

2024 - 2025

Huddersfield New College Accountability Agreement

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Section 1: Purpose

Our vision: One HNC. Together we open minds, embrace difference and empower each other to shape a better future.

Our mission: One HNC, a college where students love to learn and staff love to work. Where students earn life-changing qualifications. Where we develop the confidence to live authentically and the courage to shape a better future.

Every decision made and action taken is informed by the College's ASPIRE values. These values underpin our interactions with stakeholders and are embodied by our governors, staff, and students:

- **Authenticity:** *Honest, transparent, consistent.*
- **Self-discipline:** *Committed, accountable, self-motivated.*
- **Passion:** *Supportive, challenging, enthusiastic.*
- **Innovation:** *Humble, courageous, resilient.*
- **Respect:** *Inclusive, diverse, collaborative.*
- **Empathy:** *Reflective, considerate, responsible*

HNC's curriculum intent is to educate, enrich and enlighten:

- Engendering in our students a love of learning and a passion for the subject.
- Equipping our students with the qualifications, knowledge, and skills to flourish in their aspirational next step.
- Empowering our students with the confidence to live authentically and the courage to shape a better future.

The College's curriculum has a primary focus on Level 3 academic pathways. Consequently, our contribution to local skills needs is complimentary to that of Kirklees College with whom we collaborate to ensure that we do not offer any duplicated or overlapping provision. Together we seek to provide a post-16 curriculum that is responsive to the needs and aspirations of students, and which is designed to meet local and national priorities. HNC offers rigorous and challenging academic and applied study programmes and extensive enrichment opportunities to enable students to flourish and become resilient, active citizens making a significant positive social and economic contribution whilst leading lives with purpose and personal fulfilment. Kirklees College provide an extensive post-16 Level 2 and below curriculum in addition to an extensive vocational and technical offer at Level 3. Together, we offer a curriculum that has produces positive social and economic outcomes.

HNC's Level Three curriculum offers a broad range of A level and Applied General courses, students can also follow a blended study programme. The primary focus at Level 3 is to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and personal characteristics to enable them to successfully transition to higher education. Level 3 students who aspire to progress to an apprenticeship or

employment receive careers advice and curriculum support to achieve their progression ambitions. An essential element of every student's study programme is the Aspire curriculum which helps prepare them for their next steps in education or employment and teaches them how to be effective citizens and how to stay safe.

The current Strategic Plan (2023-26) maps the route that the College is navigating to ensure that we continue to deliver our core purpose whilst responding to the changing educational, economic, and political landscape. The Strategic Plan aims to ensure that the College is modern, progressive, and innovative. The Strategic Plan contains nine priorities grouped into three themes; a summary is provided below.

Achieving the Vision	Goal	Strategic Priorities
1. Modern: Opening Minds	1.1	Be a values-based organisation by creating and sustaining an environment of aligned autonomy in which decision-making at every level is underpinned by the College's vision, mission and intent and the behaviour choices of staff and students embody our ASPIRE values.
	1.2	Ensure that high quality teaching, learning and assessment is the daily experience of every student, inculcating a love of learning.
	1.3	Establish an ethos of mutually supportive challenge and consistently high expectations so that staff and students achieve excellence in every aspect of their life over which they exercise significant control.
2. Progressive: Embracing Difference	2.1	Develop students' cultural capital so that they become the active, engaged, positive, responsible, global citizens of the future.
	2.2	Be an inclusive educational community in which diversity is valued.
	2.3	Empower students and staff by supporting their capacity to self-regulate and to assume responsibility for their choices; provide timely and effective well-being support to those who need it.
3. Innovative: Shaping a Better Future	3.1	Provide a responsibly inclusive, financially sustainable, progression-focussed, academic Level 3 curriculum.
	3.2	Become a sector-leading green College.
	3.3	Be a place that staff love to work by recruiting, training and retaining exceptional professionals who share a passion for educating, enriching and enlightening young adults.

Section 2: Context and Place

Huddersfield New College is single site Sixth Form College that has c. 2,200 16-18-year-old students and c. 245 staff. More than 80% of our students come from 28 Kirklees schools (our local authority area), with the remaining 20% joining us from neighbouring areas such as Calderdale, Wakefield, Bradford, and Leeds. Most of our students travel less than 10 miles to and from College each day.

As a non-selective, state funded provider, HNC intends to be responsibly inclusive and accessible to local 16- and 17-year-olds. Our pathway and subject entry requirements are set to be as low as possible whilst enabling student to achieve success. We provide three main Study Programmes, all of which are Level 3 academic pathways. All funded Study Programmes are full-time. In addition, we offer GCSE Maths and English as a resit option for those students who have not yet achieved a grade 4 or better when they enrol with us. The College's 2023/24 cohort included 32.3% of students defines as economically deprived and 10.1% with a disclosed disability / learning disability. 40.8% of students had a prior attainment score in the range 0.00-<4.77; 41.0% in the range 4.77-<6.10; and 18.2% in the range 6.10+. We have a small number of students with Education & Health Care Plans (EHCP) and/or High Needs, and a significant number of students with Exam Access Arrangements and/or Additional Learning Support. Our specialist team for these students works in collaboration with our curriculum, exams, pastoral and admissions teams, our local partner schools and the applicable local authority to remove the academic disadvantage these students might otherwise experience, and enable them to achieve their full potential academically, in their progression and destinations and in their personal development.

IMD data shows that HNC enrolls just over 50% of our students from the lowest 3 deciles, contrasted with around 30% from the highest deciles.

Index of Multiple Deprivation				
Decile	Sep-22 Data gathered Oct 23		Sep-23	
	% of students	Cumulative	% of students	Cumulative
1	27.91%	27.91%	26.26%	26.26%
2	10.98%	38.89%	12.71%	38.97%
3	11.99%	50.88%	10.47%	49.44%
4	10.39%	61.27%	10.93%	60.37%
5	9.72%	71.00%	8.22%	68.60%
6	1.09%	72.09%	0.28%	68.88%
7	4.44%	76.53%	3.64%	72.52%
8	16.68%	93.21%	20.93%	93.46%
9	6.54%	99.75%	6.07%	99.53%
10	0.00%	99.75%	0.00%	99.53%
N/A	0.25%	100.00%	0.47%	100.00%

Policy Landscape

HNC sits within the West Yorkshire LSIP, one of 5 local authorities within the West Yorkshire Combined Authority. The plan sets out the region's priority sectors as:

- Health and Social Care
- Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing
- Financial and Professional Services
- Low Carbon
- Digital and Technology
- Creative Industries
- Education

- Construction
- Transport and Logistics.

It calls on providers to:

- Align and develop provision to respond to identified needs.
- Collaborate amongst each other to jointly address curriculum areas that are niche and may not be feasible for a single organisation; or alternatively, where demand is significant in several areas and may benefit from each organisation taking a specialism to ensure provision is available locally.
- Develop new ways of delivering to improve take-up of provision by employers of all sizes.

Kirklees Council's "Aspire, Achieve, Include" The Kirklees Post-16 Employment and Skills Plan 2022-2025 has 4 priority areas:

- Empowering our Young People
- Digital Inclusion
- Supporting our Communities to Learn and Progress
- Skills for the Future

Economy

Kirklees has one of the lowest average household incomes nationally. Many of our young people (more than 50%) come from areas facing multiple deprivations, where poverty is a reality, impacting on all areas of their life, including education and educational attainment. The latest data (from 2019) shows that:

- In Kirklees, 14.3% of the population are income deprived. Of the 316 local authorities in England, Kirklees is ranked 87th most income deprived.
- Of the 259 Neighbourhoods in Kirklees, 70 are in the 20% most deprived in England.
- In the least deprived neighbourhood in Kirklees, 1.7% of people are estimated to be income deprived. In the most deprived neighbourhood, 39.6% of people are estimated to be income deprived. The gap between these two (the internal disparity) is 37.9 percentage points in Kirklees.
- In Kirklees, 12.2% of the population live within Lower Super Output Area (LSOAs) which rank within the bottom 10% in England; this is higher than the average for England where 9.9% of the population are within the bottom 10% LSOAs.

Educational Attainment

- In 2022/23, GCSE attainment in Kirklees was broadly in line with the England averages. However, there is inequality in GCSE attainment. For those living in the most deprived areas of Kirklees, significantly fewer students achieve five or more GCSE grades 5 or above in English and maths compared with students living in the least deprived areas.
- In 2022/23 the average A level result in Kirklees was C+ (34.44 points), which was slightly below the England average B- (35.48 points). The Kirklees Applied General average result (Distinction, 36.37 points) was above the England average (Merit +, 29.56 points).
- One in nine people of working age (16–64-year-olds) in Kirklees have no qualifications, which is more than the Yorkshire and Humber and England averages. Furthermore, fewer than one in three people are educated to NVQ level 4 and above, which is lower than the England average.

Post-16 Education

Significant steps have been made towards the creation of a post-16 infrastructure in Kirklees which favours larger specialist providers to act as a key enabler for young people and is responsive to

business needs in priority growth sectors. It is important that the three colleges (HNC, Greenhead College, Kirklees College) work collaboratively to ensure that there is a comprehensive, high quality post-16 offer that meets the needs and aspirations of all students. More information can be found in the 'Approach to developing the annual Accountability Statement' section.

Section 3: Approach to Developing the Annual Accountability Agreement

In developing this Accountability Agreement, HNC has paid close attention to the West Yorkshire LSIP and Aspire, Achieve, Include: The Kirklees Post-16 Employment and Skills Plan 2022-2025. We have worked in partnership with the two other main post-16 providers in Kirklees (Greenhead College and Kirklees College) as well as a range of other stakeholders to understand how best HNC can support local needs.

To ensure we meet the Local Needs Duty, we have in place the Kirklees Curriculum Intent. This means we align provision to local need, address barriers to participation, reduce unhelpful duplication and promote clearer progression pathways. The young people of Kirklees have a range of post-16 options to choose from, every year over 80% choose to study at Greenhead College, Huddersfield New College, and Kirklees College. To help them make the choice that is best for them, HNC seeks to work collaboratively to craft a curriculum offer which meets their needs and supports their progression to higher education, apprenticeships, and employment. At the heart of this collaborative approach lies a shared commitment to offering a high-quality educational provision. This means that wherever a student chooses to study, they can be assured that they will experience the same high standards and expectations and achieve life-changing qualifications.

At HNC our primary focus at HNC is supporting students to progress to higher education. We do not provide technical education defined by the DfE as “provision that focuses on progression into and within skilled employment and...the acquisition ofa set of practical skills.” Neither do we offer any courses that include mandatory work experience. Our primary focus is on progression to university. Consistent with that, the Corporation and the Senior Leaders have decided not to offer T Levels recognising that Kirklees College is the provider of T Levels within Kirklees.

Section 4: Contribution to National, Regional and Local Priorities

HNC is a key contributor to Kirklees Council's Post-16 Employment and Skills Plan 2022-2025 and associated strategies.

Kirklees post 16 Employment and Skills Plan 2022-25

The Kirklees Post-16 Employment and Skills Plan 2022 – 2025 identifies four priority areas:

1. Empowering our Young People
2. Digital Inclusion
3. Supporting our communities to Learn and Progress
4. Skills for the Future.

HNC will continue to make a substantial contribution to supporting the council's goals in each of these distinct areas; progress to date is detailed below.

Empowering our Young People

- **Kirklees goal 6 (of 8):** Support young people who do not achieve good GCSEs in Maths and English at Key Stage 4 to achieve those qualifications by age 19.
- **HNC contribution:** Every year, HNC supports students to achieve a grade 4 or better in the GCSE passport qualification of English and Maths at rates significantly above the national average.
- **Kirklees goal 7 (of 8):** Support young people to progress to higher education, including degree apprenticeships, preparing them for the higher skilled jobs in great demand including those in health, care and digital.
- **HNC contribution:** HNC students consistently progress to higher education at rates above both national and local benchmarks. Destinations data 2021/22 shows that of the 63% of students who progressed to HE, 34% progressed onto degree courses related to health (19%), care (6%), and digital (9%).

Digital Inclusion

- **Kirklees goal 4 (of 5):** Promote and encourage the take-up of free-to-access digital skills qualifications via the Lifetime Skills Guarantee.
- **HNC contribution:** Via the HNC enrichment programme, all students have access to a range of Microsoft Office specialist exams. These qualifications are designed to help students build their IT skills by improving their knowledge and skills in the Office suite of applications.

Supporting Our Communities to Learn and Progress

- **Kirklees action goal 3 (of 6):** Maintain a high-quality English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) offer, delivered in safe, supportive environments and covering the real-world English skills that local employers expect.
- **HNC contribution:** HNC offers an English as an Additional Language (EAL) personalised support programme.

Skills for the Future

- **Kirklees goal 1 (of 7):** Build on the success of national and regional reskilling initiatives by supporting Kirklees residents to acquire important transferable skills that are valued by employers across a range of industries.
- **HNC contribution:** The College makes a significant contribution to developing students' employability skills through the development of their cultural capital. Specifically, the OPTICS programme introduces students to, and provides opportunities for them to develop

their employability skills. OPTICS refers to the most sought transferable skills that are non-sector specific (organisation, problem-solving, teamwork, initiative, communication, self-development). The College's cultural capital strategy promotes and develops the essential knowledge that students need to prepare themselves for their future success. At HNC, the development of employability skills is woven throughout the curriculum.

The Kirklees economic strategy 2019-25

The Kirklees economic strategy 2019-25 recognises that all local colleges are facilitating further links to university/FE expertise and with other key sectors in Kirklees, the Leeds city region and beyond. It sets out the key strategic aims for the region of inclusivity and productivity which are underpinned by five priorities, including:

- **Kirklees Priority 2 (of 5):** Skilled and ambitious people; equipping people with the skills, talents, and confidence they need to access good, well-paid jobs, contributing to and benefiting from economic success.
- **HNC contribution:** The College contributes to Action Programme 4 (delivering an aspiration uplift) through our focus on tackling inequality and promoting social mobility. In June 2022, the National Centre for Diversity named HNC as the most inclusive employer in the country for the fifth time. HNC was named as the UK Organisation of the Year 2022 and Number 1 in the Top 100 Index for Equality and Diversity. The National Centre for Diversity aims to advance fairness for all in the workplace by helping organisations to embed Fairness, Respect, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Engagement (FREDIE) practices and these endorsements acknowledge HNC as being the best in this field.
- **Kirklees Priority 3: (of 5):** Building high impact partnerships across private, public, and voluntary sectors, with a focus on how 'anchor institutions' can use their employment, procurement, assets, and service delivery to build local wealth and achieve better outcomes.
- **HNC contribution:** The College is a key 'anchor institution' within the region focusing on building local wealth by being an employer of circa 240 local people and by delivering a strong educational experience and outcomes. The College takes seriously its place within the local and regional community and all strategic curriculum decisions factor in local and regional economic priorities and balance these against the interests of prospective students.

Kirklees Post 16 Employment and Skills Plan 2022-2025

To deliver the Kirklees Post 16 Employment and Skills Plan 2022-2025, the Local Authority is to establish a new Employment and Skills Commission which will oversee the delivery of this plan. The Commission will have representation from further and higher education, work-based learning, employers from sectors of local strategic significance, business representative organisations, the voluntary sector, the local authority, and local government agencies. Meeting on a quarterly basis, the Employment and Skills Commission will consider the sustainability of the actions in this strategy. Kirklees College is the FE representative on the commission.

There are 8 key measures within the Kirklees Post 16 Employment and Skills plan; HNC actively contributes to these specific measures:

- **Kirklees key measure 7 (of 8):** Employers report improved work readiness skills amongst new starters.
- **HNC contribution:** HNC staff ensure that our students achieve the Level 3 qualifications required to enable them to progress to university. We are a key facilitator of the graduate level workforce; we help to meet the national need for skilled graduate professionals. The specific ways in which the College helps students to develop their employability skills is

delivered via OPTICS – HNC’s programme specifically designed to improve work readiness skills as outlined within the skills for the future section above.

- **Kirklees key measure 8 (of 8):** Increase in the proportion of young people from Kirklees entering higher education.
- **HNC contribution:** HNC supports the achievement of this measure by successfully enabling students to progress to university at rates which the DfE define as ‘above average’ (2020 leavers).

In addition to the work already completed, the College has a comprehensive action plan which will ensure that we continue to develop and improve our contribution to local, regional, and national skills priorities.

HNC Developing Skills for the Future: Action Plan 2024/25

Summary	Actions	Outcomes
<p>Evaluate and continually improve the quality of the College's CEIAG</p> <p>Use the LSIP to inform ongoing CEIAG planning and evaluation.</p>	<p>Labour Market Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use local skills needs data identified in the LSIP to evaluate Vision Weeks in 2024/25 and help plan wider Skills & CEIAG delivery for 2024/25. 	<p>Labour Market Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> +80% of students have an improved understanding of the sectors and employers in Kirklees, as well as the skills required to enter the labour market or progress to further study (OPTICS). Progress Tutors know the intended and actual destinations of their tutees and how these link to priority sectors. Local skills priority sectors inform curriculum planning.
	<p>Careers Team & Sector Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to refine and develop our ongoing Careers Team to advertise up-to-date vacancies, apprenticeships, volunteering, and other opportunities. Run 'spotlight' careers activities on priority sector industries. 	<p>Careers Team & Sector Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly postings to the Careers Team of the latest employment and apprenticeship opportunities. Regular 'spotlight' postings.
	<p>Aspire curriculum – understanding the workplace (rights & responsibilities)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the Enlighten Faculty Leads to revise the College's approach to delivering rights and responsibilities, with a focus on FREDIE and Fundamental British Values. 	<p>Aspire curriculum – understanding the workplace (rights & responsibilities)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student attendance at Aspire above 90%. Students demonstrate effective working knowledge of workplace rights (FREDIE) and the Fundamental British Values (FBVs).
<p>Delivering employability (soft) skills</p> <p>Provide students with regular opportunities during class time to develop their OPTICS skills and to reflect upon the development of these key employability skills.</p>	<p>Delivering employability (soft) skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly setting lesson tasks which explicitly develop one or more of the employability skills. Following the task, in addition to reflecting on the subject-specific learning that has taken place, require students to reflect on and record how effectively they practiced the pre-identified employability skill(s). 	<p>Delivering employability (soft) skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over the course of the academic year, all students have two opportunities to explicitly practise and reflect on each of the OPTICS employability skills.

HNC Developing Skills for the Future: Action Plan 2024/25

Summary	Actions	Outcomes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When working with students, link the current lesson tasks to their future self in the work place. This strategy is particularly effective when dealing with negative behaviours such as persistent late arrival to lessons and missing deadlines. 	
<p>Delivering Digital Literacy inc. A.I.</p> <p>Review digital skills induction for staff and students which equips them for teaching and study at HNC, with a focus on Teams and Microsoft which are key to so many workplace environments.</p> <p>Implement an AI policy to support with academic activity and workload reduction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update digital skills induction programme for students with greater focus on the day-to-day tools needed for effective learning at HNC. Integrate induction into Teams as well as tutorial programme. Maintain a high level of staff and student skill in the effective use of MS Office and Teams by implementing one week of remote learning for Year 12 students. Provide access for all students to the Microsoft Training Programme. Develop an AI policy for the College, create resources and training opportunities to embed AI into routine practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital induction successfully completed by all new students and staff. Positive student and staff uptake of the MS training suite. Faculty QIPs show how teams are planning for and integrating digital into their work.

Section 5: Local Needs Duty

HNC takes its responsibilities under the Local Needs Duty seriously. This is reflected in our Ofsted report from January 2024:

“The college makes a reasonable contribution to meeting skills needs. Leaders and managers liaise with a range of stakeholders to understand local and regional skills priorities. They are clear in their intent to support students to progress to higher education in readiness for future employment. Their plans for Curriculum 2025 look ahead to include courses matched to priorities in the local skills improvement plan, such as environmental science as a response to sustainability and green priorities. Leaders and managers work in close partnership with other local colleges to ensure that there is a coherent offer for post 16 study in the local area. They also work effectively with schools to understand the needs of students progressing to college and use this information well to support successful transition. They collaborate frequently with leaders in local schools, colleges, and universities to share best practice and ensure that young people locally have access to an offer that supports progression towards future goals. School and college leaders appreciate this collaboration and recognise the impact that it has on supporting young people to understand the skills required for students to be successful in their next stage and future employment. They develop students' work-related skills and, in most areas, subject specific technical skills relevant to a range of careers. Across most curriculum areas, teachers work with a range of employers and other stakeholders to inform what they teach and how it is taught. They use these connections to update their industry knowledge and to ensure that curriculum content reflects current industry practice.”

Section 6: Corporation Statement

In response to The Skills Act (2022), the Board of Governors have conducted a review of our approach, determining how well our curriculum meets local skills needs and prepares for those that will emerge in the future, through oversight, challenge, and discussion, with employers and leaders of the college. The Board has also taken into account the relevant findings and recommendations from our recent Ofsted report and Self-assessment processes.

We conclude that we make a 'reasonable' contribution to local and national skills needs and wish to continually improve this with priority actions as outlined above.

The Corporation signed off Huddersfield New Colleges' Accountability Agreement at their 16th May 2024 Meeting. They confirm that this document fulfills the Local Needs Duty.

Section 7: Supporting Documentation