



Newcastle College strategy to

2030

PART OF



Our strategy to 2030

JON RIDLEY

PRINCIPAL,
NEWCASTLE COLLEGE



I'm pleased to share our Strategy to 2030, which sets out a clear direction for our work over the coming years. At the heart of this strategy is our vision: to develop talent for the region.

This vision reflects our responsibility to contribute to the North East England future by equipping people with the skills to work and lead, enabling innovation which creates strong and thriving communities.

Everyone – learners, parents, staff, community groups and business – has a part to play in making this happen.

Our strategy is rooted in place. We are proud to be part of Newcastle and the wider region, and our work supports the broader ambitions of North East England to deliver inclusive economic growth and address long-standing inequalities. Newcastle College takes a place-based approach, anticipating and responding directly to the needs and strengths of our city while contributing to the region's wider development goals.

We are committed to widening access to education, increasing participation, and supporting social mobility. We want people, from all backgrounds, to have the opportunity to succeed, personally, professionally, and within their communities.

As an anchor institution, we have a responsibility to deliver civic impact, using our reach, resources, and relationships to contribute to the social, cultural, and economic wellbeing of our region.

A key part of this is creating the conditions for innovation to flourish, not just in what and how we teach, but in how we respond to the big challenges facing our region. By working with businesses, communities, and public services, we are helping to turn new ideas into action that make being a Newcastle College student fantastic and benefit the communities we serve.

This strategy is a collective endeavour full of ambition. I encourage you to read it, consider how you can contribute, and use it as a guide for how, together, we will shape a better future for our region.

LIZ BROMLEY

CEO, NCG

Newcastle College is an anchor institution at the heart of North East, at a time when communities need the opportunities provided by further education colleges more than ever.

As part of NCG, Newcastle College plays a key role in supporting our mission to enable social mobility and economic prosperity in the North East and beyond.

Newcastle College works in partnership with local government, employers, civic and community stakeholders, to develop and deliver high-quality education that is responsive to local, regional and national skills needs. These partnerships support Newcastle College and NCG to develop a workforce of the future, with the skills and talents that our local communities need to be successful and sustained. The College is responding to the North East Combined Authority's pledge to make the region the home of the green energy revolution and has secured investment to expand its sector-leading Energy Academy, which lies in the centre of the industry. Earlier this year, it launched its Advanced Manufacturing Suite with cutting-edge training technology, and it continues to develop and deliver courses that are aligned with the region's needs and ambitions.

Learners are at the heart of the College, and I have seen first-hand the life-changing opportunities and experiences on offer here. As a College of Sanctuary, Newcastle College supports the growing community of refugees and asylum seekers in the local area, welcoming more than 1,000 people to its English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses each year. More than 7,000 young people at Newcastle have benefited from confidence-boosting public speaking sessions with our partners Loud Speaker as part of the NCG Guarantee, and hundreds of learners have the opportunity to travel abroad each year to volunteer and gain work experience through the Turing Scheme. Some have even travelled as far as St Lucia, or South Africa, where they have made a real difference volunteering in schools and orphanages.



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Board members



The College is immensely proud of the real difference and positive contribution we are making to deliver exceptional learning opportunities and progression for our students and improving the life chances of people in the local, often economically deprived, communities we serve.

We have a strong shared view of purpose and are focused on creating a great student experience and providing high-quality education and training, aligned with the latest industry standards and supported through the effective use of digital technology to enhance learning and skills, inspire our students and prepare them to be work ready and thrive in the modern economy.

This strategy provides a clear roadmap that defines the necessary actions and priorities to achieve our desired goals and is fundamental in supporting the College to develop the skills and talents of our students and to crucially meet local employment and regional needs. We are committed to fostering an inclusive environment that supports the diverse needs of our students and staff, whilst also forming strong sustainable partnerships with business, industry and community stakeholders.

We are a major part of the North East educational landscape providing a wide range of vocational, academic, technical and professional programmes alongside Higher Education.

We provide courses at all levels for some 15,000 students and deliver a collaborative and inclusive approach to education and skills through partnerships with valued employers, local authorities, and other stakeholders essential for creating a strong and relevant skills system critical to ensuring a coherent lifelong education provision, preparing individuals for the changing world of work, and to addressing prosperity of our region.

Alex Turner

Independent Member and Board Chair,
Newcastle College



This strategy represents a visionary and comprehensive commitment to advancing opportunity, fostering innovation, and promoting inclusivity throughout Newcastle and the North East England. By harnessing our collective resources and expertise, Newcastle College are not only investing in the city and region's future but demonstrating the power of collaboration to deliver meaningful social, cultural, and economic impact. I encourage all stakeholders to engage with its aims as, together, we build a brighter, more equitable future for our students and communities.

Steve Beharall
Independent Member and CEO,
NUFC Foundation



Our college isn't just a place of learning – it's a key engine of economic renewal in the North East. As a Skills Board member, I see first-hand how the College drives growth by equipping people with the skills the region's industries and businesses need today and tomorrow. From clean energy to digital, construction to creative, health to hospitality our region's ambitions rely on colleges like ours to anchor communities, attract investment, and build the skilled workforce that powers genuine place-making.

Richard Clark
Independent Member and Director,
Barclays Wealth Management



Newcastle College's Strategy to 2030 is unashamedly ambitious and will help the North East to thrive by nurturing the talent we need to stay in our region and help it prosper.

Alice Andreasen
Independent Member and
Chief Corporate Affairs Officer,
Newcastle Airport



The Newcastle College strategy remains firmly focused on supporting the individual progression of our students and their meaningful contributions to the sectors and industries we serve. As staff, we are uniquely positioned to further nurture and develop our students' potential, especially as Newcastle College continues to grow and evolve.

Richard Cave
Staff Member



I am proud to support Newcastle College's strategy as it is a clear demonstration of our commitment to ensure that students have the relevant skills to access opportunities today and in the future, enabling them to enter, progress and thrive in their chosen careers. This strategy also supports the wellbeing and resilience not only of our 15,000 or more students but spreads beyond the campus boundaries to raise aspirations, improve opportunities and to broaden the horizons of the families and communities we reach.

Karen Marshall
Independent Member and Apprentice,
Education and Engagement Lead,
Accenture

Newcastle College is part of NCG

Newcastle College is proud to be part of NCG, one of the country's leading college groups, supporting tens of thousands of learners through its nationwide network of colleges:

- Carlisle College
- Kidderminster College
- Lewisham College
- Newcastle College
- Newcastle Sixth Form College
- Southwark College
- West Lancashire College



As part of NCG we work in partnership to support a clear mission – to enable social mobility and economic prosperity through exceptional education.

NCG colleges offer a wide range of vocational Further Education and Higher Education courses and training programmes, including apprenticeships, employability and workplace learning, and work to support those in our communities who need it most. We're the first Further Education institution in the UK to be awarded Taught Degree Awarding Powers (TDAP) on an indefinite basis, enabling us to develop and award our own Honours and Master's degrees.



Together, we play a key role in providing education and training to learners, apprentices and employers across the UK, building a skilled and talented workforce for the jobs of tomorrow.

We believe in the transformative power of education, and we develop partnerships with government, employers and community stakeholders that help us to address local, regional and national skills challenges, respond to the needs of our region's key industries and support the ambitions of our local and national government. These collaborations are key to our success in changing lives and accomplishing real change for individuals, communities and economies across the country.



Newcastle College

PURPOSE

As the region's largest college, recruiting across North East Mayoral Combined Authority (NECA), we play a pivotal role in meeting the skills needs in the region's key emerging economic sectors.

Our Strategy to 2030 commits us to a clear vision to 'develop the talent for our region'; our 7 Strategic Objectives articulate with the national and local skills priorities set out in our LSIPs and our duties laid out in the Skills and Post-16 Education Act.



CONTEXT AND PLACE

Newcastle College is a key institution in North East England, delivering education across all funding streams within the North East Mayoral Combined Authority (NECA). Located in one of England's most deprived wards (ranked 23rd out of 317, IMD 2019), the College serves a region facing deep social challenges, including below-average life expectancy, high economic inactivity, and the UK's highest child poverty rate (38%, NE Child Poverty Commission, 2023). In response, college partners with other anchor institutions to build an inclusive economy, focusing on those with the fewest opportunities.

The region struggles with high youth and adult unemployment, skills shortages, and low educational attainment. Only 42.6% of jobs are in higher-level roles (vs. 51.9% nationally), and graduate employment lags significantly, costing the region an estimated £1/3bn annually (IFS, 2020). The North East also has the lowest proportion of Level 3 qualified adults and poor progression from Level 2 to 3 by age 19 (DfE, 2021). While GCSE attainment is on par nationally at 16, 30% still lack Level 2 Maths & English by 19, highlighting the need for both basic and higher-level skills development.

The North East Chamber of Commerce (LSIP) and North East Automotive Alliance (NELSIP) have identified priority sectors: Construction, Green Energy, Health & Social Care, Creative Industries, Business Services, Advanced Manufacturing, and Transport & Logistics. Cross-cutting themes include Digital, Employability, and Professional Skills. Newcastle College's employer-led curriculum supports these sectors, serving learners across NECA, from Northumberland to Durham, with specialist provision in Renewable Energy and Transport extending across both LSIPs.

Digital employment remains low (1.5% vs. 4.4% nationally), but growth in digital and business skills is essential. Newcastle College offers pathways from entry to undergraduate level. Our specialist Green Energy Academy supports the UK's Net Zero goals, preparing technicians and engineers for 6,000 projected regional jobs over five years (NTCA LSIP 2023). Health is the region's largest employer, with over 60,000 workers and 2,000 monthly vacancies. The College's Healthcare curriculum, the largest in the region, addresses this demand.

Creative and Tourism industries are vital to regional investment, with Creative Industries growing 68% from 2011–2020, the fastest in the UK. The College aligns its Arts curriculum with the City's Culture Compact, supports Music students through Generator, and trains talent for the Hospitality sector, where 87% of businesses report recruitment challenges (NEECC Q4 2022).



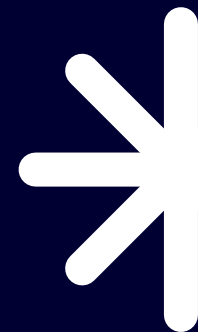
Our mission

To enable economic prosperity and social mobility through exceptional education.



Our vision

Develop talent for our region.



Strategic objectives



OBJECTIVE 1

Exceptional teaching and experiential learning, enhanced through technology

The region's young people and adults deserve, need and expect the highest quality learning experience and a curriculum to launch their future careers. As digital transformation has accelerated across UK industry, our learners require the tools and the skills for life to thrive in future economies. Our aim is to deliver an exceptional experiential learner experience, enhanced where appropriate through learning technology to build skills and confidence, and a one to which all colleagues are proud to recommend.

OBJECTIVE 2

Powering skills, innovation and economic growth

Develop and deliver future-ready skills that drive innovation and support high-growth industries, ensuring the North East England leads in advanced manufacturing, digital, and green energy and has a thriving creative and cultural industry. Partnerships with employers, universities, and further education colleges help embed cutting-edge technology e.g. AI into training, equipping students with industry-led skills to fuel business expansion and regional competitiveness.



OBJECTIVE 3

A North East University Centre

North East England has one of the lowest higher education participation rates of the UK. Located in the regional capital and with our unique degree awarding powers, we can create progression escalators across our specialisms from entry level to degree and beyond. A University Centre which expands the number of students studying on Higher Technical Qualifications, Degrees, Degree Apprenticeships and Postgraduate programmes across our group, allows us to make full use of our group's perpetual Taught Degree Awarding Powers.



OBJECTIVE 4

Pathways to employment for all

Seamless education pathways from entry-level to higher technical and degree-level apprenticeships, providing the skills and qualities to succeed in work.

OBJECTIVE 5

A champion of opportunity and social mobility

Widen participation in education and training to ensure no one is left behind, in the North East of England the “Home of real opportunity” for inclusive growth. This includes targeted outreach, affordable learning pathways, and support services.

OBJECTIVE 6

Investing in a sustainable, inclusive future

Champion net-zero initiatives, digital inclusion, and accessibility, embedding sustainability and diversity in all aspects of college operations.



OBJECTIVE 7

Partnership for health, wellbeing inclusion and prosperity

A great place to study and work, we value the people that make up the campus and wider community. The College will be known as a welcoming, encouraging, vibrant, safe community. As an anchor institution of the city, we will work together with partners to boost public health outcomes and strengthen trust and ties between the College and its communities, advancing social inclusion.





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