

Annual Accountability Statement and Local Needs Duty – July 2026



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Annual Accountability Statement and Local Needs Duty

1. Purpose: College Vision, Mission and Values

In September 2024, a new Strategic Plan was launched for the period September 2024 – July 2028. This sets out the College's vision, mission, values and goals.



Our Vision

To be a vibrant, sustainable college, exceeding the expectations of all those we serve

Our Mission

To support our local communities and to transform lives through the development of technical, professional and personal knowledge and skills

Our Values



- We are an **INCLUSIVE** College, welcoming employees and learners of all backgrounds, ages and abilities
- We are **COLLABORATIVE**, working in partnership internally and externally to achieve shared goals
- We are **RESPECTFUL** of each other in our words, actions and behaviours
- We are **AMBITIOUS** for our learners, our staff and our College, always striving for excellence
- We are **HONEST** and open, and act with integrity in all that we do
- We provide a physically and emotionally **SAFE** environment, where people can be themselves, try out ideas and thrive

Our Goals:



These goals are supported by eleven 'Plans on a Page' each owned by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. These detail annual milestones and actions required to achieve the high-level goals above. Governors monitor progress against the plans and the annual milestones through their annual cycle of meetings.

The eleven plans are for:

1. Curriculum	2. Apprenticeships	3. Higher Education	4. Employer Engagement
5. Teaching and Learning	6. Student Experience	7. People and Culture	8. Marketing
9. Information and Learning Technologies	10. Estates	11. Finance	

2. Context and Place

2.1 The Communities We Serve

Colchester Institute (the College) provides professional and technical education and training for the largely rural and coastal populations of the Colchester City and the districts of Braintree and Tendring in North Essex. The College operates from two main delivery sites (Colchester and Braintree) and three outreach centres (the Adult Skills Centres in Dovercourt and Clacton and the Harwich Energy Skills Centre), all of which are found in Tendring. The College's annual turnover will rise again, to over £52m in 2026/7.

The **Tendring** District has a considerably lower job density ratio (total jobs to population) than the East of England and UK averages, higher than average numbers of benefit claimants, and considerably lower than average numbers of residents qualified at levels 3 or above and 4 or above. Earnings are also lower than the UK and East of England average.



These data underline the importance of the College's offer in Tendring, which is successful in supporting adults into (or back into) work, or to gain higher paid, better skilled work than the seasonal and casual work that many young people and adults rely on, in this coastal district. The College's offer is based around both general and subject specific employability skills – literacy, numeracy and digital skills, with specialist offers in Healthcare, Construction and Engineering.

The College's **Braintree** Campus (the former Braintree College, pre 2010) is the place of learning for over 400 (10% of the College's total) 16-18 year old full time students, with a particular focus on the skills needs of the District; Construction, Engineering, Digitech and Business. Programmes for adults in Welding and Construction are also popular, and in Engineering, Apprenticeship programmes complement full-time study programmes, supporting the many Engineering employers in the District. The District has a particularly low level of residents holding Level 4 qualifications and the Campus provides opportunities up to Level 3, providing an entry point to university for younger residents seeking a vocational or technical alternative to A Levels.

The campus is newly built and offers some of the very best vocational training resources in the Eastern region in Creative Digital Media, Engineering and the Construction trades and the College has ambitious plans for further campus development to introduce or re-introduce new vocational subjects where applications to the College are high or growing. In 2026/27, the College will be introducing two new study programmes to the Braintree Campus: a full-time Level 1 programme in 'Working with Adults and Children', combining elements of Early Years and Health and Social Care, for College entrants with low prior attainment but aspirations to enter the care sector – another area of high demand, both locally to the Campus and across the District.

Colchester was awarded City status in 2023. The College works in close partnership with the City Council, and promotes Colchester as a great place to live, work, study and establish or grow a business. The very large majority of the College's programme delivery (around 93%) takes place at or from the Colchester Campus.



2.2 Economic and Social Characteristics (Braintree, Colchester, Tendring)

The College makes extensive use of local Labour Market Intelligence to inform curriculum planning.

The data in the table below underlines the critical importance of a broad vocational offer for adults and young people across the three local authority areas the College mainly serves. Data is drawn from [Nomis](#), based on the most recent data available. Arrows show whether the figure is higher or lower than reported last year.

Measure	Date of data collection	Colchester	Braintree	Tendring	East of England	Great Britain*
Qualifications at Level 3 and above	Jan 2025 – Dec 2025	72.7% ↑	68.2% ↑	59.9% ↑	66.1% ↑	69.0% ↑
Qualifications at Level 4 and above	Jan 2025 – Dec 2025	42.7% ↓	44.3% ↓	37.6% ↑	44.2% ↑	48.6% ↑
Claimant count – out of work benefits	Not seasonally adjusted – Apr 2026	3.1% ↓	2.7% =	4.2% ↓	3.3% ↓	4.0% ↓
Jobs Density (total jobs per population)	2024	0.83 ↑	0.61 ↓	0.59 ↓	0.83 ↓	0.85 ↓
Earnings by place of work (gross weekly)	2025	£753.4 ↑	£723.3 ↓	£681.1 ↑	£766.6 ↑	£766.6 ↑

*No comparisons possible as previous year's data were for the entire United Kingdom.

The following data is taken from the most recent (2024) Nomis Labour Market Profile and is of particular relevance to the College's planning process. As no update has been provided for 2025, the context below remains unchanged since the 2025/6 Accountability Statement.

The population across the three districts (497,300 in 2021) has grown by nearly 17,000 in the last five years and is predicted to grow by a further 17,500 in the next five years. There will be strong and steady growth in the number of school leavers from now to 2029 but whereas in much of the country, there will be a decline after this date, this is not predicted in Colchester due to significant planned additional housing including the commencement in 2028 of a 7,500 home Garden Community just four miles from Campus.

- In the 10 years between the 2011 and 2021 censuses, the **population** of Colchester increased by 11.3% (England average 6.6%), in Tendring the population grew by 7.3% and in Braintree by 5.5%.
- In **Tendring**, retail is the largest industry at 17.5% (vs 13.7% nationally) followed by Health at 15% compared to 13.9% nationally. Only 5% of the working population are employed in Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities compared to 9.3% nationally. Manufacturing is underrepresented in the working population of Tendring at 6.2% compared to 7.5% nationally (although the gap has decreased since the previous year), but Construction is notably higher at 7.5% compared to 4.8% nationally.
- **Braintree**, the largest industry sector is Retail at 19.2% compared to 13.7% nationally. 9.6% of the working population are employed in Manufacturing compared to 7.5% nationally. Employment in Construction is higher than nationally, also at 9.6%, considerably higher than the national figure of 4.8%. Only 9.6% of those in work do so in the Human Health and Social Activities sector, compared to 13.9% nationally.

- In **Colchester**, roles in Retail account for 16.5% of the working population compared to 13.7% nationally. The sector which employs the largest percentage of residents is Health, accounting for 18.8% of the working population compared to 13.9% nationally. 11.8% are employed in Education compared to 8.6% nationally. Construction employs 4.7% compared to 4.9% nationally and Manufacturing just 5.3% compared to 7.6% nationally.

Whilst Retail features highly as an employment sector across all three districts, the College does not provide direct education or training programmes in this area, having learned over a number of years that larger retailers run their own training programmes and smaller retailers tend to train 'on the job'. However, 'customer service' forms an important part of a number of programmes offered to young people and adults at the College, in particular in areas such as the service industries (salon studies and hospitality).

The above data support recent choices that the College has made in making significant capital investments in Construction, Health and Social Care, and Early Years provision and to continue to work with local employers to secure growth in Engineering in Braintree. The forecast growth in the number of young people over the coming five years supports the College's plans to find suitable vocational and technical alternatives to the current Level 3 programmes that will be defunded under current government plans, through a combination of T Levels, V Levels and other funded technical and professional qualifications. This will include a broadening of the apprenticeship offer as well as embarking on carefully selected T Level programmes, where there will be industry demand and quality work placement availability. In Summer 2026, the College will see the first leavers from its second two-year T Level programme (in Professional Construction) which commenced in 2024/5 with all learners undertaking high quality industry placements during the year.

In addition to Early Years, Construction and Health, the College will commence delivery of four further T Levels in September 2026: two in Digital (Digital Software Development and Digital Support and Security); Business and Administration (Leadership and Management) and Creative and Design (Content Creation and Development). T Levels in Science, Engineering and Marketing will commence in 2027.

The College's recent diversification in its Adult offer (through the Skills Bootcamp Programme and a number of Sector-Based Work Academy Programmes) to help combat skills shortages in particular areas) will assist in addressing the imminent reduction in working-age adults, as so many approach retirement.

The College underwent a full inspection by **Ofsted** in October 2024, under the Enhanced Inspection Framework. Alongside a finding of **Good** in all eight judgement areas, the College was recognised to be making a **STRONG** contribution to meeting skills needs, based on evidence of employer co-design and employer co-delivery across all subject sectors.

2.3 Colchester Institute Provision 2025/26 and 2026/27

The College meets the skills development needs of over 9,000 students each year. Programmes are full or part time, classroom-based or work-based, with Apprenticeships ranging from Level 2 to Level 6 and classroom-based programmes from Entry Level to Level 7 – providing important ladders of opportunity. Some programmes of learning are very short in duration whilst others are completed overall several years.

The breakdown by provision type in 2025/6 was as follows:

Full Time 16-19 FE Students	4,250	Higher Education Students (full and part time)	210	Adults (full and part time)	2,190
Apprentices	1,710	Full Cost delegates (mainly short courses)	1,000	TOTAL	9,360

Use of local plans, such as the Draft 2026 *Essex Local Skills Improvement Plan (2.0)*, not yet published but shared with Essex colleges; *Colchester Economic Development Strategy*, the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy in combination with LMI (such as that from [Nomis](#) ensures a well-designed curriculum which provides high quality and relevant education for a large cross section of learners. These data sources are supplemented by direct discourse with hundreds of employers across the broad range of sectors that the College supports, which provides a rich source of information about the skills, knowledge and behaviours they require in their current and future workforce.

Study Programmes for 16-19 year olds – 2025/26 and 2026/27

There is a clear divide in Colchester's **16-18** offer, with the opportunity for 16-year olds to pursue either a largely academic – A Level – route (at The Sixth Form College, or at one of four school sixth forms); or to take up professional and technical education and training – either classroom based or work-based – at Colchester Institute.

In **2025/26**, 4,374 young people chose this route and were engaged in professional, technical and applied general Study Programmes across a very broad range of vocational subjects with the largest numbers in skills priority areas such as Construction, Engineering, Health and Early Years, Digitech, Business and Finance. This represented an increase of over 150 young students on the previous year (and 450 in two years) as a result of rising demand for vocational programmes, and a mark of the College's strong reputation locally. In 2024/25, 340 young people took up a place at university at the end of two or three years of study, representing 45% of the eligible cohort. Of these, 85 went onto degrees in Health and Social Care, 80 Digital and Technology, 53 into the Creative Arts, and 33 into Business. The remainder pursued further education programmes (including apprenticeships), or secured work or self-employment. Of these, 70% of destinations, are into course-related study or work with the top four destination sectors being Construction, Leisure and Hospitality, Digital and Engineering. Student achievement rates were amongst the very highest in the East of England at 85% in 2024/25, with final outcomes for 25/26 still unknown at the time of publication of this Statement.

Looking forward to **2026/27**, new programmes include a Level 3, 'Arts for Screen and Theatre'; T Levels in Business and Administration; Digital Software Development; Digital Support and Security; and Content Creation and Production. There will also be a new AAQ in Computing offered as a bridge between Level 2 and the new T Levels. At Level 2, a new course 'Working in Sport' will be offered, and for the first time there will be a Level 1 Sport offer, and a combined Level 1 Early Years and Health programme - 'Working with Adults and Children' at the Braintree campus. This reintroduces Health as a subject to the Braintree Campus and it is hoped that this will, in time, facilitate a Level 2 progression course, providing programmes in Health at the campus – a much needed sector in the District. In addition to the College's 'Access to Education and Employment' programme, aimed at those wishing to pursue an apprenticeship, but still lacking the maths, English or employability skills to commence an Apprenticeship, there will be a new NEET prevention programme, starting in January 2027. This will be an opportunity to re-engage students who have fallen away from other courses either at Colchester Institute or with another provider.

A key priority for 2026/27 will be to strengthen progression, participation and learner confidence across the 16–18 curriculum. Curriculum teams will continue to work collaboratively with support services, employers and wider partners to ensure learners are placed on the right programme, supported to remain engaged, and prepared effectively for their next steps. This approach will support the College's ambition to increase successful progression into further study, apprenticeships and employment, while reducing the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training through clear pathways, targeted intervention and an ambitious, inclusive curriculum offer.

The first Essex Youth Hub will be established in Tendring from Spring 2026 and the College is already in talks with DWP Hertfordshire and Essex about collaborative opportunities to support young people back into education, training and employment. The College's Adult Skills Centres in Harwich and Clacton will play a key part in providing accessible literacy, numeracy and employability training to both under and over 18s.

Adult Provision 2025/26 and 2026/27

There is a broad offer for adult learners through the College providing lifelong learning opportunities to over 2,000 adults, who between them will undertake around 3,500 learning aims. Our curriculum intent for adults through its close partnership with the Department for Work and Pensions is largely focussed on supporting adults to pursue a range of qualifications, often through SWAP (Sector Work based Academy Programmes) delivery aimed at securing meaningful destinations including work and further study. In addition to Adult Skills Fund funded activity, the College was particularly active in 2025/26 (Wave 6), through the Essex Skills Bootcamps programme with 205 participants (the largest provider in Essex). Programmes were offered in Colchester, Braintree and within industry in subjects such as Engineering, Construction, Childminding, Spectator Security, Learning Support, Emergency Medical Response, and Renewables. In June 2026, the College delivered its first Plant Operator Bootcamp – through a newly formed partnership with L Lynch and Essex County Council. The programme, is delivered from the campus's brand new accredited **CPCS (Construction Plant Competence Scheme)** training centre (built in eight months from concept to launch) and will continue to train hundreds, and over time thousands, of plant operatives to provide vital earthworks support to the many nationally significant infrastructure and housebuilding projects locally and regionally, including Sizewell C, Lower Thames Crossing and, closer to home, the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community. The first cohort of trainees commenced in June 2026 and all secured relevant, permanent employment at the end of the programme.

Trainees on this and other Construction programmes also benefit from the College's **Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS)** training and test facilities. These are rarely found in colleges, but Colchester Institute with its high volumes of Construction courses, has two such facilities, one in Dovercourt and one in Colchester for the benefit of young people and adults training for the Construction sector. The Colchester facility opened in 2025, and will enable hundreds of trainees to access work placements, providing high quality work-related learning, properly preparing students for employment and self-employment when their programmes end.

Vital to the College's commitment to retraining adults for work has been the continued development of the Community Support Engagement Officer (CSEO) role. Success has been such that an additional role has been funded through the bootcamp initiative and SPF projects, increasing progression to work outcomes to more than 150.

The College has engaged positively with Colchester City Council and Tendring District Council in relation to the opportunities presented by the Shared Prosperity Fund which came to an end 1st April 2026. Five projects in total have been completed all of which met or exceeded expected outcomes.

1. **Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS)** – support to establish a CSCS testing centre at the Colchester and to provide a second Community Support Engagement Officer to boost employment across the range of STEM subjects (COLCHESTER).
2. An extension of the successful '**Digitising Construction**' programme, providing assistance to Construction employers in modernising and digitising their business, technical and promotional activities; COLCHESTER AND TENDRING.
3. Project to provide short programmes to economically inactive or career-changing adults into the **Care Sector** (COLCHESTER).
4. Provision of a fully funded post of **Employer and Business Development Officer – One Colchester**, aimed at increasing the number of apprenticeships available in the Colchester District, through active engagement and networking with employers. (COLCHESTER).
5. Delivery of a Pathways to Net Zero programme to SMEs in Tendring with fees met or partially met through SPF funds (TENDRING).

From an industry supportive / commercial perspective, 2025/26 has seen the development of additional commercial offers aligned to skills demand identified through the LSIP, working closely with employers involved with major infrastructure projects and CETEC responsibilities. Through the creation of dedicated social media marketing communities and Bootcamp subsidies, commercial renewables and gas courses have seen particular growth in demand. With Construction a current priority, over 550 professional delegates received high-quality training, ranging from CSCS cards to low temperature heating design courses many programmes being legislative i.e. enabling delegates to continue working in their fields.

Looking forward to **2026/27**, three clear themes continue to be priorities.

- Supporting economically inactive adults into meaningful work or next level study with a focus on the young (18 – 24 year olds).
- Supporting the significant and urgent skills requirements for the plethora of local and regional infrastructure and construction projects.
- Meeting the College's Clean Energy Technical Excellence status responsibilities.

Other new programmes for adults commencing in 2026 will include an online Level 3 programme in Children and Young People's Workforce; a Forklift Training SWAP; a Level 1 Certificate in the Facilities industry, and a range of accredited programmes at Levels 1-3 aimed at upskilling existing automotive engineers, supported by the College's new Electric and Hybrid Vehicle Centre which will open late in 2026.

Adult destinations are also strong. Destinations were collected for 1277 learners (83% of the cohort). Of the 1,059 learners for whom a destination was collected, over 70% went into a destination (further study or work) related to their studies at the College. Over 55% of the 1,059 pursued another further education aim, 30% immediately secured employment and nine individuals progressed to apprenticeships.

Apprenticeships 2025/26 and 2026/27

During **2025/26**, Colchester Institute continued to strengthen and diversify its **apprenticeship** offer. The College became an approved centre with the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) and the Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply (CIPS), reducing reliance on subcontracted provision and increasing direct delivery capacity. Alongside the development of many new employer relationships, strategic partnerships were established with North West Anglia Foundation Trust (NWAFT) and Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service, extending the reach and impact of apprenticeship provision across key sectors. The year also saw the successful launch of the College's first Apprenticeship Recognition and Rewards Event, attended by more than 300 employers, apprentices and stakeholders, alongside the introduction of new apprenticeship standards including the Level 2 Engineering Operative and Level 4 Construction Design and Build Technician apprenticeships. Overall, performance remains strong, with the provision on track to achieve the targets set out within the Apprenticeship Accountability Framework and well positioned to support future growth and employer demand.

Looking forward to **2026/27**, the College's apprenticeship provision will continue to deliver strong outcomes for apprentices and employers. Following achievement rates in excess of 72% in 2024/25 and a predicted achievement rate of 74% in 2025/26, the College has set an ambitious target of 75% achievement for 2026/27 (over 10 points higher than the most recent national rate). This will be supported through high-quality teaching, learning and assessment, robust progress monitoring and a continued focus on apprentice success, progression and positive destinations.

Responding to employer demand and emerging workforce priorities, the College will continue to evolve its curriculum through the introduction of Apprenticeship Units in Artificial Intelligence, Solar PV Installation and Maintenance, Electric Vehicle Charging Point Installation and Maintenance, Electrical Fitting and Assembly, and Mechanical Fitting and Assembly. New apprenticeship standards will include Payroll Administrator Level 3, Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability Practitioner Level 4, Administration Assistant Level 2, Learning & Development L3, Carpentry Level 3, and Low Carbon Heating Technician Level 3. Foundation Apprenticeships within Building Services Engineering will further strengthen progression opportunities for young people entering technical careers.

Following the withdrawal of a number of management apprenticeship standards, the College has developed an enhanced leadership and management offer through accredited ILM and CMI qualifications alongside bespoke commercial training programmes. This will ensure employers continue to have access to high-quality leadership development opportunities that support workforce productivity and organisational growth.

A key priority for 2026/27 is the development of a coordinated, college-wide approach to stakeholder engagement. Employer and Student Engagement Managers will work collaboratively with curriculum teams to strengthen communication, improve progression pathways and provide a seamless experience for employers and apprentices. This approach will support the College's ambition to increase participation in apprenticeships and reduce the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), working with employers and partners to create accessible routes into work, apprenticeships and further education.

The College remains committed to creating an inclusive learning environment where all students and apprentices can succeed. During 2026/27, further work will focus on improving the identification and support of students and apprentices with additional learning needs and those facing barriers to participation and achievement. Enhanced data analysis and targeted interventions will support improved outcomes, reduce achievement gaps and ensure all learners have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Clean Energy Technical Excellence College



In April 2026, the College was proud to be selected by the Department for Net Zero and Energy Security and the Department for Education as one of only five **Clean Energy Technical Excellence Colleges** in the country. The successful bid to become a Wave 2 TEC in Clean Energy will see the College working as a system leader, with three named delivery partners (Suffolk New College, City College Norwich and East Coast College) and a series of other 'spoke' providers, to boost skills capacity in support of the Clean Energy Industries, chiefly in the Eastern Region. Partnerships with the East of England Energy Group (EEEGR); Sizewell C (nuclear), East Wind (representing a range of off-shore wind providers); Freeport East (with plans for a Hydrogen Hub and Wind Turbine Manufacture facility); National Grid and many others, will be further developed in order to support the demand for an additional 60,000 direct clean energy jobs in the region over the next four years. Further information on the College's plans for the CETEC can be found in the spotlight section in Section 4 below.



3. Approach to Developing the Annual Accountability Statement

College leaders are in regular and constant dialogue with a range of local, regional and national stakeholders to identify key priorities and target outcomes articulated in this statement. The College's robust and relevant curriculum offer is informed through dialogue with employers across all curriculum areas, which ensures that students are provided with the best possible platform to develop their skill sets and secure future employment in current and emerging industries. As part of the Federation of Essex Colleges (FEDEC), the College plays an active role in collaborating with other FE Institutions to ensure that national and regional opportunities are exploited. The College has a very close working relationship with the Essex Growth Agency at Essex County Council. This has developed over many years of working in partnership.

The College is represented by the Principal and Chief Executive at the Colchester Ambassadors' network and 'We Are Colchester', two local strategic partnerships for the City. The College is recognised as an 'anchor institution', meeting local community skills needs and enabling other organisations to meet their objectives. The College continues to build on its stakeholder engagement and has built a strong reputation through supporting thousands of young people and adults to secure employment locally, meeting employer needs.

Essex County Council, Colchester City Council, Braintree District Council and Tendring District Council are key stakeholders with whom the College consults in developing plans. All four councils have growth plans, and we work with them to ensure the priorities in these documents align with the targets they have set out. Current plans for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) will see the three current Tier 2 Local Authorities combined into a single unitary authority (North East Essex) which is welcomed by the College, as this geography mirrors the geography from which the very large majority of Colchester Institute's learners are drawn. The College is also following local devolution discussions and plans closely, mindful that this could in the next year or two, impact arrangements for the commissioning and funding of adult skills funding, and potentially other key areas of the Colleges work.

The College engages regularly with the Essex Chambers of Commerce, Essex's Employer Representative Body, responsible for collation of the Local Skills Improvement Plan. In January 2026, we hosted a Construction Round Table attended by over 30 organisations to help inform the development of LSIP (2.0) and provided feedback to the ERB on other sections of the Plan, including via the Federation of Essex Colleges.

Other key external stakeholders informing our work include the Department for Work and Pensions who value our work with the unemployed through our Adult Skills Centres, from which we deliver many Sector-Based Work Academy Programmes. Our key stakeholder strategy includes harnessing the opportunities with the largest employers, and the most significant employer-led projects including East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust, the Port of Felixstowe, Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, and Freeport East.

We continue to work in close partnership with other Essex Colleges as a collective as well as individually, other colleges in Suffolk and Norfolk, ASHE (the Association of Secondary Head Teachers in Essex), all local schools, and other local independent training providers via the Essex Provider Network. There are also direct collaboration arrangements with other public organisations, such as Essex Fire and Rescue Service. The College is validated to offer degree programmes through the University of East Anglia and the University of Huddersfield. More widely the College has partnership agreements in place with a multitude of other training providers to ensure that local skills needs are met and this includes Learning Curve Group, CIDORI and a small number of high quality apprenticeship delivery partners. This wide-ranging Stakeholder activity further informs this Statement.

4. Contribution to National, Regional and Local Priorities

The table below shows each of the Essex LSIP Priority Sectors outlined in the Draft Local Skills Improvement Plan 2.0, and in the national Government's eight growth-driving sectors in the Industrial Strategy the IS-8 sectors.

Being based on national, regional and local skills priorities, these are areas with high volumes of vacancies which are expected to increase, providing demand for skills and opportunities for employment in key growth areas.

The rows shaded in green are priority /high volume areas for the College, and further detail, with target outcomes for the year ahead can be found on each of these in this section followed by a set of College-wide Short Term ambitions.

	Draft Essex Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) Sector Priorities	Industrial Strategy – 8 Growth-Driving Sectors (IS-8) and other national government priorities	Section below
1	Advanced Manufacturing, Engineering and Aviation	Advanced Manufacturing	4.1.1
		Clean Energy Industries*	
2	AgriTech, Food Technology and Horticulture		
3	Community and Voluntary	<i>Link to Get Britain Working</i>	
4	Construction and the Built Environment	Clean Energy Industries*	4.1.2
		<i>Link to Labour Manifesto – 1.5 million new homes</i>	
5	Creative Industries	Creative Industries	4.1.3
6	Digitech	Digital and Technologies	
7	Health, Social Care and Meditech	<i>Link to 'Plan for Change' – An NHS Fit for the Future</i>	4.1.4
		Life Sciences	
8	Professional Services (including Financial Services)	Financial Services	4.1.5
		Professional and Business Services	
9	Transport and Logistics		
10	Visitor Economy (travel and tourism)		4.1.6
11	Sport and Physical Activity		
IS-8 only		Defence	

4.1 Priority Sectors

4.1.1 Advanced Manufacturing, Engineering and Aviation (incorporating LSIP priority of Clean Energy)

Activity in 2025/26	16- 18 Learners	Adult Aims	Apprentices Levels 2 - 3	Apprentices Levels 4 - 7	Higher Education (non-apprenticeship)
	516	114	218	94	17

High Demand Skills and Sector Requirements • Fabrication and Welding, including 'coded' welders • Metal-working (metal fixing) • Automated Welding Processes • ECITB • NSAN(Nuclear) • Port Infrastructure • Clean Energy Industries (60,000 jobs in East by 2030)	Key Employers / Sectors served • Freeport East • Essex Manufacturing Alliance • Sizewell C • Longfield Solar Farm • Lower Thames Crossing • East Wind (off-shore) • East of England Energy Group (EEEGR) • E2V Teledyne • Hutchison Ports UK • Local Manufacturing (Ransomes; Tecniq; Maycast-Nokes, Dalau)
Areas for growth /improvement – 2026/27 • Promote Engineering careers to under-represented groups, including NEET. • Increase growth in learner numbers. • Integrating emerging clean energy skills into existing engineering and fabrication curriculum at the pace required by industry. • Expand volume and scope of welding provision and associated codings. • Broaden apprenticeship offer at L2 and L4 in readiness for 2027/28. • Support the Clean Energy Technical Excellence College objectives • Increase work-placements and progression to work in the industry. • Redevelopment of the Energy Skills Centre (Harwich) to provide wider support to port logistics and infrastructure.	
Short term SMART Objectives 1. Growth in student numbers (20%) in FE Study Programme in Engineering - including welding. 2. Create student awareness of the Clean Energy sector and career opportunities, through embedding 'Destination Renewables' through all L3 Engineering provision at Colchester Institute and with all three Clean Energy Technical Excellence College delivery partner colleges.	

Spotlight on Clean Energy Technical Excellence College

The first year of the Clean Energy Technical Excellence College will focus on establishing the partnerships, governance and delivery arrangements needed to support the long-term development of clean energy skills across the East of England. Working collaboratively with our delivery partners, employers and wider network of spoke providers, the College will establish employer advisory arrangements and collaborative working practices that will ensure provision continues to reflect current and emerging workforce needs.

Alongside this, the CETEC will begin delivering a range of initiatives to strengthen technical education and workforce development across the region. This will include the development of shared curriculum resources, employer-informed curriculum development, specialist continuing professional development for teaching staff and collaborative approaches to teaching and learning, ensuring learners benefit from high-quality, industry-informed provision wherever they study within the partnership.

The College will also invest in a network of specialist training facilities across Colchester Institute and the three delivery partner colleges. These facilities will provide industry-standard learning environments supporting priority areas including clean energy infrastructure, high voltage systems, domestic renewables, heat pumps, solar PV, welding and fabrication, steel fixing, pipefitting, and instrumentation and control. Investment has been planned collaboratively to create complementary centres of expertise across the region, maximising access to specialist facilities whilst avoiding unnecessary duplication.

A further priority will be to strengthen progression into employment by working closely with employers involved in nationally significant infrastructure projects and the wider clean energy supply chain. The CETEC will support the expansion of work placements, apprenticeships, higher technical education and adult retraining opportunities, whilst promoting careers within the clean energy industries to young people, career changers and groups currently under-represented within engineering and construction.

Working through its hub-and-spoke model, the CETEC will also support collaboration across a wider network of education providers through the sharing of curriculum resources, employer intelligence, specialist expertise and effective practice. This collaborative approach will help increase regional capacity, strengthen the quality of provision and support employers in developing the skilled workforce needed to meet the growing demand created by the East of England's clean energy sector.

4.1.2 Construction and the Built Environment

Activity in 2025/26	16- 18 Learners	Adult Aims	Apprentices Levels 2 - 3	Higher Education (non-apprenticeship)	Full Cost / Commercial Delegates
	881	87	431	18	559

High Demand Skills and Sector Requirements • Form Work • Modern Methods/Sustainable Construction • Retrofit (domestic and industrial) • Energy Efficient Technologies, including Low Carbon Heating • Groundworks • High Voltage • Sustainable Construction • Building Information Modelling • Timber Manufacturing Techniques • Fire Door Installation • CSCS (Construction Skills Certification Scheme) • Construction Courses for economically inactive adults	Key Employers / Sectors served • Kier Construction • Gipping Construction • MDS Groundworks • L Lynch Plant Hire • Swift Brickwork / DCB Brickwork • Cadman Construction • Gasway (Flagship Housing) • Latimer by Clarion • Samsung UK • St Gobain • Eastlight Housing • Lewden
Areas for growth /improvement – 2026/27 • Plan for expansion of Level 4 offer in Building Maintenance. • Successful commencement of Level 4 and Level 6 Apprenticeship in Professional Construction. • Apprenticeship Growth (new L3 Apps in Craft Carpentry and Joinery and additional numbers in Electrical Installations (L3). • Development of Smart Home Technology House and Net Zero 2. • Employer engagement to secure 3 week work industry placements for Level 2 and 3 Construction students. • Achievement and progression from Level 2 to Apprenticeship or relevant work. • Work to increase participation among under-represented groups (including women and diverse ethnicities).	
Short term SMART Objectives 1. Progression from Level 2 Construction courses to higher level study, apprenticeship or relevant work to increase from 67% to 75%. 2. Increase apprenticeship employers to meet rising demand for Level 3 apprenticeships/in Craft Carpentry (from 6 to 8), and in Plumbing, Electrical (from 30 to 45).	

4.1.3 Creative Industries

Activity in 2025/26	16- 18 Learners	Adult Aims	Higher Education (non-apprenticeship)
	926	29	23
High Demand Skills and Sector Requirements - Digital skills are essential across all creative sectors, including the use of emerging technologies such as AI, VR and AR. - Industry skills shortages continue in technical, craft and production roles, particularly in theatre, film and television. - Growth sectors include video games (the largest market in Europe) and advertising and marketing, forecast to contribute £44bn to the UK economy by 2028. - Employers increasingly value resilience, leadership, communication and creative problem-solving skills alongside technical expertise. - Freelance and self-employed careers are common within the creative industries, requiring entrepreneurial skills, commercial awareness and adaptability.		Key Employers / Sectors served - Growth in the South East creative sector, including the Thames Estuary Production Corridor, is expected to create up to 50,000 jobs and contribute £5.7bn to the UK economy. - Key local creative and cultural organisations include the Mercury Theatre, Firstsite, Colchester Arts Centre and Headgate Theatre. - Public sector and business partners include Essex County Council and Colchester BID. - The regional digital and games sector includes employers such as Delala Games and Ryan Laley Games. - Organisations such as Colchester Zoo provide opportunities in marketing, events and digital content creation. - Higher Education progression routes include leading institutions such as UAL, Norwich University of the Arts (NUA) and the University of East Anglia (UEA).	
Areas for growth /improvement – 2026/27 - Preparation for the new Level 3 3D Design and Craft qualification, including engagement with industry partners such as the Landscape Institute. - Increasing participation at Level 4 and above across the Creative Industries, including music pathways and alternative routes to traditional three-year degrees. - Improving flexible access to creative education through the development of a new entry-level programme for learners who have been outside mainstream education, alongside strengthened partnership working with access initiatives such as YAK at Firstsite. - Successful launch of the new Level 3 Arts for Screen and Theatre qualification.			
Short term SMART Objectives (max 2) - To effectively promote, prepare and plan for the introduction of new HND programmes in 2027, securing a viable first-year cohort of at least 15 students. - To provide staff training and dedicated planning time to ensure lecturers are confident in introducing, discussing and embedding the use of AI in creative production and teaching practice.			

4.1.4 Health, Social Care and Meditech

Activity in 2025/26	16- 19 Learners	Adult Aims	Apprentices Levels 2 - 3	Apprentices Levels 4 - 7	Higher Education (non-apprenticeship)
	346	67	84	11	72

High Demand Skills and Sector Requirements

- Adult Social Care (currently 3,100 direct care vacancies in Essex)
- Nursing pathways
- Healthcare support workers
- Biomedical and laboratory sciences
- Clinical support roles
- Dental nursing
- Allied health professionals
- Technical and clinical skills
- Employability and professional behaviours
- Placement and employer collaboration
- High demand driven by aging population and workforce

Key Employers / Sectors served

- NHS - ESNEFT (Colchester and Clacton)
- NHS – Mid and South Essex (incl Chelmsford and Braintree)
- Regional and Local Dental Practices (for Dental Nursing)
- Crisis Team, NHS Talking Therapies, Mind (Colchester Institute Counselling Service – provides for over 120 clients per year.
- Local care homes and centres/facilities for adults with learning disabilities that include:
 - Bright Lives Social Enterprise / Castlegate Day Centre
 - Yarra Family Services / Milton Lodge
 - New Copford Place / Penny Meadow (Achieve Together)
 - Zero Three Care Homes / Care Fulfilment
 - Kingswood Care

Areas for growth /improvement – 2026/27

- Plan for early community placements for T Level students to support progression opportunities starting October 2026.
- Expansion of HE Counselling programme to increase to 2 cohorts from September 2026.
- Develop a partnership with Mid and South Essex to supporting increasing T Level Health in 2026 (secure 15 placements).
- Developing placement opportunities for T Level Science that will run 2027/8 (20 placements).
- Scope to deliver additional T Level in Supporting Therapy Teams for 2027/8 – partnership with University of Essex (22 learners).
- Launch an additional Access to Higher Education pathway - Social Care in 2027/8 (22 learners).
- Successful transition to Pearson from NCFE for T Level in Health in 2026.
- Introduce Dental Practice Manager apprenticeship (8 learners).

Short term SMART Objectives

1. Launch a new Level 1 programme at Braintree in September 2026 with a recruitment target of 20 enrolled learners, supporting progression pathways into Level 2 study or apprenticeships.
2. Establish a formal employer partnership with Mid and South Essex healthcare providers by July 2027 to secure a minimum of 20 additional industry placements for Health and Science T Level learners, increasing placement capacity and supporting successful completion and progression into healthcare careers.

4.1.5 Professional Services (including Finance and Business Services)

Activity in 2025/26	16- 19 Learners	Adult Aims	Apprentices Levels 2 - 3	Apprentices Levels 4 - 7	Higher Education (non-apprenticeship)	Full Cost / Commercial Delegates
	278	67	180	204	5	60

High Demand Skills and Sector Requirements • Leadership and Management (all levels) • Problem Solving • Preparing for Employment • Commercial and Project Management Skills • Data literacy and data analytics • Artificial Intelligence • Compliance and Security Awareness • Sustainability and Environmental Awareness • Finance, Accountancy and Procurement • Commercial Finance and Business Planning	Key Employers / Sectors served • Port of Felixstowe • NHS (ESNEFT, West Suffolk NHS Trust and NWAFT) • DWP • Colchester Zoo • University of Essex • Colchester City Council • Norfolk County Council • Hutchison Ports • Norse Group • Zeelandia Ltd
Areas for growth /improvement – 2026/27 • Successful launch of T Level in Team Leadership and Management (20 learners). • Successful launch of 2 new T Levels in Digital (32 learners). • Develop employer partnerships for industry placements for T Level in Marketing from 2027/28. • Launch of Units and full Apprenticeship Standard in AI. • Meet employer demand for Leadership and Management post the withdrawal of Apprenticeship Standards. • Employability and ‘soft skills’ form an important part of 16-19 enrichment programme for all professional services students.	
Short term SMART Objectives 1. Grow AAT provision for Apprentices and Adults. From 61 (2025/6) to 90 (2026/7). 2. Provision of Leadership and Management accredited programmes to fully replace withdrawn Leadership and Management Standards (minimum of 45 delegates on new programmes).	

4.1.6 Visitor Economy

Activity in 2025/26	16- 18 Learners	Adult Aims	Apprentices
	136	6	6

High Demand Skills and Sector Requirements - Professional qualified Chefs - High-end Events Planning - Customer Service and Communications - Allergen awareness - Food hygiene - Front of house service - Mixology and bartender expertise - Patisserie expertise and qualification	Key Employers / Sectors served - Milsoms Group - Wilkin and Sons ('Tiptree Jam') - Dorchester Collection - Goring Hotel - Ritz - Edge Hotel School, University of Essex - Tayo By Bien - Millins Butchers - Dingley Dell Farm - Blackwell and Co Master Butchers and Curers - Royal Academy Culinary Arts - Exclusive Collection
Areas for growth /improvement – 2026/27 - Incorporate sustainable practices into practical kitchen programmes (reducing gas reliance); increasing locally-sourced and growing own herbs. - Grow Apprenticeship provision as an alternative to full-time study at Levels 2. - Further development of soft skills to instil stronger professional behaviours in line with industry standards. - Prepare curriculum and resources for new Level 2 Occupational Certificates, ready to launch in 2027/28. - Increase attendance at culinary competitions by promoting opportunities early, identifying suitable learners, providing coaching and support, and celebrating successes to encourage wider participation.	
Short term SMART Objectives - Grow Apprenticeship provision as an alternative to full-time study at Levels 2 and 3. Currently 4 apprentices in learning. Increase by 10 by end of 2026/27. (5 x Food and Beverage and 5 x Commis Chef). - Continue modernisation of kitchens to reflect current industry standards and sustainable food production practices.	

4.2 College-Wide Short Term Objectives

In addition to the Objectives identified in the Skills Priority Sectors above, the following are College- wide short-term targets for the 2026/27 academic year.

	Target / Objective	Measures	Date
1	To expand T Level provision by broadening the T Level offer and increasing student numbers across the range of subjects offered.	- Commence delivery of 4 new T Levels in Business and Administration; Digital (2 pathways); and Creative and Design, to add to 3 current T Levels offered. - First year enrolments rise from 86 (25/26) to 156 (26/27).	Autumn 2026 Autumn 2026
2	To maximise Industry Placement opportunities for current Construction students and current and future T Level students.	- Requirements of Construction Industry Placement Funding met for in-scope L2 and L3 students. - T Level Industry Placement requirements met for all students, without reliance on students sourcing own.	Summer 2027 Summer 2027
3	To support the drive to reduce NEETs through a implementation of a comprehensive NEET Strategy including focussed actions based on the Milburn Review findings.	- NEET Strategy launched. - New NEET re-engagement programme commences January 2027 for minimum of 32 students. - Every College leaver has an approved CV and has had interview practice.	Sept 26 January 2027 Summer 2027
4	To improve outcomes for learners with SEND, through use of the Inclusive Mainstream Fund, including establishment of a new Inclusion Hub.	- Inclusion Hub established and learner feedback shows high level of satisfaction for the support received. - To improve achievement rates for SEND learners to within 1 percentage point of the College overall achievement rate.	Dec 2026 Summer 2027
5	To establish the Clean Energy Technical Excellence College as a system leader, boosting skills provision to the East of England Clean Energy Industries.	All first year objectives/milestones met (including capital projects and revenue initiatives).	July 2027
6	Expand Apprenticeship offer to meet employer need in skills priority areas, through the introduction of new Apprenticeship Units and Standards.	- Introduction of a minimum of four new Apprenticeship Units. - Introduction of a minimum of six new Apprenticeship Standards (see page 11 for details of both of these). - Target of 769 new Apprentices enrolled in 2026/7 (up from forecast of 655 for 2025/6).	Summer 2027 (all targets)
7	To prepare for the expansion of provision in skills priority areas at Level 4 and above, including successful launch of the newly approved Level 4 apprenticeships in Construction.	- Plan, prepare and market Level 4 programmes in Building Services and in Games Development for delivery in 2027/8. - Minimum of 10 students enrolled on new Construction Apprenticeship at Level 4.	Dec 2026 Sept 2026

4.3 Campus Developments in support of Skills Priorities 2025/6 and 2026/7

The College continues to invest in the facilities and resources to meet local, regional and national skills priorities.

In **2025/26**, work commenced, or was completed, on the following priority projects.

Colchester Construction Plant Competence Scheme (CPCS) Training Centre

The Centre, running in partnership with L Lynch Plant Hire will train hundreds of young people and adults for the many thousand groundworker jobs associated with local and regional housebuilding projects and nationally significant infrastructure projects including Sizewell C, the Lower Thames Crossing and Grid Infrastructure and Reinforcement.



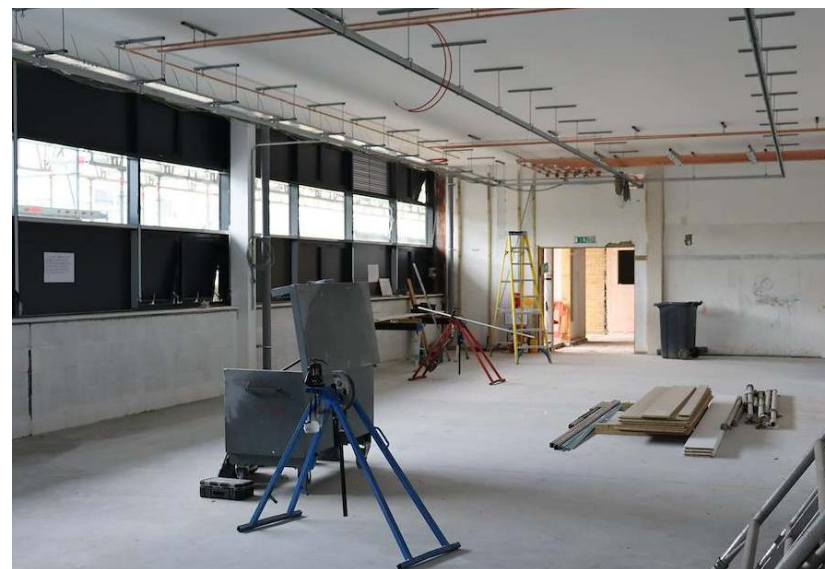
The Electric and Hybrid Vehicle Training Centre



Opening in 2026, the Electric and Hybrid Training Centre at Colchester will enable the provision of a professional and full-cost offer to industry professionals, with programmes at Levels 1 to 3 in Electric/Hybrid Maintenance; System Repair and replacement; and Hazard Management for Emergency and Recovery Personnel.

Sustainable Construction Skills Centre (L Block)

Opening in Autumn 2026, the Sustainable Construction Skills Centre is part-funded by Essex County Council and comprises three additional bricklaying workshops, a Painting and Decorating Suite and Classrooms supporting the trowel trades including both Groundworks facilities.



Art and Design Block - Reconfiguration



Reconfiguration of ground floor accommodation to provide new gallery and creative workshop spaces. Co-location of all aspects of Art and Design into one specialist building with gallery and maker space in addition to classrooms and studios.



Balkerne Restaurant and Patisserie Kitchen Refurbishment



Complete restaurant refurbishment to reflect the modern dining experience in some of the UK's most high-end establishments. Refurbishment and modernisation of one patisserie kitchen (over 23 years old) to reflect current industry practice and reduce energy costs.



The following campus improvements are among those planned to commence during 2026/27.

Clean Energy Centre – Phase 2

Building on the success of the College's first Clean Energy Centre (formerly Net Zero Centre) launched in 2024, and housed in the same building, the second Clean Energy Centre will extend the current offer to include Retrofit Installer courses, Roofing and PV Installation, and Electric High Voltage Systems.



Retrofit Smart House



The Retrofit Smart House, located on the Sheepen Road Colchester Campus, will be created by retrofitting a 1980s farmhouse (more recently used by the College as a Training Centre) with new sustainable technologies. The house will provide an opportunity to showcase domestic renewable technologies, and raise awareness of the high demand for these skills with 680,000 Essex homes.

Centre for Hospitality and Food Studies

Refurbishment and modernisation of the Balcerne kitchen, the College's principal professional training kitchen. The project, part-funded by the Savoy Educational Trust will support the replacement of outdated gas equipment with modern induction cooking suites and associated commercial catering equipment, together with the electrical and ancillary works needed to support the upgraded kitchen. Students will benefit from facilities which reflect latest and best industry-standards.



In March 2026, the College submitted an exceptional business case to the Department for Education to explore options to fund the replacement of four obsolete buildings. These buildings were deemed unfit for purpose by the Learning and Skills Council nearly 20 years ago under the proposed 2008 Building Colleges for the Future Programme.

5. Inclusive Mainstream Fund

Colchester Institute will use the Inclusive Mainstream Fund to further strengthen its inclusive mainstream offer and enhance the support already in place for learners with SEND. Drawing on the themes identified through the Milburn Report, recognising that learners with SEND are at greater risk of disengagement and becoming NEET, the funding will support a more proactive, responsive and joined up approach to securing positive participation, achievement and progression.

The fund will enhance existing support by increasing the capacity and impact of Learning Support Practitioners within key areas of the curriculum, particularly English and maths. This will enable learners to access support at the point of learning, build confidence in essential skills, and improve their ability to engage successfully with their wider study programme.

In order to enrich our support provision and create a safe and nurturing culture the inclusive mainstream fund will be used to invest in the development of a range of training resources to support the overarching college approach to inclusion such as understanding individual learning goals, adapting to learner needs and ensuring all learners benefit from high quality adaptive teaching.

The College currently deploys Learning Support Practitioners (LSPs) within English and mathematics to support learners with SEND to access essential skills teaching, build confidence and engage with their learning. Through the Inclusive Mainstream Fund, this provision will be enhanced with the development of a dedicated core team of LSPs specifically allocated to English and maths. This team will be trained and upskilled to provide more focused support for learners working towards the development of literacy and numeral skills, enabling support to be better aligned to curriculum content, assessment requirements and individual learner barriers.

In addition to in class support, the College will expand its provision through the development of an Inclusion Hub, offering both one to one and group support outside taught sessions. This will enhance the existing support offer by providing a structured space for learners to address barriers that affect their participation and progress in class, with a particular focus on developing literacy and numeracy skills, independent thinking, confidence and social skills. Through targeted skills development, peer support and individualised support planning, learners will be supported to build the strategies they need to engage more effectively in class and progress towards positive outcomes.

6. Local Needs Duty

The Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022 requires governing bodies to discharge their duty to review how well the education or training meets local needs and to consider what actions might be taken (including actions in conjunction with other governing bodies) to better meet local needs.

These actions could include, for example, decisions to expand the curriculum offer to respond to emerging needs relating to securing local employment, or to collaborate with other providers to strengthen the quality and resilience of local provision.

In January 2024, the Chairs, Principals and Governance Professionals of all Greater Essex Colleges attended an LSIP conference to agree the wording of a 'Commitment Statement' which confirms our intention to collaborate with other providers in order to strengthen the quality and resilience of local provision. This same group met again in May 2025, to reaffirm their collaborative intentions and the statement. This statement is included below in [Appendix 1](#).

Colchester Institute has a long history of working in partnership with other education and training providers, public and private sector employers and other agencies (including DWP, Employer Representative Bodies and Tier 1 and Tier 2 Local Authorities) to ensure the best possible provision of education and training opportunities to meet local and regional social and economic needs.

7. Corporation Statement

On behalf of the Colchester Institute Corporation, it is hereby confirmed that the Plan as set out above reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by their Corporation Board on 21 July 2026.

The plan will be published on the College website within three months of the start of the new academic year.



Signed: Lisa Blake, Chair of Governors



Alison Andreas, Principal and Chief Executive

Date: 21 July 2026

21 July 2026

8. Supporting Documentation

Other relevant and supporting documents can be found below:

[Colchester Institute Strategic Plan \(2024-2028\)](#)

[Greater Essex Local Skills Improvement Plan \(LSIP\) 2026-2029](#)

[Essex Green Skills Infrastructure Review \(2022\)](#)

[Essex Sector Development Report 2023](#)

[Colchester's Economic Strategy 2022-2025](#)

Appendix 1: Local Needs Commitment Statement



Greater Essex – Federation of Essex Colleges Commitment Statement – July 2026

The Federation of Essex Colleges is a well-established group within Greater Essex. We work collectively for the benefit of our Essex geography communities, people, businesses and employers to support high quality education, training and skills provision that meet the needs of our economy.

Vision

Empowering the Essex Engine: connecting every learner to local opportunity and every local business to world class talent, through collaboration and co-operation.

All individuals, communities and businesses in Greater Essex will benefit from an inclusive, relevant and responsive post-16 further education and skills system, which empowers each person to aim high, progress in their careers, prosper in life and value their lifelong learning, addressing local and regional skills' needs of employers.

Through our Greater Essex partnership, we aim to accelerate skills levels and make Essex the place for businesses to invest in through growing the talent pool. This will be aligned to and delivered through each of the Local Skills Improvement Plan's priorities for 2026 to 2029.

Our members will be held in high esteem in their communities, will be well connected with the changing needs of individuals and industry and will attract learners and employers looking for relevant learning, upskilling and reskilling.

Through effective management of funding and resources and innovative ways to secure funding, we will make our organisations financially sustainable, well maintained and provide a compelling employment opportunity for people looking to enter and move through an education career pathway.

Mission

To support the region's economy and drive up the prosperity of all people in Greater Essex through the transformational power of learning and skills development, whilst meeting local, regional and national skills priorities. Our partnership approach delivers relevant post-16 learning and skills for individuals and businesses.

Our Commitment

We believe in a systems approach through:

- Speaking as one voice to promote and raise the profile of further education and skills, including apprenticeships, adult education and higher education, to influence change for the benefit of our learners, communities, region and members.
- Collaborative planning and delivery of a cohesive regional skills offer, building on our successful models from projects such as the Local Skills Improvement Fund.
- Collaboration and sharing of experience, expertise and resources at all levels within providers, as well as growth and efficiency opportunities.
- Strategic partnerships with the Greater Essex Business Board and key stakeholders in business and government.
- Ensuring that skills is at the heart of the system and working in partnership with all political parties.
- Working together to ensure there are accessible pathways for all into employment or further study.
- Working together to address the 2026 - 2029 priorities set out in the Local Skills Improvement Plan, all linked holistically to softer and entrepreneur skills.
- Working collaboratively with the Essex Provider Network (EPN) towards these common goals.

July 2026