

# Strategic Plan

2023-2024



  
**Lakes College**  
of Further and Higher Education

## Our purpose:

Delivering excellent technical and professional skills to enhance the prosperity of our people and communities

## We achieve this by delivering:

- Local, regional and national skills priorities to all
- In collaboration and partnership with employers and key stakeholders
- Innovative responsive solutions to meet changing priorities and needs
- Sustainable operations and finances through consistently excellent provision

Front cover: Drawn by Hayley Brown while undertaking work experience at Lakes College



# Our offer includes:

## Further Education Programmes

Foundation Programmes

Prince's Trust

High Needs

T Levels

## Adult Programmes

Access

Professional Studies

Flexible Learning

Employability

Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Skills

Bootcamps

## Apprenticeships

STEM

Professional Studies

Health and Social Care

Early Years

## Higher Education Certificates and Diplomas

National College for Nuclear

Foundation Degrees

Higher Nationals

Bachelor Degrees

Teacher Education

Professional Accreditation

## Commercial

Short Courses

Events Management

ActivZone

Lakes College Enterprises

## Professional Services

Employer Engagement

Learner Support

Careers Information, Advice and Guidance

Digital

Data Services and Quality

HR

Finance

Cross College Support

# Timeline of Events




**2017:** Ofsted rated as 'Good'

**2018:** National College for Nuclear opens





**2021:** Civil Engineering Training Centre opens

**2021:** T Level delivery commences at Lakes




**2022:** Skills Hub opens

**2022:** In-centre Engineering offer commences (on-campus and in Carlisle)

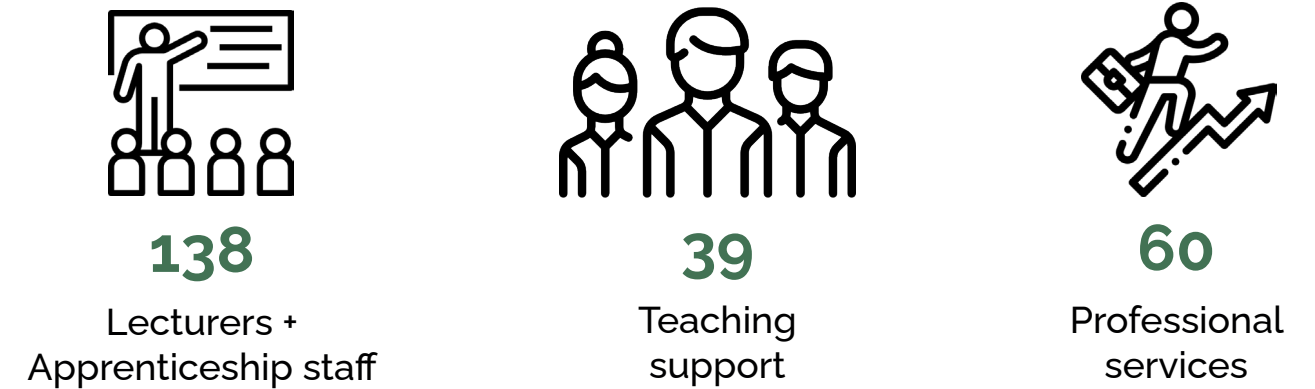



**2023:** Digital Accelerator Hub opens

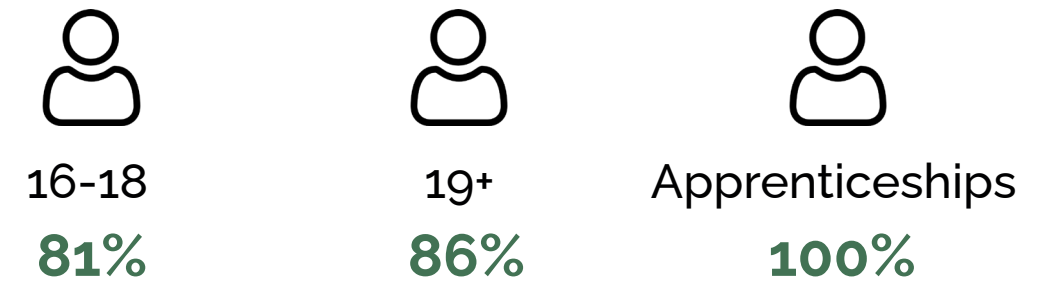
## In 2022/23, Lakes College welcomed:



## Staff numbers (headcount of FTE by role):



## % of our learners that go on to a positive destination:



Our courses start from Entry Level and go as far as Degree Level.



Our offer includes full and part-time courses, flexible learning and apprenticeships.



We are working with **600+** employers across a huge range of industries.



More than **90%** of our students would recommend their course to others.





“Each year shows incredible progression and achievement in all areas of the college, and we look forward to continuing the momentum with this year’s strategic plan in mind.”

**Chris Nattress**  
**Principal and Chief Executive**



“The Board continues to have confidence in the strategic decision of the College and its ability to meet the needs of our employers and learners. We are delighted with the direction Lakes College is taking, bringing the drive for high quality technical, vocational and professional skills into sharp focus.”

**Michael Priestley**  
**Chair of Governors**

# Current Operating Context

- Shortage of skilled people for key sectors of the economy, enhanced by population demographics and Brexit implications
- Low national productivity a government priority
- National numeracy challenge a government priority
- Post COVID – Increase in online/ digital learning provides wider and more diverse opportunities
- Increasing demand for low carbon and green skills
- Growth in importance of apprenticeship offer at all levels for employers
- Challenge on central government finances and capacity to invest whilst staff costs and inflation rise
- Vocational Education reforms continue to transform technical education
- Effective employer engagement secures deeper partnerships and collaborations in delivering to skills needs
- Regional government reorganisation and politics with increasing move to regionalism
- National, regional and local skills priorities a key driver of our offer
- Further Education's re-designation to the Public Sector has financial and operational implications and opportunities
- Challenging environment for recruitment and retention of staff requires new ways of working and innovation in our offer



# Skills Priorities (National, Local and Regional)

There is an increasing focus on how colleges meet national, local and regional skills priorities as outlined in the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), however, we recognise the importance of offering a broad range of curriculum in our isolated community to support skills development across the full range of sectors required by our local economy. This reflects our continued commitment to be an inclusive community college for West Cumbria.

Within the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) our primary focus and key objectives are to meet the broad range of needs and priority sectors in Cumbria by our service area to the West, those being:

- Manufacturing/engineering
- Energy
- Construction/Built Economy
- Visitor Economy
- Social Care

By combining our deepening collaboration within the SDF programmes and connecting our already extensive and growing direct relations with regional and national employers, we will reflect the needs and priorities as evidenced in the Cumbria Local Skills Improvement Plan with a fit for purpose, well-resourced offer well matched to regional needs. This will be further triangulated to the needs of the Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership sector skills panels. Our growing national work within the National College for Nuclear will enable us to further enhance our Higher Technical Skills offer for nuclear decommissioning and energy developments, including support for the national nuclear submarine programme and SMR new builds. Similarly, our work within the growing network of low carbon energy skills groups will support our work in developing Advanced and Higher Green Energy Technical Skills.

Building upon our developing national interests, we will expand our existing work in Advanced and HE Technical Skills within the Nuclear sectors and emergent Green Skills and Low Carbon Energy developments.

Our headline skills priorities for 2023/24 will include:

- Housebuilding construction skills and retrofit
- All aspects of Manufacturing and Engineering
- Advanced and Higher Technical Skills for Nuclear: Decommissioning, Submarine and Small Modular Reactors (SMR) programmes
- Green and low carbon technologies qualifications and skills
- Health and Adult Social Care
- Digital Skills at all levels
- Business, Leadership and Management, and Commercial skills
- Supporting the Visitor Economy in partnership with FE4 (a collaboration of the four colleges in Cumbria) and Cumbria Tourism
- Our employability skills offer including maths, English and digital skills





# Strategic Objectives

High Achievement

To promote and deliver ambitious, high-quality, inclusive training and education which supports all learners to secure their potential and thrive

Delivering Priority Skills

Collaborate with employers and key partners to deliver national, regional and local skills priorities to support economic growth and the success of our communities

Our People

To be an employer of choice supporting our staff to build careers delivering exceptional services

Sustainable Operations

Secure financial viability by delivering excellent responsive provision well matched to needs

# High Achievement

To promote and deliver ambitious, high-quality, inclusive training and education which supports all learners to secure their potential and thrive

# Delivering Priority Skills

Collaborate with employers and key partners to deliver national, regional and local skills needs priorities to support economic growth and the success of our communities

By:	KPIs:	Evidence
Developing knowledge, skills and behaviours to support to prepare learners for work, positive progression and destinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Above 85% of full-time learners have a positive progression and destination</li> <li>Full-time learners attendance is at 90%</li> <li>HE attendance is at 95%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Destination and Progression survey. Internal progression measures.</li> <li>Attendance data</li> <li>Attendance data</li> </ul>
Learners are satisfied with their course across all provision-types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Above 90% satisfaction</li> <li>Above 90% would recommend the course to others</li> <li>Above 90% feel they have made progress towards their career aim</li> <li>Extend our capture and measurement of impact of learning programmes on learners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learner surveys</li> <li>Learner surveys</li> <li>End of year learner survey</li> <li>Exit interview and destination reporting</li> </ul>
Full-time learners participate in work experience and employer engagement activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Above 97% of full-time learners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learner records</li> </ul>
Full-time and HE learners have the opportunity to participate in learner voice activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learner representatives in place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learner voice activity and impact report</li> </ul>
Develop progression routes to ensure all curriculum areas have clear routes to apprenticeships and higher education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Above 85% of full-time learners have a career plan</li> <li>All learners have access to careers and impartial advice and guidance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learner records</li> <li>All learners receive offer</li> <li>Engagement in offer</li> </ul>
Achievement rates above national averages for all provision-types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Latest national averages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achievement data</li> </ul>
Improve Maths and English achievement rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase achievement rates by 10% for Condition of Funding Learners</li> <li>Increase positive grade progression rates by 10%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achievement data</li> </ul>
For full-time learners Level 2 and 3 value added above their target For apprentices we secure added value in grade outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Value-added data</li> <li>EPA Grade profile</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment and achievement data</li> </ul>
Learners are supported with any mental health challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% of learners with identified mental health needs are offered specialist or pastoral support as required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguarding records</li> </ul>
Reduce progress and achievement gaps for learners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gender</li> <li>High Needs</li> <li>Self-declared LLDD</li> <li>Disadvantaged</li> <li>Free School meals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress and Achievement gaps close by 3%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achievement data trends</li> </ul>
Expanding the number of supported internship placements available to SEND learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% increase in supported internships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learner engagement data</li> </ul>
Learners feel safe across all provision types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>99% report feeling safe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learner survey results</li> </ul>

By:	KPIs:	Evidence
Seeking new partnerships with employers and key stakeholders to provide sustainable skills development opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and evaluate opportunities for strategic partnership with other FE colleges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholder reports</li> </ul>
Ensuring good quality apprenticeship provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apprenticeship achievement rates at least 5% above national averages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achievement rates</li> </ul>
Embed the Apprenticeship Academy offer for employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase apprenticeship academy numbers by 10%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apprenticeship academy starts</li> </ul>
Increase apprenticeship starts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase apprenticeship starts by at least 10%</li> <li>Secure one lot of Sellafield apprenticeship work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ILR starts</li> <li>Outcome of SL apprenticeship tender</li> </ul>
Extend employability and reskilling offer for adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adult engagement increased by 20%, funded and unfunded adults</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learner number reports</li> </ul>
Developing new delivery models to improve accessibility of offer to adults and employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure minimum 3 courses delivered on hybrid model</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Curriculum offer</li> </ul>
Developing awareness of sustainability agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All substantial programmes include opportunity to learn about the sustainability agenda</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivery programmes</li> </ul>
Learners develop digital skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>90% of learners on all substantial courses report progress in developing digital skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learner survey results</li> </ul>
All curriculum areas can demonstrate active employer engagement in programme design and delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 examples of active employer per sustainable course</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Curriculum intent documentation and course delivery plans</li> </ul>
Undertaking organisational training needs analysis (ONA) for active employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>80% of employers supported with ONA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Salesforce records</li> </ul>
Develop new offers in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Housebuilding construction skills and retrofit</li> <li>Manufacturing and Engineering</li> <li>Advanced and Higher Technical Skills for Nuclear: Decommissioning, Subs, and SMR programmes</li> <li>Green and low carbon technologies qualifications and skills</li> <li>Health and Adult Social Care</li> <li>Digital Skills at all levels</li> <li>Business, Leadership and Management, and Commercial skills</li> <li>Visitor Economy</li> <li>Employability skills and passports to employment, including maths, English and digital skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New offer in place in all areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Curriculum maps</li> </ul>
Ensuring provision meets employer needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase active employer skills provision by 10%</li> <li>Employer satisfaction above 80%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employer sponsored learner numbers</li> <li>Internal and external employer surveys</li> </ul>
Act as a community hub for business connections and proactive engagement with employers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure over 500 active engagements with employers and key stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholder engagement reports</li> </ul>
Increase non-core funded employer work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase learner numbers on unfunded/non-core contracts by 10%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learner number records</li> </ul>

# Our People

To be an employer of choice supporting our staff to build careers delivering exceptional services

# Sustainable Operations

Secure financial viability by delivering excellent responsive provision well matched to needs

By:	KPIs:	Evidence
Celebrate the success and achievement of our staff team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff recognition awards in place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HR report</li> </ul>
Digitally enable our staff through training and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff confidence in required digital skills improved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JISC insights survey</li> <li>Internal staff surveys</li> </ul>
Support all staff to develop their skills, knowledge, confidence and aspirations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3% of adjusted income invested in staff development</li> <li>Staff report they have opportunity to progress in the college</li> <li>Internal progression of 5%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HR development records and reports</li> <li>York survey results</li> <li>HR records</li> </ul>
Support the wellbeing of our staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Over 85% of staff report Leaders and managers are considerate of my workload and well-being</li> <li>Staff sickness levels reduced to latest sector benchmark</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey results</li> <li>HR reports</li> </ul>
All staff have PDRs linked to strategic objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% of staff have PDRs with objectives linked to strategic plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>College IP records</li> </ul>
Listening and responding to the staff voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Team Briefs in place</li> <li>Staff employer engagement forum active</li> <li>85% of staff report My views are sought and considered</li> <li>85% of staff report that Communication is Effective in the College</li> <li>75% of staff report I feel valued in the College</li> <li>&gt;93% of staff report I am proud to be a member of staff at the College</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 team briefs delivered to all staff teams per annum</li> <li>Staff forum action plan</li> <li>York survey</li> <li>York survey</li> <li>York survey</li> <li>York survey</li> </ul>
Offering flexible working opportunities to staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pilot 4 day working week and extend offer and additional flexibility to staff where business need allows</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HR report</li> </ul>
Offering staff opportunities to contribute to their local community via time off for voluntary work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update policy regarding for voluntary work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HR policies</li> </ul>
Reducing staff turnover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff turnover 3% under latest sector benchmark</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HR records</li> </ul>
Pay awards match AoC recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pay award in line with AoC recommendations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finance papers</li> </ul>
Actively managing succession risk management plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop succession planning across all leadership posts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HE records</li> </ul>
Ensure that SQEP matrix established in all curriculum areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SQEP matrix in place and drives development activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HE records</li> </ul>
Securing 2nd middle leader sector management development cohort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2nd cohort of middle or aspiring leaders under take sector training and development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HE records</li> </ul>

By:	KPIs:	Evidence
Deliver growth as per the financial plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adjusted income per financial plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Management accounts and financial statements</li> </ul>
Return to good financial health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial health measures secure good financial health</li> <li>EBITDA targeted at 4%</li> <li>Cash days in hand &gt; 25 days at all times</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial plan</li> <li>Financial plan</li> <li>Management accounts</li> </ul>
Actively explore partnership opportunities to reduce cost base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic options appraisal undertaken</li> <li>New delivery model in place across minimum 3 curriculum areas.</li> <li>FE Commissioner curriculum review explored</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic papers</li> </ul>
Maintain investment in college assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure £300,000 of college investment in the estate and digital resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial plan</li> </ul>
Review the college estates strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refreshed estates strategy in place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Estate strategy approved by governors</li> </ul>
Maintain effective financial management and control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial health improved.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Management and financial accounts</li> </ul>
Increase proportion of adult education budget utilised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As per financial plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contract reconciliation</li> </ul>
Increase apprenticeship income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt;10% increase in apprenticeship income</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ILR returns</li> </ul>
Reducing staff cost %	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As per financial plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Management accounts and financial statements</li> </ul>
Reduce our carbon footprint and develop green skills provision to meet our sustainability commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce carbon footprint by 3% in 2023/24 Establish retrofit provision and centre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainability reporting</li> <li>Retrofit offer in place</li> </ul>
Review quality approach across all business areas aligned to EIF and ISO standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refreshed quality strategy agreed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality Strategy operational</li> </ul>







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