Lancashire Local Skills Improvement Plan – Progress Report 2025

30th June 2025

Contents

Purpose of the report

The second Progress Report of the Lancashire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), published August 2023, provides an overview of what has been achieved so far and what is still to be achieved against the priorities set out in the LSIP.

The primary audience for this report are the employers who have engaged with the development of the LSIP priorities. They will see how their recommendations are being addressed and what more is to come. Those who have not so far been involved will see how the LSIP is helping shape local skills provision, encouraging their involvement in future LSIP development.

It is vital for those who have given their time to share their needs to see how much has already been done to address LSIP priorities in less than two years since the plan was published.

While employers are the primary audience for the Progress Report, providers and other local stakeholders will also benefit from understanding the wider picture of what has happened so far and the important role they can play in implementing LSIP priorities.

Summary of the LSIP

Lancashire's LSIP is led by the North & Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, supported by the East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce. As one of eight areas who ran a Trailblazer LSIP, Lancashire has been working on LSIPs since 2021 and have engaged with over 1,200 individual employer organisations in that time.

The Lancashire LSIP covers the area Lancashire County Combined Authority, comprising Lancashire County Council, and the unitary authorities of Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen. Within Lancashire County Council are 12 district authorities: Burnley, Chorley, Fylde, Hyndburn, Lancaster, Pendle, Preston, Ribble Valley, Rossendale, South Ribble, West Lancashire, and Wyre.

Through a mix of surveys, focus groups, roundtables, one-to-one interviews, and analysis of labour market information, the LSIP produced a number of key priorities as expressed by employers.

Common challenges across different sectors became evident:

- Finding skilled, experienced staff or new people to enter the industry to train.
- Work readiness of people entering the workforce for the first time.
- Increased digital needs across most job roles, not just specifically digital jobs or within the digital sector.
- Employers not sure how navigate the skills system and a need for them to find training easily and better understand available apprenticeships, T Levels and Skills Bootcamps.

Each sector also identified specific priorities regarding shortages in job roles and other skills required.

This Progress Report will show the cross-sectoral priorities and how they are being addressed.

Whilst the LSIP is a plan there is a need for it to also be a process to oversee and support implementation of the solutions. The Chamber, as lead ERB of the LSIP, is not going to be delivering on most of the skills need priorities as this is dependent on how providers respond. The Chamber is responsible for developing and supporting the collaboration between employers, providers and stakeholders to start to deliver on these priorities.

Following the release of the Emerging Priorities in March 2023 and the Lancashire LSIP report in August 2023, providers have started to embed employers' needs in their curriculum planning and this can be seen in their Annual Accountability Statements. The county's FE Colleges have a duty to respond to local skills needs in these Statements and in their actions. How well they're succeeding in addressing employer needs is now assessed as part of Ofsted's enhanced inspections.

This report features the initial response to the LSIP as well as planned future activity.

The LSIP process is proving to have reach beyond the initial scope of the project. The strong employer voice and interactions around employment issues has seen the Chamber's LSIP team asked to partake in working groups and consultations tackling economic inactivity, health & work, and SEND employment.

Alongside FE colleges and private training providers, the LSIP has built close collaborative relationships with the Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub, Careers Hub, the Universities, local authorities, DWP, and other stakeholders representing different sectors including CITB, AMRC NW, NW Aerospace Alliance, Northern Automotive Alliance, Road Haulage Association, Skills for Care, and the Electrical Contractors Association.

Strategic and economic context update

Lancashire Devolution

In February 2025 the Lancashire Combined County Authority (LCCA) came into being. This is a level 2 devolution agreement led by the county's upper tier authorities: Lancashire County Council, Blackpool Council and Blackburn with Darwen Council.

Lancashire's devolution agreement includes several key areas:

- **Innovation, Trade and Investment**
  - o Working with local and national stakeholders to become a globally recognised and sustainable economy, distinguished by our quality of life, connectivity, and access to opportunities.
- **Skills and Adult Education**
  - o Working collaboratively with employers, skills and training providers, local authorities and other stakeholders to support people to develop their skills throughout their lives and attract business to Lancashire because of our highly skilled workforce.
- **Transport**
  - o Working with transport providers inside and outside Lancashire to create better connected infrastructure that links opportunity to need and delivers travel choices that are safe, inclusive, affordable and low carbon.
- **Net Zero and Climate Change**
  - o Working across Lancashire to meet our low carbon ambitions, promote clean energy, and enhance our natural environment. Our ambition is that Lancashire becomes internationally recognised as a leader in the creation of 'green jobs', building upon our world class engineering and manufacturing capabilities.
- **Digital and Cyber**
  - o Working throughout Lancashire to improve our digital infrastructure and knowledge-based industries, aiming to modernise and balance our industrial sector.
- **Culture and Tourism**
  - o Recognising the fundamental importance of our culture and tourism assets and are working with stakeholders across Lancashire to strengthen these. This work includes the creation of a Local Visitor Economy Partnership to help further develop the region's visitor economy.
- **Housing and Land**
  - o Supporting the delivery of decent, affordable and low carbon housing for every community. High quality housing will benefit existing residents, as well as attract and retain the people required to drive the economy over the long term.

There are clear links between these areas and the work of the LSIP: creating a positive environment for business growth; the development of a skilled workforce; and reference to LSIP priority areas such as digital, low carbon & sustainability, leisure & tourism, transport and construction.

The LCCA has integrated a number of functions from the old Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership including the Skills & Employment Hub, with whom the LSIP will continue to work closely. The governance arrangements include a Business Board which feeds directly into the LCCA Board. Sitting on the Business Board are the Chief Executives of the North & Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce and the East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, as well as the Chair of the LSIP Board. The LSIP Chair is also a member of the Skills Advisory Board which feeds into the Business Board.

Looking ahead, LCCA will also take control of the county's Adult Skills Fund (formerly Adult Education Budget) allocation from the academic year 2026/27, supporting integration of skills with local and national strategic priorities.

<u>The Lancashire Growth Plan 2025-35</u>

One of the LCCA's first tasks has been to develop a growth plan for the county. This has gone through a consultation phase with the results and approved plan still to be released at the time of writing.

The Growth Plan highlights five 'priority opportunities' to target "investment in key technology sectors, maximising national impact and local transformation":

- **UK Security**
  - o Lancashire's capacity and ability to manufacture military aircraft, produce nuclear fuel, and develop emerging capabilities in the cyber domain are powerful economic drivers. By harnessing the intersections of these industries and their underlying technological needs, we can establish new clusters where industry, academia, and wider society collaborate. This synergy will forge new products and capabilities, enhancing national security and contributing to economic growth.
- **Clean Growth / Nuclear**
  - o The region boasts key capabilities across the nuclear lifecycle, particularly in enrichment and fuel production and operating nuclear power stations. Combined with Lancashire's sites, skills, and expertise, this presents opportunities for developing a new generation of nuclear fuels and energy systems. These established capabilities are complemented by new energy storage and efficiency technologies, which enhance both offshore and onshore energy generation. Lancashire's significant capabilities in clean energy and nuclear not only provide energy security but also the availability of more cost-effective power to enable Lancashire's (and the UK's) other key sectors to remain globally competitive. Additionally, Lancashire's advanced engineering and manufacturing base has the skills necessary to diversify and support production in these sectors.
- **Sustainable Digital and Artificial Intelligence**
  - o Digitisation and Artificial Intelligence (AI) will transform all economic sectors. However, this development brings challenges, such as the data processing sector's high consumption of water and power, potential impacts on routine jobs, and the need to address risks to digital systems. Lancashire is uniquely positioned with its access to unparalleled transatlantic connectivity and wind power, and its innovative approach to tackle these challenges as part of a nascent North West Cyber Corridor to drive economic growth in a sustainable way, deliver major productivity gains, and generate new higher-value jobs.
- **Supporting the Continued Success of Advanced Engineering & Manufacturing**
  - o Lancashire has historically been a pioneer of manufacturing and continues to be to this day. Our evidence base indicates that the advanced engineering & manufacturing sector significantly impacts Lancashire's economy, contributing approximately £6.4 billion, which represents 18% of the region's total Gross Value Added (GVA). Key sectors include military and civil aerospace, energy, chemicals, and commercial vehicles, with action focused on supporting these prime sectors with a strong supply chain of mid-cap companies that have shown resilience, innovation, and openness to diversification. Our supply chain capabilities are equally important to the development of new, high value, low-carbon goods.
- **A Re-imagined Coast**
  - o While boasting the UK's most visited seaside town, in Blackpool, Lancashire's coastal towns have recognised the need to reinvent themselves and adapt to changing tourism trends and visitor demands. They are leading the way in driving local partnerships, forging strong and enduring relationships with Government, and in seeding investment in new attractions and town centre development opportunities – a way of working that offers a regeneration blueprint to inform a national approach to revitalising coastal towns.

Around skills in particular, there is a plan to "refocus devolved skills and employment investment to lift local job prospects and productivity by:"

- Continued investment in the Lancashire Careers Hub to drive the aspirations and interests of young people, working with schools, colleges and employers, to enable effective transitions from education to the world of work.
- Local prioritisation of devolved funds to better align technical education and skills pathways to meet local labour market needs and the demands of new economic sectors – including Skills and Growth Levy flexibilities, Skills Bootcamps and realignment of 16-19 provision.
- Partnership with DSIT to drive up digital, cyber and AI skills and address digital exclusion.
- Investment in programmes by DWP and DHSC to support local alignment of work, health and skills programmes to stem and reverse the growth in economic inactivity.

At the time of writing, it must be noted that recent county council elections have returned a new administration which will become partners on the LCCA. At this stage it is not known if, or how, their priorities around devolution ad the growth plan will differ from those laid out above.

Skills England priority sectors

Nationally, the newly formed Skills England has identified the skills needs for 10 priority sectors.[1] These include the 8 'growth-driving sectors' identified in the plans for the UK's industrial strategy[2]:

- advanced manufacturing
- clean energy industries
- creative industries
- defence
- digital and technologies
- financial services
- life sciences
- professional and business services

Additionally, Skills England have included two other sectors based on other government priorities and persistent skills gaps:

- construction
- health and social care.

There are already good links between the LSIP priorities and these sectors. Advanced manufacturing (and due to the county's manufacturing make up defence features in those discussions), construction, health and social care, and digital are all included within the LSIP. The clean energy industries have also been involved in some of work around green skills.

While not part of the sectoral priorities companies within the financial services, professional and business services, and the creative industries have been involved.

---

[1] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-england-skills-for-growth-and-opportunity
[2] https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/invest-2035-the-uks-modern-industrial-strategy/invest-2035-the-uks-modern-industrial-strategy

What has been achieved so far?

After a great deal of progress highlighted in the 2024 Progress Report, action continues to be taken to deliver on the priorities laid out in the LSIP.

Ensuring provision is aligned to needs

Curriculum planning within our FE Colleges continues to be directed to delivering on LSIP priorities. Their Annual Accountability Agreements feature the needs of employers as articulated through the LSIP. For example, one such agreement for the upcoming year (still in draft and going through final approval before publication in July) states that

> *"[the] College is committed to planning and delivering a curriculum that aligns with local, regional, and national priorities, including those identified through the LSIP. Our curriculum planning is a robust annual process informed by Labour Market Intelligence (LMI), training needs analyses, and direct engagement with employers."*

The three **Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF)** projects have being delivered collaboratively by **The Lancashire Colleges** in direct response to the LSIP.[3] Through the **'Skills for Sustainability'**, **'Digital, Cyber and AI Employability Skills'** and **'Farm to Fork'** projects the colleges have worked closely with local employers to enhance and design new courses that respond to their skills needs.

Some examples of new curriculum added over the last year or planned for the next academic year include:

- **Blackpool & the Fylde College**
  - **CMI Leadership and Management short 6 week course L2, L3, L5**.
  - **Lead to Succeed and Well Led**, 10 week courses to support **Health and Social Care managers**, which happened as a direct result of feedback from businesses within the care sector.
- **Burnley College**
  - Introduced fully funded modular courses in areas such as **Big Data, Visualisation & Analytics, Digital Innovation & Cyber Security, Mechatronics & Digital Principles, and Engineering Design & Quality**. These courses offer flexibility, allowing learners to tailor their education to specific skill needs and build credits toward full Higher Technical Qualifications.
- **Lancaster & Morecambe College**
  - T-Levels in Engineering, Health and Early Years (Education)
  - Apprenticeship in Digital Technician
  - AAT Level 4
  - Microsoft Excel courses (beginner and advanced levels)
- **Myerscough College**
  - Work has commenced at pace over the past year to enhance our Trees & Timber curriculum with the launch of a **new level 4 standard to support tree officers**. From September 2025 Myerscough will enhance this offer by being **the only college in the country to offer the L6 Degree Apprenticeship in Professional Arboriculturist**.

---

[3] https://www.tlc.ac.uk/projects-activities/lsif/

- o **Leadership & Management** – effective employer engagement has led to the development of a new 'Elevate' management development programme to meet the shortage of leadership and management skills within the Sports Turf sector. Through sector leading partnerships including industry sponsorship and awarding body approval, Myerscough will launch this new provision from September 2025 with a clear focus on the 'accidental and aspiring manager, responding to a gap identified by employers.
- **Runshaw College**
  - o As part of the **LSIF**, a **Level 3 course in Software Development** has been designed and recruited 60 students, with progression routes to a **Level 5 in Web Application Design.**
- **West Lancashire College**
  - o Relaunch of Catering & Hospitality level 1 & 2 courses - as part of the Visitor Economy project within our LSIF and aligning with LSIP priorities. We have developed our kitchens, and one is now fully electrical allowing us to demonstrate sustainability within this environment. The level 2 allows us to engage with our stakeholder schools as a progression from previously studied qualifications.

Not only does this new provision deliver on the needs of employers but much of the provision also provides shorter, modular training which was another priority highlighted in the LSIP.

To help ensure courses fit the needs of employers another LSIP priority was that employers were engaged

The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub has recently announced the latest wave of **Skills Bootcamps**.[4] The LSIP findings were shared with employers and providers during the consultation and course design stage. The vast majority of courses can be linked to recommendations within the LSIP.

The Skills Bootcamps announced cover the following areas which all feature either as LSIP priority sectors or within skills needs of employers:

- Construction
- Digital
- Engineering & Manufacturing
- Logistics
- Health & Social Care
- Leadership & Management
- Business & Marketing
- Energy & Sustainability
- Healthcare & Education
- Hospitality

Attracting people to shortage occupations and sectors

As well as new courses, Colleges have reported **increasing student numbers** in priority areas particularly **construction, engineering and hospitality.** Following a promotional campaign and close work with the NHS and early years settings, Lancaster & Morecambe College have also reported increased student numbers in **health** and **early years** courses.

---

[4] https://www.lancashireskillshub.co.uk/skillsbootcamps/

The LSIP sectoral business clusters have been active in how to promote opportunities in each sector. The clusters have been broad groups and been successful in introducing employers to careers advisory services such as the Lancashire Careers Hub as well as encouraging participation in careers events and work experience placements.

There is an appetite to continue the work of the clusters and build on this work developing specific content to be used by careers leads.

One of the ideas discussed in clusters meeting was that of 'workplace safaris' whereby a number of school pupils can visit one or two sites in a day. Following these discussions a bid was won to run a pilot in Lancashire and the LSIP team has supported the delivery of this pilot.

Closer involvement of employers within the skill system

The LSIP described how employers often find the skills system and local offer complex and difficult to navigate. Some work was already underway at the time of the last progress report and the Colleges are also working to support employers engaging with the skills system.

As could be seen from some of the new courses and LSIF activity there has been an increase of involvement of employers in curriculum development, with many new courses being as a result of direct employer feedback. The Colleges have introduced new Business/Trade Advisory Boards to advise on priority industry areas and help inform decisions on new courses and delivery.

An excellent example of the kind of extensive employer engagement can be seen at Runshaw College:

> *"We aim to be an active and engaged partner within the employer community, working with over 1200 employers. Our approach involves dedicated teams and structures to facilitate engagement. The **Employer Relationship Team (ERT)** gathers contemporaneous intelligence on employer demands and training needs. The ERT conducts **bespoke Training Needs Analyses (TNAs)** with local employers, helping them with long-term workforce strategy and assisting the college with curriculum planning to meet future needs.*

> *"The Sector Specific **Employer Partnership Boards (EPBs)** provide a structured forum for employers to engage directly with college leaders and curriculum teams, discussing and reviewing our curriculum offer across eight sectors. The intel and feedback gathered through EPBs are compiled, shared with curriculum colleagues, and stored in a centrally accessed report, informing curriculum planning decisions. These boards ensure employers' most pressing skills needs are reflected and delivered.*

> *"Events like the 'Back to the Future' initiative also allow employers direct interaction with lessons, staff, and students, facilitating detailed feedback on delivery and curriculum. Our college website also lists information about our employer partners and how to engage."*

Both colleges and employers have provided clear examples where direct engagement between them has resulted in adaptations to curriculum delivery and content, leading to a personalised curriculum reflecting the business' needs.

This level of College/employer interaction supports a number of LSIP priorities:

- Ensure provision is aligned to needs
- Ensure employers continue to be engaged during course development
- Improve future staffing and skills planning among smaller employers

- Employers require greater support to navigate the skills system and providers need to build trust with employers

Work Readiness

The **Work Ready Lancashire**[5] project has been successfully rolled our across many of Lancashire's secondary schools and is now being promoted among employers to help their understanding of what is being taught in schools and how they can support the development of desired attributes and behaviours during placements and early career stages.

Work readiness is being embedded across FE Colleges too with Nelson & Colne College Group building on the Work Ready Lancashire project. The NCCG have a appointed a lead to implement work readiness across the curriculum. Work readiness signs are displayed across NCCG sites and employers have helped develop sessions to support the development of key attributes like communication, problem solving and teamwork.

Burnley College has taken another route with their Skills for Work program which provides free courses tailored to help individuals gain employment. These include Skills Academies in Manufacturing, Warehousing and Forklift Truck Training, Construction Trade, Multi Skills, and Textiles, each offering nationally recognised qualifications to boost employability. Through the Skills for Work program, learners receive practical training and qualifications in various trades, enhancing their employability and readiness for the workforce.

Lancaster & Morecambe College have introduced career plans for all 16-18 learners, ensuring a focus on skills for employment. Work readiness skills requested by employers in different sectors re also explicitly illustrated within curriculum mapping documents, informing curriculum design and delivery. Expectations for industry and work placements have also been designed with businesses to ensure all parties are clear on what is required.

While it is very early days for much of this activity and any impact is not likely to be felt for a couple of years at the earliest, some employers have expressed in interviews an early trend that there are improvements in those leaving education to join the workforce, with improved attitudes to work. Some of this improvement is likely to be due to normality resuming post-COVID but also changing attitudes among those employers who engaged with the LSIP process and cluster groups towards hiring people new to work.

Low Carbon & Sustainability

There has been considerable activity already in relation to green skills. In particular, as will be featured throughout the sectoral analyses, there is much new provision being developed in the areas of construction and retrofit, EV maintenance, catering & hospitality, and farming. The LSIF projects focusing on 'Skills for Sustainability' and 'Farm to Fork' were particularly focused on developing new courses, updating college teaching facilities and engaging employers with green skills.

As part of the 'Farm to Fork' project, the Colleges participating in the catering updated their kitchens to become more sustainable and low carbon, in order to introduce students to the newest technology and preparation methods and as demonstrators to employers.

---

[5] https://lancashirecareershub.co.uk/work-ready-lancashire/

Myerscough College tackled the farming aspects of the 'Fam to Fork' project, engaging with employers to demonstrate new technologies, carbon auditing and the College farm estate's own decarbonisation journey. This has included events with presentations from lecturers and the manufacturers/suppliers of the new technology.

Burnley College established a Low Carbon Hub offering sustainability training to help small and medium-sized businesses reduce their carbon footprint and achieve net-zero goals. The facility provides training on behavioural changes and technological solutions for energy management. The college has also invested in new equipment and technologies that to deliver qualifications that are in line with the Lancashire Energy and Low Carbon Strategy helping the local economy achieve their Net Zero goals and enable behavioural change to reduce carbon emissions.

Blackpool & the Fylde College have introduced new courses in Solar Panels, Air Source Heat Pumps, Domestic Energy Assessor and Electric Vehicle. The College has also built a Sustainability house to raise awareness with school children, students and businesses.

Digital

There has been significant progress in starting to deliver on the digital skills required by employers.

The **LSIF 'Digital, Cyber and AI Employability Skills'** project has worked to advance cyber-security and artificial intelligence training. This initiative helped equip learners with cutting-edge skills required in the evolving digital landscape.

As well as new courses and increasing learner numbers, the LSIP also recommended support for employers to understand the changing digital landscape.

There has been an increase in employer-facing events advising employers of new digital technologies and how to utilise them in their businesses. Since the LSIP was published there has been a significant increase of the use of AI within businesses and this can be seen from the content of these events, two examples of which are below:

- Blackpool & the Fylde College held 'AI in Action: Transforming Business with Practical Skills' which provided employers with presentations on latest advancements in AI and how they can improve efficiency and drive innovation. There were also live demonstrations, and real-world practical examples.
- Burnley College brought together approximately 80 leaders from business, education, and government. The summit addressed topics such as skills training, innovation, and the future of AI. There were speakers and a panel of local AI experts. Discussions focused on preparing the local and regional workforce for the AI revolution and fostering collaborations between education and industry to address emerging technological challenges.

Beyond the LSIP

The LSIP team has engaged in areas that were not specifically detailed in the LSIP priorities but that do support general LSIP goals.

The health and work agenda has been a growing priority in Lancashire with high numbers of people dropping out of the workplace into economic inactivity.[6] The LSIP team have been involved in the initial bid for a WorkWell Vanguard programme in the Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board area, providing the viewpoint of employers and private business. This bid was successful, and activity will run until March 2026, providing support to individuals who are at risk of leaving work, taking significant time off or have already recently left work.[7]

This work is important and supports the goals of LSIP as reducing the number of skilled, experienced people lost to the workforce will help relieve the pressure to find replacement skills. With the government's focus on health and work through their Get Britain Working[8] plans and Connect to Work[9] proposals, this will become s greater priority over the next few years. The LSIP team are already engaged in conversations about the delivery of the Connect to Work programme.

While sport and physical activity was not a LSIP priority, the team have been involved in the CIMSPA-led Lancashire Sport & Physical Activity Local Skills Accountability Board[10] and the development alongside local partners of a Lancashire Sport & Physical Activity Local Skills Plan.

While not one the identified priorities in the LSIP report of 2023, it useful to link these specific skills plans to the wider picture.

---

[6] https://www.lancashireskillshub.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/L2050-Economic-Inactivity-Insight-Report-2023.pdf

[7] https://www.lancashireandsouthcumbria.icb.nhs.uk/our-work/workwell

[8] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/get-britain-working-white-paper

[9] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/connect-to-work

[10] https://www.cimspa.co.uk/localskills/

What still needs to be achieved?

Ensuring provision is aligned to needs

While the number of courses being introduced is fantastic it needs to be noted that some challenges still remain.

In particular, providers are reporting they are over-subscribed or having to turn students away in some priority areas such as construction (e.g. plumbing and heating, electrical) and engineering or do not have the space for the increased numbers. While temporary structures have been put in place more permanent solutions are being developed at some colleges with others submitting plans for new buildings. There should be new facilities opening in the next year with more planned over the next couple of years.

Another issue that remains is that of training recruitment and retention in priority sectors. It continues to be a struggle to match industry salaries for teaching staff so new and innovative ways need to introduced including engaging more with industry to release staff for teaching or attracting people out of industry, possibly on a part time basis. Some promising work has already been done by providers on this but closer more is still needed. The LSIP team will continue to work with providers and employers to help achieve further success.

Closer involvement of employers within the skill system

While fantastic work is ongoing with Colleges engaging with employers much more there is still room for improvement.

Recent conversations with employers has highlighted that there is still a lack of understanding about what is available locally both in terms of skills training and applicable funding. The Chamber's LSIP team will be collaborating with FE Colleges to develop easy to understand information about funding and better signposting to see what is available. There have been requests to hold course funding workshops and this is being looked at with provider partners.

More can also be done around supporting employers with skills planning and the Chamber's LSIP team will be carrying our more activity and developing information to support employers.

Apprenticeships and T Level Awareness

Although work has taken place to raise awareness of Apprenticeships and T Levels there is more still to be done. Many employers interviewed are still unaware of how T Levels operate and what courses are running locally to them. New promotional campaigns with employers will be needed over the summer of 2025 and into the new academic year to help them understand what students are available in terms of both taking on apprentices and providing T Level placements.

There is still need to promote apprenticeships as a route to employment for 16-19 year olds. This will include keeping employers updated as details about the new Skills & Growth Levy are confirmed, and the funding picture for non-levy payers.

Attracting people to shortage occupations and sectors

Work is to continue with cluster groups and careers organisations throughout the summer of 2025 and to develop content and programmes of engagement. One problem we encounter is that a lot of careers engagement falls on a small number of companies. Expanding the number of companies getting involved in careers events, taking placements, workplace visits will be key in improving this situation.

Annex 1: Roadmap

Main cross-sectoral priorities

Priority	Action	Partners	Timescales	Method of implementation	Monitoring arrangements	Progress Status
>Attracting people to shortage occupations and sectors > Introduce employers to adult careers organisations	>Engage cluster groups to raise awareness of opportunities >Engage Careers Hub to help raise awareness with careers advisors/leads >Engage adult careers organisations	>ERB >Employers >Careers Hub >JCP >National Careers Service	>Routes to inform and promote opportunities to partners in place by June 2025	>Sectoral business clusters	>Progress reports	On track. >Cluster groups have been introduced to careers partners and opportunities to get involved shared. >Work will continue to increase the number of companies engaging and developing sector specific content
>Ensure provision is aligned to needs > Ensure employers continue to be engaged during course development	>Work with providers to embed LSIP employer needs embedded within curriculum design	>ERB >Providers	>New courses introduced across 23/24 & 24/25 academic years	>Curriculum planning > Skills Bootcamps – 25/26 >Extra provision from LSIF	>Starts / enrolment data >Accountability agreements >LSIF KPIs	On track >New courses being introduced to support priority areas >Increase employer engagement is evident with impact on course and curriculum development
Develop new shorter, modular, relevant courses reacting to upskilling needs and changing employer requirements	>Skills Bootcamps provision to match priority areas >New provision introduced by colleges >UK SPF funding to feature shorter provision in priority areas	>ERB >The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub >Local Authorities >FE Colleges	>New courses introduced across 23/24 & 24/25 academic years	>Skills Bootcamps – 24/25 >Adult Skills Fund >Extra provision from LSIF >UK SPF skills provision	>New Skills Bootcamps courses >LSIF progress reports & KPIs >LA updates on UK SPF	On track >Skills Bootcamp provision meets many priority areas and other identified needs >New course provision introduced by colleges does include significant numbers of short courses
Improve future staffing and skills planning among smaller employers	>Develop support for SMEs to help them implement effective skills planning	>ERB >The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub	>Workshops to take place and a toolkit to be developed by Jan 2025	>Sectoral business clusters >Workshops >Toolkit	>Progress report	In progress >Discussion taken place in cluster groups and in 1-2-1 meetings >Development of workshops and toolkit still to be completed

Priority	Action	Partners	Timescales	Method of implementation	Monitoring arrangements	Progress Status
Employers require greater support to navigate the skills system and providers need to build trust with employers	>Raise awareness of apprenticeships, T Levels and Skills Bootcamps >Develop training map of provision in Lancashire	>ERB >Providers > The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub >Lancs WBLE Forum	>Demonstrable improvement in awareness by March 2025 >Accessible training maps in place by March 2025	>Sectoral business clusters >Events >Chamber publications >Early Connect programme	>Survey results >Apprenticeship vacancies advertised >T Level placements offered	In progress >Promotion of apprenticeships to employers through Early Connect pilot >Programme of T Level promotional work being developed with DfE and colleges >Evolve page developed by The Lancashire Colleges and Lancs WBLE Forum >College websites have been redesigned to become more employer focused >Awareness still needs to be improved of what is available – work to take place on developing workshops and information about courses and funding
Develop a greater understanding among young people of what is needed and expected in the workplace	> Engagement with schools and colleges features examples of behavioural expectations	>Careers Hub >ERB >The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub >Providers	>Work readiness / employability embedded in colleges across 23/24 & 24/25 academic years >Work Readiness language project launched in schools for 24/25 academic year	>Work Readiness language project for schools	>Accountability agreements >Progress report	On track >Colleges have introduced dedicated activity on work readiness and embedded across course curriculums >Work readiness project launched in schools and is awareness being raised with employers to introduce in placements an new starters

Digital

Priority	Action	Partners	Timescales	Method of implementation	Monitoring arrangements	Progress Status

Priority	Action	Partners	Timescales	Method of implementation	Monitoring arrangements	Progress Status
Sector occupations: >Software developers / engineers >Web developers >Computer support specialists >Computer systems engineers / architects >Cyber security technicians **Digital skills requested in other sectors:** >Data analysis >Web design >Digital marketing >Excel	>Increase relevant courses and participation >Promote careers opportunities >Introduce short upskilling and job entry training >Collaborations of employers and providers to develop short, flexible upskilling opportunities for existing staff members as well as building digital confidence and competence	>Providers >ERB >Careers Hub > The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub	>New courses introduced across 23/24 & 24/25 academic years >Routes to inform and promote opportunities to partners in place by June 2025	>Curriculum planning > Skills Bootcamps – 24/25 >Extra provision from LSIF	>Starts / enrolment data >Accountability agreements >New Skills Bootcamps courses >LSIF progress reports & KPIs	On track >Positive responses from some providers so far with commitments to digital, new courses and increased learner numbers >New Skills Bootcamps have been introduced addressing key LSIP needs >Positive initial activity from the LSIF digital project with more to come especially in terms of employer engagement
>Support employers to understand the changing digital landscape > Ensure information to employers and provision is kept as up-to-date as possible	> Support employers who need help to understand the impact and opportunities of digital transformation as well as future skills planning	>ERB >Sector business clusters >Providers > The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub	>Effective processes in place to provide necessary information and support to employers by June 2025	>Information sharing through clusters >Events / workshops >Information shared through Chamber channels	>Progress reports	On track >There is considerable activity introducing new digital technologies with employers >Greater information has been requested about AI and we have seen some activity to start work on this.

Manufacturing & Engineering

Priority	Action	Partners	Timescales	Method of implementation	Monitoring arrangements	Progress Status
Sector Occupations: >Manufacturing Engineers >CNC Machinists	>Increase relevant courses and participation >Promote careers opportunities	>Providers >ERB >Careers Hub	>New courses introduced across 23/24 & 24/25 academic years	>Curriculum planning > Skills Bootcamps – 24/25	>Starts / enrolment data >Accountability agreements	On track >New provision and increased

Priority	Action	Partners	Timescales	Method of implementation	Monitoring arrangements	Progress Status
>Electrical & Multi-Skilled Maintenance Engineers >Tool Makers **Other skills requested by the sector:** >Data analysis >Procurement >Project & change management >Leadership, management & supervisory >Digital confidence & competence	>Introduce short upskilling and job entry training >Collaborations of employers and providers to develop short, flexible upskilling opportunities for existing staff members as well as building digital confidence and competence	> The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub	>Routes to inform and promote opportunities to partners in place by June 2025		>New Skills Bootcamps courses	learner numbers >New Skills Bootcamps courses supporting some sector roles and other roles needed by the sector

Health & Social Care

Priority	Action	Partners	Timescales	Method of implementation	Monitoring arrangements	Progress Status
Sector Occupations: >Health Care Assistants >Staff Nurses >Registered Nurses >Mental Health Practitioners >Occupational Therapists >Midwives >Registered Mental Health Nurses >Adult Care Workers **Upskilling need:** >Care leadership & management	>Increase relevant courses and participation >Promote careers opportunities >Introduce short upskilling and job entry training >Collaborations of employers and providers to develop short, flexible upskilling opportunities for existing staff members as well as building digital confidence and competence	>Providers >ERB >Careers Hub > The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub	>New courses introduced across 23/24 & 24/25 academic years >Routes to inform and promote opportunities to partners in place by June 2025	>Curriculum planning > Skills Bootcamps – 24/25	>Starts / enrolment data >Accountability agreements >New Skills Bootcamps courses	On track >Increases in provision especially T Level >Skills Bootcamps featuring sector specific training

Construction

Priority	Action	Partners	Timescales	Method of implementation	Monitoring arrangements	Progress Status
Sector Occupations: > Plumbing, Heating and Ventilation Engineers >Quantity Surveyors >Carpenters and Joiners >Construction Managers >Construction and Building Trade Supervisors >Electricians/ Electrical Engineering >Roofers	>Increase relevant courses and participation >Promote careers opportunities >Introduce short upskilling and job entry training	>Providers >ERB >Careers Hub > The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub	>New courses introduced across 23/24 & 24/25 academic years >Routes to inform and promote opportunities to partners in place by June 2025	>Curriculum planning > Skills Bootcamps – 24/25 >Extra provision from LSIF >Sector business clusters	>Starts / enrolment data >Accountability agreements >New Skills Bootcamps courses >LSIF progress reports & KPIs	On track >There is increased access to courses with numbers growing in some shortage areas
Retrofit: >Support businesses in the sector to understand new technologies and opportunities available	>Provide employers within the sector with the information they need to understand how to move to green technologies and retrofit opportunites	>ERB > The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub >Providers >Industry bodies	>Platforms for sharing information with regarding green technologies to be in place by June 2025	>Sector business clusters >Workshops	>Progress reports	In progress >New courses introduced and promoted to relevant companies but more to be done to develop understanding of new technology

Hospitality, Leisure & Tourism

Priority	Action	Partners	Timescales	Method of implementation	Monitoring arrangements	Progress Status
Sector Occupations: >Kitchen Porters / Kitchen & Catering Assistants >Chefs – Commis & Professional Chef >Catering & Bar Managers >Bar Staff	>Increase relevant courses and participation >Promote careers opportunities >Introduce short upskilling and job entry training >Collaborations of employers and providers to develop short, flexible upskilling	>Providers >ERB >Careers Hub > The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub	>New courses introduced across 23/24 & 24/25 academic years >Routes to inform and promote opportunities to partners in place by June 2025	>Curriculum planning > Skills Bootcamps – 24/25 >Extra provision from LSIF	>Starts / enrolment data >Accountability agreements >New Skills Bootcamps courses >LSIF progress reports & KPIs	On track >New provision has been developed along with improved facilities >There is good collaboration in place to work on

>Waiting Staff >Housekeeping Staff >Receptionists >Business administrators >Digital Marketers >Events Managers **Other skills requested by the sector:** >Excel & basic software packages >Digital confidence & competence >Cellar management upskilling >Leadership, management & supervisory	opportunities for existing staff members as well as building digital confidence and competence					raising the sector's profile as a career destination

Transport & Distribution

Priority	Action	Partners	Timescales	Method of implementation	Monitoring arrangements	Progress Status
Sector Occupations: >Large Goods Vehicle Drivers >Vehicle Technicians, Mechanics and Electricians >Van Drivers & Couriers >Warehouse Operatives, Fulfilment Associates & Pickers/Packers >Transport Managers >Coach and Bus Drivers	>Increase relevant courses and participation >Promote careers opportunities >Introduce short upskilling and job entry training >Collaborations of employers and providers to develop short, flexible upskilling opportunities for existing staff members as well as building digital confidence and competence	>Providers >ERB >Careers Hub > The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub	>New courses introduced across 23/24 & 24/25 academic years	>Curriculum planning > Skills Bootcamps – 24/25	>Starts / enrolment data >Accountability agreements >New Skills Bootcamps courses	On track >New courses are being funded through the Skills Bootcamps >Automotive mechanic / technician training is increasing especially in relation to new EV technology

Farming & Agriculture

Priority	Action	Partners	Timescales	Method of implementation	Monitoring arrangements	Progress Status
Sector Occupations: >General farm worker	>Increase relevant courses and participation >Promote careers opportunities >Introduce short upskilling and job entry training >Collaborations of employers and providers to develop short, flexible upskilling opportunities for existing staff members as well as building digital confidence and competence	>Providers >ERB >Careers Hub > The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub	>New courses introduced across 23/24 & 24/25 academic years >Routes to inform and promote opportunities to partners in place by June 2025	>Curriculum planning	>Starts / enrolment data >Accountability agreements	On Track >Increases in provision taking place including more providers delivering for the sector >Work to do with employers and stakeholders around improving the perception of the sector