



OAKLANDS
COLLEGE

ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

PUBLISHED MAY 2024



CONTENTS

VISION AND MISSION	P4
1. PURPOSE AND KEY PRIORITIES	P6
2. CONTEXT AND PLACE	P9
3. MEETING LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL NEEDS	P13
4. KEY STAKEHOLDERS	P18
5. COLLABORATIVE WORKING WITH OTHER PROVIDERS ...	P22
6. ANNUAL OBJECTIVES 2024/2025	P25
7. CORPORATION STATEMENT AND LOCAL NEEDS DUTY ..	P34
8. APPENDICES AND REFERENCE SOURCES	P36



VISION AND MISSION

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VISION

By 2027 we will be: A sustainable educational trailblazer inspiring our learners and our wider community to achieve their potential in a changing world!



MISSION

The Mission of Oaklands College is:

Prepare every learner for work, a rewarding career and life's opportunities. By treating every student as the individual they are, with care, passion and understanding in a professional, contemporary and community-focused environment they'll value and enjoy.



CURRICULUM INTENT

Learners are the centre of our universe. The curriculum at Oaklands College is ambitious and accessible, responsive both to individual ambitions of learners and the needs of the communities we serve, supporting students to overcome barriers whilst providing the relevant learning and skills required to realise their full potential - supporting them towards future sustainable careers.



A photograph of four people standing in front of a fire truck. The truck has a yellow and blue color scheme. Text on the truck includes "FIRE FIRE & RESCUE", "either do we.", and "#MakingInclusionPa". The image is overlaid with a large teal circle on the left side. The main title is centered in white text.

1. PURPOSE AND KEY PRIORITIES

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Oaklands has a proud heritage of providing responsive, transformational education. We opened our doors to men and women in 1921. Since then, we have provided our students with the knowledge and skills to achieve their individual ambitions and make a valuable contribution to their communities. Whilst the operating environment for further education remains challenging, we are confident that our history of seizing opportunities and working closely with our partners puts us in a good position to ensure our continued success.

Oaklands is a complex and vibrant community, with teaching, learning and assessment at our heart and forming our core business. Education and skills unite individuals; they give all learners and teachers a shared purpose and a common goal. In the current fast changing employment landscape, Oaklands is committed to equipping our learners with the flexible and transferable skills required for new emerging opportunities locally, prioritising those identified in the Hertfordshire Skills Framework as the skills most valued by employers and developing skills that are needed in the 4th and 5th industrial revolutions.

By 2027, Oaklands will be a sustainable educational trailblazer. To meet this vision we have a clear strategic plan and associated goals, objectives, and targets. Our strategic aims and objectives are to:



Deliver continuous outstanding teaching, learning, and assessment to all learners and employers.



Create mutually beneficial partnerships to deliver the highest quality educational offer to increase economic prosperity.



Create our estate so that it is recognised as world class in terms of quality, sustainability and the promotion and practice of evolving leading-edge technologies.



Create a caring, accessible, inclusive, and thriving college community, committed to fairness, health, and success.



Deliver good or outstanding long term sustainable financial health, through growth, that enables reinvestment in our students, staff, and estate to support our aspirational goals.

The college has four cross-cutting themes, which are integral to all we undertake and are at the very heart of what we want the college to be about. These are:



Our commitment to sustainability and the environment.



Our commitment to the happiness and wellbeing of our college community.



Our commitment to digital transformation.



Our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusivity.

All that we do and every decision we take is underpinned by our values:



Excellence and Innovation - Delivering outstanding results, sustainable careers and future leaders.



Collaborative Learning - Developing knowledge and skills to prepare our people for life and work.



Inclusion and Happiness - Celebrating the achievements and successes of all our communities.



Integrity and Accountability - Striving for the best in all we do.

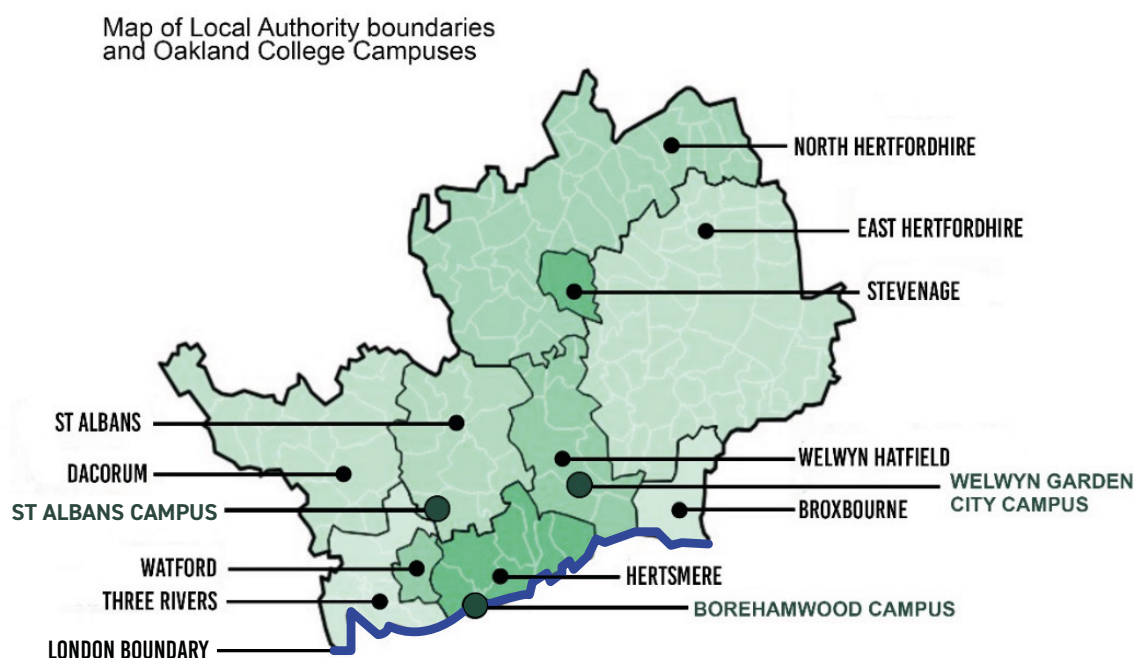
The Corporation conducts regular review of the college's curriculum, ensuring its currency and readiness for future skills needs as detailed within this accountability statement. In response to our operating environment and the local needs duty to review key sectors, digital, health, engineering and construction have been prioritised within our strategic objectives, annual operating plan, and future strategic plans.



2. CONTEXT AND PLACE

2. CONTEXT AND PLACE

Oaklands serves a large geographical area and has three Hertfordshire campuses in St Albans, Welwyn Garden City and Borehamwood. Oaklands serves students locally, as well as throughout Hertfordshire, and through good local transport links students travel to the college from the east of England region, including Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, and London. Due to our excellent sports provision, we have a national pull of students, resulting in on-site residential accommodation which serves up to 80 students.



The college has a turnover of £38 million with approximately 8,000 young people and adults studying each year. Our curriculum areas are widespread as we deliver across 15 sector areas. The curriculum offer includes education programmes for young people aged 16-19, apprenticeships, higher education, adult education, employability programmes, skills bootcamps, sector-based work programmes, online learning, professional training, education to those who speak English as a second language, programmes for those with special education needs and disabilities, T Level programmes, and we are introducing new HTQs in September 2024. We are nationally renowned for our sports academies, where sporting and academic excellence are given equal importance. Many of our alumni compete globally or continue their sport and education in UK and international universities. Oaklands is ambitious and continues to further develop our centres of excellence, including SEND provision, Engineering, Care, Early Years and Creative Industries.

We are well-placed to move from being a locally significant college to one which is recognised more widely, regionally and nationally.

Hertfordshire's economic output, measured as Gross Value Added (GVA), is around £40,745 billion. The county has 72,835 mostly small (91%) enterprises in sectors including pharmaceutical, accountancy and construction. The percentage splits of Hertfordshire's businesses by size almost reflects the national picture. Within Hertfordshire, 91% of businesses are micro (with 0-9 employees) compared with 90% nationally; 7% are small (10 to 49 employees) compared with 8% nationally; 1% are medium-sized (50 to 248 employees) compared with 2% nationally. Within Hertfordshire there are 719,709 jobs and 755,724 estimated people of working age, however the total working population is 751,200. Employment has grown by more than 14% in the last decade. Expected employment growth between 2020-2035 in Hertfordshire is 0.57%. Most of these jobs are expected to be filled by people who live in Hertfordshire.

TV and film is a significant growth industry in Hertfordshire with more than 4,550 firms involved in activities from film making to digital content production. The number of employers has grown by 6.5% year on year, employing around 20,000 people. Employment in this sector has grown by 10.6% annually since 2010, far exceeding the national growth rate of 4.5%. Hertfordshire is home to Sunset, Sky, Elstree Studios, and Warner Bros with Pinewood Studio close by. With multiple expansion plans across Hertfordshire and neighbouring counties, this is an enormous growth industry, and a multitude of skilled jobs are required from runners to specialist IPR lawyers.

There are large engineering companies firmly established in Hertfordshire, including MBDA, Airbus and Hensoldt, as well as smaller companies. This sector has been identified by the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) as a priority. Skills in specialist engineering in areas across aerospace, satellite, electrical/electronic, envirotech, as well as more general engineering, are urgently required.

There is a county-wide need for the recruitment of skilled workers at all levels in the health care sector and a further requirement to upskill the existing workforce to meet local community needs.

In hospitality and tourism, the county's visitor economy contributed £106 billion to the British economy (GDP) and supports 2.6 million jobs. The number of tourism related jobs, supported by the visitor economy in Hertfordshire increased by 15% to 38,936 (compared to 2021) accounting for 6% of total employment in Hertfordshire.

Hertfordshire is home to a wide range of specialist companies in the professional services sector including banks, lawyers, and accountants. Research and employer feedback has identified a substantial demand for staff with specialist and generic sales and marketing skills across most sectors.

With Crest Nicholson, Morgan Sindall and Willmott Dixon based in Hertfordshire as well as 7,235 other construction businesses employing 43,500 people, this sector is a significant county asset. In addition, there is £3 billion in construction investment planned across Hertfordshire. It is estimated



that 6,000 new people will be required for the sector each year over the next five years.

Digital and IT and sustainability and environment areas are both considered to be vital and overarching all the sectors. The Government-led drive to net zero is also very much part of Hertfordshire priorities and the county has recently seen significant investment into retrofit skill development through the LEP.

Sport is significant in Hertfordshire and London. Between 2003 to 2017, the sport and physical activity sector added nearly 129,000 new jobs, a 42% growth achieved over a period characterised by a global financial crisis and the recession that followed it. The UK Coaching Survey 2019 reported, pre-COVID, that 6% of UK adults had coached, instructed, trained, taught, or led sport or physical activity in the 12 months prior to the survey. While this equates to a massive three million individuals across the UK, only 37% of these coaches were paid for any of their coaching and just 8% stated that coaching was their primary occupation. The Hertfordshire Skills Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity sets out the priorities for Hertfordshire and the Measuring the Social and Economic Impact of Sport in England, was published in August 2020 which shows the net value of sport on physical and mental health is £9.59 billion, on mental wellbeing £42 billion, on individual development £282 billion and social and community development £20 billion.

Many residents in our immediate locations have no formal qualifications, representing 3.6% of people in Welwyn Hatfield and St Albans. Economic activity rates are high in St Albans at 85.4% and lower in Welwyn Hatfield at 78% and even lower in Hertsmere at 75%.

The percentage of residents reported to have NVQ L4 or higher qualifications are 45.9% in Welwyn Hatfield, 52.3% in Hertsmere and 65.9% in St Albans. In London, qualifications are higher than in any other UK region, yet the in-work poverty rates are the highest and whilst there are more jobs in London than ever before, economic inactivity and unemployment is higher than in other regions. Despite London's workforce having the highest levels of qualification in the country, labour shortage challenges are still being exacerbated by significant skills gaps. While the pandemic has worsened the gaps, this unmet demand already existed. In 2019, 15% of employers in London reported a skills gap or skills shortage.

The employment rate in the Greater London areas we serve has decreased since last year with the unemployment rate of currently 5.4-5.6%, this is much lower in Hertfordshire at 2.5%. However, 9.8% (24,092) of children live in families in low-income households in Hertfordshire. Whilst St Albans is generally considered an affluent area, an area Northwest of the city in the Batchwood ward is considered to be the most deprived area in the borough and ranked 9,268 most deprived in England. Roe Green in Hatfield is ranked 6,540 most deprived area in England in the office for national statistics (ONS Census 2021)





3. MEETING LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL NEEDS

3. MEETING LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL NEEDS

Oaklands uses 3 - 5 year labour market intelligence trends from specialist providers such as Lightcast and Vector to assist the college in providing courses to meet local labour market needs, regional business demands and LEP priorities. This forms the basis for our curriculum planning and has influenced the college's strategic work.

The college supported the development of the local skills improvement plans (LSIP) in both Hertfordshire and London. In Hertfordshire, the survey to inform the LSIP revealed 70% of employers were prepared to invest in skills. The priority sectors identified for Hertfordshire include property and construction, creative industries, hospitality & tourism, life sciences, health and care, education and childcare and engineering and manufacturing, highlighting also that essential skills including digital and green skills were required across all sectors. The priority demographics in Hertfordshire are 16-24s, 50+ career professionals and those with learning differences and disabilities. The LSIP highlights that 40% of Hertfordshire businesses were planning to recruit in the next 12 months with 45.5% reporting finding employees with the right employment skills as a problem, 43.2% find problems with employees having the right technical skills and 7.7% problems with sufficient Maths and English skills.

In London, the LSIP identified four key sectors and four cross-cutting themes: creative, health & social care, built environment and hospitality sectors, and themes of digital, green, and transferable skills and labour market inclusion. The LSIP's priority sectors and cross-cutting themes closely align to the priority sectors identified by the Mayor as part of the London Recovery Programme's Helping Londoners into Good Work mission.

In response to these priorities Oaklands is focussed on several strategic projects. We are working with Hertfordshire County Council and other SEND providers on increasing accessibility to local provision. The college currently has an extensive SEND programme and is looking to develop a new, bespoke High Needs Centre to respond to the increasing demand for places, should funding allow. The College is also working on initiatives to develop the work readiness of learners with SEND, including the introduction of a SEND cafe on campus.

The development of our 3,000 square metre construction facility will be completed in autumn 2024 and will enable us to deliver new programmes for renewable technology, sustainability and retrofit,



in addition to the embedding of these skills in our full-time study programme curriculum. Students will learn in immersive environments, supported by immersive technology such as virtual reality.

In response to skills demand for the Health Care sector, the college is undergoing a building programme to model NHS facilities on the campus so learners can develop skills in a real-world working environment. Our new health care centre has been developed with our employers and partners and will also allow us to grow the courses offered to extend to professional upskilling of NHS and other health related workers. Furthermore, our Early Years Centre and on-site learning Nursery have been developed to support new T Level provision starting in September 2024. The curriculum has been developed through consultation with one of our industry boards and our course offering extended into adult professional programmes and skills bootcamps to service the increasing demand for early years working and childminders locally.

Oaklands is at the forefront of skills development for the screen industries locally. Working with the Hertfordshire Film Office the college is now established as a film set and several productions have already been shot on our campuses involving our students in various elements of the production to support their work experience in the sector. Furthermore, the college is committed, through our estates masterplan to deliver a Creative Gateway building to further enhance our curriculum offering to support the ever-growing industry locally and regionally.

Oaklands continues to develop its sports offering through the diversification of curriculum offered to upskill those already in the leisure industry to increasing the number of sporting academies on campus, introducing three new academies in 2024. Our outstanding coaching programmes service the local demand for such skills and are a key contributor to the employment needs locally for sports roles.

Oaklands has developed an Employer Engagement Strategy which sets out our plans for excellence in employer and stakeholder engagement across the college. As part of this strategy, every curriculum area is underpinned by an Industry Advisory Board made up of the employer and stakeholder community. Industry advisory boards seek to understand the immediate and longer-term skills needs from a technical perspective and in terms of core employability. For example, our employers and stakeholders have shaped the college's #Getcareeready strategy, and many employers are aligned to assess students against industry-led competency and skills measures which contribute significantly to students' professional development.

The curriculum at Oaklands College is ambitious and accessible, responsive both to the individual ambitions of learners and the needs of the communities we serve, supporting students to overcome barriers whilst providing the relevant learning and skills required to realise their full potential - supporting them towards future sustainable careers. The college's curriculum planning



cycle takes explicit note of the skills landscape to ensure our curriculum is fit for purpose and future proof wherever possible. A comprehensive set of data sources are used in the planning process. These include LMI accessed via the Lightcast system and RCU Vector along with tangible local, regional, national, and international perspectives, emergent themes from the Hertfordshire and London Local Skills Improvement Plans, the Hertfordshire Skills Framework, The Hertfordshire Skills Employment Strategy (2021-24) Hertfordshire Sports Partnership sector skills strategy, Tech Nations people and skills report (2022) St Albans Skills and Labour Market Analysis Report (2022) Digital Construction Report (2023) Hertfordshire LEP Economic Plan (2017-2030) and the UK Industrial Strategy.

The college has appointed a skills link governor and reports on our contribution to skills are ratified by the curriculum and quality committee termly.

PRIORITY SECTORS

Sector Area	Local	Regional	National	Emergent
Construction & Built Environment	x	x	x	
Creative Industries	x	x		x
Hospitality	x			
Tourism	x			
Life Science	x			
Health and Care	x	x	x	
Education & Childcare	x	x	x	
Engineering & Manufacturing	x	x	x	
AgriTech	x			x
Digital & Technology	x	x	x	
Low Carbon Tech	x	x	x	
Space Technologies	x			x
Corporate Services	x	x	x	
Greenkeeping & Land Based	x	x	x	

OAKLANDS CONTRIBUTION TO SKILLS

Sector Area	16-19	Adult	HE	Apprenticeships
Construction & Built Environment	x	x	x	x
Creative Industries	x	x		
Hospitality	x			
Tourism	x			
Life Science	x			
Health and Care	x	x	x	
Education & Childcare	x	x	x	x
Engineering & Manufacturing	x	x	x	x
Agritech				
Digital & Technology	x		x	
Low Carbon Tech		x		
Space Technologies				x
Corporate Services	x	x	x	x
Greenkeeping & Land Based	x	x		x



4. KEY STAKEHOLDERS

4. KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The work we do with our employer partners, and stakeholders is embedded into the DNA of Oaklands, resulting in the alignment to several of the college's strategic aims.

Oaklands has established employment and skills boards in St Albans, in partnership with St Albans District Council, Hertsmere, in partnership with Hertsmere Borough Council and we are currently establishing the Welwyn Hatfield skills board in conjunction with Welwyn and Hatfield Borough Council. The skills boards meet four times per year with the view to shaping and sharing skills demands within the districts and boroughs, allowing colleagues at the highest level of the organisations to support horizon scanning and curriculum implementation at the college.

Members of the college executive are active in the local skills landscape including our Principal and CEO representing the college on Hertfordshire Film & TV Board, SEND Partnership & Assurance Board, Skills and Employment Board, Consortium Strategy Group and regularly meeting with the leaders of the councils in St Albans, Welwyn Garden City and Hertfordshire County Council along with other key stakeholders. The Deputy Principal, Strategy, Partnerships and Business Development who co-chairs all the Employment and Skills Boards locally, The Herts Innovation Quarter (IQ) board, The WGC & St Albans Business Improvement District (BID) boards, the St Albans Visitor Partnership and the Hertfordshire Growth Board. The college works very closely with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) on skills initiatives across the county including the introduction of Skills Bootcamps.

In addition, Corporation members utilise their networks to ensure visibility of college activities and initiatives throughout the County and beyond.

Many Oaklands staff are leaders in education or in their respective fields. Senior managers make valuable contributions at local, regional and national levels, advocating for the sector and contributing to national policy. For example, members of our senior team are working with government on SEND issues nationally.

Our engagement with employers is extensive, our approach is collaborative, and we develop long-lasting relationships with employers who share the same intent for supporting and developing talent. We have relationships with over 1000 employers ranging from large corporate organisations such as Airbus, Sky and Fujitsu to smaller SME's which make up the large proportion of Hertfordshire businesses. Employers engage with us to recruit, train, and develop their staff through both accredited and non-accredited training, and many engage with us to support their corporate and social responsibilities. Activities include their participation in the



#GETCAREEREADY strategy, work experience and industry placement, attendance at industry board, industry insight events to inspire students and careers events. Furthermore, Oaklands is a key placeholder in the local and regional business community, hosting several employer networking events, awards events, and sponsorship of local employer events. Oaklands has established several strategic alliances with employers locally and nationally.

Oaklands College boasts a robust engagement with the sports world, primarily facilitated through our thriving Sports Academies and high-class facilities which has led to excellent relationships with Sport England and the Hertfordshire Sports Partnership. Both bodies were consulted as we launched the Oaklands Aspirational Estates Masterplan in mid-2022 to ensure the facilities we are planning meet the current and future sporting needs for the county and the region. The strategic partnerships and initiatives with the world of sport underscore our commitment to fostering athletic excellence and promoting sports at various levels. Key elements of our engagement include Sport England, Hertfordshire Sports partnership, National governing bodies of various sports and the talent athlete programme (TASS). Our engagement with the sports world through our academies is comprehensive, spanning collaborative initiatives, strategic partnerships, and a commitment to fostering athletic talent and excellence at all levels.

Our stakeholder work with the department for work and pension (DWP) is significant and we have developed several initiatives in partnership with the Job Centre Plus (JCP) to target those from the most disadvantaged in society to those who are very close to entering the job market. Initiatives include the Borehamwood Job Club, the Pathway to Progression programme and new for 2024-25 initiatives to tackle unemployed in the over fifties and incentives for tackling the skills shortage for the early years' workforce. At the JCP St Albans we are supporting the new 'Youth Hub' which develops the employment skills of 18–24-year-olds who may not have experienced employment. Our learner engagement officer has scheduled as well as drop-in sessions where this group of young people can get advice on courses and qualifications that could help them on their employment journey. This will also extend into ESOL assessment sessions to encourage second language speakers to upskill enabling them to break into the job market.

Oaklands is committed to developing the engagement we have with parents, residents who live locally to our campus and the wider community to deliver social value to the communities which we serve. To complement our extensive community and leisure training programmes, the college throughout 2024-25 will extend our community outreach, further engaging the community with a range of social activities to promote wellbeing and social cohesion. The colleges ambition is to serve as a dynamic hub, through developing local partnerships and community engagement to play a transformative role in building an even stronger, more united community.



Oaklands College is dedicated to working with local schools to support their careers programmes. In line with the Oaklands mission statement to create mutually beneficial partnerships, the college framework of events and activities is aligned with the new Provider Access Legislation enabling student encounters with the college. The encounters improve students' knowledge of technical pathways and are designed to promote the breadth of courses Oaklands College has to offer. The college engages with schools in several ways including, school assemblies (Yr8 – Yr11), school careers fairs and parents' evenings, school events, school explorer afternoons – schools visit the college campus for a presentation/tour/meet careers advice team and admissions team, twilight Tasters – an hour 'taster' lesson which is subject specific and helps with effective transition from school to college. The college also supports several county-led initiatives such as the 'generation events' in association with the LEP and the local council. Oaklands College also engages with future students through school news bulletins, newsletters and via google classroom and our sports academy offer starts from age 6years. The college also works with other targeted organisations such as Services for Young People to build a thriving college community.





5.

**COLLABORATIVE
WORKING
WITH OTHER
PROVIDERS**

5. COLLABORATIVE WORKING WITH OTHER PROVIDERS

We take an active role in the Hertfordshire Principals Group where all executive leaders from every FE College in the region meet to discuss opportunities for collaboration and partnership working. We work collaboratively with our FE colleagues across the region to secure inward investment to the area. Examples of this include the LSIF & Strategic Development Fund which brought together four partners and secured almost one million of capital and revenue investment into our HE, health care, green and digital curriculums.

Oaklands also works with many other providers in the national educational arena including representation on the Association of Colleges Groups for Sport and Apprenticeships.

Working alongside the other three Hertfordshire Colleges and the Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce on LSIP employer and stakeholder engagement, has enabled us to quickly respond to the LSIP feedback and develop accessible training to meet local skills need and create a more efficient employer engagement programme across the county for example, attending many networking events together, at a substantially greater scale than was seen previously.

The Colleges, successfully, in collaboration with the other Hertfordshire Further Education (FE) Colleges bid for local skills improvement funding (LSIF). For Oaklands this will deliver for 2024-2025 further enhancements to the digital strand of the strategic development funding (SDF) through the capital purchase of an immersive virtual reality (VR) space at 2 of our campuses, a digital lecture space, augmented reality equipment, collaborative working on the metacollege and upskilling of staff on VR, AR, RFID and AI plus other digital technologies as appropriate. To enhance our green skills curriculum the fund will be used to upskill staff and includes capital procurement of equipment for delivering training in energy efficiency, sustainability, and renewable energy technologies in our new 3,000 sqm construction facility. Significant investment will be made to our Health and Care facilities including the development of specialist and simulation equipment and a new training ward, curriculum development with NHS trusts and sector work on the employer led board for the NHS. Funding will also support the creative, design, media, and film capacity building activities. The



college has also successfully participated in the delivery of strategic development funding to meet skills gaps in current and emergent areas across the region.

Our strategic alliance with University of Hertfordshire (UH) has built a close, mutually beneficial, supportive, and wide-ranging partnership between the two institutions. The alliance is founded on a friendly co-operation basis where mutual respect and benefit allow for shared growth and enhancement, with benefits realised that are greater than the sum of its parts. This allows both organisations to work individually and collaboratively to gain an advantage in serving and supporting the communities and stakeholders we serve. Together, we will deliver products and services that:

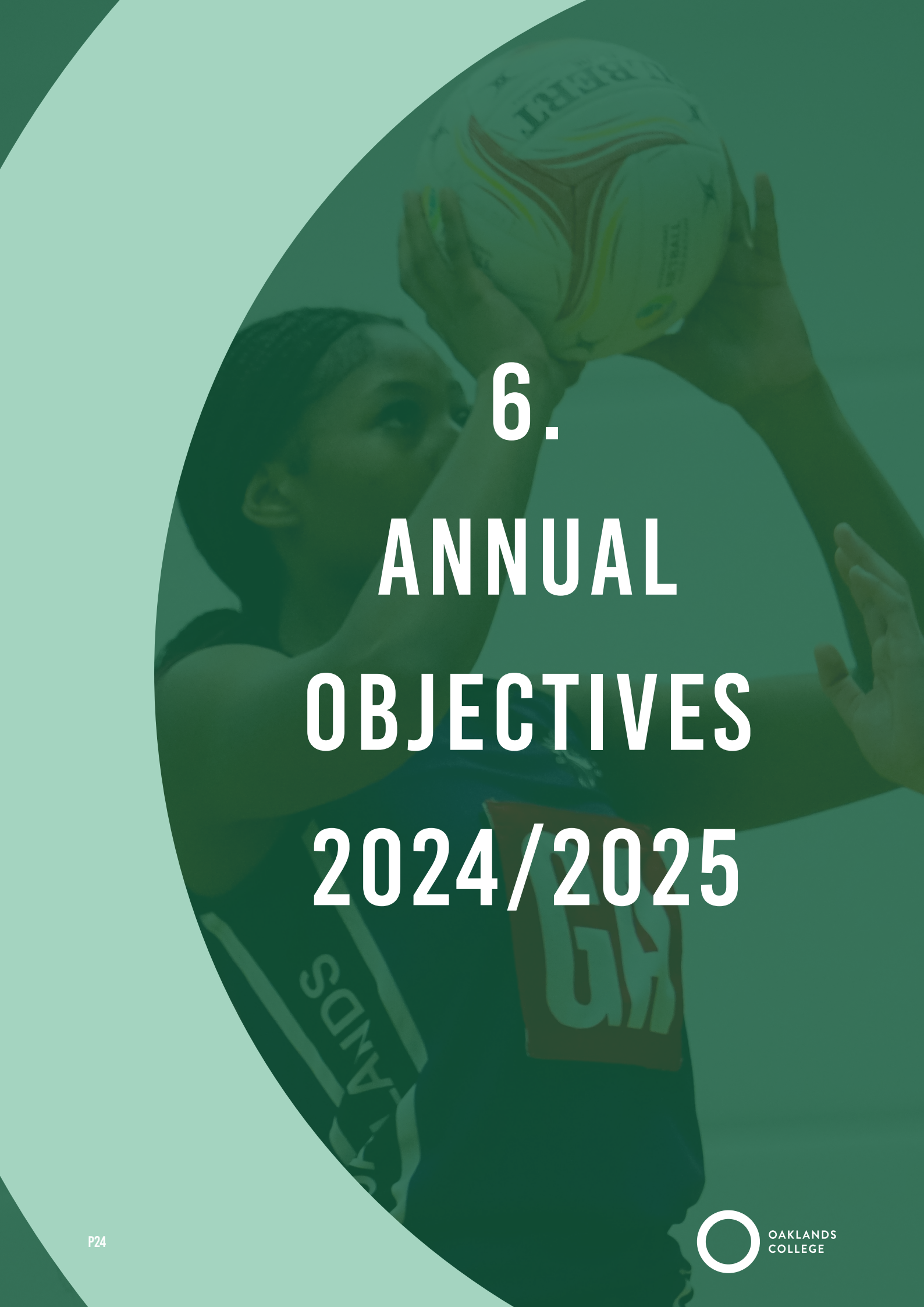
1. Benefit our communities that otherwise would not have existed and/or
2. Enhance either institution's current offers to ensure we meet the demands of the Skills White paper.

Working collaboratively with UH will create further strategic opportunities in the HE and FE marketplace, whether this be learner progression, joint bids, joint events, or other innovative areas which emerge. Additionally, to this, our respective organisations have concluded a curriculum mapping activity which has culminated in a shared collective understanding of where Oaklands and UH higher education curriculum, including degree level apprenticeships, which will be delivered with each organisation taking the lead in areas which lend to their strengths. Furthermore, Oaklands and the other Hertfordshire Colleges share a consortium with the University of Hertfordshire.

Oaklands supports the local community in a variety of ways including access to training through Step2Skills and Multiply both on campus, through distance learning and at local community venues. Oaklands contributes to the communities we serve through active involvement on the WGC and St Albans and BID teams Oaklands hosts several community engagement events including 'Communities.

Oaklands works with Groundworks to offer specialised horticulture to individuals in our local area with significant barriers to employment. The programme is successful in building confidence and giving the individuals the skills and experience needed to work in this sector.





6.
ANNUAL
OBJECTIVES
2024/2025

6. ANNUAL OBJECTIVES 2024/2025

Through the execution of our 2022 – 2027 Strategic Plan, we are focussed on achieving the following strategic aims and objectives:

1	Delivering continuous outstanding teaching, learning, and assessment to all learners and employers.
2	Create mutually beneficial partnerships to deliver the highest quality educational offer to increase economic prosperity.
3	Create our estate so that it is recognised as world class in terms of quality, sustainability and the promotion and practice of evolving leading-edge technologies.
4	Create a caring, accessible, inclusive, and thriving college community, committed to fairness, health, and success.
5	Deliver good or outstanding long term sustainable financial health, through growth, that enables reinvestment in our students, staff, and estate to support our aspirational goals.

To support the deliverance of our strategic objectives, Oaklands has an annual operating plan which is updated and shared to the Corporation each quarter to hold the senior executives to key actions which support the delivery of our agreed objectives and targets. This accountability statement highlights the high-level actions.

STRATEGIC AIM ONE:

Delivering continuous outstanding teaching, learning, and assessment to all learners and employers.

ACTION 1

Increase achievement rates across all programmes, with a keen focus on programmes for young people, adults and apprenticeships, in skilled priority areas where achievement will be a minimum of 83.4% which equates to an improvement of 2% overall.

IMPACT ON / CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS SKILLS PRIORITIES

By increasing outcomes in skilled priority areas, we will enable more students to progress through the levels of learning at Oaklands College and enter the job market in high productivity sectors. We will also increase our market share in apprenticeships through offering high-quality collaborative programmes with employers.

ACTION 2

English and maths outcomes to be in line with the national average which equates to a 20.8% increase in functional skills English and maths and 5% increase in GCSE English and maths. This will be achieved through the implementation of the English and maths strategy which places skill development as priority so that students develop their confidence in a range of communication styles and become active problem solvers.

IMPACT ON / CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS SKILLS PRIORITIES

The level of English and maths attainment at Oaklands College is too low, this is symptomatic across the region. Increasing English and maths outcomes will support skills growth and generation of new skills and talent in key priority sectors including.

- Health
- Construction
- Engineering
- Education

ACTION 3

Launch new curriculum areas and invigorate withstanding curriculum so that the offer is directly aligned to sector need and seeks to improve educational attainment:

- Develop and launch apprenticeships in 2024-25
- New T-Levels: introduce three new pathways in 2023/2024
- A-Level Programmes: offer a three A Level package with an increase in a choice of ten programmes for 2024/25 to meet demand
- Develop digital learning opportunities for implementation in 2024/2025 to support the large non-English-speaking community to access education and training which enables them to enter the job market
- Deliver the Multiply programme to eighty adults in 2024/25
- Develop and launch new Leadership and management programmes

IMPACT ON / CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS SKILLS PRIORITIES

Young people, adults, and apprentices, including those with additional needs, will be able to access relevant modes of delivery enabled them to engage in programmes which are aligned to skills needs. Each curriculum area links directly to skills needs, LMI and the Colleges themes and priorities. These areas will impact on skill development and labour market entrants in health, digital, science, engineering, construction, low and the corporate sector.

STRATEGIC AIM TWO:

Create mutually beneficial partnerships to deliver the highest quality educational offer to increase economic prosperity.

ACTION 4

Deliver growth and diversification in the higher level digital, engineering, construction, health care and sport sectors by implementing a range of new Higher Technical Qualification (HTQ) programmes which addresses skills gaps and emerging trends by increasing access and participation to higher level skills programmes. Participation in higher skills programmes (HTQ & HE provision) will increase by 30% which equates to 63 additional students studying within these professions.

IMPACT ON / CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS SKILLS PRIORITIES

This will ensure that more people obtain higher level skills leading to entering the labour market in higher level jobs servicing priority sectors thus meeting the priorities set out in the LSIP, LEP, and national priorities and tackling the lower number of residents in the college community whom do not have L4 or higher qualifications.

ACTION 5

Further increase direct delivery of adult provision which provides employability, sector-based Work Academy Programmes and Bootcamps in key priority areas. Employability provision will be tailored to support those who are the most disadvantaged in our society through developing joint initiatives with the DWP and REED in partnership and will be delivered to 150 adults which equates to an increase of 70%. We will also deliver bootcamps in digital, retrofit, rail track (National Rail) Plate layer (London Underground) Education and Arboriculture training with approximately 250 candidates undertaking these programmes.

IMPACT ON / CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS SKILLS PRIORITIES

This will mean that adults are accessing work ready programmes that directly reflect employer needs, local, regional, and national demand, therefore more adults are able to enter and progress within the most in-demand labour markets. Our bootcamps programmes will directly service entry into apprenticeship programmes with 50 students expected to progress to an apprenticeship. Our employability programmes will support those who are the most disadvantaged in society to gain the confidence and skills to enter the job market.

ACTION 6

Deliver a responsive and future focussed training portfolio, to include apprenticeships and professional training programmes, aligned to business needs which promotes innovation, investment, internationalisation and contributes to increasing business productivity, thus ensuring we are the training partner of choice for Hertfordshire employers and beyond.

IMPACT ON / CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS SKILLS PRIORITIES

Allowing employers and apprentices access to training that was not available for several years at Oaklands. Each sector area links directly to skills needs identified through employer discussions and LMI and the college themes and priorities. These areas will impact on skill development and labour. market entrants' education, engineering, construction, hairdressing greenkeeping and the corporate sector.

ACTION 7

The college #GETCAREERREADYSTRATEGY to be fully embedded into curriculum delivery. Through ensuring employers have supported the design of curriculum content during industry boards, which happen for every sector area, a skills and behaviours matrix is established for each sector area with employer involvement in the observation of learner skills development and the delivery of some of the technical aspects of curriculum in all areas.

IMPACT ON/ CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS SKILLS PRIORITIES

All students on a study programme will have achieved the skills needed to progress into industry, as identified by employers from the sector. Oaklands students who have achieved the get career ready badges will be first choices for employers in their talent recruitment leading to more, more quickly progressing to jobs and positive outcomes. Destinations of Oaklands students will improve from last year.

ACTION 8

Continue to develop Oaklands as a collaborative college that increases its number of strategic partners to develop skills, promote productivity and prosperity in the region by engaging with 500 employers over the next 12 months, securing another 10 strategic partners, working with each Hertfordshire FE College and engaging with over 50 schools locally.

IMPACT ON / CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS SKILLS PRIORITIES

Oaklands will continue to develop new programmes which are aligned to skills needs through collaboration with employers and other partners such as other FE Colleges. Collaborate bids linked to developing skills in the region will be prioritised to ensure there is county wide impact – such as the emerging skills need to develop a significant number of skilled early years workforce individuals to meet the changing government, initiative around nursery places for all.

STRATEGIC AIM THREE:

Develop our estate so that it is recognised as world class in terms of quality, sustainability and the promotion and practice of evolving leading-edge technologies (2024 - 2027).

ACTION 9

Deliver the college estate masterplan and strategy to maximise our assets to the benefit of our stakeholders.

IMPACT ON/ CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS SKILLS PRIORITIES

On completion of the current building programme (masterplan) Oaklands will have developed country-leading centres of the delivery of education and skills.

ACTION 10

Raise awareness of the importance of climate change and sustainability, equipping staff and students with the tools to do better for the environment and as custodians of the Oaklands estate, through the implementation of a sustainability action plan.

IMPACT ON/ CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS SKILLS PRIORITIES

Through our action plan, Oaklands will be aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and will be engaged with local employers and providers of sustainable auditing, technology and inspiration to make incremental changes to our approach to sustainability in line with the priorities of the UK.

ACTION 11

Complete the building programme on the St Albans Campus for the Construction Centre, ensuring the new 3,000sqm facility is digitally SMART and enables the training and development of digitally enabled courses for the construction industry.

IMPACT ON / CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS SKILLS PRIORITIES

Oaklands will offer leading edge construction training, required by industry for young people and professionals already in industry through upskilling and professional qualifications. The use of virtual reality technology will enable employers to be more immersed in the delivery of technical skills and the development of the construction curriculum.

STRATEGIC AIM FOUR:

Ensuring a caring, accessible, inclusive, and thriving college community, committed to fairness, health, and success.

ACTION 12

Create a comprehensive People Strategy which encompasses a strategic approach to staff development, industry upskilling, and a 'back to the floor' initiative for technical staff to ensure they are at the leading edge of industrial practice where all delivery staff will undertake a back to the floor days in key priority sectors. In doing so we will improve the quality of training and skills development in key growth areas therefore leading to higher skilled professionals entering the labour market.

IMPACT ON / CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS SKILLS PRIORITIES

The People Strategy will directly influence the college's capacity towards developing a skilled workforce able to deliver the skills of the future and that which is aligned to the local, region and national priorities. Supporting Oaklands to drive a professional culture of continuous improvement through high quality training, coaching and performance management to sustain outstanding quality of education.

STRATEGIC AIM FIVE:

Deliver “Good” or “Outstanding” long term sustainable financial health, through growth, that enables reinvestment in our students, staff, and estate to support our aspirational goals.

ACTION 13

Deliver an annual positive college contribution generating cash for future investments through growth and financial prudence including increasing 16-18 students to 3400 and improving recruitment by 10% and pre 42 day retention by 5% across all levels and all provision. Furthermore, the college will generate over £1.5m across our commercial streams in 2024-25.

IMPACT ON / CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS SKILLS PRIORITIES

The college will be able to continue to reinvest in its future, invest in the newest learning technologies and further enhance our teaching capacity. Through an increase in commercial activities students will have the opportunity to partake in several experiences of the commercial world including working on active film sets and at college events. Oaklands Student Crew has been established to enable students to work and be paid for their contribution to commercial activities at Oaklands.

ACTION 14

Increase the college income to > £40m through the diversification of revenue streams, including increasing the commercial operations and delivering sponsorship across our building programmes and through other events and activities.

IMPACT ON / CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS SKILLS PRIORITIES

The college will be able to further invest in its future, securing new partners in the commercial and sponsorship areas the college will have access to large and successful organisations who are strategically aligned to support the college growth both financially and through the skills agenda.



7. CORPORATION STATEMENT AND LOCAL NEEDS DUTY

7. CORPORATION STATEMENT AND LOCAL NEEDS DUTY

The College Corporation regularly undertakes a review of how Oaklands College is meeting local, regional and national skills needs through several mechanisms that enable both long-term strategic planning and near-term operational oversight.

Key processes include the annual curriculum planning cycle, which ensures alignment to priority sectors and labour market demand; the 5-year strategic plan which takes an outward-looking approach to position the college at the forefront of changing skills needs; and Annual Operating Plan to deliver our objectives.

This year's accountability statement focuses on addressing urgent curriculum needs and our future growth in HTQs, level 4 and above provision, apprenticeships, and professional training. Together these mechanisms of review enable regular scrutiny of how the college serves its communities by filling skills gaps, avoiding duplication, and collaborating with partners.

Collaboration remains crucial; work continues with the University of Hertfordshire to align higher education curriculum and enable clear progression pathways. The college is developing a revised offer which focuses on Higher Technical Skills in key priority sectors including, for example, the introduction of higher-level study. While meeting economic needs, developing wider employability skills and raising aspirations remains a priority. Further development of our Industry Boards and the annual Accountability Agreement further support strategic review. This will help the college in maintaining a strong connection with industry so that our offers remain agile, responsive, and future focused.

The Corporation continues to be outward looking, responding agilely to changing local, regional, national, and global skills landscapes. This multifaceted approach enables the Corporation to ensure that Oaklands leads on technical education, boosting productivity and inclusive growth across the region.

On behalf of the Oaklands College Corporation, it is hereby confirmed that the Corporation conducts reviews in line with the local needs duty, as such resulting in this plan. The annual accountability statement sets out an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the Corporation. The plan will be published on the college website within 3 months of the start of the new academic year and can be accessed from the following link: <https://www.oaklands.ac.uk/about-us/our-values-mission/>



Peter Thompson
Chair of the Corporation



Andrew Slade
Principal & CEO



8. APPENDICES AND REFERENCE SOURCES

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Reference to relevant supporting documentation college's should provide links overleaf to any other key documents that are referred to or directly relevant to the college plan, such as LSIPs, annual financial statements, performance dashboards, and Ofsted inspections.

- HSP Skills Strategy - <https://sportinherts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/HSP-SKILLS-STRATEGY.pdf>
- Hertfordshire Local Skills Report (LEP 2021) <https://www.hertfordshirelep.com/media/maf1pk3y/hertfordshire-local-skills-report-2021.pdf>
- Hertfordshire Skills and Employment Strategy - <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/about-the-council/data-and-information/childrens-services/hertfordshire-skills-strategy-to-2021-24.pdf>
- Hertfordshire LSIP - <https://www.hertschamber.com/lsip>
- London LSIP - <https://www.businessldn.co.uk/what-we-do/people/the-london-local-skills-improvement-plan>
- Oaklands Strategic Plan - https://www.oaklands.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Oaklands_College_Full_Strategic_Plan_A4_v9-reduced-file-size.pdf
- Skills roadmap for London - https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/skills_roadmap_for_london.pdf