“The next three years could be a period of transformative change for the region, whilst nationally, greater importance is placed on vocational, technical and higher level skills. This strategic plan for the College is not just a collection of intentions; it has been created through extensive consultation and sets out not just what we aim to achieve, but the reasons why and the values we will enact every day to bring about our vision.”

**Grant Glendinning**  
Principal, Carlisle College

“Carlisle College provides young people in our city with an opportunity to learn new skills and develop their talents. Carlisle College is an integral part of our education offer and its development and engagement with the city continues to strengthen the offer to students.”

**John Stevenson MP**  
Member of Parliament for Carlisle

“Since my time as a student at Carlisle College in the 1980s it has been transformed with exceptional facilities, and boasts both dedicated and high performing students and staff. As a college we are focused on supporting our students to achieve their desired goals and on supporting employers to ensure they have the skilled staff that they need. Working with our partners we want to build a prosperous and vibrant local economy for Cumbria.”

**Patrick McGahon**  
Chair, Carlisle College Board

“Carlisle College plays a major role in Cumbria’s skills system by providing a flexible, high quality provision designed to support the economic growth needs of our businesses. Importantly, the college is fully committed to providing an excellent experience for all of its learners. The LEP works in close and successful partnership with the College as demonstrated by our joint work in developing the Advanced Manufacturing Centre to support our local manufacturing businesses.”

**Jo Lappin**  
Chief Executive, Cumbria LEP

“Carlisle College provides a huge variety of courses that prepare young people to work in an array of businesses and institutions in Carlisle and beyond. The College has developed talented young people for my business for many years and has become a valued and trusted partner.”

**Alan Wilson**  
Engineering Manager UK, Pirelli  
Enterprise Advisor, Carlisle College

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Our Purpose

“To unlock potential through learning”

Our strategy impacts on our people, the quality of our services and how we are structured to meet our purpose of unlocking potential through learning, a purpose which underpins everything we do as an organisation.

Our Vision

A college empowering learners and businesses through excellence and innovation for Cumbria’s future prosperity.
Our Values

Students are at the heart of what we do

Being Open & Honest

Valuing Our People

Taking Ownership
Strategic Gears

Through our dynamic & innovative learning community and highly effective partnerships, we will provide responsive education and skills development.
Exceptional teaching and learning

Carlisle College provides consistently high quality teaching, learning and assessment for its learners and apprentices, focussing on individuals’ needs. This results in better than expected grades when our learners’ starting points are taken into consideration. The number of learners who successfully complete their qualifications is above national rates compared to similar colleges across the country. There is a strong focus on employability and on the transferable skills that equip learners well for the changing employment landscapes of their futures; this results in high proportions going on to higher levels of study and directly into employment. The College will continue to strive for excellence within teaching and learning, through the development and sharing of innovative practice.

By 2021 we will be a college which provides exceptional teaching, learning and personal and professional development. We will be recognised as an ‘Outstanding’ college by Ofsted and we will demonstrate student satisfaction levels in excess of sector benchmarks.

Justyna Rudek
Level 4 AAT Accounting

“I’m now in my third year at Carlisle College having completed Level 2 and Level 3 Accounting programmes. I’m currently studying for my Level 4 Professional Diploma in Accounting whilst also working at David Allen Accountants, which allows me to put into practice what I’m learning. My dream is to gain my chartered accounting status.”

Developing high performing staff

Carlisle College has a committed staff body of creative professionals, many of whom are dual-professionals with both industry and teaching backgrounds. Our staff feedback tells us how much they enjoy working at the college and our staff turnover is low. The dynamic world we prepare our learners for means continual professional development for all our staff, and we will ensure regular up-skilling through industry placements. Teaching approaches will be developed through evidence-informed practice, and our managers will inspire success through strong and effective leadership.

Over this strategic plan period we will foster a culture in which our staff strive for excellence. By 2021 we will have facilitated professional or industry updating for all of our teaching staff.

“The college to me is more than just a job or a place of work. It is a hive of people all striving to achieve their goals. Whether that be the students working towards their qualifications or the staff striving to help them to succeed. I can honestly say I love my job and the work I do. The meaningful impact that you can have on a person’s life, makes all the hard work worthwhile.”

Helen Armstrong
Complementary Therapies Tutor
3 Harnessing technology

Technology increasingly underpins and enhances teaching and learning throughout the education world. It brings flexible access, irrespective of space and time, powerful teaching tools such as virtual and augmented reality, and education software for monitoring learners’ progress. In our digitally-driven economy, modern life, learning and business is increasingly impossible without technology, as jobs and whole industries are disrupted by digital innovation. It is estimated that 35% of UK jobs are at risk of automation in the near future and those in the workforce possessing lower skills will find it difficult to move into the future jobs technology will create.

Over this strategic plan period we will further enhance learning through technology, creating more flexible ways to develop skills and knowledge and to gain qualifications. By 2021 our Technology Enhanced Learning Strategy will result in a significant uptake in online participation amongst our learners.

"At David Allen IT Solutions, we really value the Carlisle College Apprenticeship programme. The IT Apprenticeship that is delivered is so relevant to our business, and is tailored in such a way that the learning that our Apprentices undertake really enhances what they do with us in the workplace. Apprentices are so important to us, we acknowledge that the fresh ideas young people bring to our organisation cultivates innovation, and in a world of technology in which we operate this gives us the competitive edge."

Gary Martin
Director
David Allen IT Solutions

"After school I used the Carlisle College Apprenticeship vacancy service to secure my Apprenticeship. It was very straightforward and you are offered lots of help and advice through the process. It is great to get first hand experience in the work place with an established, well respected firm. I am really enjoying the world of work and earning at the same time as studying at Carlisle College."

Connor Fish
Level 3 - IT, Software, Web & Telecoms Apprentice (David Allen IT Solutions)

"After completing my GCSEs I applied to study Music at Carlisle College having seen performances here over the years. The facilities are really good, Carlisle College of the Arts certainly lives up to its great reputation. After College I hope to go to a University in London and develop a career in the music industry."

Isobelle Faulkner
Level 3 - Music

"After my GCSEs I studied Media at Carlisle College for 2 years. The equipment is great and I was even awarded a Royal Television Society Award in the entertainment category for editing a music video. While at College I ran my own production company working with over 30 clients including New Balance and Carlisle City Council. My course provided the UCAS points needed to go to University where I am now studying Digital Television Production at Ravensbourne University in London, whilst working freelance as a studio co-ordinator at the shopping channel QVC."

Charlie Stone
Level 3 - Media
Each year, UAL Foundation Diploma in Art & Design students hold a pop up exhibition to showcase their work. A wide-ranging mix of work is exhibited which encompasses the various specialist areas on offer within the Art & Design programmes at Carlisle College - Fine Art, Visual Communication, Fashion, 3D Design, Photography, Graphic Design, Illustration, Textiles & Print. The exhibition also provides students with the opportunity to develop effective event planning, management, and organisation skills.

**Enhancing wider skills**

There are great opportunities for change and sustainable, inclusive economic growth for Carlisle and Cumbria and we want local people to benefit from this coming prosperity. It is vital that they are able to: a recent government report placed Carlisle in the top 5 ‘cold spots’ for social mobility, and household income in Cumbria is 15% lower than the UK median. We know that the planned mass infrastructure projects, a growing population with increased service demands and a stronger visitor economy will bring better paid jobs to the region. But this will necessitate higher workforce skills, not only technical but wider, transferable skills. Employers in Cumbria cite low numbers of applicants with the required attitude as the main recruitment barrier they face. At the College we will focus on the personal, individualised journey of each of our learners, to ensure they know their progress every step of the way and are clear on all of their options. Their learning will not simply prepare them for work, but to be active citizens, able to thrive independently in a complex, globalised world.

We will continue to guide students to reach personal and professional goals through self-motivation, individual growth and pursuit of excellence. By 2021 our Careers Strategy will ensure every learner receives advice which inspires, tailored to their circumstances.

**Carlisle College is an exceptional educational establishment, which works in partnership to maximise opportunities to give their students fantastic real life opportunities, as well as bringing benefits to local businesses, organisations and the local community. The College has a real “can do” attitude and I am always blown away by the professionalism of both staff and students.”**

- **Emma Dixon**
  Carlisle Partnership Manager

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**Barber Bash**

The team from the Great British Barber Bash demonstrated the latest barbering techniques at Carlisle College, giving tips, advice and lots of inspiration to all who attended. The showcase was fun, informative and also brimming with skills and techniques, attracting crowds of learners and employers from local hairdressers.

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**Pop up exhibition**

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Delivering higher level skills

The proportion of people with higher level skills in the county is lower than the rest of the UK. Just 27% of the working age population in Carlisle are qualified to degree level compared to 38% nationally. But in Cumbria, around 41% of the job vacancies from existing jobs between 2016 and 2021 will require a degree, and the Cumbria LEP has a target to help ensure 32% of the working age population is qualified to this level or above. At present, most school and college leavers in Carlisle travel to other UK cities for higher education, and in Cumbria many subjects are not available at degree level. Working with our Group and university partners, we will grow the scope and number of programmes we offer at degree level in key areas, such as engineering, computing, business and the arts.

By 2021, we will provide greater choice for those progressing to higher education in Carlisle and Cumbria and will have increased our number of learners on degree level courses by 150%.

HE Graduation

The Higher Education Graduation Ceremony is held each year at Carlisle Cathedral to celebrate the achievement, commitment and dedication of learners whom have completed university level courses. Based on local market needs, our higher education courses have been designed with input from business – a combination that makes Carlisle College graduates highly sought after by employers.

Lewis Shaw
HND General Engineering

“I first started Carlisle College in 2013 as part of my Engineering Apprenticeship with Nestle. Having completed Level 3 and 4, I progressed on to the HND where I attend College one day a week. College has really enhanced my knowledge and performance in my job at Nestle and I hope to progress onto a degree level qualification.”

Tim Massey
Leadership & Management Apprentice (ForFarmers UK)

“Following the completion of my Foundation Degree in Computing in 2017, I looked around for a qualification that would assist me in taking the next step into Mill Management. The Level 5 Apprenticeship in Leadership and Management at Carlisle College offers everything I need in terms of knowledge and skills. The added advantage of being able to complete the qualification in the workplace is a huge benefit, saving time and money for my employer.”

Nicola Woodward
Access to Higher Education - Health

“I enrolled at Carlisle College for an Access to Health course to enable me to apply to University. What I liked about the course was that it is combined into one year, which was intense but if you put in the work it is easily manageable. The course provides a variety of Health associated subjects which have really helped me going forward. The course is run by fantastic lecturers who go out of their way to help you on your journey and provide top class support. I am pleased to have gained the qualifications to enable me to secure a place studying Midwifery at University.”
Building the region’s workforce

Apprentices add great value to the economy and provide life-changing skills and experience. Cumbria has an ambitious target to increase its number of apprentices by 5,000 by 2020. The College has grown its apprenticeship offer year-on-year, by 50% since 2015, and now trains apprentices for employers all over Cumbria and South-West Scotland; the College has key specialisms, delivered in industry-standard learning environments. Working with employers and partners we will create more apprenticeships in key areas of local demand, such as manufacturing, construction, engineering, digital and professional services from first stage apprenticeships to degree level.

Over this strategic plan period we will create genuine alternative pathways to successful careers for people in Carlisle and its surroundings, through more opportunities to study and train whilst working. By 2021 we will have increased our apprentice numbers by a further 50%.

Skillbuild Competition

Construction students participate in the Skillbuild Competition, in areas including joinery, plastering and bricklaying, providing students with a great opportunity to showcase their skills and develop their confidence. Carlisle College students have received numerous medals at the regional competitions and several have progressed to the national finals.

Chris Cork

Level 3 - Joinery Apprentice (Cubby Construction)

“After school I started Carlisle College full-time to develop the skills required for a joinery role to make me a stronger candidate for interview. My tutor at Carlisle College was my reference and helped me to apply for an Apprenticeship with Cubby Construction who I hope to continue working for and complete my foreman training.”

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Zoe Pluckrose Norman

People Director, Armstrong Watson

“Armstrong Watson have been working in partnership with Carlisle College for a number of years. We have a large cohort of Apprentice trainees across our business studying AAT qualifications with a view to these colleagues becoming our future senior accounts officers/supervisors and managers. All our trainees praise the work of the tutors at Carlisle College. Our Apprentices feel very supported which is a great experience for both our colleagues and for our business. Apprenticeships are a great way of retaining our talent in Cumbria and helping them to realise their potential in addition to adding real value to businesses.”

Zoe Pluckrose Norman

People Director, Armstrong Watson
7 Working with our partners

The region is set to benefit from a number of developments in the coming years, which will add to its population, generate a greater need for services, encourage investment into established and evolving industries and position Carlisle as a regional and economic capital of the Borderlands. The coming years promise the establishment of domestic flights from Carlisle airport, regeneration and development through the Borderlands Growth Deal and the creation of a new Garden City. The College has a critical role to play in preparing local people to meet the demands that change will bring. Cumbria has an ageing population, with 23% aged 65+ compared to 18% nationally, and although there are the same number of jobs as working age people and low unemployment, too often skills do not match existing and new vacancies. Cumbria LEP has set a target that by 2020 the proportion of businesses in Cumbria reporting skills gaps will be below the national average. The College will work with the LEP, local authorities, education partners and employers to understand local skills gaps, future jobs and skills requirements. Our professionals will ensure local people are ready for rewarding careers in an optimistic and forward-looking Cumbria.

Over this strategic plan period we will work to develop new partnerships to secure wider opportunities for our students to progress to study and work, improving their economic prospects.

Olivia Phillips
Level 3 - Health & Social Care (Nurse Cadet)

“The Nurse Cadets programme as part of my Health & Social Care course has been great. The ability to combine the theory at Carlisle College with practical hands on experience at the Cumberland Infirmary has really helped my learning and confirmed that nursing is the right career choice for me.”

Gill Long
Head of Nursing, Clinical Education and Practice Development

“The nurse cadet scheme is an excellent programme that allows college students to gain on-the-job experience working with patients. It’s been two years since it launched and has made great progress, many people have worked very hard to see this come to fruition and succeed.”

Story Contracting

“At Story Contracting we felt the development of a Groundworks Apprenticeship route with Carlisle College was important for the future succession planning of our Construction Division. Employing Apprentices enables us to provide a comprehensive development pathway, allowing us to develop our next cohort of Operatives and ensures that we develop the necessary people and skills that will take our business forward.”

STRATEGIC PLAN - 2018-2021
At the forefront of the regional skills agenda

Carlisle College has a long track record of working with partners to provide education and training across Cumbria, through highly successful, multi-million pound projects such as ‘The Edge’ which develops the skills of Cumbria’s workforce. The College is a key contributor to the skills vision for the Borderlands Growth Deal, and it is playing an active role in the LEP’s Local Industrial Strategy development. It supported the LEP in its successful application for a Cumbria Careers Hub, and is leading the development of online, flexible learning for adults pan-Cumbria. As growth and investment opportunities are realised in the county, the College will play a pivotal role in identifying and meeting skills gaps, ensuring that local people are well-placed to benefit from Cumbria’s renaissance. Through flexible, innovative programmes and high quality apprenticeships, reforming our technical and vocational education, we will work collaboratively to secure successful investment in skills for Cumbria’s future.

By 2021 we will have led the delivery of a further successful, significant regional training project.

The Edge

Carlisle College leads a £10.5m European Social Fund Project commissioned by Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership to offer funded training solutions to support workforce development and business growth. Delivered by a partnership of highly skilled and experienced providers of training and business support, the project is designed to enable Cumbria to have one of the fastest growing economies in the country.

Media Students Save Lives

A group of media students have received ‘Life Saving’ Certificates from North West Ambulance Service awarded in recognition of outstanding efforts to save the life of a person suffering from a cardiac arrest. These were awarded for their production of videos showing how to respond to such an incident including the provision of CPR and the use of a defibrillator. The videos were launched by CardiacSmart via their social media pages.

Max Thorburn
Level 3 - Health & Social Care

“The Health & Social Care course offered me the best route to University and as it is continually assessed it provides the opportunity to study specific areas in depth. My placement at Notwen House gave me hands-on experience of working in the care sector and helped me in my application to study a degree in adult nursing.”

Tia Boertien
Level 3 - Sport

“Rather than stay on at school for sixth form and having to study a number of different subjects, I have been able to focus on sport at Carlisle College which is where my passion lies. I really enjoy the practical work and the atmosphere at Carlisle College. In the future I hope to pursue a career as a ski instructor.”
A College for its communities

Carlisle College is far more than the sum of its courses. It has extensive partnerships with local businesses, the local authority, schools and charities which create real value for our learners and our communities. Through our vast range of initiatives and partnerships we will ensure we deliver the technical and vocational training and opportunities young people need to thrive in successful careers, as well as develop strategies to engage hard-to-reach groups and support local people back into learning. Our work with employers helps them to secure their future workforce and provides opportunities for local people. We are a focal point for Carlisle’s people of all ages, diverse backgrounds and levels.

Over this strategic plan period we will continue to be a transformative nucleus for the communities of Carlisle. Assisted by our extensive network, by 2021 over 90% of students will achieve a positive destination of their choosing after their course.

Give A Day

Carlisle College played a significant role in the Carlisle Ambassadors ‘Give a Day to the City’ initiative. The talents and skills of our staff were put to great use for hundreds of beneficiaries across the city. Projects ranged from enhancing the outdoor space at Carlisle Mencap Centre, enhancing the NSPCC Centre through decoration and wall art, improving the allotment space for Carlisle Carers and delivering ‘Pots of Joy’ to community and elderly housing.

Sugar Smart Carlisle

Carlisle College hosted the launch of Sugar Smart Carlisle on behalf of Carlisle Partnership and Carlisle City Council. Sugar Smart takes a cross-sector approach to transforming local food environments and raising public awareness of the impacts of consuming too much sugar. As part of the launch, a group of Level 3 Media students were tasked with creating a video/documentary to help raise awareness on the subject.

Children’s University

Carlisle College continues to lead the Cumbria Children’s University, an initiative to inspire primary school children to engage with learning, by encouraging and rewarding exciting and innovative learning activities and experiences outside normal school hours. The Cumbria Children’s University Graduation takes place each year at Carlisle Cathedral, to recognise the achievements the young participants have made in actively seeking and taking part in a wide variety of different learning opportunities.
A sustainable financial future

With our growing numbers of full-time students and apprentices over the past three years, all benefiting from a redeveloped College estate, the College has worked hard to ensure its financial stability through the effective and efficient use of its funding. We will remain ever-vigilant with financial monitoring, and ensure the highest value for money for our learners and funding bodies.

Over this strategic plan period we will ensure the College delivers a healthy operating surplus to re-invest year-on-year.

“...if we are going to build the future, we need future-builders; Carlisle College continues to deliver the skills, empowerment and vision, in the present, to realise that ambition…”

Phil Houghton
Chair, Carlisle Partnership

“BSW Timber Group are the largest timber manufacturing business in the UK. As such we require a number of annual & ad-hoc training and development courses to keep our staff up to date with the latest in business and operational techniques. We have been working with Carlisle College for a number of years and find their tutors and campus facilities top notch. Our annual Apprentice and graduate intake requires the very best and latest training, and this is supplied by the College. We look forward to continuing our close relationship and to working with Carlisle College for many years.”

Tony Lockey
Group Learning & Development Manager, BSW Timber

Adam Story
Foundation Diploma in Art & Design

“The quality of teaching at Carlisle College is second to none. I say teaching, but the tutors are more ‘critical friends’ who explore your specialist realm of creativity in depth alongside you. The focus here is personal development, preparing you with creative skills that can be applied both in and out of the arts. I received a huge amount of support for writing my UCAS personal statement, creating a portfolio and practicing for interviews as well as a huge desk and studio space to sit and think at each day! I am now studying Fine Art at Oxford University / The Ruskin School of Art. If you want to achieve a goal then the tutors here will do their absolute best to get you there.”
With a nationwide network of colleges and training centres, and around 2,500 colleagues, NCG works with thousands of learners and businesses every year, regionally and nationally, to help them reach their full potential and build a talented workforce through high quality education and training. NCG are also one of the largest not for profit training groups in the UK.

We have a clear purpose to unlock potential through learning and we do this through the work of our colleges and training providers.

NCG operates seven colleges:

- Carlisle College
- Kidderminster College
- Lewisham College
- Southwark College
- Newcastle College
- Newcastle Sixth Form College
- West Lancashire College

NCG also operates two national training providers, Intraining and Rathbone Training.

Creating and developing partnerships that bridge education and business is a vital area of work for our colleges, while our two training providers work with businesses and individuals to help them unlock their potential through learning.

We offer a wide range of training programmes, from workforce development to supporting job seekers, apprenticeships to work place learning. We work with government, employers and partners to help thousands of people every year start or develop a career.

These collaborations are key to our success in supporting employers who want to invest in their workforce, or industry sectors that have major skills gaps and need specific training and skills to ensure future growth.

NCG colleges and training providers offer a wide range of vocational Further Education and Higher Education courses and training programmes, including apprenticeships, employability and work place learning. NCG is also the first Further Education institution in the UK ever to be awarded Taught Degree Awarding Powers (TDAP), enabling us to develop and award our own Honours and Masters degrees.