



# ACCOUNTABILITY AGREEMENT & LOCAL NEEDS DUTY 2024 - 2025



THE **LEARNING DESTINATION OF CHOICE**



# CONTENTS

- 02 Strategic Objectives
- 06 Context & Place
- 10 Approach
- 12 Our Priorities
- 22 Corporation Sign-off

# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

**City College Plymouth is a large vocational and technical General Further Education (GFE) College offering both Further and Higher Education (FE and HE) provision and is a significant contributor to the educational, cultural and economic life of Plymouth.**

The College provides courses for those aged 16-18, adults and for young people aged 14 to 16 (schools provision). Courses range from pre-entry through to HE and cover 14 of the 15 Subject Sector Areas (SSAs). The College is the largest provider of full-time 16-18 education, adult education and Apprenticeships in Plymouth. The College was graded as Good by OFSTED in 2021.

The College's Strategic Intent 2021 set out eight strategic actions to achieve our vision to be the Learning Destination of Choice.

- We will respond to a changing economy with education that connects learning and our learners to the real world, working with students, employers and other stakeholders to shape a flexible, agile skills provision, supporting employment, innovation and productivity and fundamentally delivering for our students, through our **strategic action: curriculum**.
- We will empower our staff through clarity of purpose, confidence and shared understanding. A culture of trust will enable us all to embed our values - respect, ownership, integrity - motivating our daily actions, attitudes, language and decisions through our **strategic action: developing people**.
- We will become a cloud and digital-first college, maximising the use and benefits of our technologies to re-imagine our curriculum and services through our **strategic action: digital**.
- We will ensure we have the financial resilience to drive growth and innovation through our curriculum, partnerships and our estate through our **strategic action: finance**.
- We will create collaborative, integrated solutions to strengthen the current and future health and care workforce and improve the wider determinants of health in our city through our **strategic action: health and active wellbeing**.
- We will co-create employer-responsive, flexible technical skills programmes in marine, advanced manufacturing, construction, digital and sciences to reshape the skills landscape of our community and drive growth through our **strategic action: maritime, manufacturing, construction and the built environment**.
- We will build and use our physical spaces, infrastructure and resources to drive and respond to key developments in our curriculum, our community and our economy through our **strategic action: estates and assets**.
- We will support the region by collaborating and innovating with the civic and commercial sectors, continually developing our curriculum and business models to deliver the true potential of the College through our **strategic action: opportunities**.

Since the publication of our Strategic Intent in 2021 the Skills Act has passed into law and requires the College - through both the Local Skills Improvement Plan and Accountability Agreements - to ensure our curriculum contributes towards meeting local, regional and national skills needs and fulfils our Local Needs Duty. As our Strategic Intent had been created with extensive involvement from our employer, civic, community and educational stakeholders our eight strategic actions have subsequently been re-enforced by the activities surrounding the new statutory duties, ensuring that the College is well placed to deliver for the region as the anchor institution for skills.

The College sits on the highly influential Plymouth Growth Board, the primary forum for public/private engagement that shapes city-wide activity. This is the delivery partnership of the local growth plan of which the local skills plan is one of the key pillars. Our involvement with this group is significant with the chair of this board also being the College's Chair of Governors. Our Chief Executive also sits on this board. Other representation includes the Chief Executives of Plymouth City Council, Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust, Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership, Devon & Plymouth Chamber of Commerce and the University of Plymouth; as well as leaders from key employers across the city such as Princess Yachts, Babcock International Group, Livewell and the Theatre Royal Plymouth. Membership of this group ensures that the College reflects the needs of the city.

The College is an active partner in the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) and delivery of the Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) partnership with Bridgwater & Taunton College, Yeovil College, Strode College, Petroc, South Devon College and Exeter College.

An important element of our close regional working relationship within the Devon Colleges Group has been to map our curriculum across the region to ensure that there is effective curriculum coverage to meet skills needs identified through LMI and stakeholder engagement. As a result of this collaboration adult Apprenticeships are mapped for the region.



## Our Apprenticeship Offer

Apprenticeship programmes, covering all the key industrial sectors. The table below demonstrates the breadth of the course offer currently available. With programme at level 1 through to Intermediate Level, Advanced Level 3 and Higher Level (Level 4 and 5), there is sure to be an offer to meet your training needs.



	A - Apprenticeships				B - Advanced Apprenticeships				C - Higher Apprenticeships				D - Degree Apprenticeships			
	Business Management and Administration				Construction				Digital Industries and IT				Education and Training			
	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D
City College Plymouth	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Exeter College	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Petroc	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
South Devon College	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Environment, Health and Safety				Financial Services, Banking and Insurance				Food and Drink				Freight, Logistics and Distribution			
	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D
City College Plymouth	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Exeter College	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Petroc	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
South Devon College	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Hair and Beauty				Healthcare, Nursing and Dentistry				Hospitality and Tourism				Legal Services			
	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D
City College Plymouth	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Exeter College	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Petroc	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
South Devon College	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

We are not offering Apprenticeships in financial services, banking and insurance at this time as an output of both the LMI on demand and also in acknowledgement of the availability of this provision elsewhere. We also recognise

the absence of logistics and distribution provision in the region and in light of the Plymouth & South Devon Freeport we are exploring how we can develop this offer to meet demand.



# CONTEXT & PLACE

**City College Plymouth is at the heart of its community and offers high quality provision developed to meet its unique and diverse needs. It operates from three locations across the city, with the majority of provision based at the main Kings Road site, with pre-employment programmes run from our Breakwater Centre and higher education marine provision run out of the Centre for Higher Technical Innovation & Maritime Skills at the heart of the Ocean's Gate Marine Enterprise location.**

Locally, the College actively works in partnership with both Plymouth & Devon Local Authorities, sits within the Heart of the South West LEP, and is part of the South West Institute of Technology and the Greater South West initiative. We have been actively involved in the discussions over Devon and Torbay Local Authorities forming a devolved Tier 2 Combined Authority while working closely with our Plymouth Local Authority.

With a growing population of 264,700, an economic output of £5.03 billion and 110,300 jobs, Plymouth is the most significant urban area on the South West peninsula. A further 100,000 people live within the city's travel-to-work area. The city has aspirations of growing the population to 300,000 by 2034.

Plymouth is an ambitious city with huge growth potential and is undergoing exciting changes, with many more on the horizon and a strong pipeline of 10,000 construction jobs demonstrating the city's growth potential and commitment.

As a centre of excellence for marine science and manufacturing, Plymouth has a unique set of competitive advantages on which to build upon in its transition to a more competitive and thriving knowledge based economy.

Home to the largest naval base in Western Europe, investments of over £1 billion have secured submarine and nuclear work for the next 70 years. We also have the highest concentration of manufacturing employment on the south coast of Britain with 12% of Plymouth's jobs being in the manufacturing industry, far exceeding the 8.3% national average.

Plymouth also has a growing cluster of innovative life science companies utilising the area's technology infrastructure, resulting in a healthy mix of established and emerging companies across medical device and diagnostics, biologics and biotech, contract research organisations and pharmaceuticals. The University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust is the largest hospital trust in the South West Peninsula.

Finally, the digital economy in Plymouth is recognised as a key strength and forms one of the five key pillars within the Local Economic Strategy.



## Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 PLYMOUTH



However, Plymouth also has a number of challenges which focus and frame College activities:

### Jobs and skills

We have a significant volume of job vacancies, with a further 8,000 new jobs forecast over the next decade alongside strong growth sectors and strong demand for high level skills, particularly in health and care, marine, defence, manufacturing and engineering, construction and the built environment. The significant skills gaps and shortages are particularly in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) sectors, which accounts for nearly 60% of all jobs in the city, with declining interest and take-up at Key Stage 4 in the education system.

### English Indices of Deprivation

Plymouth is ranked as the 64th most deprived local authority district in England (of 317 LAs). The summary measure places Plymouth within the 20% most deprived local authority districts in England. 13.2% of Plymouth residents (34,432) live in the 10% most income deprived areas nationally. Of these, two of the LSOAs are in the most deprived 1% for income nationally which relates to 4,119 residents.

Health and disability is a particular issue with 62,575 residents in the most deprived 10% for this measure covering 23.9% of the Plymouth population. There are varied health outcomes for residents with life expectancy over four years lower in some of the most deprived areas of the city compared to the least deprived group of neighbourhoods.

## Low-income families

Average full-time weekly earnings are £542 which is £81 per week lower than the national average of £623. There is also a significant gender imbalance in the city with male weekly earnings in 2022 at £584 per week compared to female weekly earnings of £535 per week. However, this is seen to be due to the number of hours worked rather than a pay rate differential.

Children in low-income families increased from 12.9% in 2017 to 14.1% in 2020. This continuous upwards trend is also above the South West average (10.8% to 11.7%). Pupil absence reflects this trend. At 5.14% in 2019 is increasing and higher than regional and national comparisons. The Plymouth Report 2019 also highlighted that 18.6% of children are living in poverty accounting for 9,990 children with a majority of these within workless households.

Educational attainment continues to be an issue for Plymouth, with a 4.6% deficit gap in the number of pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths at Key Stage 4 in 2022/23. This gap grows to 5.7% for those receiving Free School Meals.

## Young people with experience of the care system

In 2022 there were 500 young people (aged 0 to 17 inclusive) in care, with 187 aged 14 to 17 and a further 180 young people aged 18 to 20 and 82 aged 21 to 24. At 91 per 10,000 children, Plymouth had more looked after children than the South West (56) and England (67) average. This had risen from 78 per 10,000 in 2019, showing how the pandemic has impacted this target group.

## Young carers

There are over 700 young carers in Plymouth and one in three of these young people are likely to experience educational difficulties or miss schooling.

## Children Missing Out On Education (CMOOE)

In October 2022 there were in excess of 700 students (2%) of children missing out on education in the city. Seven out of ten children of secondary school age and three out of ten children of primary school age, of which two of five (in total) had received SEND support. As of October 2022 there were 190 children on reduced timetables (81 primary, 88 secondary, 21 SEND). The key reasons for missed education are behaviour, SEND, exclusions and medical needs.

Within this context of opportunities for the city and associated challenges identified above, the College plays a fundamental role in supporting the city in exceeding its aspirations. We do this through connecting our community, civic organisations and employers; delivering for our students through preparing them for the world of work and other positive destinations by developing skills, knowledge and behaviours which will improve students' life chances.



# APPROACH

**Diversification and strong links with industry are key to City College Plymouth being the training provider of choice, whereby staff at all levels will be required to establish strong links with local, regional and national employers, along with civic, educational and community partners. All will expect the same level of quality, engagement and service with a single point of contact to aid the development of new programmes and ensure that those who oversee the training aspects of their business understand what is on offer and where to go for support if required.**

The College has developed eight strategic ten year plans which provide focus but also allow for opportunities to be considered and acted upon if proving beneficial.

Two of these plans have a strategic focus on skills, which are based on LMI and support the Skills 4 Plymouth local authority plan and align with the Local Skills Improvement Plan. These include maritime, defence, nuclear, manufacturing, construction and the built environment, medical, health and life sciences, tourism and leisure, and digital, with all having a link to national agendas such as green and blue skills.

## Key stakeholders

The College's engagement across the Plymouth travel-to-learn area and beyond (given the technological advancements of learning), allows interaction across a diverse range of stakeholders, which include tier one companies such as Babcock International Group, Princess Yachts, Kier Construction, and the NHS, along with many smaller organisations, such as YGS Landscapes through to strategic organisations such as the University of Plymouth, CBI, the Local Authority, Devon & Plymouth Chamber, Shekinah and many other community organisations.

Engagement with our community is through various mediums including:

- events and networking
- membership of strategic organisations
- sector partner meetings
- key account management/key partnership meetings
- generic employer meetings at the College and at employer premises
- surveys to elicit feedback and gauge the temperature in the community
- marketing and PR
- memberships
- engagement with government initiatives
- Skilfully Speaking podcast series
- schools liaison.

## Other providers

The reach across sectors and amongst varying sizes of organisation is essential to providing the breadth of provision; this is particularly prevalent with the majority of companies being within the SME range both within the city and wider south west region.

To allow the College to focus on each sector, relevant sector partner meetings take place and, where possible, include industry bodies so that we do not compete in a crowded market and also collaborate wherever possible. These direct links allow us to understand employer needs for all sizes of organisation, obtain rich intel for curriculum creation/delivery, as well as direction from the industry bodies with links through to local, regional and national requirements. This has proved successful and encourages greater partnership working for example through the Plymouth Manufacturers' Group, Building Plymouth, the Maritime & Defence Skills Partnership, the Nuclear Skills Task Force, and the Confederation of British Industry of which the College are members. By using these meetings, curriculum and the skills required to meet future demand can be moulded to the needs of all of our partners, through carefully orchestrated meetings, workshops and the gathering of local market intelligence.

Events and networking are held (both internally and externally) and attended on a regular basis. Internal

events are generally hosted by the strategic lead for the sectors involved or by their relevant Curriculum Lead & Development Officer (CLDO). The College has also appointed an Executive Skills Lead who works across the College to bring together information and data, which informs curriculum and skills plans and the future investments into our innovative teaching spaces and workshops. For example, the College has recently invested over £1 million into its innovative Future Skills Centre, which is used to train and upskill the construction workforce across the city and beyond. This engagement has proved to be successful, as not only are our partners able to discuss their sector and needs with staff directly, the events also allow the College to showcase current and future training; this provides excellent feedback opportunities when courses are being developed in line with local needs and allows for changes to be made that are relevant to the sector.

# OUR PRIORITIES

**To meet key national, regional and local priorities, and our Local Needs Duty, the College has identified key areas where we will prioritise our activities in the next year. Through these priorities we aim to have a transformational impact on the opportunities for our communities, delivering leading skills training to realise full potential and meet aspirations.**

## Blue skills

As the anchor institution for skills within Britain's Ocean City, the College is a leader in the blue/maritime sector and this area is a key strategic priority for the region, the city and the College. The city is already a national leader in maritime defence, marine technology, marine leisure boat production, and is also one of eight regions with Freeport status.

Within this thriving sector there are significant recruitment and skills needs. To meet these demands we have:

- lead on the maritime and defence sector skills partnership with Babcock International Group on behalf of the city identifying and coordinating the development of the essential skills required to meet the sector need
- grown our Apprenticeship provision at level 3 and Higher Apprenticeship level
- developed a range of level 3 Skills Bootcamps
- developed cooperative arrangements for workforce planning with key employers to create and deliver a skills pipeline to the sector meeting future skills needs

- expanded our marine boat outfitting and engineering offer to meet marine leisure boat sector demand
- developed outstanding immersive learning resources to deliver training for high risk activities in a safe, simulated environment while also realising significant resource savings.

In addition, the College recognises the need for the city to have sector leading facilities to provide the skills to the sector, supporting growth and innovation. The College has already built a Centre for Higher Technical Innovation & Maritime Skills in collaboration with key employers such as Babcock International Group, and funded through the SWIoT - however, there remains the need for significant further development of facilities. Following the award of T Level wave five funding we will further develop our engineering facilities to increase the capacity of both welding, marine defence and manufacturing - an essential requirement to meet the skills needs of the maritime sector.

Furthermore, the city's blue sector also includes the visitor economy which, in early 2024, received a significant boost in investment to enable the delivery of a £22 million transformational five-year programme for the Plymouth Sound National Marine Park (PSNMP) to help connect people with the coastline on their doorstep.

Plymouth, Britain's Ocean City, leads the way to becoming the UK's first National Marine Park after announcing £11.6 million funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund. This substantial investment will enable the delivery of the transformational five-year programme that will engage an entire city in its landscape and heritage. The project will revolutionise the way Plymouth interacts with its heritage, promoting a more harmonious relationship with the ocean and creating hundreds of jobs.



Combining blue and digital, a Digital Marine Park will also bring to life the amazing heritage of Plymouth Sound in a unique way online - opening up the UK's first National Marine Park to a global audience. This particular aspect of the project will enable people who cannot get in, on, under, or near the waters of PSNMP - either in real-time or on-demand, enabling them to see what lies beneath the waves and increase passion and awareness around the nature and heritage of the place.

The city's vision is to create and sustain a 33% growth in jobs in the visitor economy, equating to 4,000 new jobs in the city by 2026. These jobs will require traditional skills as well as digital skills, including multi-trade roles which can span across the various roles within this sector. Furthermore, with the visitor economy sector including leisure, the announcement of funding for the ocean aspect will provide wider opportunities for roles within both the leisure (sport) and health and active wellbeing areas.

**Action:** development of broader blue skills curriculum with increased delivery of welding, marine defence and manufacturing provision.



## Green skills and energy

Green skills is one of the fastest growing areas for skills and is essential for the sustainability of both our environment and our regional economy. At the College, we are committed to our role in meeting the challenges our world faces. In 2021 City College Plymouth was the first college in the South West in calling for action to prevent a climate catastrophe by officially declaring a climate emergency and is putting in place a plan to become a carbon-neutral organisation.

In 2022, the College became the first college in the South West to partner with the Retrofit Academy to support the delivery of green construction skills training across the sector, then further built on this with the launch of a Green Construction Skills Bootcamp in 2023. To date, the students who have attended our Retrofit Skills Bootcamps have achieved a 100% pass rate.



The average annual recruitment requirement in the South West is set to average 3.2% per year, based on 2022 workforce levels, which is higher than the UK figure of 1.7%. This means that the construction industry would have to increase current recruitment by 7,640 new workers each year to deliver the expected work between the start of 2023 and end of 2027, equating to a total of 38,200 workers across this period. The majority of these roles range from green skills sectors such as retrofit to traditional skills such as wood trades and fit out, which has the greatest annual recruitment demand of 2,770 workers per year.

A key priority over the next 12 months will be to expand this provision and support key employers to upskill and recruit new staff, to meet essential retrofit objectives. We will deliver additional skills training at levels 2 through 5, including instruction on the operation of new technologies (such as drones and robots) to equip students to excel in this field.

The College has also invested significantly in electric vehicles (through the Strategic Development Fund the College has purchased three additional electric vehicles), as well as the technology to train in the installation of the electric charging points, solar, and battery storage. The College has continued to increase the breadth and regularity of this training through the development of its Green Skills Centre, which has increased the exposure to these new technologies, while also meeting the demand from the sector.



To ensure that the College is aligned to the city, we have representation on the Plymouth Green Skills Board and have worked closely with other stakeholders to develop the Plymouth Green Skills Action Plan.

Aligning ourselves with the Plymouth Green Skills Plan will ensure that we target the largest producers of carbon, for example buildings (construction and maintenance), power and heat (solar, hydrogen, heat pumps), mobility (electric vehicle charging and installation), and waste (environmental and general).

In addition, the College is involved in the Celtic Sea Offshore Wind project and to support this strategic priority we will work collaboratively with the Floating Offshore Wind (FLOW) accelerator to meet the demands of this industry. The longevity of the renewables sector spans over 25 years, with an increase in demand throughout, and will include everything from design, through to engineering and build, before commissioning, maintenance and decommissioning at the end of the life span. This will require a range of skills across multiple sectors, including civil, electrical and mechanical engineering through design, HR and project management specialisms.

While the FLOW developments in the Celtic Sea represent a significant long-term opportunity for the HoTSW region, as well as the wider South West and South Wales, many of the skills and capabilities needed in the supply chain will be transferable between engineering sector applications.

Therefore, the College has taken a proactive stance to ensure that students who qualify through one of the many engineering courses on offer can access this exciting sector,

through a collaborative agreement with a local maritime independent training provider.

The offer will now include added value to students' core programmes allowing them to work at sea by undertaking the necessary accredited courses.

By investing in the development of relevant transferable skills and supporting them with the necessary at-sea qualifications, the College will ensure that the necessary expertise is available across the entire FLOW supply chain. The growth and development of the FLOW in the Celtic Sea represents a long-term employment opportunity and it is crucial that we ensure that younger generations, along with those transferring from fading industries, have the required knowledge and skills to keep the industry evolving, not just locally, but also on a national and international scale.

**Action:** expansion of Retrofit provision with targeted approach to engage employers in upskilling in this key sector.



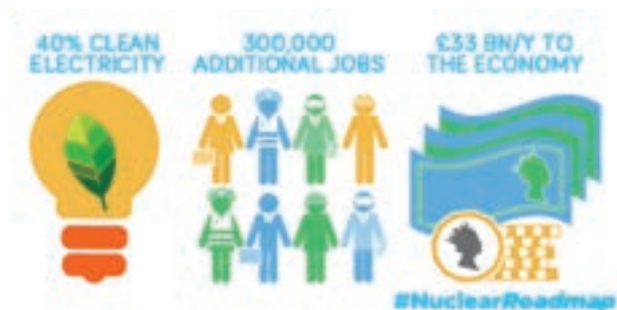
## Nuclear

The College holds strategic significance in cultivating skills for the nuclear industry, contributing not only to the city's role in the nuclear submarine maintenance programme but also to the broader nuclear sector. Global tensions underscore the critical role of our nation's security and the Nuclear Continuous at Sea Deterrent (CASD), which has maintained a credible nuclear presence since April 1969, remaining of utmost importance.

Furthermore, the College is poised to contribute to our nation's energy security by actively supporting the civil nuclear industry. Collaboration with other educational institutions through the National College for Nuclear network will be integral to fulfilling this role.

In close collaboration with our industry partners and the Nuclear Skills Task Force (NSTF), we will leverage the Destination Nuclear campaign to address the imperative of recruiting the 120,000 positions required in the nuclear sector by the year 2040.

**Action:** launch of new nuclear curriculum for the 2024/25 academic year.



## Health

There are over 71,000 employees working across all sectors of Devon's health and care system. The multi-professional workforce includes staff that work for primary care (including GPs, dentists, community pharmacists and ophthalmic opticians), ambulance service, secondary care, community health services, adult and children's social care, public health and the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) and independent sector. Health and care systems nationally are facing extreme challenges, including continued operational demands on services, financial constraints, poor performance in key service areas leading to increased poor outcomes for the population. The impact of this on employees across health and care is exceptionally challenging which is leading to poorer health and wellbeing and increased workforce vacancies as many staff choose to leave the health and care profession. Demand for health and care services will continue to grow with an expected annual increase of 2.9% growth per annum for the next decade.

To combat these challenges, the College will work with health and care partners on a specific plan to:

- encourage more 16+ year olds and those in the maturer age bracket (35+) to consider a role in health or social care through promotion of health and care as a career of choice
- be part of a vibrant programme of work placements and recruitment initiatives to support people currently not in work and providing essential skills

- deliver and develop Apprenticeships across the system for both undergraduate and postgraduate, optimising career development opportunities
- provide skills for partners to optimise the retention of their existing workforce to retain expertise, knowledge and skills in Devon and reduce cost associated with attrition
- within the complex needs arena, provide innovative programmes that address skills gaps
- work with partners in the health and active wellbeing sectors to provide a systems change to health ie GP referrals, inactivity into activity etc
- include digital skills to enable technology across the sector.

Our strategic action aligns to the aspirations of the One Devon Health & Social Care System Skills Strategy 2035 (below), alongside the NHS Long Term Workforce Plan 2023 with the intent of providing skills to new entrants and

adding skills to existing health and care staff.

As a key partner in the health arena, the College will be a conduit for new entrants into the sector through the raising of the profile alongside our stakeholders, as well as providing a potential pipeline of new employees. Furthermore, our skills will keep abreast of developments within the sector and embrace digital technologies and encourage innovative working practices.

Our skills provision will span full-time studies, adult education, degree and Apprenticeships; these qualification routes will allow for skills development across the sector providing opportunities for all learners/employees. With collaboration being at the heart of this sector, the College will act as a conduit where innovative approaches to education will be activated for the benefit of the community's health and wellbeing.

**Action:** develop innovative new products to support recruitment, upskilling and retention of staff in this key sector.



#### SYSTEM WORKING

We work collaboratively to enable our workforce to move flexibly across sectors and create new roles to meet the needs of the population and services.



#### STABILITY

We stabilise the workforce by supporting new and diverse career pathways for our current and future workforce.



#### LEARNING & EDUCATION

We commit to investing in the workforce through enrichment of development opportunities ensuring that quality and safety is at the forefront.



#### DIGITAL

We utilise digital technology to support innovation and transformation to our workforce and across all services we deliver.



#### SUSTAINABLE

We commit to achieving a skilled workforce built on a system that is financially sustainable.

## Digital

Driving the development of digital skills across the city and region is a strategic priority for the College. The College's Strategic Intent to become a cloud and digital-first college, maximising the use and benefits of technologies to reimagine curriculum and services has been realised through the achievement of the Google Reference College accolade in 2022; one of only eight in the UK and the first college in the South West.

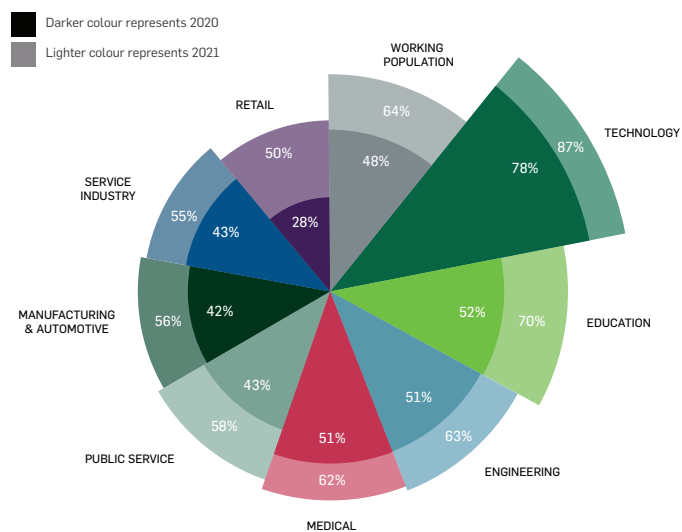
The CBI identified in 2019 that we were in the midst of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, driven by technologies such as artificial intelligence, automation and biotechnology. Providing our communities with access to - and training in - these future skills is essential for digital equity and prosperity.

However, data from 2021 indicated that around 11 million people, (21% of the UK population) were digitally disadvantaged and lacked the essential digital skills for life. Of this, around ten million lacked fundamentals themselves. With regard to employment "11.8 million (36% of the workforce) lack essential digital skills for work" with particular shortages in retail, service industries and manufacturing and automotive.

In addition, the latest surveys on Advanced Digital Skills from Amazon/Gallop identified that only 11% of UK workers possessed advanced digital skills, 68% of businesses found it difficult to recruit the digital skills they need, and 45% of these say this is due to a shortage of qualified applicants.

These challenges, combined with a growing skills gaps, have resulted in local, regional and national plans (Skills 4 Plymouth Plan, Heart of the South West plan to Build Back Better, Understanding current and future skills needs) all highlighting this as a priority sector. The College, already a leading Google college, is ideally positioned to meet the skills needed as a digital leader.

Proportion of working adults 18+ that have Work EDS, split by industry, 2020 and 2021



In order to meet these priorities there are two core focusses over the next 12 months:

### Essential digital skills

We will offer a range of broad digital upskilling provisions to meet skills gaps across the five core competencies, support improved employment and progression opportunities, and meet core business needs. These offers will be through short skills based training courses, both face-to-face and online, as well as ensuring that core digital skills are woven through our vocational programmes.

### Advanced digital skills

It is essential that we provide advanced digital skills to enable employers to meet the rapid challenges of new technology adoption. To do this we will deliver skills across six key areas:

- **cyber security** - this will include the delivery of a new BSc in Cyber Security, as well as shorter employer focussed courses (bespoke and accredited) working with key partners
- **data analytics** - this will be through development of Apprenticeship provision in addition to shorter masterclass delivery and sports analytics
- **artificial intelligence** - this will include short courses in both understanding the possibilities and the practical implementation and leveraging of AI for business. We will look to equip our existing learners with exposure to AI in order to support skills transfer upon employment



Advanced digital skills boost annual UK GDP by GBP £67.8 billion



British workers with advanced digital skills earn an average of GBP £11,568 more annually than non-digital peers.

GALLUP

- **networking and programming** - in addition to the existing full-time and higher education offers, the College will develop shorter employer focussed courses (bespoke and accredited) to support both retraining and upskilling
- **augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR)** - a new VR course to be delivered in September 2024 and increase in the range of VR and AR courses both in terms of development of these and the practical use of these to train in low risk/low cost environments as an alternative to live or simulated environments.

**Action:** launch new provision covering essential digital skills, cyber security and AI for the 2024/25 academic year.

## Delivering for employers

Support for employers is a further strategic priority for the College, with their success essential to the health and prosperity of our wider communities. This is also central to our Local Needs Duty.

While the College already has extensive employer engagement, with the creation and delivery of our curriculum we intend to further strengthen these relationships over the next 12 months in line with the intention of the Skills for Jobs White paper of 2021.

We recognise the Local Skills Improvement Plan for the Heart of the South West (HotSW) as a historic opportunity to formally place employers at the heart of defining local skills needs - and we will fully embrace this. Our commitment to this process can be seen through the first four strategies identified in this document which align with the core priorities from the LSIP: blue skills (marine engineering and maritime), green skills (green construction, green energy and sustainability), health and digital.

Over the next 12 months we will continue to work with the Devon & Plymouth Chamber of Commerce as the Employer Representative Body for the LSIP to address the priorities identified, develop and deliver new curriculum to meet demand in each of the defined areas.

Alongside this, we will also build on the outcomes from the Strategic Development Fund (SDF) for the HotSW which focussed on aligning the curriculum with employers and on addressing the challenges of meeting both the skills gaps and the need for new talent across SMEs. To do this we have aligned the priorities identified in the LSIP with progress already made through the SDF ensuring

a comprehensive response to employer skills needs in designing our curriculum offer.

In addition to these key activities, the College will continue to partner with key employers across the region to support key skills needs and workforce planning through curriculum initiatives. We will deliver a range of provision including skills academies and Skills Bootcamps to meet needs across the marine, health, blue economy including visitor economy, digital and green construction areas aligned with the LSIP, as well as ones in logistics aligned to the emerging Freeport skills needs.

**Action:** grow Skills Bootcamps by working with employers to co-design provision to address sector skill needs.

## Delivering for our communities

City College Plymouth has a learning environment and organisational culture that is focussed on positively impacting the health, wellbeing and sustainability of our community and enables all of our students and staff to achieve their full potential. We also recognise that within a changing political and economic environment, City College Plymouth now, more than ever, needs to establish itself as a significant element of our city's civic infrastructure - an anchor institution - vital to the development of our community and our economy.

As defined earlier in this document the city has challenges with significant deprivation, educational engagement, attainment and progression. The College cannot meet these significant challenges alone and as such works with a wide number of civic and community partners to positively impact our city and region.



To respond to this challenge, the College has developed an innovative tool to support people through their educational journey but to also provide support to re-engage with education and to access employment. Caerus is a map for our city, created by our city, with a difference. This innovative navigational tool is structured to address the whole person in addition to the logistical signposting of a career journey. Underpinned by several key concepts including 'Who am i?', 'What happens next?' and 'Elevate you'; it leads with a consistency of reflective questioning. Further to this, Caerus works positively to support growth by addressing the city's key economic strengths and assets such as, marine and maritime, and medical and healthcare sector; with a collection of employment sector maps. This united approach to creating something for our city that will make an impact, makes Caerus so unique.

The health and wellbeing of our communities is a priority activity for the College. The pandemic and subsequent cost of living crisis has exacerbated what had already been significant mental health problems across society that has subsequently impacted many students' ability to commence or continue their studies. The College has invested significantly in its mental health and wellbeing facilities to support our vulnerable students and staff, including having a wellbeing centre, the "Lighthouse" which has already had a significant impact. However, over the next 12 months we will continue to work with our partners to support the wider community with a wellbeing offer to key sectors such as the health and social care sector, carers, veterans and the third sector.

An important and developing area of provision across the city is for people with Special Educational Needs (SEN). Given the volume of people in the city and the region with SEN and the limited provision that is available the college

is looking to expand both its facilities and offer a new SEN hub and subsequent associated delivery. This is not limited to young people (aged 16-24) and will include provision for those above the age of 24 to address isolation and engagement.

Another key aspect to our civic and community duties will be to empower low skilled and low waged members of our society to upskill and to raise the average wage of city residents.

We will undertake this activity through provision of the core skills required for improved employability - maths, English and essential digital skills though to level 2 - with a broadened offer of delivery. In addition, the College will develop an outreach offer in key locations across the city and surrounding region to address barriers to attending this essential skills training.

To address the disproportionate number of adults who do not progress from level 1 to study level 2 and also from level 2 to 3 - which has a direct correlation to average wage levels - the College will review its adult offer to ensure that it meets the city's skills needs and is accessible around both childcare and work commitments with both increased evening, weekend and online learning solutions.

To support equity, equality, diversity and inclusion we will take a range of measures to ensure access to all. This will include: the delivery of substantial English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) delivery with linked vocational specialisms to support second language speakers with employment and social integration; specific women only sessions for vulnerable or isolated groups to encourage confidence in engaging with educational programmes.



# CORPORATION ACCOUNTABILITY & LOCAL NEEDS DUTY SIGN-OFF

In line with the Local Needs Duty, the Corporation has reviewed how well the College's curriculum meets local, regional and national skills needs, assessing both immediate skills shortages as well as long-term strategic planning.

The key aspects of the College's approach are contained within our Strategic Intent 2021-2031 document, which sets out eight ambitious strategic actions. With specific skills needs focused on health and active wellbeing; maritime, manufacturing construction and the built environment, as well as the broader digital skills needs, the College has positioned itself in full alignment with key regional and local drivers such as the Local Skills Improvement Plan and the Skills 4 Plymouth plan. This accountability agreement fully reflects these skill needs and sets out in detail our approach.

We recognise that collaboration is essential to meeting skills needs and the corporation notes the strong links demonstrated with employers, educational partners and other key civic and community stakeholders in both the identification of skills needs and also the co-design of provision to specifically address needs. In line with this, we welcome the exciting initiatives to meet the needs of the emerging blue/green sector in the city through new curriculum - especially in the nuclear sector, as well as the many new curriculum developments in the health and wellbeing sector and an increasing focus on SEN provision for the city.

The Corporation continues to champion an ambitious approach, responding agilely to changing local, regional, national and global skills landscapes to ensure that City College Plymouth leads on technical education, boosting productivity and inclusive growth across Plymouth and the wider region.

We conclude that we make a strong contribution to local and national skills needs and wish to continually improve this with priority actions as outlined in this document.

On behalf of the City College Plymouth Board, it is hereby confirmed that the plan as set out above reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives and is approved by the Corporation at their meeting on Monday 20 May 2024. The plan will be published on the College's website.

Chair of Governors



Chief Executive / Principal



Dated: 20 May 2024