



DN COLLEGES GROUP

Accountability Statement 2023–2024

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Purpose

DN Colleges Group is currently finalising its long-term strategic plan from 2023 and will produce and publish a revised college strategy at or around the start of the 2023 academic year.

Central to the College's strategy, now and in the future, however, are its core Vision and Mission, which set out the fundamental purpose for DN Colleges Group:

Our Vision:

"Transforming our Communities Through Learning"

Our Mission:

"Outstanding Education and Training that enables students to develop their full potential; meeting social, economic and community needs"

We serve our communities in South Yorkshire and across northern Lincolnshire and the Humber from our well-equipped and expanding campus bases in Doncaster, Scunthorpe and Hull. We are committed to working with local strategic partners in these areas to create a compelling and high-value curriculum offer, which is responsive to individual needs and is closely aligned with the economic, employment and skills ambitions of our localities. Our engagement with employers is a real hallmark of the DN Colleges Group experience and we are proud of the scale and range of employment interactions enjoyed by our students across the curriculum.



Strategy Pillars

Whilst still in development, the future strategic plan will be focused around four core themes, which are responsive to the national, regional and local demand for skills and which represent the ambition and aspiration for our college and our learners' future.

This is summarised in the strategy's ambition:

"Enabling learners to live a larger life and expanding horizons through exceptional learning experiences"

1. A Compelling Curriculum Vision

- All learners at all levels accessing a clear entitlement to develop the skills, knowledge and behaviours which take them successfully to the next stage of life and work.
- A focus on future curriculum development, aligned to the skills and jobs which are most valuable and most needed in our local and regional economies, providing a pathway to higher technical skills.
- The systematic embedding and enhancement of employer and employment interactions into the design, development and delivery of the curriculum experience.
- A practical and powerful way for learners to showcase their skills and evidence their readiness to make a difference in life and work.

2. Outstanding Quality and Service

- Learners make excellent progress across the whole of the curriculum offer and at all levels. Their achievements are consistently positive and the proportion of those who progress to their chosen destinations is exceptional.
- Learners enjoy coming to the College and attendance across the whole of the curriculum is high and sustained.
- Stakeholders are highly satisfied with and positively recommend their experience.
- The learner journey is characterised by exceptional customer service.
- Systems and processes, coupled with high quality training and development, ensures that operational delivery is consistently effective and meets all external requirements.
- A culture of customer service excellence supports highly effective teamwork and delivery of College objectives.

3. Good Growth

- Courses are fully subscribed and the College has expanded its offer to meet increased demand.
- The curriculum has grown due to significant increases in market share and a skilful and well-evidenced response to new market opportunities.
- Marketing and recruitment activity is firmly embedded in the process of curriculum and business development.
- Business development and strategic relationship building has successfully enabled the College to respond to new business and learning opportunities, underpinning the College's responsiveness to its customers.
- A high degree of income results from repeat business, increased numbers of students progressing to the higher technical skills offered in the Institutes of Technology and increased demand from employers wanting to do more work in partnership with the College.

4. A Commitment to Partnership, Place and Planet

- DN Colleges Group maximises the benefits of its group structure, whilst remaining locally focused and relevant to its communities in South Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire.
- The ambitious curriculum vision set-out and shared by DN Colleges Group has become a catalyst for raising aspirations, supporting a significant and sustained increase in the number of young people and adults with valuable skills to access new opportunities. All learners at all levels access a high-quality core entitlement.
- The College takes a lead role in the development of the education and skills system more broadly. Collaboration with other providers has widened community access to opportunities.
- Students across the College are aware of and practically equipped to make good decisions around environmental and sustainability issues in their life and work.
- The curriculum in construction and engineering are developed to make a clear and distinct 'green skills' offer aligned to attractive and essential jobs in the local economy.
- The College's buildings and infrastructure are developed and managed to minimise their environmental impact and are used to enhance the teaching and learning of green skills.

What this Means:

For our Learners

A curriculum experience which prepares them for success in life and work. Learners will leave DN Colleges Group with a set of high value skills and experiences which they can confidently demonstrate to future employers and other partners. As a result, DN Colleges Group graduates are seen as the first choice in the labour market and they make rapid progress in their careers. Students' achievement and progression rates are outstanding leading to positive destinations.

For our Stakeholders

DN Colleges Group is recognised as an essential partner and leader in the skills system. Employers and other strategic partners recognise that they can influence curriculum design, development and delivery. They see the College as a key strategic partner and as an essential asset for addressing long term skills needs. Other strategic partners (Civic, Community, Employer Representative Bodies, Education providers) recognise and value the role that the College plays as an anchor institution.

For our Teams

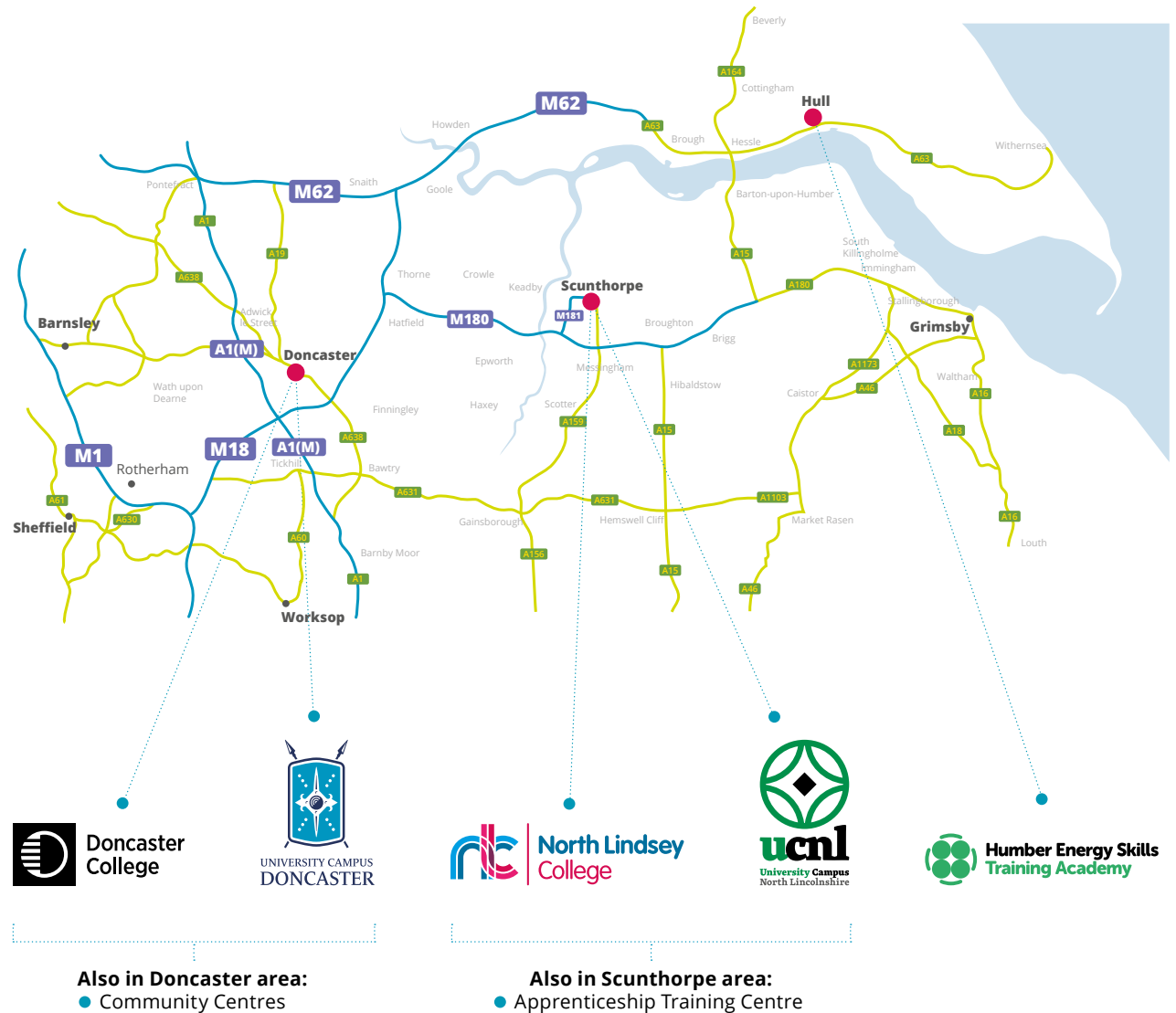
The curriculum vision provides the basis for a clear and long-term curriculum development cycle. Changes are managed through a well-planned process and new curriculum developments are well-evidenced by demand from learners, employers and other key partners. The curriculum vision, strategy and plan are the drivers for future College developments and are enabled by the College's support services and capital plans. The College is growing as a result of increasing enrolments across all provision.

Context and Place – The Communities we Serve

The Group is a significant regional provider of education and training across Yorkshire and the Humber, operating from two main sites in Scunthorpe and Doncaster, as well as training centres in Hull and at British Steel in Scunthorpe and centres out in the community in Doncaster.

The College offers a very wide range of provision to young people, adult learners, apprentices, for students with SEND. The college offers Higher Education provision from its new University Campus North Lincolnshire building and from University Campus Doncaster located in the main campus building. Both university centres are home to new Institutes of Technology (for Lincolnshire and South Yorkshire respectively) and are key assets in promoting and enabling social and economic mobility in our communities by providing local access to high quality higher education.

At the time of writing the college provides education to over 14,000 students, of which 6,100 are adults, 4,300 are young people and with a large apprentice cohort of 2,000 and approaching 2,000 Higher Education students. There are around 140 High Needs students studying across the group.



North Lincolnshire Place Overview

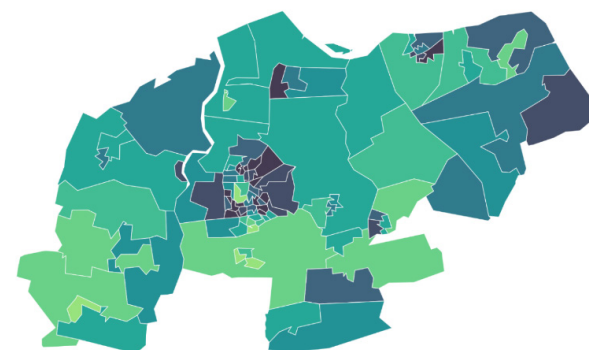
- North Lincolnshire's population in 2021 is 169,674, increased by 2.228 (1.3%) between 2011 and 2021.
- North Lincolnshire has a working age population of 102,189 (60.2% of the total population).
- In North Lincolnshire in 2021, the rate of people in employment qualified to NVQ Level 4 or above was lower than the regional or national rates, but the number has increased over the last 5 years.
- In North Lincolnshire in 2021, some 9.2% of those aged 16 to 64 had no qualifications, compared to 7.8% in the region and 6.4% in England. The wards of Brumby, Frodingham, Crosby and Park and Town have the highest proportion of those with no qualifications.
- In September 2022, North Lincolnshire was showing high levels of employment with an employment rate of 77.6%, higher than the rates for both the region and England.
- North Lincolnshire's claimant count for December 2022 was 3.5% compared to 4.0% in the region and 3.8% in England
- In September 2022, the employment rates for both males (80.1%) and females (75.0%) were higher than both the regional and national averages.
- In September 2022, the unemployment rate in North Lincolnshire remains at an all-time low rate of 1.6%, significantly lower than the region and England.

- In April 2022, the median gross weekly pay for workers in North Lincolnshire was £518.90, making it slightly higher than the regional figure of £481.50 but lower than the national figure of £536.60.
- North Lincolnshire has extremely high levels of employment in the Manufacturing Sector (24.1% of employment) compared the regional (11.5%) and national (7.3%) levels. Local specialisations include Steel, Chemicals (refining of petrochemicals) and Food Manufacture. Transport & Storage, Energy and Construction are also well represented in the area.
- As of September 2022, Skilled Trades (14.4%) and Process, Plant and Machine Operatives (8.2%) are well represented in the North Lincolnshire workforce, more so than in the wider regional and national workforces. Professional Occupations (15.5%) are underrepresented in North Lincolnshire

North Lincolnshire has pockets of education and skills deprivation. The skills domain of the Index of Multiply deprivation, for example, measures the lack of attainment and skills in the local population:

Education, Skills and Training, 2019

Lower-layer Super Output Areas in North Lincolnshire by decile



Most deprived
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Least deprived

Source: English Indices of Deprivation (2019),
MHCLG. Contains Ordnance Survey data ©
Crown copyright and database right 2019

City of Doncaster Place Overview

- The newly conferred City of Doncaster covers a diverse landscape of approximately 568km². The city has a population of 311,890, which is predicted to increase by 3.7% by 2030. Doncaster has an age profile that is broadly comparable to other areas. However, it has a lower percentage of population in the 20 to 25 age group and a slightly higher proportion in the 55-64 age group.
- With 91.8% of Doncaster residents self-identifying as White British, Doncaster is less ethnically diverse than similar local authority areas. The next two largest groups after this are 'Other White' (3.4%) and 'Asian' (2.5%). Doncaster does have, however, a significant Gypsy, Roma and Traveller population.
- The social and economic profile of Doncaster as a place to grow up, work and live has a huge bearing on education and skills outcomes. Doncaster has many strengths, including one of the best rail hubs in the North and a rich heritage going back to Roman times. We have a high proportion of employment in Health, Engineering, Education, Logistics, Construction, Manufacturing and Business Administration.
- Poverty and socio-economic background also have a significant impact on learning and cognition. Doncaster is in the top 20% of most deprived Local Authority Areas in England. Just under a quarter (22.6%) of children in the borough live in low income families. Doncaster's overall level of relative deprivation ranking has increased over the last five years, moving 48th to 41st out of 317 local authority areas.

- Health and educational outcomes also vary significantly across the population, with a strong correlation between deprivation and these poor outcomes. Life expectancy is 10.9 years lower for men and 8.2 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Doncaster compared to the least deprived areas.
- Of 317 local authority areas, Doncaster ranks as the 20th most deprived, as measured by the Education and Skills Deprivation measure. 37.6% of our Lower Super Output Areas are in the 10% most deprived nationally.
- Whilst children perform relatively well, up until the end of Key Stage 1, the story is somewhat different by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 4. Doncaster's average GCSE attainment score is lower than similar authorities and the national average, with outcomes in English and Maths being particular areas in need of improvement.
- The proportion of Doncaster's 19 year olds qualified to Level 3 is currently 13% below the national average and the gap for the proportion of our working population qualified to Level 4 is even wider, at just 24% compared to 40% nationally. Almost 11% of the working age population have no formal qualifications at all.

Approach to Developing the Annual Accountability Statement

Working with Key Stakeholders

DN Colleges Group is committed to working collaboratively with partner organisations and institutions across the areas we serve. Since the merger of the two founder colleges, DNCG has created Local Stakeholder Boards in its two main communities to ensure that as well as developing group responses, it is able to connect with and respond to its local civic, employer, education and community base in each area. These groups are being redeveloped and enhanced as the next chapter in the College strategy is built, but they will remain a key asset in the ability of the College maintain local relevance and responsiveness.

The College's employer relationships are a major asset in its ability to understand and respond to the needs of local and regional employers and this work is supported by a dedicated employer engagement team. At a strategic partnership level, the College is considered an anchor institution in both localities and has a strong level of engagement in the strategic and operational partnership groups alongside our key partners.

DN Colleges Group continues to work closely with a range of key stakeholders to achieve its strategic objectives. These include:

- City of Doncaster Council through our active membership of the Team Doncaster Local Strategic Partnership Board.
- The North Lincolnshire Skills Transformation Board and delivery group.
- The Employer Representative Bodies (ERBs) in South Yorkshire and Greater Lincolnshire, through the consultation process and embedding the initial outcomes from the LSIPs into College strategy development.
- Acting as a lead partner in the South Yorkshire Centre of Excellence in Health and Care (alongside NHS and wider health partners).
- The regional authorities (SYMCA and GLLEP) through regional skills forums and by contributing to the development of regional skills strategy.
- Individual large employers, such as British Steel (Engineering), Siemens Gamesa (Renewable Energy) and Airco Refrigeration (Green Skills through our Humber Energy Skills Training Academy) to support apprentice delivery and wider training and development needs in key growth sectors of the regional economy.

The College has engaged these partners in the development of its future strategy and will continue to do so in the future to ensure plans remain relevant and responsive to local priorities over time. Specifically, the College has reviewed and responded to the following key publications in the development of its draft strategy and in preparing this Accountability Agreement:

Local and Regional Skills Drivers

- **South Yorkshire Skills Strategy and Implementation Plan** (draft)
- **South Yorkshire LSIP - Draft Priorities** (April 23)
- **Greater Lincolnshire LSIP - Emerging Priorities Report** (April 23)
- **City of Doncaster Council - Education and Skills 2030 and Talent Innovation**
- **Ecosystem (TIE) Strategies**
- **North Lincolnshire Council - Skills and Employability Plan 2023 - 28**

Engagement and Collaboration with Other Providers in the Area

DN Colleges Group maintains close and regular working relationships with a wide range of education partners. Across the localities it serves, the College recognises the important role it plays as a key part of the wider educational landscape and system. To ensure that a coherent offer can be developed and that institutions can both collaborate and play to their individual strengths, the College is an active member in a large number of educational partnerships, including:

- Schools' forums, local head teacher partnerships in Doncaster and North Lincolnshire.
- College Principals' Groups and consortia in South Yorkshire, Greater Lincolnshire and Humber regions. These networks support peer working groups around key themes and ensure a system response to regional priorities is developed, for example, the HE, Adult Level 3 and apprentice networks in South Yorkshire.
- Institute of Technology (IoT) partners in the Lincolnshire and South Yorkshire IoT Boards.
- Collaborative partnership/consortium bidding, for example in the Strategic Development Fund and Skills Injection Fund projects, focused on key priorities around employer engagement, sustainability and Higher Technical Qualifications.

- University relationships. The College works with The University of Hull, The University of Lincoln, Sheffield Hallam University and The University of Huddersfield in collaborative partnerships to support local access to high quality higher education through the College's University campuses and through the expansion of the IoT offer for Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs) in the future.
- Private providers. The College engages carefully and selectively with private providers to support training delivery where there is a clear need and where the College is unable to meet this directly. These relationships are reviewed regularly to ensure continued relevance and responsiveness.

Duty to Review Provision in Relation to Local Needs

We are committed to complying with our duty under a new 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 a report on our main website following this review. We will factor in any actions from this report into our Accountability Agreement plan.

Contribution to National, Regional and Local Priorities

Aims for 2023/24	How Aims and Objectives Contribute to National, Regional and Local Priorities
<p>Increase number of students taking T Level qualifications and expand range of T Levels offered.</p>	<p>Technical Education reforms agenda to improve technical skills at level 3 and to raise the status and recognition of advanced level technical qualifications, providing a route into employment, higher and degree apprenticeships and higher level study.</p> <p>Providing progression routes for access to higher technical learning in key employment and growth sectors with skills shortages.</p>
<p>Develop Higher Technical Education pathways (including Higher and Degree Level apprenticeship routes), working collaboratively with our HEI and awarding partners to maximise the impact of the Institutes of Technology.</p>	<p>Higher technical skills (HTQs) and Apprenticeships are a key priority for the skills agenda. With the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy and Reforms in 2017, the college has continued to work with employers, government bodies and awarding organisations to expand the range and volume of higher and degree apprenticeship opportunities.</p> <p>Expanding the collaborative IoT network as a driver for the delivery of Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs) and to engage employers as strategic partners in the design, development and delivery of the higher technical system response.</p>
<p>Review and develop a new, integrated curriculum development and planning business cycle, which systematically embeds stakeholder input and LMI into the curriculum design process.</p>	<p>The programme of work will ensure regular and systematic embedding of demand side information into the process of curriculum and course planning.</p> <p>The integration of a strong evidence base, drawing from up-to-date labour market intelligence, economic and employment forecasting, competitor analysis, direct employer demand and demographic data into the planning cycle will improve the understanding of demand for skills and the opportunities to develop a 'future proof' curriculum offer.</p> <p>A review and reset of the College's Local Stakeholder Boards will ensure a clear role in the development cycle for employer, community, civic and education partners.</p> <p>The re-establishment of Stakeholder Board membership will ensure fair and balanced representation of stakeholders, supporting the economic, community and social mission of the College.</p> <p>All of the above will ensure that curriculum intent is developed with stakeholder needs as the key driver for future planning and will enable employer input to be built into both the course offer (what is delivered) and learning design (how it is delivered and the wider student experience).</p>
<p>Develop and publish a clear 'every learner, every level' curriculum entitlement to be built into the design principles for future curriculum planning.</p>	<p>Building in findings from LSIPs, other research evidence and direct employer feedback into the entitlement blueprint, DN Colleges Group students will access high-value essential skills development, designed to prepare for success in life and work, irrespective of their area or level of study.</p>
<p>Continue to seek opportunities to collaborate with partners across the education and skills system to maximise the benefit to learners, employers and stakeholders.</p> <p>Partnerships include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - South Yorkshire Colleges Consortium - Federation of Lincolnshire Colleges - Humber Colleges - University and IoT partners - Schools forums 	<p>Responds to opportunities through the Local Skills Improvement Fund and other skills initiatives.</p> <p>Builds a system response to skills supply across institutions, enabling provider responsiveness to local need and collective response to wider regional priorities.</p> <p>Shares effective practice across institutions and builds system capacity.</p>

Corporation Statement

On behalf of DN Colleges Group Corporation, it is hereby confirmed that the plan set out above reflects an agreed statement of purpose, as approved by the Chair of the Corporation on the 30th May 2023.



Angela Briggs
Chair of Governors
Date: 30th May 2023



John Rees
CEO
Date: 30th May 2023

Supporting Documentation

- South Yorkshire LSIP Draft Priorities Report
- Greater Lincolnshire Emerging Priorities Report
- North Lincolnshire Skills and Employability Plan
- Doncaster Economic and Education & Skills Strategies 2030
- Regional (SYMCA) Skills Strategy and Implementation Plan (when published)
- Annual Financial Statements
- Ofsted March 2022 Report
- 2021-2022 College Self-Assessment Report (SAR)