

CARLISLE COLLEGE

STRATEGY TO 2030



PART OF





Carlisle College is an anchor institution in Carlisle and across Cumbria.

At a time when communities need the opportunities provided by further education colleges more than ever, we are a College that is invested in its local communities and employers.



We are committed to growth for Cumbria and the part that we play in retaining and training talent to meet the skills needs of our local employers.

Our stakeholders including students, staff, employers, community groups, and civic partners are central to our success. Their input, collaboration, and shared ambition help to shape our direction and strengthen the relevance and impact of all that we do.

Above all, our students are at the heart of this strategy. We are passionate about creating an inclusive, supportive environment where every individual feels they belong, can thrive, and is empowered to achieve their full potential – whatever their background or starting point.

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Sarah McGrath,
Principal, Carlisle College



CARLISLE COLLEGE IS PART OF NCG

As part of NCG we work in partnership to support a clear mission – to enable social mobility and economic prosperity through exceptional education.

NCG colleges offer a wide range of vocational Further Education and Higher Education courses and training programmes, including apprenticeships, employability and workplace learning, and work to support those in our communities who need it most.

Together, we play a key role in providing education and training to learners, apprentices and employers across the UK, building a skilled and talented workforce for the jobs of tomorrow.

Carlisle College is proud to be part of NCG, one of the country's leading college groups, supporting tens of thousands of learners through its nationwide network of colleges:

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



Carlisle College is an anchor institution at the heart of Carlisle, at a time when communities need the opportunities provided by further education colleges more than ever.

Carlisle College works in partnership with local government, employers, civic and community stakeholders, to develop and deliver high-quality education that is responsive to local, regional and national skills needs. These partnerships support Carlisle College and NCG to develop a workforce of the future, with the skills and talents that our local communities need to be successful and sustained.

Learners are at the heart of Carlisle College, and I have seen first-hand the life-changing opportunities and experiences on offer here.

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Liz Bromley,
CEO, NCG





OUR PURPOSE

Carlisle College will collaborate with partners across Carlisle and the surrounding area to support social cohesion and promote social mobility.

We will be a hub for the community and the first port of call for information about, and the delivery of, training, education and people development. Carlisle College will provide opportunities for local communities to develop skills and gain qualifications that will enable them to secure employment and contribute to growth of the local economy.

CARLISLE COLLEGE CHANGES
LIVES WITHIN ITS COMMUNITIES

STRATEGIC THEMES

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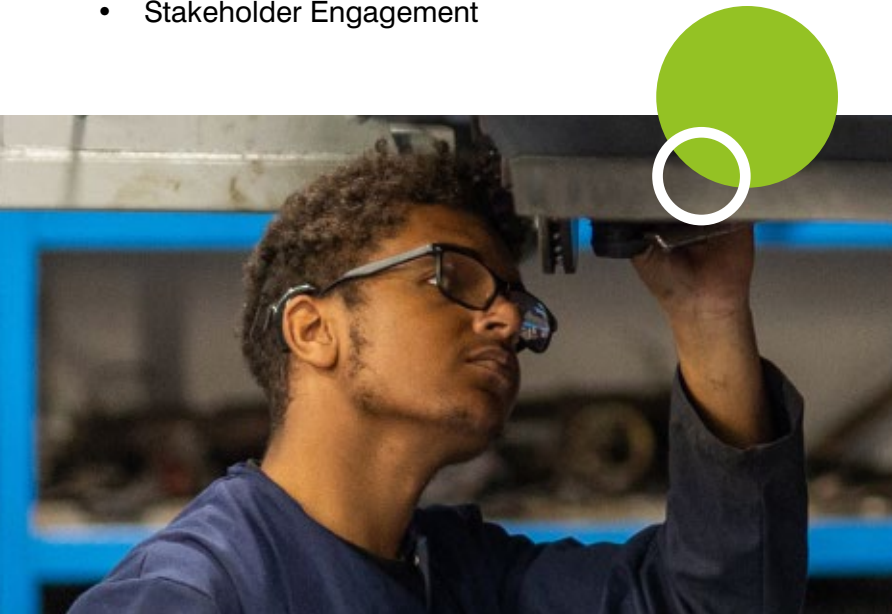
- Exceptional Teaching and Training
- Our People
- Building the Workforce of Cumbria
- Investing in our Future
- Stakeholder Engagement

OUR MISSION

Enabling social mobility and economic prosperity through exceptional education.

OUR VISION

To be the UK's leading college group recognised for our local impact, national influence and reach.





CONTEXT AND PLACE

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Carlisle College is the only GFE College within a 35-mile radius of Carlisle. It provides vocational and technical education programmes from pre-entry to Level 7. This includes programmes for young people, adult courses, apprenticeships, and bespoke training.

The College is located in one of the slowest growing population areas of the UK, and the declining working-age population suggests a looming workforce deficit of over 20,000 people emerging over the next 5 to 10 years.

The largest concentrations of employment per sector in Carlisle are Wholesale and Retail (18%), Health (14%) and Manufacturing (9.8%) (Cumbria Intelligence Observatory).

Carlisle is a semi-rural location with limitations around travel and transport. There are a small number of large employers in and around Carlisle, but the vast majority of local employers are SMEs.

EXCEPTIONAL TEACHING AND TRAINING



We will provide all our students and apprentices with an excellent learning experience.

Drawing on the existing good practice across the College we will raise the quality of teaching and training to ensure that every learner makes exceptional progress, meets their full potential and progresses to a positive destination.

WHY?

- To improve outcomes for our students, in line with our mission to enable social mobility and economic prosperity.
- To respond to local employer and stakeholder needs, ensuring that our students are well prepared for the workforce of the future and that we are addressing the findings of the Local Skills Improvement Plan.
- To drive innovation, using evidence-based teaching methods to create a dynamic learning environment that engages and inspires learners.
- To meet regulatory expectations, and be recognised for our high-quality teaching and learning leading to enhanced reputation, better student recruitment, and wider funding opportunities.

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

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All teachers believe in their students and what they can achieve. They are focussed on preparing them for their futures through high quality, inspirational teaching and training. Every learner at the College has stretching and ambitious targets that they strive to achieve.

Classrooms are inclusive and difference is embraced. Colleagues work with each other and their learners to develop their practice that promotes learning and progress for all; no matter their starting points, their backgrounds or any barriers they may face.

Staff are confident and innovative in their teaching. They seek out and engage in ongoing professional development. Teachers and learners are confident to try new things; they are not afraid to get things wrong and to learn from mistakes. Learners and employers recommend the College to family and friends.

OUR PEOPLE

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We will build a workplace culture that motivates all colleagues to work collectively towards delivering the strategic goals of the college. We will recruit with integrity and support all our people to continue to learn, develop and progress. Our colleagues will feel trusted and feel a sense of belonging. They will be ambitious for themselves, their colleagues, our learners and our communities.



WHY?

- We believe that our people are our greatest asset and our most valuable resource.
- When our people feel empowered and trusted they will get greater job satisfaction and perform better which will ultimately ensure a better learner experience.
- To be an effective learning organisation we need to invest in our talent and have ambition for our people. This will help create a culture of ongoing development and improvement.

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

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Every member of staff has the highest aspirations for themselves, their colleagues and every learner at the College. Our people feel confident to challenge each other and their managers in a productive and supportive way. Furthermore, they respond positively when challenged by others.

Our people seek out and engage in professional development that supports them to do their role better and that enriches them. Colleagues develop the skills and confidence that they need to progress within the organisation and feel supported to do so. The results of surveys show that colleagues feel a sense of belonging as well as an understanding of, and commitment to the strategy and direction of the College. Staff absence and turnover are both below sector averages.





BUILDING THE WORKFORCE OF CUMBRIA

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WHAT ARE WE STRIVING FOR?

Carlisle College will be the region's hub for workforce planning. We will collaborate with industry to deliver relevant, high quality learning programmes to both train and upskill. We will continue to develop our apprenticeship offer in response to local need and develop targeted adult training that promotes economic prosperity and social mobility as well as addressing the Local Skills Improvement Plan. We will place a strong focus on the skills that local employers tell us they need.



WHY?

- Cumbria is currently facing a skills gap which is set to widen moving forward and we have a significant part to play in addressing this.
- Upskilling, reskilling and encouraging those who are currently economically inactive into employment is a key priority of the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) for Cumbria.
- Aligned to the LSIP and Cumbria's Economic Growth Plan apprenticeships and high quality vocational, technical and specialist programmes are key to creating well paid, meaningful careers within Carlisle and the surrounding area.
- Essential skills have been identified through the LSIP as a cross cutting theme across all sector areas.
- As Cumbria moves towards devolution, and government policy to skills funding evolves, we need to ensure we are at the forefront of maximising opportunities that will support the people and businesses of Carlisle and the surrounding area.
- We want to support Carlisle to become a 'stay and succeed' city.



WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

We have close stakeholder links across all sector areas in Carlisle. These include major employers, SMEs and sole traders. These links are visible at all levels of the organisation and form a key part of our strategic, tactical and operational planning.

The courses we chose to run are defined by conversations with stakeholders and take up of adult training and apprenticeships is high. Our adult learning offer is focussed around the skills that adults in Carlisle and the surrounding area need, in order to secure employment or to get promoted in work. We provide flexibility and develop programmes that meet the specific needs of local employers using funding flexibilities provided through devolution.

At course level, teachers work with local businesses and employers to make sure that they plan their training in a logical sequence that meets industry requirements. They are in regular contact with employers to talk about new developments in their sector and constantly update what and how they teach to ensure that all of our learners have the skills they need to work in their chosen fields.

The NCG Guarantee is fully embedded and this means that, alongside the specific sector-based skills our learners develop, they also develop the essential skills that our employers value and that make them even more employable.



INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE

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We will ensure that our learners are prepared for industry by investing in our college. We will work with partners to ensure that we provide industry standard facilities and create an environment that supports exceptional teaching, learning, and the long-term success of our students and colleagues.

We will build partnerships that ensure our students benefit from being able to access real, on-site industry facilities and resources. We will work with colleagues across NCG to seek out funding opportunities to maintain and improve an industry standard training environment.

We will invest in the global future in support of Zero Carbon Cumbria. We will implement sustainable practices throughout the College where possible and integrate green technologies. We will continue to develop our curriculum to train our learners with the skills needed to contribute to a sustainable future.





WHY?

- To give our students the best possible experiences to prepare them for their future careers.
- To ensure that we are able to meet the future training needs of all our local businesses and employers and to provide a highly and appropriately skilled workforce of the future.
- To maximise funding and growth across Carlisle and our broader region.
- To play our part in protecting our planet for future generations and provide our learners with the skills to contribute positively towards a sustainable environment.
- Because the people and businesses of Carlisle and Cumbria deserve the best and most relevant training facilities.



WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

Every curriculum area has access to cutting edge facilities either at the College or through collaborative partnership arrangements. Students all benefit from experiencing training in environments that prepares them for their future careers.

We are recognised as a college that fosters innovation and sustainability, embedding these values into everything we do, from our infrastructure to our curriculum, ensuring that our investments are aligned with the future needs of the workforce and society.

Our estate is well designed and forward thinking. We are carbon neutral and all students know how

they can contribute positively to the environment within their chosen sector.

We are a thriving College with an environment that promotes collaboration, curiosity and engagement. Local businesses and employers want to visit our site to experience our facilities and they know that our students leave us having developed skills in an environment that is relevant to their workplaces. Our College community feels supported by the resources and facilities available to them, creating an environment where students, staff, and employers are proud to be part of Carlisle College.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

We will work with partners and colleagues to identify key local and regional employers in the industries that we work in.

We will pro-actively seek out partners and build relationships that will enhance the training we deliver and allow us to contribute to the future direction of Carlisle and its surrounding area.

We will seek out and work with decision makers from large employers locally to understand their current and future training needs. We will also

use our networks to reach SMEs to ensure that we fully understand their needs and that they understand our offer and how training can benefit their business. We will use these stakeholders to inform the development of our curriculum. Leaders will engage with stakeholders and stakeholder groups who are shaping the future direction of Cumbria. They will fully engage with the local implementation of national government and industrial strategies in order to inform local implementation.

WHY?

- To ensure that our curriculum is fit for purpose and is helping local businesses to develop local talent.
- To ensure that our learners are getting the right skills that will secure their futures.
- To ensure that the College has a voice locally and can impact the future skills landscape and maximise on opportunities relating to skills and training.



WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

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We are the first port of call for businesses in and around Carlisle in relation to training and people development.

Our curriculum is responsive and constantly evolving to meet new and emerging skills needs. Our full time and apprenticeship offer is complemented by a suite of bespoke training opportunities that have been co-designed with employers and that effectively upskill local people to meet local skills needs.

Leaders and Managers from the College are 'at the table' for conversations relating to the future landscape of Cumbria. They are pro-actively contributing to discussions and decision making about skills.





PART OF



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