

## **Annual Accountability Statement 2025/26 – The Manchester College**

***“The college makes a strong contribution to meeting skills needs.” The Manchester College Ofsted Report, March 2025***

### **Section 1: Purpose**

Our ‘College 2027’ strategy has a single, clear mission: to improve lives and economic success through learning and skills. Underpinning this is a broader vision to create ‘inclusive growth’, connecting our students to the opportunities that living in one of the fastest growing cities in the world provides.

At the heart of ‘College 2027’ is a strong social mission to promote aspiration and social mobility within the communities we serve. As a large General Further Education College, delivering over 34,000 qualifications each year, with a significant number of our students coming from not just Manchester but also from neighbouring boroughs in the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, we are ideally placed to deliver this vision.

Our provision is – and will remain – both broad and predominantly technical, creative and community focussed, aligned to the skills and place needs of Manchester, ranging from entry level to higher education, ensuring that we offer a starting point and progression pathway for our students.

**OUR VISION:** At The Manchester College, our vision is to create ‘inclusive growth’, connecting our students to the opportunities that one of the fastest growing cities in the world can provide, through the delivery of high-quality technical education, progression and employability.

**OUR AIMS:** Mirroring the commitment of the Greater Manchester Strategy ‘Good Lives for All’ and the ‘Our Manchester’ Strategy 2025-2035, our strategy will continue to deliver an inclusive and diverse college where students grow, ‘get along’, and are ready to contribute to a fairer more prosperous city region with the technical and life ready skills to do so. Our strong inclusive ethos and vigorous response to local socio-economic challenges continues to widen participation and social mobility for Manchester and Greater Manchester residents. We deliver high quality technical education aligned to the priority sectors required by place. Our courses support and lead to course-related destinations and progression routes for our students

Our sister organisation, UCEN Manchester, will be a leading provider of flexible employer-focused and local higher technical education, providing opportunities for young people and adults to continue their education journey with us through higher education.

Our strategic approach mirrors the commitment of the Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS) ‘Good Lives for All’, the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) and the Manchester Work and Skills Strategy. The GMS is shaped around frontier sectors targeting new investment and promoting innovation, with the potential to address some of society’s biggest challenges. Our Strategic Plan is based around five key themes: our students; excellence; our people, our culture; our city, our community; our environment, our investment.

## Section 2: Context and place

### THE COMMUNITIES WE SERVE

We will continue to positively contribute to the needs of the City, providing an inclusive and supportive education for all.

#### 'OUR MANCHESTER' STRATEGY (2025-2035)

The 'Our Manchester' Strategy (2025-2035) has the ambition to ensure "people will have a great education and be able to learn new skills as they grow older, so they can get the best jobs. Education is important to everyone's future." The Strategy notes the challenge that not all Manchester residents have equal access to good-quality education and opportunities to learn new skills throughout their lives: some residents face barriers to learning and achieving their full potential. We have a shared goal to support everybody to have an excellent and inclusive education, that enhances personal fulfilment, strengthens our city's workforce and economic resilience.

The Manchester College is a large, inner-city general FE college with an annual income of over £80m, delivering to around 5,900 16–18-year-olds, 5,450 adults and almost 1,400 higher education students each year. With six campuses, 87% of our learners come from some of the country's most deprived wards, nearly 60% are from black and minority ethnic groups and 75% start key stage 5 without level 2 equivalent English and maths qualifications.

In 2023/24, 68% of leavers, in both 16-18 and adult age groups, were from IMD 1 (classed as the most deprived areas in the country). Achievement rates for all 16-18 and adult IMDs are significantly above the latest IMD national rates:

Students, aged 16-18, from IMD 1, had an achievement rate of 89.2%, which was +9.4pp above the latest IMD1 national rate. The college's 16-18 IMD 1 rate is also 4.5pp. above the national rate for IMD 5 (classed as the least deprived areas in the country).

Adult students from IMD 1 had an achievement rate of 91.3% in 2023/24, +4.2pp above the national rate. The college's adult IMD 1 rate is also 4.3pp. above the national rate for IMD 5.

Our students, who reside in some of the most deprived wards in the country, achieve results when compared with other colleges nationally, place them 8<sup>th</sup> for 16-18 students, 20<sup>th</sup> for adult students and 11<sup>th</sup> overall.

Our students increasingly progress not only onto higher levels of education, but directly into work from level 2 and 3 technical programmes. As such, we believe our organisation has become an engine of social mobility.

Manchester has a diverse and growing population. The 2021 census reported the Manchester population as 552,000, with considerable growth forecast to 607,000 in 2023 and 627,000 by 2025. From the College perspective this growth is particularly acute for 16–18-year-olds, and this group is forecast to grow by nearly 10% between 2023 and 2030. Manchester is an extremely diverse city, with 43% of residents from non-white backgrounds and 31% of residents born outside the UK. Even though national and local lockdowns caused by the Covid-19 pandemic had damaging long-term economic, health and social effects the city is currently experiencing strong inclusive economic growth. Despite this, the cost-of-living crisis has hit many families in Manchester particularly hard, exacerbating an already challenging picture. Widening participation and developing skills to improve life chances and earning potential are therefore at the heart of everything we do at The Manchester College, for both 16-18 and Adult learners.

There is an improving educational picture within the city but challenges in attainment in GCSE English and maths remain, however, with less than 50% of students enrolling at The Manchester College having achieved a grade 4 or above in these subjects.

## THE MANCHESTER WORK AND SKILLS STRATEGY

The Manchester Work and Skills Strategy 2022-27 is built on the ambition to create a more sustainable, inclusive and diverse economy that benefits everyone. This will be delivered across the five Our Manchester themes of Thriving and Sustainable, Highly Skilled, Progressive and Equitable, Liveable and Zero Carbon, and Connected. While supportive of all these themes, The Manchester College is largely focused on the delivery of the second of these and the creation of “a highly skilled city”. The Strategy goes on to state that “To make sure that our skills and training system is fit for purpose, we need to make it more responsive to the changing needs of employers and the wider labour market in both the short term, to combat instability creating skills shortages (such as hospitality in 2022), and in the medium to longer term, to prevent crises in other sectors (such as health and social care). This may require new qualifications and learning pathways, including maximising the impact of T Levels and strengthening all technical and vocational solutions to meet the gaps in the labour market at Levels 4 and 5.” This approach has already been embraced by The Manchester College, which is one of the key players nationally in the delivery of both T Levels and the developing Higher Technical Qualifications. Our Strategic Themes and outcome measures contained within this accountability statement are entirely aligned with the priorities and outcomes contained within the Work and Skills Strategy.

## LOCAL SKILLS IMPROVEMENT PLAN PRIORITIES

While we are proud to be The Manchester College, we recognise that many of the residents we serve and employers we partner with are from across the 10 boroughs of Greater Manchester and beyond. Our curriculum is informed, therefore, by both the Greater Manchester Local Skills Improvement Plan and the local area report and priorities for Manchester that sits within it.

The priority areas identified for **Greater Manchester** in the LSIP Update published in January 2024 are:

- Health and Social Care
- Construction
- Manufacturing and Engineering
- Digital.

The priority areas identified for **Manchester** through the LSIP are:

- Financial Business and Professional Services (FBPS) sector
- Advanced Materials and Manufacturing
- Health and Social Care
- Digital, creative and media sectors
- Construction.

There is clearly therefore significant overlap between the priorities for Greater Manchester and Manchester, with the FBPS sector being an additional priority for the latter. These also align to the National Skills Priorities outlined in the ‘Meeting skills needs’ guidance published in January 2025, taking into account the Skills England report, Industrial Strategy Priorities and Plan for Change and are areas with high volumes of vacancies which are expected to increase; long-term structural barriers to recruitment, retention and progression issues; and are important in providing opportunities for employment in key growth areas

These areas have therefore been acknowledged as priority areas for The Manchester College to focus on.

### **Section 3: Approach to developing the annual Accountability Statement**

*“Leaders have created highly effective working relationships with many stakeholders such as Manchester City Council, Greater Manchester Combined Authority, the Chamber of Commerce and the Department for Work and Pensions. This close working helps leaders to understand fully the emerging needs in the area and adapt their college strategy at pace to ensure their curriculums meet these needs.”* **The Manchester College Ofsted Inspection Report, March 2025**

At a strategic level, senior leaders from The Manchester College are active participants in shaping the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and Manchester City skills strategies. The College Principal attends the Greater Manchester College's Group (GMCG), consisting of the nine Greater Manchester FE colleges. This collaborative effort extends to engagement with the Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA), ensuring a cohesive and integrated approach to relationships with the Greater Manchester LEP and MCA. This coordinated approach enhances alignment and effectiveness in addressing regional skills priorities and fostering socioeconomic development across Greater Manchester.

The GMCG has a strong partnership with the combined authority and as a result the College's Group has collaborated with GMCA to deliver AEB devolution, transport strategies for 16–18-year-olds and capacity-building projects for new T Level programmes. The Manchester College and UCEN Manchester, the higher education arm of the College, are engaged in responding to the Local Skills Improvement Plan across Greater Manchester, creating strategic relations with industry to inform, co-design and co-deliver the next generation of skills for the local economy. Recently the College has been heavily involved in delivering the Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) project as part of a consortium consisting of the 9 GM FE Colleges to address the LSIP priorities.

Since publishing the first Annual Accountability Statement 2023/24 we have continued to work closely with the GM Chamber of Commerce, designated as the Employer Representative Body (ERB) for the GM LSIP, to ensure our curriculum offer continues to align with local priorities. These discussions have largely centred on the GM LSIP Update published in June 2024 and the GM LSIP Director for the Chamber, Chris Fletcher, has confirmed that we are addressing skills priorities appropriately and making a clear contribution to GM skills needs.

### **Delivering the Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF)**

*“The LSIP influenced the Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) bid made by colleges in Greater Manchester. This bid was successful, and colleges are creating new training provision in many of the priorities identified by the LSIP.”* **GM LSIP Update, January 2024**

The Greater Manchester LSIF has five project strands but is ultimately linked by collaboration across the major capital investments in Cave Automatic Virtual Environments (CAVEs), which is a major part of three projects with staff CPD and development and maintenance of collective resources addressed within the Education project strand. The overall programme has central co-ordination to ensure that the projects are responsive to changing need and are impactful at a Greater Manchester level as well as in localities. The project will deliver a programme of work that increases collaborative working in the long term and creates new and exciting pathways for learners to address the challenges identified in the Greater Manchester Local Skills Improvement Plan.

The project has tackled priorities in Engineering & Manufacturing, Construction, Digital, Education and Health. There are cross cutting themes linked to both digitisation and Net Zero:

- **Construction**

Retrofitting, construction process management, project management and quantity surveying. Leadership and management, digitalisation of construction.

- **Digital**

Software development, Cybersecurity, Internet of Things, Basic skills, immersive technologies, virtual reality, artificial intelligence.

- **Health**

Nursing and allied professionals, Basic digital skills, digital skills for healthcare.

- **Engineering & manufacturing**

Lean processes and evaluation, including: reduced carbon manufacturing operations; waste and recycling; sustainable logistics; and life cycle analysis.

Practical instruction around maintenance and safe operation of vehicles using green energy systems.

- **Education**

STEM and digital teachers, collaborative approach to staff development, collaborative resources for sharing across all partners.

Whilst the funding of the projects was completed in March 2025, we are committed to continuing to work collaboratively with College partners in these priority areas.

The College is the lead for Digital across the 9 Greater Manchester Colleges, with the aims to:

- support more learners to develop digital skills to progress in the digital sector. This addressed barriers to progression allowing people to develop basic digital skills so they can increase their career opportunities.
- develop short courses for upskilling/reskilling leading to greater HTQ engagement especially in relation to Artificial Intelligence, Cybersecurity, virtual reality and Robotics.
- promote careers in the tech industry with a focus on the most deprived neighbourhoods leading to an increased uptake in digital courses from these communities.
- develop staff skills to utilise new technologies in teaching.

In delivering the LSIF Digital project, the College has created strategic partnerships with Cisco, Manchester Digital and Microsoft to inform the offer, engage local students in careers within the sector, lead the professional development for staff, and co-deliver short courses for our students. The project has also seen the creation of a number of short courses accessible to all (e.g., Intro to AI), alongside the approval of HTQs in areas such as Computing and Artificial Intelligence.

We were also fully engaged in other strands of the LSIF projects with similar outputs and shall continue to work closely with the other GM colleges to progress curriculum in priority areas, including through the GM Specialist Boards. Our Digital Health project has led to improved connections with health employers (e.g., NHS Trusts, Skills for Cares) to increase the digital capability of those in the sector and improving student experience with augmented reality and utilisation of new technologies. Alongside the development of short courses delivered to support digital literacy for our ESOL students amongst others, the College has approved HTQs within Nursing and the Care sector and plans to expand this HTQ portfolio.

Our Construction and Engineering projects engaged with industry partners to inform short courses and the approval of several HTQs (e.g., Civil Engineering), including engagement

with industry partners to inform a sustainable construction design offer, and BLOCK Engineering to support programme developments related to hydrogen engines and the net-zero agenda.

All projects have seen significant capital investment to support the delivery of future skills, including virtual environments for Health (e.g., CAVEs, anamotage tables), Robotics, virtual engineering capital and software, and hydrogen vehicles. Alongside this is a strategic oversight of staff professional development to support up-skilling of the teaching workforce with the new technologies and curriculum offer.

The Manchester College has secured funding as part of the GM Colleges, Innovate UK Further Education Innovation Fund (FEIF) project. The Manchester Further Education Innovation Fund (FEIF) prioritises supporting the college to drive local business innovation by boosting productivity, stimulating economic growth, and creating high-quality jobs. Key areas of focus within FEIF include strengthening links between FECs and local businesses, fostering apprenticeships and work placements, co-producing courses with businesses, and leveraging FEC expertise for business innovation. The Manchester College Innovation team comprises of a Business Innovation Advisor and Innovation Co-Ordinator. The project was launched in April 2024, initially as a 12-month programme, and the programme has since been extended until end of March 2026. During the latter part of the first year of operations the Manchester Innovation team engaged with 110 businesses, hosted 4 networking events and referred 18 business for innovation support within the local innovation eco-system.

Within the FEIF, 'Innovators in Residence' bring specialist expertise to inform the CPD of College staff and create within a college campus a place to collaborate and co-create, and new ideas can be tested and trialled. Innovators in Residence (IiR) are shared between the 9 colleges, have specialist knowledge of adoption and diffusion in the 4 GM Frontier Sectors, currently lacking in the FE system:

- Advanced Materials and Manufacturing
- Health Innovation and Life Sciences
- Digital and Creative
- Clean Growth.

The Manchester College will continue to operate one of the 10 Local Innovation Centres and we have recruited Business Innovation Advisors and Business Innovation Coordinators to take this work forward.

UCEN Manchester is also effectively engaged in funded-projects to meet local and national agendas to support higher level skills in priority areas. Over the last 2-years, this has included our engagement in the SDF short course project for Construction, as well as the current LSIF Projects for Digital, Health, Construction and Engineering and the HTE Skills Injection Fund. Alongside the value of these to support our strategic intent in providing higher technical skills to meet industry demand (e.g., modular provision, short courses, HTQs), we have capitalised on these projects to inform and invest in high-quality subject-specialist up-skilling for staff in readiness for the emerging curriculum portfolio aligned to local skills needs. This has included investment in externally-sourced staff CPD within the digitalisation of the Health and Construction sector, sustainability and green technologies within the motor industry, AI and Cybersecurity, along with cross-subject development in the use of CAVEs and immersive technologies to enhance learning and teaching.

The College works with approximately 160 secondary school across Greater Manchester, with around 50 of these being classed as key schools, 24 in Manchester itself. The Manchester College is one of three GM colleges leading the GM Careers Hub as part of the GM Strategy 'Our People, Our Place', promoting best practice amongst all schools in Manchester, and most schools and other colleges in the region around Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) related to technical education. Bridge GM, the GM Careers Hub+, funded by the Careers and Enterprise Fund, has labelled the college an 'Innovator' in its role as

Careers Lead for Manchester CEIAG. Governance of the group includes The Mayor of Greater Manchester, GM Combined Authority and the Careers and Employability Advisory Group.

The College has also developed significant employer partnerships since introducing the 'Careers not Courses' strategy and now works with a range of businesses and organisations across the city and Greater Manchester. As stated in our recent Ofsted report, "Leaders and teachers seek advice and involvement from stakeholders and employers in designing and implementing their curriculums. In automotive, a large car manufacturer provides opportunities for students to take part in a work-based programme alongside their studies so they gain the most up-to-date skills and knowledge. In hospitality, leaders have developed an advisory board of employers that advises students about business acumen and the 'nose to tail' methodology to help reduce food waste in the sector. In early years, advisory board members suggested that speech development was an area that needed more focus in the curriculum. Leaders listen carefully to this advice and develop their curriculums very effectively in response."

A significant recent development within Greater Manchester was the announcement of the Trailblazer Devolution Deal in March 2023. Two key features of the GM Deal are:

- **Single Settlement.** For the next Spending Review period (due to begin in 2025-26), Government will agree a Single Funding Settlement with GMCA, which will include funding for Local growth and place and Adult skills
- **Skills and employment.** A new Partnership for post-16 Technical and Education and Skills will provide oversight of post 16 technical education and skills. The launch of the GM integrated technical education ecosystem and the proposed MBacc will deliver a technical education pathway with routes to higher skills. With the College's focus on technical education within further education and alignment with the higher technical pathways within UCEN Manchester, the College is in a strong position to respond to this place-based approach. The Principal of the College is a member of the GMCA's Adult Skills and Inclusive Employment thematic panel contributing to the strategic direction of GMCA policy in this area.

## STRATEGIC THEMES

*"Leaders take an active role in a wide range of groups in Manchester such as the post-16 strategy group, the anti-poverty group and the community strategy group. **This involvement helps leaders contribute and shape the strategic direction of the city.** Leaders have been integral in providing curriculums that reduce the number of 16- to 18-year-olds who are not in education, employment or training. They work closely with Manchester Adult Education Service to provide a cross-city ESOL strategy to reduce duplication of offer and ensure that residents are signposted to high-quality courses that best meet their needs." **The Manchester College Ofsted Report, March 2025***

To meet the Greater Manchester and Manchester Strategies, the College needed a curriculum aligned not only to the priority sectors required by place, but ambition for our students to make progress and progress. This intent was developed into the College's 2020 Strategy - Careers Not Courses, which ultimately led to the College being awarded the Queen's Anniversary Prize in 2021 for our College wide approach to employability linked to skills need.

Our curriculum strategy focuses on courses that provide the foundations for students to become work ready. Students study a broad range of courses and develop the skills and gain the qualifications needed to take the next steps. Students complete a work placement or work experience and have dedicated 'knowledge, skills and behaviour' sessions that directly link to employability skills to become work ready. Our programmes provide the foundations for students to progress to higher levels, with a programme of study that has been co-developed with one of our industry partners. The input of our partners not only helps ensure that our

courses are aligned with current industry skills demands but also means that students benefit from a range of industry level activities and lessons.

#### **Section 4: Contribution to national, regional, local priorities**

As confirmed by Ofsted (2025), the College makes a strong contribution to meeting skills needs.

At the heart of delivering on this strategic intent are our leaders and managers who have a clear understanding of how they contribute to meeting the skills needs in the local, regional and national economy, planning their curriculum accordingly and engaging effectively with employers and other stakeholders to ensure their curriculum has a clear focus on contributing to meeting the skills needs that exist.

At every level across our College we have strong connections with a broad range of stakeholders working with them to ensure that we are developing the skills that are required in the labour market, to drive economic growth and enable the communities we serve to secure rewarding and meaningful employment.

At a strategic level we have representation on the 'Manchester Work and Skills Board' and 'Our Manchester Investment Board'. We also have representation on the Manchester Work and Skills Board and the Strategic Education Partnership Board' and 'Post 16 Reference Group' where we helped to shape the development of the Manchester Education Strategy. The College is required to appear before the City Council's Economic Scrutiny Committee each year to be held to account for its contribution to Manchester. Our participation provides vital direct intelligence about Place to shape our response as a College and ensures we are a key partner in the City.

The 'Our Manchester' Strategy 2025-2035 includes the priority (2) that "Our people will have a great education and be able to learn new skills as they grow older, so they can get the best jobs", supported by "connecting Manchester schools, colleges, universities and training providers with employers to build better links between learning and work".

The Manchester Work and Skills Strategy 2022-27 aims to "ensure businesses are at the heart of the skills system, influencing the design and delivery of provision" and to "develop an education and skills system with meaningful business engagement". This was a cornerstone of the College's employer engagement strategy and led to the establishment of stakeholder advisory boards in all subject areas. These boards meet at least twice a year, and employer members advise key curriculum staff on their skills needs, Labour Market Intelligence, current trends, curriculum design and any other topics that affect their businesses and which the College and other employer members can help with. Most importantly, these boards validate our curriculum offer and that the way in which it is delivered meets the needs of the industry

A key response of the College to these strategies is our award-winning 'Career not Courses' vision and ethos, and the full implementation of our Employer Engagement Strategy. In parallel, we invested in staff development and, through dual professionalism and communities of best practice, supported subject specialisms and ensured excellence in both teaching and learning and customer-focused support services.

Our curriculum intent has structure and standards – and is then aligned to the key sectors in Manchester, taking a place-based approach to our curriculum strategy, recognising that parts of the city require different models and courses aligned to community and employer need.

The College now has:

- Over 2,200 employer partnerships, enabling us to offer valuable work experience and industry placements to all our 16-18 students.



- Over 2,000 local, regional, and national employers, community settings, civic institutions, and education providers work with the College to directly shape the curriculum, as confirmed by Ofsted in our 2025 inspection, the college makes a “strong” contribution to meeting the local/regional skills needs
- 21 sector-specific Employer Industry Boards, informing curriculum development, including T Level implementation
- Industry Weeks are held regularly throughout the academic year to support all students in gaining an appreciation of a range of industries, careers and higher education pathways—with over 420 stakeholders participating in events during the 24/25 academic year.
- The College is committed to providing learners with opportunities to demonstrate the skills across regional and national competition pathways and to further develop their knowledge, skills and behaviours whilst showcasing their ability. The College had a strong presence across the wide range of 2023/24 Greater Manchester Skills Final competitions and also achieved an eight-fold increase on the number of World Skills registrations giving many more students access to the prestigious competitions.
- The College is in the process of becoming a World Skills Centre of Excellence with the first year now complete. Over 50 staff have undertaken specialised training hosted by World Skills (Mindset Development) in order to host WorldSkills competitions each year as well as engaging with WorldSkills staff CPD.
- Secured funding as part of the GM Colleges, Innovate UK Further Education Innovation Fund (FEIF) project and hosts an Innovation Hub and Innovation business advisory service which is accessible to local employers.

#### The College:

- Is engaged in strong partnership and collaborative work with stakeholders such as the Department for Work and Pensions to deliver programmes for those furthest from the workplace, including for example the Volition programme with Manchester Cathedral and the GM Fire and Rescue Service to deliver the King’s Trust Team Programme.
- The College’s Ofsted report from March 2025 stated that “Leaders have been integral in providing curriculums that reduce the number of 16- to 18-year-olds who are not in education, employment or training”. We will continue to focus on reducing the number of NEET young people in the city through our curriculum design, including our Foundation Learning and employability offer.
- Provides CEIAG at key stages of the learner journey.
- Delivers nearly 4,000 work placements in an average year.
- Offers students career mentoring opportunities.
- Is firmly embedded as a key strategic partner to employers through the Greater Manchester (GM) Employer Skills Advisory Panel.
- Offers a ‘Dual Professionalism’ commitment to staff – five days or more for staff to undertake their own industry placement activity or upskilling.

In the GM strategic vision for 2025 “every young person” will have “skills that will match the economy’s needs” (gov.uk website) and The Manchester Work and Skills Strategy 2022-27 aims to “ensure businesses are at the heart of the skills system, influencing the design and delivery of provision” and to “develop an education and skills system with meaningful business engagement”. This was a cornerstone of the College’s employer engagement strategy and led to the establishment of 21 employer Industry Boards. These boards meet at least twice a year, and employers/stakeholders advise curriculum teams on their skills needs, Labour Market Intelligence, current trends, curriculum planning and design and any other topics that affect their businesses and which the College and other employer members can help with.

Whilst the College has a clear focus on students having the necessary technical skills needed to meet the local, regional and national priorities, it also works with employer stakeholders to ensure that students possess the wider industry behavioural competencies required in work. For example in health and social care, the department places strong emphasis on professional behaviours, empathy, resilience, and communication – all of which have been consistently

highlighted as essential through our work with Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust and Stepping Hill Hospital and social care employers. The department make use of employer-designed visual prompts in classrooms to reinforce expectations around confidentiality, professionalism and managing emotional pressure. Through partnerships with local authorities and care providers, the College has embedded key aspects of the Care Certificate to ensure students gain a recognised foundation in safeguarding, dignity in care, and person-centred planning. This work reinforces the commitment to preparing students who are not only work ready but bring genuine value to the health and social care workforce across Greater Manchester.

Outlined below is the contribution the College intends to make to delivering the local/regional skills needs in 2025/26.

## **Section 5: Local Needs Duty**

*“Governors have a wide range of skills and experience. They use this expertise to challenge leaders effectively”* **The Manchester College Ofsted Report, March 2025**

The governing body (the Board) of LTE group have devolved responsibility for reviewing the approach to developing this annual Accountability Statement, and the contribution to national, regional and local priorities, to The Manchester College Divisional Board. Rather than carry out this review as a single event at a specific point in time, TMC Board have adopted an approach of constant review throughout the academic year. This has been done as part of their ongoing monitoring of performance and strategy through activities such as:

- Review of the College Self Assessment Report (SAR) and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) at each Board meeting
- Review of the Student Outcome Report at Board (Autumn 2024)
- Engagement in ‘Curriculum Insight’ presentations (e.g., Creative Arts, Spring 2024; Construction, Summer 2024; Health, Autumn 2024).
- An update on Strategic Plan Key Performance Metrics at Board (Spring 2025)
- Continually reviewing capacity within the college and the challenges presented by Greater Manchester demographic changes.
- Considering items on Qualification reform at Board (e.g., Summer 2024)
- Link visits and deep dives undertaken by board members with curriculum departments to provide opportunities to question directly on curriculum intent
- Review and approval of the College Adult Skills Strategy at Board (Summer 2024) and Higher Education Strategy (Summer 2025)
- Playing a full and active part in the Ofsted Inspection of the College in March 2025
- A paper on “Curriculum Planning 2025/26” will be considered by Board on 10 June 2025.

LTE group Board also reviewed progress against The Manchester College’s Strategic Plan at two Strategy Development Days in May 2025. The Board are well aware of the priorities identified in the Manchester Work and Skills Strategy and the Greater Manchester Local Skills Improvement Plan. The Board has noted the significant partnership work currently undertaken with other local providers, in particular through the GM Colleges Group and delivery of the Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) project and is satisfied that this collaboration is both appropriate and effective. At this point in time the Board does not feel that any other action is required to better meet local needs but notes that this position will require further review during 2026 in the light of capacity challenges for 16–18-year-olds and also the impact of external policy reviews, for example, curriculum reform, HE reform, post-16 English and maths policy, Technical Excellence Colleges, the Skills White Paper and further devolution. Given that it will have been three years since the introduction of the Local Needs Duty, in 2026/27 the Board

is cognisant of the fact that a full review of how it is discharging this duty will be required at that time.

## **Section 6: Corporation Statement**

On behalf of The Manchester College, it is hereby confirmed that the plan as set out above reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the LTE Group Board in June 2025. The plan will be published on the College's website within three months from the start of the new academic year and will be available on The Manchester College website at: <https://www.tmc.ac.uk/policies-and-procedures/>

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

- **Greater Manchester Local Skills Improvement Plan Report (Progress Report 2024)** [GM LSIP Reports | Gmlsip](#)
- *GM Skills Intelligence Summary Pack* [PowerPoint Presentation \(greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk\)](#)
- *GM Strategy Good Lives for All* [The Greater Manchester Strategy 2021-2031 \(aboutgreatermanchester.com\)](#)
- *LTE Group Ofsted Report 2025* [50275454](#)
- *Manchester LSIP* [Home | Gmlsip](#)
- *Manchester State of the City 2022 Report* [Manchester: State of the City \(oraclecloud.com\)](#)
- *Manchester Work and Skills Strategy 2022* [Work and Skills - Greater Manchester Combined Authority \(greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk\)](#)
- *Our Manchester Strategy 2025-35* ([Our Manchester Strategy 2025-35 | Our Manchester Strategy 2025-35 | Manchester City Council](#))
- *The Manchester College Strategic Plan 2023-27* [strategic-plan-2023-2027-v10-digital.pdf \(tmc.ac.uk\)](#)
- *The Manchester College Adult Skills Strategy*

Strategic Theme 1: Our Students	Outcome Measures 2025/26
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We will deliver high quality technical education aligned to the priority sectors required by place. Our courses will support and lead to course-related destinations and progression routes for our students.</li> <li>2. Our students will benefit from experiences that ensure they leave College thoroughly prepared for further study and the world of work and understand the future challenges and opportunities facing them</li> <li>3. We will provide the adult residents of Manchester with opportunities to access the support and training they need to gain better paid employment or progress in their jobs, thereby supporting GM productivity and the Manchester Adult Skills Plan.</li> </ol>	<p><i>The College will measure the impact of these objectives through the delivery of student volumes in the priority skills areas, destinations of students into work or further study and an employer focused curriculum.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We will deliver the following student volumes in the priority skills areas of Manchester/Greater Manchester (2024/25 figures in brackets): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain volumes of 16-18 student numbers across health, social care and care professions at c.560; plus volumes of adults within Access Health and Medical Professions at c.230</li> <li>• Increase volumes of 16-18 student numbers in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- construction and engineering to c.750 (c.700)</li> <li>- computing to c.400 (380)</li> <li>- digital and creative media to c.375 (350)</li> <li>- business to 445 (430)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Increase adult student numbers in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- finance to c.150 adults (95)</li> <li>- business 75 (50)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Continue to increase volumes of students on T levels in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 20 Lab Science (20)</li> <li>- 32 Animal Care and Management (14)</li> <li>- 90 Business and Finance (80)</li> <li>- 30 Care Professions (23)</li> <li>- 103 Computing (71)</li> <li>- 32 Creative and Media (25)</li> <li>- 262 Construction, Engineering and Automotive (210)</li> <li>- 46 Health and Social Care (39).</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. We will review our Foundation Learning offer to ensure it meets the needs of young people at entry/level 1 and in the light of the pilot carried out in Construction during 2024/25.</li> <li>3. By engaging fully with curriculum reform we will provide progression routes from foundation learning (at level 1) through to level 3 in The Manchester College and from level 3 into higher technical education in UCEN Manchester and increase the number of students who do progress.</li> <li>4. We will fully implement our refreshed Adult Skills Strategy to ensure our Adult provision is aligned to the GM LSIP and fully utilises the Adult Skills Fund, including GM Level 3 Skills funding.</li> <li>5. We shall continue to develop Higher Technical Qualifications for student progression from Level 3, aligned to GM priority areas – with a minimum of 10 programmes approved by 2026.</li> </ol>
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Strategic Theme 2: Excellence	Outcome Measures 2025/26
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We will deliver high quality education, training and support with the ambition for our students to make progress and achieve positive outcomes regardless of starting point.</li> <li>2. Through a purposeful curriculum and investment in the continued professional development for our teachers, we will meet both the academic and technical needs of our students.</li> </ol>	<p><i>We will measure the impact of these objectives in the receipt of strong levels of student satisfaction, good teaching and learning, consistently good student progress, strong achievement rates and positive work-related or higher-level study destinations.</i></p> <p>The College will (most recent position in brackets):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver strong progress measures from initial starting points for our students, evidencing that they make excellent progress through ALPS measures (Grade 3).</li> <li>• Maintain at least our Ofsted rating of 'Good' [or Strong] at next inspection (Good).</li> <li>• Continue to achieve above the national achievement rates for pass, retention and achievement (pass 96.6%, retention 93.7%, achievement 90.6%).</li> <li>• Maintain good outcomes for students in respect of positive destinations (90.2%), the value they attach to their course of study and the link between qualification(s) gained and employment destination.</li> </ul> <p>In implementing our refreshed Adult Skills Strategy, we shall establish an Adult Centre of Excellence for Adults and create a 'curriculum and skills group' to develop the adult curriculum offer and pathways in the priority areas of Digital and Health and Social Care.</p>

Strategic Theme 3: Our City Our Community	Outcome Measures 2025/26
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Through our Curriculum Strategy, we will support productivity and address skills shortages, aligned to the skills needs of Manchester and Greater Manchester. Our students will have the skills and qualifications that employers want and need. To do this, we will develop clear pathways to occupations aligned to policy, regional and national skills priorities and learner need.</li> <li>2. We will work with employers to create in-work bespoke opportunities for existing employees to address skills gaps and productivity challenges.</li> <li>3. Working with external partners we will deliver a strengths/place-based approach for those furthest from the labour market, or returning to study, to support their transition back into education and/or the world of work.</li> </ol>	<p><i>We will measure the impact of these objectives through the number of students on employer sponsored programmes, an increase in the number of 16–18-year-olds on occupational routes in priority areas and the volume of learners progressing from work placements to extended industry placements. We will also measure this through the achievement of our commitment to deliver growth in priority sectors and in the volume of higher level technical and professional and basic skills provision.</i></p> <p>The College will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• deliver an increase in the number of students on employer sponsored programmes</li> <li>• deliver an increase in the number of 16–18-year-olds on occupational routes in priority areas and the volume of learners progressing from work placements to extended industry placements.</li> <li>• provide a level 1 offer that progresses students from L1 to L2 and L2 to L3, and measure and target increases in these pathways where required</li> <li>• increase the volumes of students accessing and achieving full L2 qualifications in English and maths</li> <li>• widen our Adult Essential Skills offer at L1, particularly for literacy, numeracy and digital skills.</li> <li>• provide a strong Access to Higher Education offer, with progression within the College and into university or higher technical routes</li> </ul> <p>The College will continue to implement T Levels in 2025/26 and increase the volume of 16–18-year-olds in occupational routes linked to the GM Industrial Strategy and LSIP priority areas. We will increase our T Level enrolments in LSIP priority areas to over 550 in 2025/26, from 443 in 2024/25:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 20 Lab Science</li> <li>- 90 Business and Finance (80)</li> <li>- 30 Care Professions (23)</li> <li>- 103 Computing (71)</li> <li>- 262 Construction, Engineering and Automotive (210)</li> <li>- 46 Health and Social Care (39).</li> </ul>

	<p>In line with our refreshed Adult Skills Strategy, our Employability, Skills and Partnerships Team within The Manchester College will adopt a renewed focus on adult students and work with employers to ensure effective industry engagement is in place. This will include development of a bespoke offer to local employers to address skills gaps, through both college and work-based provision and Apprenticeships.</p>
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