

ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT 2023-24



PURPOSE

This accountability statement allows stakeholders to understand the key strategic objectives planned for Dudley College of Technology over the coming academic year. These objectives reflect key actions highlighted in our Strategic Plan, emerging activity identified through our Annual Strategic Impact Assessment (ASIA) and most importantly align to meeting priority skills development needs identified through the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP).

THE COLLEGE'S MISSION STATEMENT:

Outstanding technical and professional learning, which raises aspirations, develops skills and changes lives.

OUR VISION:

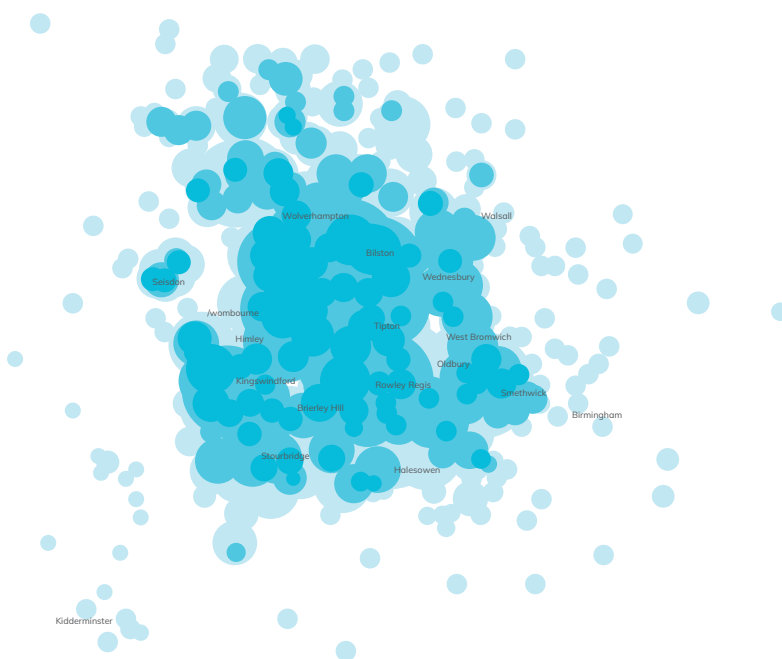
Dudley College of Technology will be firmly recognised locally, regionally and nationally simply as 'a great college'. With our focus on full-time programmes for young people, adult learning, apprentices and higher technical skills, we will consistently make a real difference to the lives of our learners, raising their aspirations and promoting their prosperity. As a driving force in the regional economy we will continue to improve business productivity, adding gross value. Our stakeholders will recognise our collaborative approach to developing innovative curriculum opportunities that meet local and regional skills needs, our focus on technical, professional and higher skills and our ongoing development of inspirational facilities.



For further information on the wider plans for the college in each of the sectors we serve, please take a look at our Strategic Plan: <https://dudleycol.ac.uk/our-college/about-us/strategic-plan-2020-2023/>. We are currently developing our new Strategic Plan 2024-27 and there will be opportunities for stakeholders to engage in this at the start of the academic year.

CONTEXT AND PLACE

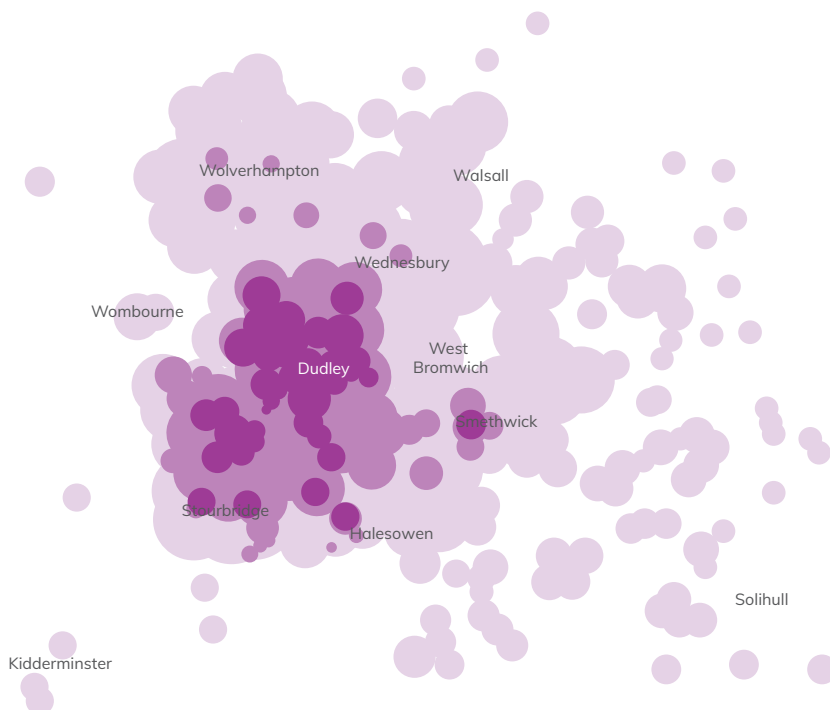
Dudley College of Technology is a large General Further Education (GFE) provider based in the heart of the Black Country in the West Midlands. The college supports around 12,000 students per year, including around 4,800 full time school leavers, 4,500 adults and 2,000 apprentices.



Travel to learn heatmap – 16-18 full time

At the time of writing the college is rated as Outstanding by Ofsted (May 2017), has received the Queens Anniversary Prize for Education (Feb 2020) and has its technical provision accredited to STEM Assured status.

Over the past 13 years the college has invested in the creation of some truly state of the art facilities, co-developed with employer partners. Our main campus is based around Dudley town centre, with further facilities in Brierley Hill. Our most recent development is the collaborative creation of the Innovation Park, which is home to The Black Country & Marches Institute of Technology for which the college is the lead provider. You can see more about each of our facilities here: <https://dudleycol.ac.uk/student-life/facilities/>



Full and part time adults



Student residence -
Apprenticeships

The college serves a predominantly local student community for its 16-18 school leaver and adult provision. With most students travelling from around the borough or close neighbouring boroughs to study at one of the college sites. For apprenticeships however the reach is much greater. Our day release programmes still serve a relatively local community. However our block release models and provision delivered on employer premises allows us to attract employers from further afield where we are offering technical provision not widely available, such as modern construction methodologies and medical engineering.

The Black Country is well served in further education, with all providers in the region rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted and a good range of provision available. The region is not without its challenges however and this is recognised by Dudley borough and other surrounding areas being identified as Education Investment Areas. School performance is still below national levels, with some provision significantly below, meaning many young people are not ready to progress to level 3

provision when they leave school. There are fewer adults with level 4 or above qualifications than the national picture and pockets of very low level skills (or no qualifications) and long term unemployment. The borough of Dudley is also very diverse with some areas of relative affluence and some areas facing significant economic challenges. Overall earnings per person are lower than the national rate and the GVA per head of residents in Dudley is lower than the Black Country and significantly lower than across the UK.

Despite these challenges, the borough of Dudley and beyond has some real opportunities. There is considerable investment currently underway to improve business opportunities, transport, tourism healthcare and education opportunities. The region is home to some world-leading businesses, with particular strengths in engineering & manufacturing, construction, healthcare, business services and transport & logistics. The key to success for the region is to support more local people to develop the skills to work in these sectors, driving up their income and in turn driving up the innovation and productivity of our local businesses.

The college has worked hard to address some of these long term challenges by building an aspirational curriculum that supports more local people to achieve and be successful in priority employment sectors. In 2017 we formed Dudley Academies Trust to support a number of schools to improve their performance and enhance their curriculum offer through collaboration with the College. Through an innovative collaborative model between the college, employers, local universities and private training providers we have developed new routes for local adults to receive higher level training in a cost

effective way. With the support of West Midlands Combined Authority and local employers, we have developed a wide range of new flexible funded programmes to support adults into work or to progress in their chosen career.

Our work to date has made a real difference to the individuals, communities and employers we serve. However, there is more we need to do. Our Strategic Plan 2024-27 will again be codeveloped with local stakeholders and set out our vision for the continuation of this journey. For the coming year, this accountability statement shares just some of our priority objectives and how they align with local skills needs.

The number of people without any qualifications is higher in Dudley (8.5%) when compared with the West Midlands (7.8%) and GB average (6.6%).

APPROACH TO DEVELOPING THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

Throughout the journey of investment in college facilities, we have ensured that we use these developments to reinvent ourselves in terms of the curriculum we offer.

At the heart of this has been a clear strategy of ensuring our provision is led by employers, aligned to priority skills needs and innovative in its approach to collaboration to ensure the best outcomes. We work to ensure that our full time offer, apprenticeship programmes, upskilling training and CPD offer is industry led and drives growth in the local economy.

The College has always taken a detailed approach to Strategic Planning. Our plans have a dedicated section for each of the main sectors we serve, explicitly detailing the new curriculum, facilities and employer engagement approaches we will implement. These plans are built bottom up with input from staff, students and a wide range of stakeholders (most importantly employers). For each priority sector, prior to developing any new facilities, a steering group of employers from that sector was formed. These steering groups have led on ensuring the design of the technical facilities we have

created and the curriculum offered meet industry needs.

The College has been active in spearheading collaboration to ensure the skills needs put forward by employers can be met. Utilising the strengths of other providers and employers to create bespoke programmes and delivery models. Most notably in the secondment of specialist staff from local employers to support delivery and the partnerships with higher level providers to deliver the curriculum in our Institute of Technology. Our links with schools through Dudley Academies Trust and these collaborative partners has given us a strong base of stakeholders to consult with when developing our plans.

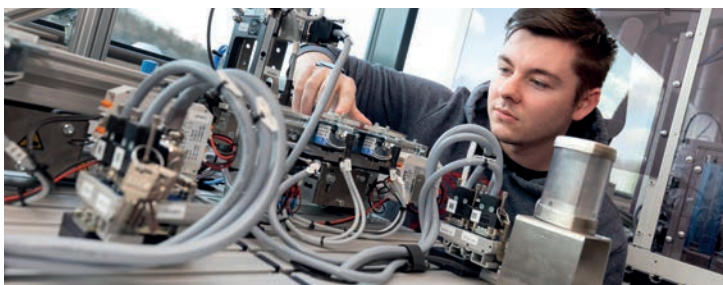
We have ensured we are at the heart of our community so that we can hear and respond quickly to the needs of stakeholders. This includes our Chief Executive & Principal being the lead for 'Employment & Skills' in Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC) Forging

a Future Executive as well as chairing Dudley Employment & Skills Board. The College is also represented at a senior level on Dudley Economic Growth Board, Dudley Towns Board and Brierley Hill Town Board.

At a local level, the five colleges across the Black Country work together to plan provision that is complimentary and in some cases (such as the recent Skills Accelerator programme) delivered collaboratively between providers. At a regional level, Dudley College of Technology is also part of Colleges West Midlands (CWM). CWM is a highly successful collaboration between all colleges in the West Midlands, working closely with the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) to design and deliver curriculum required across the region and support sharing of best practice.

Building upon all of the above, the College has worked to support the production of the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP). The plan covers the West Midlands region

There are 196,500
196,500 residents
aged 16-64 in Dudley
(60.7% of the total
Dudley population)
less than the wider
West Midlands (61.9%)
and the Great Britain
average 62.9%.



In Dudley the gap in
educational attainment
for 16-64 males
(61.3%) and females
(60.2%) is higher for
both genders than in the
wider West Midlands
(62.3% and 61.4%) and
in comparison to the GB
average (63.3%
and 62.6%).

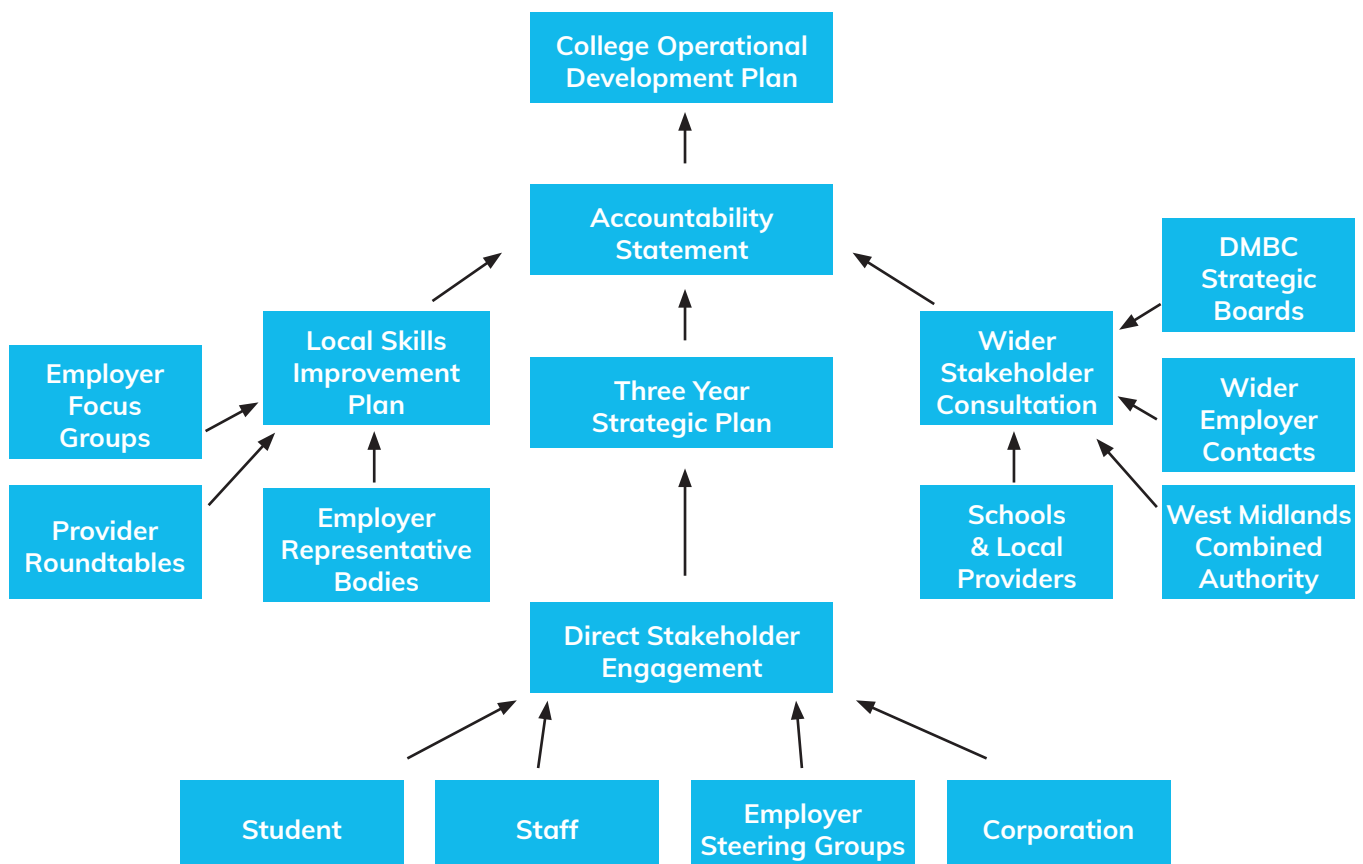
and has been led by Coventry & Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce in partnership with other employer representative bodies. This has included a series of sector-based workshops with employers from across the region, surveys to understand local skills needs, roundtable discussions with providers and employers and a detailed analysis of local employment and skills gaps. The final LSIP is due to be published shortly, but the priorities identified through the development process have informed the objectives set out in this statement.

Our history of employer engagement and our involvement

in the LSIP production has allowed us to align our accountability statement with the skills needs identified. After the first draft was developed, we have circulated this to the wide range of stakeholders identified above for further input and development. The feedback from this consultation was then fed into the final version agreed by our Corporation in May 2023. These objectives will be delivered through the college's existing processes, including our annual operational development plan and individual performance management system. Our stakeholders will be able to monitor our performance against these objectives through

our performance dashboard (available on our website) and through a new section in our Annual Strategic Impact Assessment (ASIA) which we produce each year.

It is expected the college strategic objectives contained within this accountability statement will be updated annually to share our priorities for each academic year with all stakeholders. This will continue to reflect the needs of employers set out in next Strategic Plan as well as responding to emerging local or national priorities identified.





The number of residents with Level 1,2,3 and 4 qualifications is lower than the wider West Midlands figure, and the Great Britain number. The number of individuals with Level 3 qualifications is significantly lower than the West Midlands average at 3.8% and the wider UK 8.1%.

CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL PRIORITIES

Below, we set out a number of aims and target outcomes for the year ahead that reflect how we are responding to national, regional and/ or local priorities and skills needs.

College strategic objective	Impact and/or Contribution towards National, Regional and Local Priorities for Learning and Skills
Objective 1 - We will launch our new strategic plan to continue our focus on meeting the skills needs of the region	Following extensive consultation, we will launch our new Strategic Plan in the first quarter of 2024. To include direct response to Local Skills Improvement Plan.
Objective 2 - We will continue to innovate in the design of our curriculum for young people to support progression and employment	<p>We will add new T-level pathways in law, on-site construction, engineering (including motor vehicle) and building services engineers, growing our T-level numbers to at least 300.</p> <p>We will pilot a new model of level 1 and 2 delivery to support students ultimately looking to progress to T-levels and readiness for work.</p> <p>We will use the catch up funding allocation to target dedicated support to students at risk of not progressing to give every student the best chance of success.</p> <p>We will work with curriculum teams to embed sustainability topics into all subject areas on full time programmes.</p>

College strategic objective	Impact and/or Contribution towards National, Regional and Local Priorities for Learning and Skills
<p>Objective 3 - We will continue to expand opportunities for adults to undertake training that supports their success.</p>	<p>We will introduce new adult programmes linked to logistics, warehousing & operations, engineering & manufacturing and construction trades / site.</p> <p>The above will include an expansion of ESOL vocational pathways to support more local people to improve their English whilst also gaining technical training linked to local employment.</p> <p>We will look to expand our successful Sector Based Work Academy Programmes by developing a proposal for expansion of our Skills Shop facility at Merry Hill, which would enable a 30% increase in the number of local people participating in these programmes.</p> <p>In response to LSIP, we will work with WMCA to secure funding to offer digital upskilling bitesize programmes for employed people looking to upskill.</p> <p>We will build on our pilot 'Green Dudley' programme to offer sustainability programmes to local employers.</p> <p>We will continue to work with Warwick Manufacturing Group on upskilling staff to deliver new programmes in electrification.</p> <p>We will continue to expand the offer from our Institute of Technology, including developing programmes with our higher education partners. This will include further expansion of High Technical Qualifications and modular programmes for employers linked to robotics, industry 4.0 and medical engineering.</p>
<p>Objective 4 - We will ensure our employer offer remains responsive and accessible.</p>	<p>We will host a series of employer events to raise awareness of the range of training and funding options now available to them, in response to LSIP findings.</p> <p>We will expand our employer advisory boards to cover all priority sectors identified in the LSIP.</p> <p>We will work with local partners to provide support to employers in engaging with training provision, as identified in the LSIP.</p>
<p>Objective 5 - We will continue our focus on providing industry standard facilities that develop the skills needed for our region.</p>	<p>We will finalise design and begin construction of the new Health Innovation Dudley facility, aimed at addressing local skills challenges in health care and related technologies.</p> <p>We will develop our new life sciences facility, offering improved facilities for sciences and animal management.</p> <p>We will develop a proposal for our new Transport Technologies centre, to include dedicated new facilities for electric and hydrogen vehicle systems.</p>
<p>Objective 6 - We will have a heightened focus on developing our staff and recruitment practices to ensure we have the technical skills for the future.</p>	<p>We will continue to expand our use of employer secondment activity to provide industry expertise into our curriculum delivery.</p> <p>We will develop a technical upskilling programme in identified curriculum areas to support future curriculum and succession planning.</p> <p>We will redevelop our Aspiring Managers programme and deliver for an identified cohort.</p>

CORPORATION STATEMENT

On behalf of the Dudley College of Technology corporation, it is hereby confirmed that the college plan as set out above reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the corporation at their meeting on 5th May 2023.

This statement will be published on the college's website within three months of the start of the new academic year and can be accessed from the following link: <https://dudleycol.ac.uk/our-college/about-us/policies-procedures/>

Chair of Governors

Signed: 

Name: Paul Noon

Date:

Chief Executive and Principal

Signed: 

Name: Neil Thomas

Date:

SUPPORTING LINKS

- This accountability statement can be accessed online at <https://dudleycol.ac.uk/our-college/about-us/strategic-plan-2020-2023/>
- College Strategic Plan – <https://dudleycol.ac.uk/our-college/about-us/strategic-plan-2020-2023/>
- College performance dashboard – <https://dudleycol.ac.uk/our-college/about-us/dashboard/>
- College Ofsted inspection report – <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/31/130475>
- College annual financial accounts - <https://dudleycol.ac.uk/our-college/about-us/>
- Local Skills Improvement Plan -<https://dudleycol.ac.uk/our-college/about-us/policies-procedures/>
- Black Country & West Birmingham Socio-Economic Profile (Black Country Consortium) - <https://www.strategyunitwm.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/2020-10/BCWB%20Socioeconomic%20Profile%20July%202020%20-%20Final.pdf>
- Black Country LEP Strategy - <https://www.blackcountrylep.co.uk/our-strategy/>
- West Midlands Combined Authority Plan for Growth - <https://www.wmca.org.uk/what-we-do/economy-and-innovation/plan-for-growth/>
- Black Country Consortium GVA analysis - <https://www.the-blackcountry.com/upload/Intelligence%20Reports/2022/05/BC%20GVA%202022.pdf>



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