current year - Baseline position in key National Skills Priority areas		Target 2026-2027	Sector Priorities										Priority area			
						Construction	Health	Clean Energy	Advanced Manufacturing	Creative Industries	Digital and Technologies	Professional and Business	Life Science	Financial Services	Local/College Priority	National	Regional	Local	LSIP
Deliver excellent education programmes for young people with clear progression pathways, that leads to further study or meaningful employment	SP3 – Delivering skills aligned to the local growth plan SP4 – Equipping students with digital and AI skills for the future SP5 – working in partnership to reduce NEETS	Further develop the EPYP curriculum across priority sector programmes	53% of students study in priority sector areas		58% of students study in priority sector areas	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
		Embed digital and AI skills within all education programmes for young people	4000 advantage awards for digital development		4200 advantage awards for digital development						Y				Y		Y		Y
		Students secure positive progression and destinations	89% of students either progressed or secured positive destinations		90% of students secure positive destinations	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
		Develop a bespoke in year NEET offer	New target for 26/27 offer		50 students to be reengaged through in year curriculum offer										Y	Y	Y	Y	

*Subjects such as cyber security and uniformed public services are delivered within the curriculum offer and can be attributable towards meeting the skills need within the priority sector of Defence.

CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL PRIORITIES (CONTINUED)

College Strategic Goal 2	Contribution to College Long term strategic Priority	Aim	Current year - Baseline position in key National Skills Priority areas		Target 2026-2027	Sector Priorities									Priority area			
						Construction	Health	Clean Energy	Advanced Manufacturing	Creative Industries	Digital and Technologies	Professional and Business	Life Science	Financial Services	Local/College Priority	Nartional	Regional	Local
Deliver excellent higher level programmes that align with local and regional growth plans, providing clear pathways to skilled jobs.	SP1 - leaders of collaboration across post 16 skills in South Yorkshire	Grow the higher skills offer in regional priority sector areas	54% of HE students study provision in priority areas		62% study higher level skills in priority areas	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	SP2 - Enablers towards the Uk becoming a green superpower																	
	SP3 – Delivering skills aligned to the local growth plan	Grow the modular provision in regional priority sector areas	There are 6 modular programmes on offer. with 48 enrolments.		60 enrolments on modular programmes	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y				Y	Y	Y
	SP4 – Equipping students with digital and AI skills for the future																	
	SP5 – working in partnership to reduce NEETS																	
		Embed digital and AI skills across all HE programmes	New target for 26/27		100% of HE students complete an AI/digital module						Y				Y		Y	
		HE students secure positive destinations	New target for 26/27		At least 90% of students secure positive destinations	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

*Subjects such as cyber security are delivered within the curriculum offer and can be attributable towards meeting the skills need within the priority sector of Defence.

CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL PRIORITIES (CONTINUED)

College Strategic Goal 3	Contribution to College Long term strategic Priority	Aim	Current year - Baseline position in key National Skills Priority areas		Target 2026-2027	Sector Priorities										Priority area			
						Construction	Health	Clean Energy	Advanced Manufacturing	Creative Industries	Digital and Technologies	Professional and Business	Life Science	Financial Services	Local/College Priority	National	Regional	Local	LSIP
Deliver excellent adult education programmes that align with local and regional growth plans, providing clear pathways to skilled jobs.	SP1 - leaders of collaboration across post 16 skills in South Yorkshire SP3 – Delivering skills aligned to the local growth plan SP4 – Equipping students with digital and AI skills for the future	Grow adult re-skilling courses in regional priority sector areas	59% of adults study in priority sectors		65% of adults study in priority sectors	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
		Embed digital and AI skills across adult programmes	New target for 26/27		100% of adults on substantial programmes complete an AI/Digital module						Y				Y		Y		Y
		Adult students secure positive destinations	New target for 26/27		At least 65% of adults on substantial programmes secure positive destinations	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL PRIORITIES (CONTINUED)

College Strategic Goal 4	Contribution to College Long term strategic Priority	Aim	Current year - Baseline position in key National Skills Priority areas		Target 2026-2027	Sector Priorities									Priority area				
						Construction	Health	Clean Energy	Advanced Manufacturing	Creative Industries	Digital and Technologies	Professional and Business	Life Science	Financial Services	Local/College Priority	Nartional	Regional	Local	LSIP
Further develop an excellent apprenticeship curriculum meeting the needs of employers and apprentices.	SP1 - leaders of collaboration across post 16 skills in South Yorkshire	Grow apprenticeship provision in priority areas	73% of apprentices study provision in priority areas		75% of apprentices study provision in priority areas	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	SP2 - Enablers towards the Uk becoming a green superpower				Deliver new foundation apprenticeships and apprenticeship units in priority areas	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	SP3 – Delivering skills aligned to the local growth plan	Develop higher level apprenticeship provision in priority areas in line with apprenticeship reform	554 students have studied higher level apprenticeship progarmmes			500 apprentices study higher level apprenticeship programmes at level 4 and above	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	
	SP4 – Equipping students with digital and AI skills for the future																		

REVIEW OF LOCAL NEEDS DUTY

The Corporation review of the Barnsley College annual accountability statement confirms the institution's excellent achievements in strongly meeting local and regional skills needs.

Barnsley College offers a diverse range of vocational and academic programmes designed to meet the specific skills needs of the region. Through the analysis of LMI data, the college identifies industry trends, emerging job sectors, and the specific competencies required by employers. We ensure that short courses and academic programmes align with the skills needs of the region to prepare students for the current and future job market, thereby enhancing their employability and supporting regional economic growth.

The close working relationship between the College and external stakeholders including the Local Authority and devolved Combined Mayoral Authorities ensures that we are able to help influence and inform the Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) and Skills priority areas which in turn allows us to shape our curriculum accordingly.

By analysing and integrating LSIP data and understanding the local environment the college identifies the most critical skill gaps within the local economy. This data-driven approach allows us to adapt our course offerings to address these Skills priority areas effectively.

Barnsley College has fostered robust employer engagement, facilitating valuable partnerships that enhance curriculum relevance and provide students with practical, real-world skills. Employers play a crucial role in shaping the curriculum by providing insights into industry trends and skills requirements. Their involvement ensures that the college's programmes remain relevant and aligned with the needs of the local and national economy providing successful transitions into further or higher education and sustained employment.

Through advisory boards, internships, and collaborative projects, employers contribute to the development of courses that equip students with the competencies necessary for success in their chosen fields. These dynamic partnerships guarantees that Barnsley College consistently meets the skills demand of the area, fostering a workforce that is both skilled and adaptable in sector priority areas .

CONCLUSION

We are proud of our tertiary status, breadth and quality of curriculum offer. We are ambitious and determined in providing our students with exceptional opportunities in which to grow, develop and progress. We remain closely connected with the business world and our key stakeholders. We are wholly committed to designing and delivering a curriculum which is rich and responsive to the ever-changing skills needs for the world in which we live.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION



CORPORATION STATEMENT

The board is confident with its assessment that Barnsley College makes a strong contribution towards meeting local skills needs and provides an excellent resource for its community and excellent provision for its students.

On behalf of Barnsley College corporation, it is hereby confirmed that the college plan as set out in this document, reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the corporation at their meeting in July 2026.

The plan will be published on the college's website within three months of the start of the new academic year.

Signed: _____

Chair of Governors

Signed:  _____

Principal and Chief Executive Officer



