



CRAVEN COLLEGE

ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT 2025

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ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY AGREEMENT

1. PURPOSE

Craven College's commitment to the development of skills can be seen in the new Strategic Plan which was launched in September 2024 with a new vision and mission. Specific strategic aims related to skills and the relationship with employers and stakeholders in the design and development of provision (SA2, SO3 and SO4) are now made more overt. A separate Skills Plan was implemented in September 2024.

Vision

To be exceptional in everything we do

Mission

Proudly serving the community by delivering high quality education and training

Strategic Aims

- SA1 To be the college of choice for students
- SA2 To be the college of choice for employers and other stakeholders
- SA3 To be the education employer of choice in the region
- SA4 To grow an efficient and sustainable college

Strategic Objectives

- SO1 Ensure that exceptional teaching and learning is at the heart of our college
- SO2 Provide an outstanding student journey to maximise potential
- SO3 Foster highly effective partnerships with employers and stakeholders
- SO4 Deliver on the current and future skills needs of our communities and employers
- SO5 Nurture a culture of excellence, celebrating success and promoting accountability
- SO6 Seek out opportunities to grow and drive an efficient, effective and sustainable college

In October 2023 the governing body commissioned a strategic review of the College. This was carried out by the FEC and the DfE placed Based team. The review included:

- A local provision needs analysis
- Positioning and performance of the college regarding its capacity and approach to meeting local needs

The strategic aims and objectives take into account the recommendations made as a result of the strategic review (see Local Needs Duty section).

2. CONTEXT AND PLACE

We are a small general further education college, based in the market town of Skipton, North Yorkshire, 'The Gateway to the Dales.' Our unique position draws students from the dispersed towns and villages of the Yorkshire Dales, East Lancashire, and West Yorkshire (WY).

Skipton has two selective grammar schools which both have sixth-form provision. This means that most full-time students choosing Craven College have vocational ambitions or have not met the stringent entry requirements of selective schools. We have a significant proportion of students with mental health needs and are a first-choice provider for the local authority for High Needs transition. Students choose Craven College for our reputation for individualised support and the appeal of a small, friendly and semi-rural campus.

The College operates over five teaching and administration sites, with the principle Aireville campus situated on the outskirts of Skipton town. The Aireville campus comprises of four teaching buildings, a café and the Animal Management Centre with specialist rooms for aquatics, invertebrates, nocturnals, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals. The Style Academy is also on campus with fully equipped, modern salons using industry-standard, techniques and products.

The neighbouring Craven Cattle Mart provides leased premises predominantly for land-based provision, and commercial business development through Tyro Training. This environment provides real connection to the agriculture and land-based industries that make up the businesses using and situated in the Craven Cattle Mart. A substantial number of students come from an agricultural or rural home and so this connection is valuable and tangible in determining career networks and working towards their aspirational ambitions. The motor vehicle facilities located at the Auction Mart campus have recently been updated to bring them in line with modern garages and new technologies

Due to the significant growth in our construction provision over the past three years, new facilities for brickwork, plastering, painting & decorating, electrical and plumbing are being developed ready for September 2025 at the Cattle Mart site.

The Craven Arena is situated behind the Cattle Mart and provides students with first-hand experience of working and learning in competition standard equine facilities which includes an indoor arena with specialist flooring, 22 stables, an outdoor warm up arena, a horse solarium, tack and blanket rooms, on site liveries, turn out pens and a teaching area. The arena is a brand new building and is quickly growing a reputation as a competition-class venue that is being used by industry professionals to run courses and masterclasses on stable management, clinics, unaffiliated dressage, combined training and show jumping.

The Aviation Academy is based at Leeds-Bradford Airport which enables strong collaboration with major airlines operating out of the airport, providing work placements, progression into jobs and industry specific enrichment through the airport police, border force and Jet2.

Evolve is based in Ripon and supports young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, offering study programmes with a focus on work experience and skills for employment. There is very limited provision of this type in the area and destinations are outstanding in relation to starting points for these students.

Community programmes are delivered at Aireville campus and in outlying premises that are local to needs including Keighley, Settle and Burnley. These programmes are often the first study experience for some demographic groups and are informed through strong collaboration with community leaders and Job Centre Plus.

Tyro training is Craven College's business arm and provide an extensive range of training to over 500 employers.

Craven College offers a broad range of vocational and technical qualifications to young people and adults. The most popular subject sector areas are Health & Social Care, Horticulture & Forestry, Animal Care, Building & Construction, Preparation for Life & Work and Business Management. The College also delivers apprenticeships, serving a base of employers in the local area with a small provision in Scarborough that are mainly in Accounting & Finance, Construction and Service Enterprises.

Provision at the College ranges from entry level to level 6 in the subject sector areas of Construction, Equine, Countryside, Agricultural Engineering and Motor Vehicle, Hair and Beauty, Travel and Tourism, IT, Media, Performing Arts, Hospitality and Catering, Sport, Public Services, Health and Social Care, Early Years, Foundation Learning, Business, Computing, Science, Art and Design and Access to HE, ESOL, Distance Learning, Community Education and English, Maths and Functional Skills.

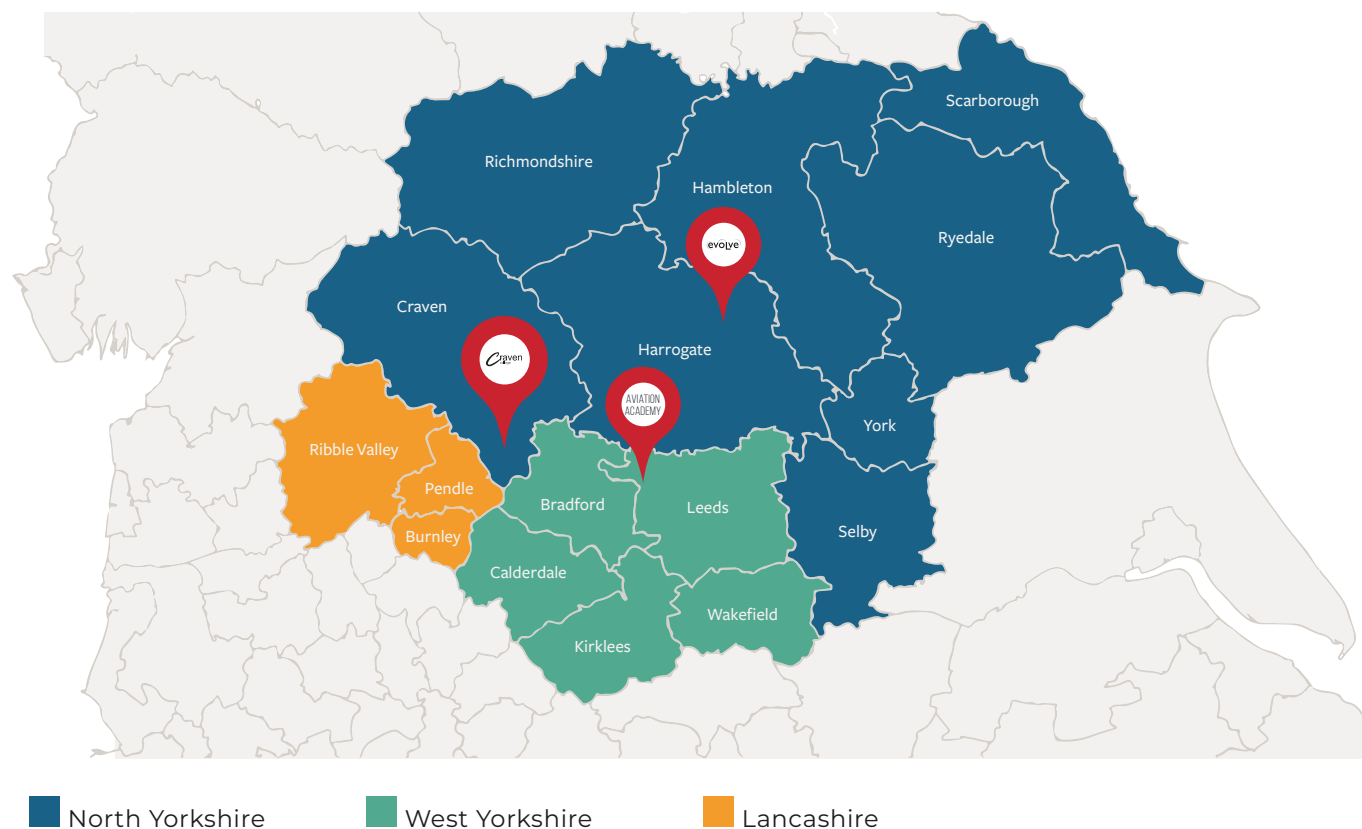
Geographical area

Due to its geographical location, Craven College attracts students from 3 different local authorities, West Yorkshire (WY), North Yorkshire (NY) and East Lancashire. Of these, WY is an established devolved mayoral combined authority, and NY has recently become devolved.

Geographical data by district and ward for 16-18 funded learners demonstrates that Craven College attracts almost two thirds of its 16-18 students from these surrounding local authority areas, with nearly half from Bradford Local Authority and a significant proportion from Lancashire (mainly Pendle). Both Bradford and Pendle local authorities are within c.5 miles of the main College site with strong transport links to the two respectively. The students that attend Craven College from the Leeds or Harrogate district are the ones that attend either The Aviation Academy (TAA) at Leeds Bradford Airport or Evolve at Ripon. The majority of 16-18 learners that live in Craven district and who continue in education, tend to study locally, with most split between Craven College and local school sixth forms. Of the 16-19 students who live in Craven District and studied A Levels or vocational subjects at an FE Institution in 22/23, 62% studied at Craven College.

ONS Population Projections by Local Authority District show increases in 16-17 years olds over the coming years for both Bradford and Pendle with a small reduction for Craven. 16-17-year-old populations are forecast to grow by c.6% and 12% for Bradford and Pendle respectively with Craven forecasting a contraction in this population over the period. Bradford also shows the greatest growth nationally over the next 5 years (decile 10).

The rural nature of much of the areas that Craven College serves means that education and training is less accessible



Economic and social characteristics

There are varying levels of deprivation amongst the students at Craven and these diverse levels of deprivation play a role in the curriculum that is offered.

Craven has low levels of deprivation with more than 85% of the population in band 6 or higher. Most of the college students from Craven are from areas of low deprivation with 25% of 16-18 year old students and 24% of adult students coming from band 6. 42% of 16-18 and 40% of adult students are in band 7 or higher. Only 7.8% of 16-18-year-old and 8.4% of adult students come from very deprived areas (band 1 to 3).

This is different to Bradford local authority where 65% of the adult population and 71% of the 16-18 population are in the most deprived bands (bands 1-3). In terms of the students attending the college from Bradford, 44% of 16-18 and 54% of adults are in bands 1 to 3.

Leeds is a mixed picture in terms of college students with over half of 16-18 year olds in band 7 or higher (65%). This compares to only 32% of the population in Leeds. A significant percentage of the 16-18 year old cohort are in bands 1-3 (25%) but this is low when compared to 50% of the population.

In Pendle over 60% of the 16-18 population is in the most deprived bands 1 to 3 but only 26% of college students from Pendle are in these bands. Most of the 16-18 year old students at Craven College are in band 4. Over half of the adult population in Pendle are in bands 1-3 but most adult college students are in band 4 (compared to 13% of the population).

Similar to the trend in NY where 23% of residents are at retirement age, the Craven district has an increasing older demographic with a steady increase in those aged 65 or older (27%) whilst those aged 64 and under has been decreasing. The age profile for West Yorkshire (median age 38) is broadly similar to the national average (median age 40) although Bradford has a younger population with a media age of 35.

More than 50% of people aged 16-64 in Craven district have a NVQ 4 or higher compared to 40% in England. This is also true for NY where 41% are educated to level 4 or higher. However, the situation is very different in WY with 34% qualified to this level, and in Bradford only 26% are educated to level 4 or higher. The proportion of the population with no formal qualifications is small in NY at 5% compared to 8% in West Yorkshire and 7% nationally. In Bradford however, 15% of the working age population have no formal qualifications.

Employment rates vary across the communities that the College serve. In the Craven district employment rates are 79% compared to 78% in NY and 76% in England. Employment rates in West Yorkshire are 75% but are considerably lower in Bradford at 66%.

In common with the rest of Yorkshire and Humber, more than 85% of businesses in the Craven district are microbusinesses with 0-9 employees. When considering Skipton, this number is 99% of businesses.

Within both West and North Yorkshire, the largest areas of employment are wholesale/retail, health & social care and manufacturing. Agriculture, hospitality and mining are strongly represented in the North Yorkshire's employment base relative to the national benchmark.

Construction, manufacturing & agriculture are the most strongly represented industries in Craven with the biggest employment sectors within Skipton being business admin & support services and financial & insurance. This is mainly due to the headquarters of Skipton Building Society being based in the town.

Both West and North Yorkshire have significant skills shortage and upskilling issues and have a deficit of higher skilled employment, particularly in the higher level STEM professional roles.

Economic strengths of North Yorkshire and West Yorkshire

- Strong knowledge economy with high quality universities and colleges
- Significant graduate pipeline that is attractive to employers
- Apprenticeships embedded with a large provider base
- Broad and diverse economy with some specialisms

Specific Strengths - West Yorkshire

- Specialisms in manufacturing with emerging strength in technical services
- Home to the UK's fastest growing digital sector
- Total employment in green economy is projected to grow by 104% between 2020 and 2023 with jobs growth focussed on Stem roles (engineers, scientists and technicians)

Specific Strengths – North Yorkshire

- High proportion of higher skilled, non-manual sectors such as education, finance and professional services
- High proportion of land-based businesses making the area distinct
- Low numbers of people seeking work compared to other areas
- Growth in key sectors such as rail and construction with high demand for staff
- World-renowned expertise and facilities exist in important areas such as agritech, bioeconomy and life sciences
- High number of job vacancies in highly skilled sectors such as health and engineering
- Existing partnerships such as Higher York, BioYorkshire and the Yorkshire and Humber Institute of Technology demonstrate the commitment of local organisations to boosting local skills
- Vibrant visitor economy which offers flexible work to a broad range of people

Economic Challenges in North and West Yorkshire

- High number of hard to fill vacancies and skills gaps in important sectors
- Increased recruitment needs linked to increased replacement demand
- Replacements needs will create broad based labour requirement across most of the industries and sectors, even in the low skilled occupations
- Under-investment in skills by employers
- Upskilling driven by new working practices, development of new products and services, new technologies or equipment

Specific Challenges - West Yorkshire

- Acute deprivation is widespread across WY's communities and is closely associated with a lack of skills within those neighbourhoods
- Lack of access for the disadvantaged to education and training opportunities, including apprenticeships and higher education is a key barrier to inclusive growth and social mobility
- 400,000 adults in West Yorkshire lack foundation digital skills and nearly 0.5m workers lack essential digital skills for the workplace
- 24% of all vacancies in West Yorkshire are skill shortage vacancies and many relating to higher skilled "STEM" professional roles
- Health (e.g. nursing & midwifery), engineering (concentrated in manufacturing) and digital professionals (largely in information & communication businesses) and skilled trades (e.g. food preparation & hospitality, building trades and vehicle trades), face acute shortages
- 59% of shortage vacancies are due to a lack of specialist /job specific skills and knowledge
- Generic skills most in demand are communications, management, customer services and sales
- Specialist skills most in demand are marketing, finance, agile methodology and auditing.
- Skills gaps seen in 15% of employers, mainly in business services, education, hotel & restaurant and wholesale and retail
- Gaps are operational skills in lower skilled staff reflecting staff turnover and recent recruitment
- Replacements needs will create broad based labour requirement across most of the industries and sectors, even in the low skilled occupations
- Upskilling needs amongst 64% of employers

Specific Challenges - North Yorkshire

- Ageing workforce leading to potential labour shortages in people are not suitably trained
- Increased recruitment needs linked to replacement demand
 - Hospitality, wholesale and retail impacted by this in particular. According to YNY LEP labour market analysis the replacement demands are expected to create 14 times as many employment opportunities as net growth and this is expected across all the main occupational groups
- Issues related to recruitment of specialist trades in construction
- 68% of employers have significant upskilling needs linked to job specific skills.
- 20% of vacancies in the area are in hard-to-fill skills shortage-based role with construction, manufacturing, hospitality, wholesale & retail and health and social work being the sectors most susceptible to skill shortages
- Limited digital connectivity particular in rural areas
- Limited and stagnant productivity growth
- The demand for digital skills at all levels outstrips supply
- Tight labour market due to changes to the available workforce as a result of Brexit, the pandemic and the ageing population has put extra pressure on businesses trying to recruit locally
- Automation in industries such as retail and food manufacture reduces the need for people with lower skilled jobs

3. APPROACH TO DEVELOPING ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

The College undergoes rigorous curriculum planning to ensure that vocational programmes meet the demands of current and projected labour market intelligence. Provision for students at Craven College is aligned to national and regional priorities.

Curriculum planning and course approval processes are robust in determining this alignment through rounds of proposal, approval, amendment and final authorisation. All curriculum offers require senior leadership authorisation which is determined by alignment to skills needs, high quality education provision and strategic goals.

We recognise the strength that partnership provides and continue to explore opportunities to develop and continually improve inclusive provision. The College works collaboratively on meeting skills needs and informing intent through a wide network of organisations including employers, community, civic and education organisations.

Colleges across York, North Yorkshire, and East Riding work closely together in a proactive, collaborative approach to ensure that there are sufficient options available for the communities served by the colleges. Leaders of the colleges work carefully together to ensure that the skills market is not saturated.






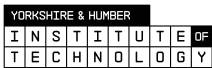
Colleges have worked together on funded projects, such as the Local Skills Improvement Plan and Local Skills Improvement Fund. These projects have been highly successful and delivered measurable outcomes for the communities the colleges work to serve. This can be seen in this published booklet highlighting the collaboration done on the LSIF https://issuu.com/wharnccliffe/docs/lsif_new




There is a Yorkshire and Humber Institute of Technology that most colleges across Yorkshire and Humber, including Craven College, are members of.

The colleges in the York and North Yorkshire region are:

- Askham Bryan
- Bishop Burton
- Craven College
- Darlington College
- Heart of Yorkshire College Group: Selby College
- Henshaws College
- Luminate College Group: Harrogate College
- TEC Partnership: East Riding College and Scarborough TEC

Key Partnerships

EMPLOYER/STAKEHOLDER	NATURE OF RELATIONSHIP
Craven Cattle Mart 	<p>Craven College has a major on-site presence at the Craven Cattle Mart where we deliver our land based provision. This is a long-standing relationship with a number of current projects being delivered in partnership.</p>
Jet2, Leeds Bradford Airport  	<p>Craven College's Aviation Academy is an ABTA educational partner and has curriculum partnerships with Jet2 and Leeds Bradford Airport (LBA) which means that they recruit directly from the Aviation Academy for students who have followed an industry-standard and industry-informed programme.</p>
Craven Locality Board	<p>A partnership arrangement between the college, primary and secondary schools, nurseries and the local authority to develop an overall strategy and action plan for school improvement and SEND and inclusion across the locality.</p>
Skipton Business Improvement District 	<p>The College sits on the Board of Directors and works with the BID group to develop projects that benefit businesses in the local area.</p>
Skipton District and Town Council 	<p>Working on projects to revive Skipton High Street and bring education, training & skills development to the heart of the community.</p>
Yorkshire & Humber Institute of Technology 	<p>The Y&H IoT is a partnership between a number of FE Colleges, including Craven College, employers and universities, to collaborate on curriculum development and increase the amount of technical Level 4 and Level 5 qualifications and pathways available for young people, based on the industry and skills need in the local area. Craven College has been focussing on the use of technology such as drones and VR in conservation and land based industries.</p>

EMPLOYER/STAKEHOLDER	NATURE OF RELATIONSHIP
British Association of Shooting and Conservation (BASC), National Gamekeepers Organisation (NGO), Gamekeepers Welfare Trust (GWT) The Moorland Association, Yorkshire Dales Moorland Group, Bolton Abbey Estate, Castle Bolton Estate, Yorkshire Dales National Park, Ribble Rivers Trust, Jamie's Farm, The Deep, Tropical World, Yorkshire Peat Partnership, RDA, BHS, Equine Supplements, Saracen Horse Feeds, Yorkshire Dales Moorland Group, Skipton Gun Room and Coniston Estate Shooting	<p>These employers have played a crucial role in establishing the Level 2 Countryside Worker Apprenticeship as a pathway to training the next generation of gamekeepers. These industry experts are in full support of an apprenticeship that combines hands-on training with theoretical knowledge. Their future input as guest speakers will ensure that the program meets industry needs, providing apprentices with practical skills while also addressing the evolving demands of the countryside management sector. This collaborative effort ensures a well-trained workforce capable of managing and conserving rural landscapes, supporting wildlife, and maintaining sustainable land practices.</p>
North Yorkshire Combined Authority 	<p>We have a good relationship with NYCA at various levels and are actively involved with the LSIPs, industry specific steering groups and delivery of Skills Bootcamps.</p>
Northern Estates Services Limited, Ainsty Timber Management (ATM LTD) 	<p>Examples of two large companies where we deliver skills bootcamps in forestry and rural skills to upskill their employees.</p>
West Yorkshire Combined Authority 	<p>Work with WYCA to deliver adult training and upskilling to residents in WY.</p>

4. CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL, REGIONAL, LOCAL PRIORITIES

After consultation with employers and providers in West Yorkshire and North Yorkshire, West and North Yorkshire Chambers of Commerce who are leading on the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) for these regions have identified the following key priorities.

The Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) for North Yorkshire, West Yorkshire and Lancashire continue to inform our curriculum plans and our accountability statement.

York & North Yorkshire LSIP priorities:

- Digital and technology
- Agri-skills*
- Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing (including Rail)
- Construction
- Health and Social Care
- Visitor Economy*

Cross cutting themes:

- Low carbon
- Innovation
- Green skills
- Emerging Technology
- Rurality
- Collaboration
- Transferable skills

West Yorkshire LSIP sector priorities:

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

These are underpinned by the following themes:

- Net zero transition and sustainability
- Transferable skills
- Equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)
- Leadership and management
- Digitisation and automation

Lancashire LSIP sector priorities and cross cutting themes:

- Manufacturing
- Construction
- Transport & Distribution
- Digital
- Low Carbon & Sustainability
- Hospitality, Leisure & Tourism*
- Health & Social Care
- Farming & Agriculture*

The sectors and themes in orange reflect priorities that are common with York & North Yorkshire LSIP.

*Hospitality, Leisure & Tourism has cross over with Visitor Economy
* Farming & Agriculture has cross over with Agri-skills

National priorities have been updated to take into account the Skills England report, Industrial Strategy Priorities and Plan for Change and are listed below:

- Advanced manufacturing
- Creative industries
- Defence
- Digital and technologies
- Financial services
- Life sciences
- Professional and business services
- Clean energy industries
- Construction
- Health

Below are the College's strategic aims and objectives in delivering provision that meets local, regional and national priorities.

College Strategic Aims and Objectives	Contribution to National, Regional and Local Priorities
1. Adult learning offer to continue to focus on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Upskilling needs linked to job specific skills (particularly in skill shortage areas) - Development of bite-size and modular courses for businesses - Careers advice and coaching as an integral part of the adult offer - Develop targeted provision for rural communities in NY and deprived communities in WY - Offer package of provision to support employment for under-represented groups 	<p>Links to NY People Priority on transferable skills, upskilling and re-skilling,</p> <p>Links to NY Businesses Priority on flexible modes of delivery</p> <p>Links to WY and NY Priority Sectors Visitor Economy, Health & Social Care</p> <p>Link to National Priority Mathematics, Digital</p>
2. Deliver T levels in the following key sectors over the next 4 years <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building Services Engineering for Construction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Electrotechnical Engineering - Digital - Business and Marketing - Agriculture, Environmental & Animal Care - Construction & the Built Environment - Education & Childcare 	<p>Links to NY and WY Priority Sectors Construction, Manufacturing, Health and Social Care, Engineering, Agri-skills, Digital & Technology, Creative Industries</p> <p>Links to National Priority Construction, Digital, Health & Social Care, Science & Mathematics, Engineering</p>
3. Continue to expand Skills Bootcamps for land-based provision	<p>Link to NY Priority Sector Agri-skills</p> <p>Links to NY People Priority on accessing skills to support progression into work</p> <p>Links to LSIP theme of Rurality</p>
4. Continue to expand apprenticeship provision in key priority sectors over the next 3 years <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Construction - Electrical engineering - Motor vehicle and agricultural engineering - Early Years 	<p>Links to NY and WY Priority Sectors Construction, Manufacturing, Health and Social Care and Visitor Economy</p>
5. Increase travel & tourism and aviation provision in response to need from aviation industry partners	<p>Links to NY Priority Sector Visitor Economy</p> <p>Links to NY Businesses Priority on enabling businesses to upskill staff</p>

5. LOCAL NEEDS DUTY

We are committed to complying with our duty under 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. As described earlier, the strategic review of the college carried out by the FEC and the DfE place-based team in October 2023 included an analysis of how the college's provision meets local needs. The LPNA has helped to inform the College's medium-term curriculum strategy including the identification of priorities for growth based on evidence of need and avoiding duplication/overlap with other providers. The LPNA has also informed considerations regarding the reconfiguration of the curriculum offer to address particular challenges.

We will review our Accountability Agreement at least every three years to ensure our Curriculum is meeting the needs of learners, employers and the communities we serve. We will publish a report on our main website following this review. We will factor in any actions from this report into our Accountability Agreement plan and this will also influence our Strategic Plan.

CORPORATION STATEMENT

On behalf of the Craven College Corporation, it is hereby confirmed that the college plan as set out above reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the corporation at their meeting on 3rd April 2025.

The plan will be published on the college's website within three months of the start of the new academic year and can be accessed from the following link: <https://www.craven-college.ac.uk/reports-and-policies/>

Chair of Governors

Principal/Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

Dr Alison Birkinshaw

Mrs Anita Lall



Date 03 April 2025

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

[York and North Yorkshire Labour Market Analysis 2021](#)

[York and North Yorkshire Labour Market Analysis 2023](#)

[West Yorkshire Combined Authority Local Skills Report March 2021](#)

[West Yorkshire Annex Core Indicators March 2021](#)

[West Yorkshire Local Skills Report Jan 2022](#)

[West Yorkshire Annex Core Indicators Jan 2022](#)

[Ofsted report](#)

[Financial statements](#)

[EMSI data](#)

[RCU Vector Deprivation data](#)

[West Yorkshire LSIP Report](#)

[York and North Yorkshire LSIP Report](#)

[Lancashire LSIP Report](#)



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