

ACCOUNTABILITY AGREEMENT

MAY 2023

1) PURPOSE

Mission:

The College of West Anglia provides many identifiable public benefits through the advancement of education, which is included in the delivery of the strategic plan and public value statement. We aim to create public value through, amongst other things:

- Working with learners to develop their skills and personal confidence, to raise aspirations and enhance employment opportunities.
- Displaying and promoting local leadership through our relationships and collaboration with other organisations, leading to the enrichment of the economic, social, cultural, and physical well-being of our communities.

Our Vision:

Changing lives through learning.

Strategic Ambitions:

1. Deliver outstanding learner success.
2. Impact positively on local social and economic prosperity.
3. Develop a culture of support, empowerment, and high performance.
4. Use our resources to achieve maximum impact.

Our Values:

We recognise that students must be central in all that we do and aspire to the following values:



Why College of West Anglia (CWA) provision is important and the contribution it makes:

CWA has an excellent track record with students and employers and has been recognised and rated by Ofsted as Good:

“Our inclusive and supportive culture and the extent to which we have together created **a welcoming and friendly place to study**, where learners feel safe, are well behaved and motivated, have high attendance and develop substantial new skills, and that the vast majority of the **learners progress into employment, apprenticeships, or higher education.**”

David Pomfret, Principal

Ofsted recognised College of West Anglia as:

- providing a welcoming and friendly place to study
- achieving high attendance rates
- developing substantial new skills
- housing some of the best facilities in the country
- providing high-quality resources in inspiring environments
- delivering excellent tutor knowledge and skills
- preparing students and apprentices for the workplace
- offering a safe environment where learners are well-behaved and motivated.
- offering comprehensive work experience opportunities and effective careers advice.

CWA has an excellent track record of students competing in skills competitions and a superb record of achievement demonstrated across many years at local, national, and international competitions. This includes WorldSkills UK, where in 2022, CWA achieved more medal points than the combined total from all other East of England colleges.

2) CONTEXT & PLACE

CWA is one of the largest providers of education and training in rural Norfolk and Cambridgeshire, with additional employer-partner provision delivered in Lincolnshire and across England.

CWA provides programmes across all 15 sector subject areas (SSAs), at campuses in King's Lynn, Wisbech and Milton (Cambridge), along with several smaller venues. Approximately 75% of all full-time students live in the West Norfolk and Fenland areas.

Challenges of the local area which inform our strategy, and curriculum planning.

The proportion of pupils reaching five or more GCSEs at Grades 9 - 4 including English and mathematics in local schools is below the national average. The number of

students who need to achieve their basic skills in English and maths is 3% above similar providers.

A far smaller proportion of the local population is educated to Levels 3 and 4 than is the case nationally. Around 37% of the workforce in Norfolk and Cambridgeshire are educated to NVQ level 4, some 6% lower than the rest of the UK.

Skill levels are markedly lower in Fenland and West Norfolk. Norwich and East Cambridgeshire constituencies are identified as two of the ten worst affected areas in the Government's Opportunity Gap Ranking. The number of students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is above national average.

The New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has identified the region as having low higher education (HE) participation with only 29.8% of the area's population educated to degree level compared with England's average of 34.2%. Participation in HE is particularly poor in King's Lynn and Fenland which have been identified as 'cold spots' in HE participation, where local opportunities are poor.

3) APPROACH TO DEVELOPING THE ACCOUNTABILITY AGREEMENT

CWA is working with the local Chambers of Commerce in Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, and Peterborough with regards to the *Local Skills Improvement Plans* (LSIPs), including representation on working parties for emerging sector specialisms.

Our approach is based on partnership, collaboration, research and networking with employer, education, community and civic organisations and other relevant stakeholders:

Norfolk, Suffolk, and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Chambers of Commerce (LSIPs)

New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority

King's Lynn Town Deal Board

Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk

Norfolk County Council

Queen Elizabeth Hospital King's Lynn

Anglian Water @One Alliance partnership

Freebridge Community Housing Association

HE Partners: Anglia Ruskin University (ARU); Open University; University of Huddersfield

Landex (Land Based Colleges and Universities Aspiring to Excellence).

New Anglia Colleges Group and Cambridge & Peterborough Colleges

King's Lynn Skills Group

Fenland District Council

Cambridgeshire County Council

Department for Education

Department for Work & Pensions

Over 700 other employer partners

Our approach to employer engagement is long standing. In 2018, CWA achieved regional and national recognition.



In 2019, CWA was the first ever UK College to achieve the Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme, Gold Award.



The accountability agreement statement has been developed as a natural extension of our regular dialogue and focus on continuous improvement and meeting skills needs with input from:

- Employer focus groups, and networking with large and SME, locally and regionally with regards to skills needs through our extensive network of employer contacts and partners which has been established over many years.
- Robust implementation of the curriculum planning strategy and subsequent operational planning meetings
- Student and parent voice
- CWA Team
- CWA Governing Board scrutiny and training sessions
- Continued scrutiny and feedback from internal and external bodies.
- College leadership team discussions
- Senior management team agenda – strategy discussions
- Employer focus groups and discussions

- LMI (Labour Market Intelligence) – Vector reports and operational discussions
- LSIP focus groups.
- Local network group meetings NCC/CPCA events
- Collaboration with the New Anglia College and CPCA Groups

4) CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL PRIORITIES

CWA (College of West Anglia) contribution intent for 2023/24 is based on the successful implementation of our annually reviewed strategic plan, which aligns with local, regional, and national skills market intelligence, local employer voice and emerging themes from the recent LSIPs (Local Skills Improvement Plans) discussion such as Agri-Technology/food processing, Advanced Manufacturing, Net Zero, Life Science, Digital and clearly locally identified areas of skills shortage such as dentistry, public service and animal care. The impact on skills shortage arising from industry 4.0, regional projects such as Sizewell C and global themes such as Carbon Net Zero are also considered.

This approach is underpinned by our robust curriculum planning strategy and student and employer feedback. The impact of what we do will be the focus for our reporting to governors. Impact is the central theme of our self-assessment processes. We ensure that through our self-assessment we continually review the relevance and effectiveness of the curriculum offer to our communities. Through self-assessment we also hold ourselves accountable for the effective use of public funds.

CWA has four key themes for implementation across 2023/24:

1. Build student career and next step confidence and opportunity.

Intent: Build on our current delivery of excellent careers education and work experience opportunities to enable students to confidently take their next step with

the right skills and understanding to maximise the opportunities available to them and provide employers with a pipeline of suitable candidates.

- Provide impartial information, advice and guidance on education, training, and employment opportunities to prospective, current, and former learners. CWA believes that high-quality careers education, information, advice, and guidance (CEIAG) **improves aspiration and attainment** and is vital in supporting our young people to progress from further education, ready and capable of achieving their full potential, irrespective of their starting point. In February 2023, CWA achieved reaccreditation for the matrix standard and in April 2023 was awarded the Quality in Careers Standard for careers education, information, advice, and guidance.
- Provide students with opportunities and experiences that enable them to further **develop their knowledge, skills, and qualities** during their time of studying with us. As part of their study programme, most students aged 16 to 18 (excluding Level 3 Year 2 students applying to UCAS), will be expected to undertake a meaningful work experience placement, linked to their course of study and career plans. Work experience provides young people with **real-world knowledge** of the workplace, builds skills, and helps smooth the transition from education into employment.
- As part of their vocational studies, teaching teams will refer to Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) and different career opportunities available to the students; they will encourage students to be aspirational with their career plans and will also challenge stereotypical thinking. It is imperative that our ethos of '**careers, not courses,**' continues to be embedded in our offer to students to enable them to effectively career plan and to acquire vital skills for the future.

2. Enable student progression and widen participation.

Intent: Enhance our current offer to drive progression, and develop the talent, skills, and knowledge available to the local economy. Widen participation in HE to meet local and regional employer demand.

- CWA intends to develop and implement an adult **Higher Education (HE) strategy and growth plan** that meets local and regional needs, with an ambition of increasing progression to higher level education and training, developing the pool of talent, knowledge, and skills available to our local and regional economy. We will review provision regularly to ensure we are responsive to the identified sector needs, investing in identified sector priorities and divest in those areas no longer fit for purpose. To this end, a franchised offer is neither flexible nor responsive enough to meet these aspirational goals; a more flexible validation model has been identified as the way forward. Plans to develop *validated* provision in the future, include a BSc (Hons) Bio-Veterinary Science, feature in the 2023-2028 strategy, to be delivered from our bespoke HE building at the [Cambridge Campus](#).
- CWA aims to **develop the Level 4 and 5 higher technical education**, higher and degree apprenticeships offer, leading to skilled employment. These qualifications will be supported by the availability of learning loans, expected from 2025 ([Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth January 2021](#)) These qualifications will offer progression opportunities from T-Level qualifications, currently being rolled out at the College, to meet the needs of employers in the region who are seeking higher technical skills in their workforce. Building on our current offer at Levels 4 and 5, we see higher and degree apprenticeships as a natural area for development given the College's enduring, successful experience of apprenticeship delivery and the scope of our employer engagement.

A key aspect of our rationale for planning pathways in and out of Levels 4 and 5, is to raise aspirations across the current high employment, low wage workforce.

- [School of Nursing Studies King's Lynn](#) The CWA vision is to provide all local nurse training to **meet the workforce needs of Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH)**, support the hospital to address CQC (Care Quality Commission) improvement actions and reduce costs and provide career progression opportunities for local people. The vision was launched in December 2019 by Principal and CEO David Pomfret and key stakeholders. Town Deal Accelerated Funding of £597k was achieved in December 2020; a lead practice educator was seconded from QEH in spring 2021; the building was erected in February 2022; the first cohort of Level 5 trainee nursing apprentices was recruited in January 2022; Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) unconditional accreditation was achieved in March 2022. CWA and QEH will continue to develop the partnership and offer to meet the local needs.
 - CWA intends to research the impact that availability of affordable local accommodation would have on uptake of HE provision at the King's Lynn campus.
- 3. Drive continuous improvement of the curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of the community, is fit for future economic need, and can be measured for impact.**

Intent: Continuous review and development of the curriculum to address current and future skills needs, including cross-cutting themes, global skills requirements and LSIP emerging trends.

- **Impact/employability/transferable skills delivered across the curriculum.**

- **Address sector requirements for digital and green skills development to provide a workforce fit for current and future economic requirements.**
- CWA will continue to embed **digital skills** needs across the curriculum and address the local skills needs, including development of further programmes to address existing computing cyber security skills shortages in [Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies](#) and additional opportunities for reskilling those leaving [RAF Marham](#) and other Armed Forces, with whom the College has an existing relationship. The record of accomplishment of CWA graduates in finding graduate level jobs within the information technology (IT) industry, is extremely good; most find suitable positions in time for their graduation ceremony. It should also be noted that local labour market analysis does not really reflect the opportunities for graduates with digital degrees; many of our recent graduates' work remotely with only occasional visits to the office. For example, in conversations with three recent graduates all living in King's Lynn, their offices are in Ipswich, London and Southampton, respectively. Employers are more concerned with the skills employees can provide than where they live.
 - CWA plan to offer a degree programme enabling students to study a range of core modules with the opportunity to specialise in one of four areas:
 - Cyber Security
 - Computer Science
 - Games Development
 - IT Infrastructure and Networking.
- Currently, higher level programmes in computing cyber security are not offered in the area. To address the issue of extremely low Level 4 and 5 attainments in digital skills (Digital per 1000 residents – 0.0 to 0.1), whilst also recognising the need for some learners to remain in employed roles during their period of study, a blended higher technical offer is planned. Local provision will afford those

enrolled **access to robust student support services, focused careers guidance, and potential progression** to higher- level study.

'The Anglia Ruskin Periodic Partnership Review (October 2022) formally commended University Centre West Anglia for meeting the local needs of our students. The College engages regularly with COMPTIA.'

- **Green Skills and Net Zero Agenda** – CWA is committed to the Carbon Zero agenda and has a clear sustainability strategy; we have several projects underway with local employers, including Anglian Water @One Alliance and a team trained and driving the green skills agenda. Our intention for the forthcoming year is as follows:
 - Raise student **awareness of relevant sustainability issues** through tutorials, assignments, and competitions, so students understand their impact on changing attitudes.
 - Commission an external review of options for developing the Cambridge campus, including potential for **green energy generation**.
 - Design and plan the development of a new **green construction skills centre** at the Wisbech campus.
 - College leadership team to complete a **sustainability qualification** and encourage wider staff engagement.
 - Continue to upskill the teaching staff with relevant CPD (Continuing Professional Development) aligned to **retrofit and green skills**.
 - Include information on **environmental sustainability** in staff induction.

4. Collaborate extensively to enable CWA to inform and influence the skills agenda.

Intent: Continue to collaborate with employers, stakeholder, and strategic partners to drive the local, regional, and national skills agenda, with the aim of impacting positively on economic prosperity. CWA will be responsive to identified need, widen participation, and provide a quality of provision that meets economic and student requirements. We will:

- Work collaboratively with local and regional strategic partners, including businesses and other education providers, to contribute to socio-economic prosperity, in line with the Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs).
- Work with colleges in the region to ensure new government initiatives, such as skills boot camps, and Local Skills Improvement Fund projects are implemented effectively and that we can **deliver on the skills most necessary to our communities.**
- Use business intelligence and labour market information to plan a curriculum that is responsive to the training needs and skills priorities of the local, regional, and national economy, building a sustainable future for our students, employers, and the communities we serve, e.g., Anglian Water @One Alliance partnership.
- Design learning opportunities with **local businesses** and develop a range of complementary provision, underpinned by alternative funding, to **support their training and development needs.**
- Demonstrate system leadership by **working collaboratively** with other regional colleges, universities, training providers and business support agencies to develop an inclusive response e.g., to the creation of local skills improvement

plans, the levelling up agenda, collaborative response to government initiatives that require further funding, challenge, or clarification such as T-levels, staffing.

- Seek further funding to address local needs in addition to those identified by the LSIP scope such as Engineering and Health & Social Care.
- Engage with **local school partners** to ensure a smooth and successful transition to appropriate further and higher education.
- Design and implement a coherent adult and higher education growth plan, to develop the talent, skills and knowledge required to broaden economic opportunity.
- Secure external funding to promote and support wider community use of our existing high-quality facilities.
- Address internal skills shortages by providing an exemplar **teacher training programme**. Explore collaborative ideas with employers and FE colleagues to innovate and deliver alternative solutions.
- Continue to review and align **apprenticeship provision** with local/regional economic and business needs.
- Become a recognised centre of excellence for **collaborative research**.

Whilst planning and shaping the skills curriculum, we must be responsive to funding income streams. The main external influences arise from:

- [Department for Education](#)
- The National Government education agenda e.g., [Post-16 Skills Plan](#), [Augar Report](#), [Apprenticeship Reforms](#), [Sainsbury Review](#) and [T Levels](#)
- [Ofsted research and publications](#)
- [National Progress Measures](#)
- Utilisation of information from [UKCES data](#) for key employment areas and specifically local information
- [New Anglia LEP](#) and Cambridge and [Peterborough Combined Authority](#) priority areas for employment and future growth
 - [Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Strategy - New Anglia](#)
 - [Business Board Strategies | CPCA | The Combined Authority \(cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk\)](#)
- Demand and specific local requirements through [sector-based work academy programmes \(SWAP\)](#).
- [Overall demographic trends for 3-5 years](#)
- Demographic and transition information on individuals' specific needs from feeder schools
- [SEND \(Special Educational Needs and Disabilities\) reforms and 'The Local Offer'](#)
- Availability of specialist and technical resources, including staff, where required to underpin curriculum delivery.
- Historic application, enrolment, and retention trend information
- English, maths, and information communication technologies (ICT) skills development
- Promotion of equality of opportunity and diversity, employability skills and British Values within the curriculum

- The [Ofsted Education Inspection Framework](#) which contains a strong focus on curriculum 'intent, implementation and impact.'
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-post-16-qualifications-at-level-3-in-england--2>

5) **CORPORATION STATEMENT**

As with any mature organisation, the College is subject to internal and external audit. CWA operate within a highly robust framework of governance and control.

[Corporation – Our Board.](#)

Corporation Documents:

- [Corporation Minutes](#)
- [Search and Governance Committee](#)
- [Performance Review and Quality Committee](#)
- [Rules, Regulations and Policies](#)
- [Published Accounts](#)
- [Governance Reports](#)
- [Instruments and Articles of Government](#)
- [Audit Committee](#)
- [Chairs' Meeting Group](#)
- [Employment Policy Committee](#)
- [Finance and General Purposes](#)

CWA is committed to complying with our duty under a new section 52B of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 to review provision in relation to local needs, as proposed in the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill 2022. We will look to hold a review at least every three years to identify how well we are meeting local needs associated with securing suitable employment. We will publish our reports on our main website following this review.

On behalf of the College of West Anglia Corporation, it is hereby confirmed that the college plan as set out above reflects an agreement statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the corporation board on 30/5/23.

Signed Off:

Gill Rejzl - Chair of Governors:



Dated: 30/5/23

David Pomfret - Principal:



Dated: 30/5/23

6) HYPERLINK

<https://cwa.ac.uk/about/governance/policies-and-statements>

7) SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

- [Meeting Skills Needs: The College of West Anglia Curriculum Planning Strategy](#).
- CWA - Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025 (available on request)
- Our [College of West Anglia \(CWA\)](#) and [University Centre West Anglia \(UCWA\)](#) marketing brands are both mature and robust in terms of regional breadth and depth of reach; campaigns are informed and updated by relevant LMI and Office for National Statistics (ONS) data. Social media platforms include:
 - <https://www.facebook.com/cwacollege/>
 - https://twitter.com/cwa_college
 - <https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-college-of-west-anglia/>
 - https://www.instagram.com/cwa_college/
- CWA - Career Development Plan (available on request)
- CWA - Sustainability Strategy (available on request)