



LOCAL NEEDS DUTY & ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

2025 – 2026

MISSION & PURPOSE

TO CREATE LIFE-CHANGING OPPORTUNITIES.

Yeovil College has a clear mission statement 'To Create Life-Changing Opportunities'.

Our purpose is to proactively engage with our stakeholders to identify the skills needs within our local community, with a particular focus on high value, priority sectors that drive the economy forward. These sectors have currently been identified as Advanced Manufacturing (Aerospace), Health, Science, Construction, Digital (& Design) and Electrical (& Cell) Technology. The College is designing and implementing a curriculum for the local, regional and national skills needs, balancing current and future workforce priorities.

The College is focused on creating and growing high quality employer partnerships, which provide opportunities for our learners and deliver the skilled workforce that our business community needs to thrive acknowledging that their prosperity is to the benefit of our whole community and our vision best places us to integrate this locally.

The Yeovil College Strategic Plan was last updated and approved in November 2023 and sets the College's direction of travel towards 2028 – in which we will deliver the government's national and regional skills priorities, while also transforming our campus with three brilliant new buildings made possible with more than £60 million of Department for Education capital investment.

Strategic Plan Link: [Yeovil College Vision, Mission, Values & Strategic Aims | Yeovil College](#)

BEHAVIOURS

The college commits to working in line with the following behaviours:

- **Aspirational** – High ambition, expectation and effort
- **Collaborative** – Collaborative, in it together
- **Exceptional** – Innovative and enterprising
- **Team YC** – Valued and supportive

These behaviors are a commitment to each other, our learners, and our partners. Our Local Needs Duty & Accountability Agreement is led from the uppermost levels of the organisation and the alignment is steadfast with Yeovil College's strategic plan and specialisms.



APPROACH

Shaping an exciting future with the best education and collaboration

The Yeovil College accountability agreement is contextualized within our local industrial heritage and explains how we will further strategically invest and prioritise our curriculum to maximise the opportunities to support our local business communities' success. The College is committed to designing a forward-looking curriculum with high quality learning resources to develop our business partners' highly capable workforce, ensuring that we can support our community and businesses to be globally competitive, delivering more and better jobs, with a clear line of sight to exciting local careers for all our students.

Our Annual Accountability Statement integrates insights through essential sources including:

Insights from the Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) from the Devon & Somerset, Dorset and the West of England regions.

Information for the Great South West pan-regional partnership.

Feedback from employers via our Employer Forums and Surveys and Reviews covering all areas of the curriculum.

Analysis of education and training provision across Somerset, Dorset and the West of England.

Partnerships with our civic, community, education and employer communities.

Guidance from national skills policy.

Emerging regional opportunities of investment and growth.

Foresight to the upcoming Invest 2035:

UK's modern industrial strategy.



MEETING LOCAL, REGIONAL & NATIONAL NEEDS

NATIONAL SKILLS PRIORITIES

National Skills Priorities have been agreed across government and take into account the Skills England report, Industrial Strategy Priorities and Plan for Change and are areas with high volumes of vacancies which are expected to increase; long-term structural barriers to recruitment, retention and progression issues; and are important in providing opportunities for employment in key growth areas such as green jobs and net zero, creative industries and science and technology (including AI and quantum computing).

These sectors are:

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



As part of the Colleges' Accountability Agreement, we will be prioritising the delivery of high-quality programmes that have been co-designed with employers which align to government identified priority sectors, and that are transferable to the local and regional skills requirements. National priority delivery programmes include T Levels, apprenticeships, Free courses for jobs, Skills Bootcamps, and Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs).

SKILLS
FOR LIFE
SKILLS BOOTCAMPS

INVEST 2035: THE UK's MODERN INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

The 'Invest 2035: the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy' is a 10-year plan by the UK government to drive economic growth by focusing on high-growth sectors and places. It aims to create a more stable and predictable environment for businesses, encouraging investment in sectors with high growth potential and ensuring tangible impact across the UK. The strategy emphasises a collaborative approach, involving local and devolved governments, businesses, and other stakeholders.

The strategy aims to attract a greater share of internationally mobile investment in strategic sectors. It also seeks to encourage domestic businesses to increase their investment and scale up their growth. The goal is to achieve this with sustainable, inclusive, and resilient economic growth across the UK.

The Industrial Strategy, focuses on eight growth-driving sectors, which are: advanced manufacturing, clean energy, creative industries, defence, digital and technologies, financial services, life sciences, and professional and business services.

Key Areas of Focus for the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy include:

High-growth sectors -

The strategy will prioritise and support sectors with strong growth potential, such as advanced manufacturing, clean energy, and digital technologies.

Strategic places -

It will focus on areas with the greatest potential for growth, including city regions, high-potential clusters, and strategic industrial sites.

Local and devolved governments -

The strategy emphasises collaboration with local and devolved governments to tailor growth initiatives to specific regional needs.

Skills and workforce -

The strategy will recognise the importance of investing in skills and training to support a skilled and adaptable workforce.

Within its Accountability Statement the College is looking to the future and the expected emerging priorities and investments of the Invest 2035: the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy'. Related to these priorities the UK government has committed to increasing its defence spending to 2.6% of gross domestic product (GDP) by 2027, with an ambition to reach 3% in the next parliament as economic and fiscal conditions allow. This commitment is a significant increase from the previous target of 2.5% by the end of the decade and is intended to be offset by cuts to aid spending. In the financial year 2023-2024, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) spent £6.9 billion in the South West region of England. This represents a significant portion of the MOD's overall spending with UK businesses which and was the second largest regional spend behind the South East (£7.1bn.).

THE GREAT SOUTH WEST

The Great South West (GSW) is a true private-public sector pan-regional partnership, committed to driving investment, delivering major projects, developing a testbed for new ideas and ensuring the Great South West's opportunities are understood by the Government.

As the Pan-Regional Partnership for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, Devon, Dorset and Somerset, GSW are focused on:

Shifting the needle on UK economic growth

Driving the UK economy forward

Leading in globally critical sectors for the UK

Our Partnership Board has representatives from business, education, councils and Local Enterprise Partnerships. Transport, energy, manufacturing, agriculture, marine and space sectors are all represented. The Board works with government and champions our incredible region on a national and international level.

The GSW mission is to deliver a prosperous future for all our communities, drive long-term investment and boost the economy by up to £45bn, create 190,000 new jobs by 2035, power a green and blue economy and lead the UK economy.

The College continued to be actively engaged with the GSW partnership, supporting its Programme Boards covering '**Food Security, Energy Security, Defence and Internationalisation**' while also actively supporting its Industrial Workforce Plan (IWP) for the Great South West region. The IWP builds on The Great South West Independent Economic Review (IER), current Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) and sector-based initiatives which have been regionally secured and are a range of significant flagships and nationally critical projects.

A report on the GSW region ([GSW-HVM-Technical-Report](#)) published in 2024 highlights that 120,000 people (in 2023) were employed in 7,880 manufacturing businesses in the Great South West, comprising 7% of the regional economy. In employment terms, Manufacturing in the Great South West has grown at an annual average rate of 1.2% in the five years to 2022, a significantly higher rate than the 0.5% decline seen across Great Britain over the same period.

Opportunities within the GSW region

The GSW also recognises that the region is securing significant investment through a range of flagship, nationally critical projects. Whilst welcome, it risks placing increased pressure on labour supply that is already constrained. Hence, an aligned skills ecosystem is required to deliver these time-critical opportunities in a seamless manner – to deliver to projects including Hinkley Point C, Floating Offshore Wind, Critical Minerals, Gravity Campus (the site of the Agratas gigafactory), Devonport, Defence investments from the Ministry of Defence (Leonardo, AUKUS etc.), Dorset Clean Energy Super Cluster as well as manufacturing sector demand in the region.



LOCAL SKILLS IMPROVEMENT PLANS

Outlined in the Department for Education's Further Education white paper, the aim of Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) is to give employers a voice and opportunity to collaborate and contribute to the future skills landscape in their locality as an integral part of addressing skills gaps. Yeovil College has a clear geographical focus to serve the skills needs across South Somerset, North & West Dorset and, as a result, the College supports businesses and communities multiple LEP areas and continues to engage with stakeholders across the traditional geographical boundaries.

In addition, the College proactively engages with the designated employer representative bodies (ERBs) that are assigned to lead the development of the Local Skills Improvement Plans across the West of England, Devon and Somerset (Heart of the South West) and Dorset to ensure the skills being planned, designed and delivered are supporting the needs of its business community.

The Secretary of State for Education approved all 38 LSIPs in line with the approval criteria set out in the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022 and in accordance with the LSIP statutory guidance in August 2023. Since then regional LSIPs have been updated with regular reviews to ensure they remain relevant and are currently in effect until September 2025, where the government intend to re-commission the LSIPs aligned to new geographical and devolved regional boundaries helping shape the future Growth and Skills Levy requirements, which replaced the Apprenticeship Levy in April 2025.

LSIPs SUMMARIES



The Devon & Somerset Local Skills Improvement Plan is jointly led by Devon & Plymouth Chamber of Commerce and Somerset Chamber of Commerce. The Report recommends 20 priority areas to help make that happen, with a clear roadmap for achieving those priorities [LSIP report v6 \(devonandsomersetlsip.co.uk\)](https://devonandsomersetlsip.co.uk)

Three sectors were identified as 'transformational opportunities' for the area:

Energy - renewables, nuclear, green construction, clean propulsion, electric and hybrid vehicles and green tourism.

Engineering – advanced manufacturing, engineering, aerospace, marine, hi-tech photonics and microelectronics.

Digital - data analytics, health technology, cyber security, creative sector and agri-tech

These three provide significant growth opportunities for the region and they are also broad enough to include local specialisms, place-based clusters of expertise and our centres of excellence.

The Dorset LSIP aims to represent depth and breadth of Dorset employers. Within the region the following sectors have been identified as high need, growth and innovation sectors and will form the core priorities of the report ([Dorset LSIP](#)):

- Agriculture, Agri-tech and Aquaculture
- Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering including Aerospace, Defence and Marine
- Construction
- Digital Tech and Creative
- Health and Social Care
- Net Zero

A strong importance is focused within Advanced Manufacturing is supporting employers to organise and monitor automation and an associated need for more electronics engineers to support the automated machinery. 3D printing, Artificial Intelligence, Augmented Reality and machine-learning



Yeovil College maintain a strong relationship with Business West. The College supported the original LSIP trailblazers and maintains its relationship due to the Colleges focus on advanced manufacturing and engineering, which is even more prominent in the WoE Aerospace cluster. All WoE findings included engagements that incorporated questioning routes attached to the UK's Net Zero Strategy, decarbonisation and sustainability, as well as core and soft skills and digitalisation. The report focused on 4 key areas:

- Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering: [West of England LSIP Advanced Engineering Manufacturing Priority Findings](#)
- Construction: [West of England LSIP Construction Priority Findings](#)
- Creative Industries: [West of England LSIP Creative Industries Priority Findings](#)
- Health and Social Care: [West of England LSIP Health & Social Care Priority Findings](#)

LSIP PROGRESS (SUMMER 2024) AND AREAS OF GROWTH

Devon & Somerset

Somerset LSIP Progress Report - August 2024

The Summer 2024 Progress Report from the Devon and Somerset Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) outlines the region's ongoing efforts to align education and training with employer needs. It emphasises a collaborative, employer-led approach to skills development, aiming to address persistent talent shortages and future-proof the workforce. The report highlights progress made since the original LSIP publication in 2023, including strengthened partnerships between businesses and education providers, the development of new training pathways, and a focus on digital and green skills. It also identifies areas needing further work, such as improving access to training in rural areas and enhancing employer engagement across sectors.

Yeovil College Highlights:

Employer Collaboration: Yeovil College is recognised for its proactive engagement with local employers to co-design curriculum and training that meet real-world business needs.

Digital and Technical Skills: The college has expanded its digital and technical training offerings, aligning with regional priorities for a future-ready workforce.

Apprenticeship Growth: Yeovil College has seen growth in degree apprenticeships (including HTQ's), providing alternative higher education routes that combine work and study.

Case Studies: The report includes case studies featuring Yeovil College's role in innovative partnerships, particularly in engineering and health sectors.

Dorset

Dorset LSIP Progress Report - June 2024

The Dorset LSIP Progress Report (June 2024) provides an update on the region's progress in aligning post-16 technical education with employer needs, nearly a year after the original plan was published. The report reflects a strong foundation of collaboration among employers, educators, and stakeholders, with a focus on addressing skills shortages, improving training accessibility, and supporting economic growth. Key themes include the importance of apprenticeships, employer-led curriculum development, and targeted support for disadvantaged learners. The report also highlights the role of local initiatives in tackling broader social challenges, such as homelessness and youth unemployment.

Other emerging opportunities include:

PortWind: Proposed 2GW offshore wind farm in Dorset to power 3 million homes.

£28bn Dorset Clean Energy Cluster: Includes wind, hydrogen, carbon capture, and nuclear projects.

Economic Impact & Skills Boost: Thousands of jobs, up to £332m GVA annually, and local training geared toward green careers.

The devolution circumstances provide additional challenges for the regional economic leadership, however key stakeholders including GSW, ERB's, LA's and providers continue to work together proactively to bridge any functional gap these circumstances present.

West of England & North Somerset

West of England and North Somerset LSIP Progress Report - June 2024

The West of England and North Somerset LSIP Progress Report (2024) outlines the region's progress in aligning skills provision with employer needs, focusing on key growth sectors such as engineering and advanced manufacturing, construction, and digital. The report emphasises collaboration between employers, training providers, and local authorities to address skills shortages, improve curriculum relevance, and support economic growth.

Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing

Identified and continues as a priority sector due to its contribution to regional productivity and innovation. Employers report persistent skills shortages, particularly in mechanical, electrical, and precision engineering. The report notes a growing demand for higher-level technical skills, including CAD, CNC machining, and robotics.

Investment in specialist staff recruitment and CPD, training equipment and employer-designed curriculum is underway to meet these needs.

Construction

The sector is experiencing a resurgence in demand, driven by housing and infrastructure projects.

- There is a shortage of skilled tradespeople, including bricklayers, electricians, and site managers.
- The report highlights collaborative training hubs and on-site learning models as effective responses.
- Emphasis is placed on green construction skills, such as retrofitting and sustainable building practices.

Digital

- Digital skills are described as cross-cutting and essential across all sectors.
- There continues to be a significant gap in data analysis, cybersecurity, and software development capabilities.
- The report cites new digital bootcamps and employer-led short courses as key interventions.
- A regional push is underway to integrate AI and data literacy into broader training programs.



REGIONAL & LOCAL NEEDS

Aerospace, Advanced Manufacturing and the 'Home of British Helicopters'

The British Science Association (2022) identified South Somerset as being in the bottom 10 areas nationally for provision of STEM outreach, despite this not being representative of the employment and careers opportunities within the region. The West of England Plus LSIP (WoE+ LSIP) Trailblazer, covering the West of England region and parts of Somerset and Gloucestershire (geographically aligned with the West of England Institute of Technology) reports 2,075 businesses employing 36,460 people within aerospace and advanced engineering. Additionally, the geographic region is the largest aerospace cluster in the UK (second largest in Europe) directly employing c.29,500 people (2018) in the West of England alone with an estimated worth (pre-COVID) of £7bn.

In April 2023, Yeovil was officially recognised as the 'Home of British Helicopters'. Leonardo UK, for nearly 80 years, have been manufacturing helicopters at its Yeovil site and provides the UK's only end-to-end rotary wing or aerospace capability. Leonardo Helicopters has the breadth and depth of skills, tools, processes and infrastructure needed to design, develop, test, manufacture, support and deliver training for rotary wing aircraft within Yeovil, where more than 3,100 staff are based on site, including contractors and 150 trainee graduates and apprentices, who work across departments including planning, engineering, research and innovation, air traffic control, aviation operations, electrical manufacturing and flight safety.



Strategically vital to the local community and Leonardo is the UK Ministry of Defence (MoD) New Medium Helicopter (NMH) contract award (Circa £1bn value), expected in late 2025. This timeline was confirmed in a parliamentary response by Minister of State for Defence - Maria Eagle, who stated that the procurement process is ongoing and remains commercially sensitive until evaluations are complete, however Leonardo are now the only remaining bidding partners in this process.

In addition to Leonardo, other significant aerospace and advanced manufacturing employers are based within close proximity and form part of the local aerospace supply chain and infrastructure. Examples include Honeywell Aerospace (Yeovil c.600 employees) and Numatic International (Chard c.1200 employees)

Emerging underwater regional requirement

The demand for underwater technologies and systems in Somerset and Dorset—particularly from companies like Atlas Elektronik UK and Thales—is experiencing significant growth, driven by both defence and commercial sectors. The South West of England, including Dorset and Somerset, is recognised as one of the UK's leading hubs for marine autonomy and underwater systems. The region supports a £103 billion global market for marine autonomous systems projected by 2030.

Atlas Elektronik UK (Portland, c 400 employees) recently secured a £32 million contract to supply the Royal Navy with autonomous mine-hunting systems. This includes the development of Medium Autonomous Underwater Vessels (MAUVs), enhancing the UK's naval mine countermeasure capabilities. The contract created 50 high-skilled jobs in Dorset, highlighting the growing local demand for expertise in underwater systems. AEUK are expecting further growth to circa 600 employees in the next 5 years.



Thales UK (Templecombe c.600 employees)

Thales' site in Templecombe, Somerset is one of its primary strategic locations in the UK, with a strong focus on maritime underwater operations. The site is a key global hub for sonar systems, acoustic sensors, and underwater surveillance technologies, supporting the Royal Navy and other defence partners with multi-billion-pound contracts. Recent contracts have seen significant growth in the site's workforce and is expected to further grow in the next 15-20 years.



Employment, unemployment and economic inactivity

In Somerset:		In Dorset:	
Employment rate 79.3% ages 16 to 64	Employment in Somerset has increased compared with the previous year. Somerset's employment rate was slightly higher than across the South West as a whole in the year ending September 2023.	Employment rate 80.3% ages 16 to 64	Employment in Dorset has increased compared with the previous year. Dorset's employment rate was higher than across the South West as a whole in the year ending December 2023.
Unemployment rate 2.6% ages 16+	The unemployment rate in Somerset was 2.6% in the year ending September 2023. Unemployed people are looking for work and able to start work.	Unemployment rate 2.5% ages 16+	Unemployment (people looking for work) has fallen slightly since a year earlier. The unemployment rate for Dorset was about the same as across the South West as a whole.
Claimant Count 2.5% ages 16 to 64	Claimant Count was slightly higher in December 2023 compared with a year earlier. The Claimant Count measures the number of people who are claiming unemployment-related benefits.	Claimant Count 2.5% ages 16 to 64	Claimant Count was slightly higher in March 2024 compared with a year earlier. The Claimant Count measures the number of people who are claiming unemployment-related benefits.
Economic inactivity 18.7% ages 16 to 64	Economic inactivity has decreased since the previous year. These are people who are neither employed nor seeking work.	Economic inactivity 17.9% ages 16 to 64	Economic inactivity has decreased since the previous year. These are people who are neither employed nor seeking work.

Somerset has a slightly higher employment rate than the South West average (78.9%) and significantly higher than the national rate (75.1%). Again, both Somerset's (2.6%) and Dorset's (2.5%) unemployment rate is lower than the regional average (3.1%) and significantly lower than the national rate (4.4%).

The low economic inactivity rate in Somerset (18.7%) and Dorset (17.9%) is also slightly lower than the South West average (19.0%). The UK economic inactivity rate for people aged 16 to 64 years was estimated at 21.4% in December 2024 to February 2025.

Dorset had an average of 9,500 vacancies advertised per month in 2023 although concentrated to the lower end of the skills range (Healthcare / Hospitality / Retail / Social Care). In a similar case Somerset, high-demand jobs are concentrated in Healthcare, Social Care, and the Tech Sector. The data demonstrates a high employment / low unemployment and economically inactive workforce in the region, in turn causing challenges for the employment market within the lower end of the skills range and service led sectors.

ONS Published Data as of February 2024.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

At Yeovil College we recognise that we are a small but essential part of a much bigger picture. To provide the skills, resources, knowledge and opportunities we maximise every opportunity to engage with our wider community. This includes employers, local leaders, other educational providers and support services.

We seek to support our local businesses with a workforce at all levels that drives innovation, improved productivity, investment, collaboration adds value and is a clear element in our Strategic Plan for Yeovil College. This approach facilitates continuous growth and investment in emerging technologies and markets, minimises overlap, and ensures the availability and specialisation of resources as needed.

The College will continuously review the focus and aims of our Accountability Statement, ensuring it remains aligned to local demand. Stakeholders who will help continually develop our Accountability Statement in the future include:

- Place Leadership Group
 - The Great South West pan-Regional Partnership
 - Education institutions for all age groups and abilities (WEIoT, Schools, HotSW Collaboration)
 - South Somerset 14-19 Partnership
 - South West Work Experience Partnership (SWWEP)
 - Local and national employers of all sizes and all sectors, both private and publicly funded (surveys, reviews and curriculum employer forums)
 - Local authorities and other government bodies including Somerset Council
 - Board and Governance positions across regional stakeholder, schools and local authority growth board.
 - Jobcentre Plus / Seetec Pluss / Abri Employment
 - Employer representative partners such as LEP / FSB / Chambers of Commerce / South West Business Council
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- ERB LSIP leaders across Devon & Somerset, the West of England and Dorset
 - Other Governing bodies and strategic stakeholders in the area

Our partnership with stakeholders supports the college curriculum to develop a range of opportunities to support the diverse levels of our learners' covering experiences such as:

- Supported Internships
- Apprenticeships
- T Level Industry Placements
- Work Experience
- Career Events such as:
 - Futures Fest
 - Time to Shine
 - Apprenticeship and Careers Fair
 - Guest Talks and Lectures
 - Employer Forums
 - Employer site visits



Somerset
Council

ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHER PROVIDERS IN THE AREA

WEST OF ENGLAND									
I	N	S	T	I	T	U	T	E	OF
T	E	C	H	N	O	L	O	G	Y

West of England Institute of Technology: Training Collaboration

Yeovil College is part of the West of England Institute of Technology (WEIoT). Institutes of Technology were the previous Government's flagship programme designed to spearhead the delivery of higher technical education in STEM subjects. The WEIoT has brought together key regional strategic employers with FE Colleges including Yeovil College, Bath College, Weston College, City of Bristol College, South Gloucestershire and Stroud College and the University of the West of England (UWE). Yeovil College has committed to the re-licensing and its continued support of the WEIoT in 2028.

The WEIoT has the ambition of levelling up skills across the country and the WEIoT has focus on providing accessible routes into high wage and high skilled employment. Yeovil College has strategically partnered with the WEIoT as it complements the Colleges deliberate focus on Advanced Manufacturing (Aerospace), Health, Science, Construction, Digital (& Design) and Electrical (& Cell) Technology much more closely than that of the South West Institute of Technology. Under its contract extension the WEIoT will also been focusing on the construction sector, aligned to emerging government requirements.

The WEIoT has an established a network of anchor and partner employers who continue to contribute towards the aim of designing and delivering high-quality, employer led, technical education and training to priority sectors across the West of England, including Leonardo Helicopters and the Jones Building Group (both Yeovil College strategic partners). Each College partner has their own regional and industry body employer networks that inform local skills needs and priorities, who work with education providers to co-design and co-deliver timely and relevant local provision.

Other Key Provider Links

Yeovil College actively collaborates with other education and training providers across the South West. Recently, the College has contributed to the Skills Development Fund (SDF) and Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) initiatives, delivering through its Institute of Technology (IoT) partnerships across the West of England (WoE), as well as through the Heart of the South West (HotSW) SDF/LSIF collaboration. This partnership includes Bridgwater and Taunton College, Strode College, South Devon College, Exeter College, Petroc, City College Plymouth, and the independent training provider SWATpro.

The College remains deeply committed to these partnerships, which are vital in addressing the region's evolving skills needs. Leveraging its strong regional collaborations and IoT status, Yeovil College continues to play a key role in meeting local, regional, and national workforce demands. It is dedicated to maintaining its position as a strategic and operational partner within the community, offering partnership-driven solutions to identified challenges.

The vision outlined in the Association of Colleges' *College of the Future* report—where colleges serve as anchor institutions providing systems leadership within their local and regional ecosystems—aligns closely with Yeovil College's mission. The College is fully committed to this forward-looking role.

Additionally, Yeovil College is an active member of the Dorset & Somerset Training Provider Network (DSTPN), which brings together training organisations, colleges, employers, and stakeholders in the post-16 education and training sector. The College's collaborative work with DSTPN, particularly through Skills Bootcamps across Somerset and Dorset, has already delivered significant outcomes for the region and will continue to be a focus moving forward.

South Somerset 14-19 Partnership

'Imagine the Possibilities'

The South Somerset 14-19 Partnership is a collaboration between the secondary schools, the special educational needs schools and Yeovil College, located in the South of the County. A main aim of the Partnership is to organise and promote aspirational career information events for our young people and these include the Year 8 'My Future' events, Year 10 'Experience days' and the 'Future Forward' event for Higher Education.

The South Somerset 14-19 Partnership undertakes work to help support the transition of its young people into Post 16 destinations by liaising with schools, colleges and support agencies to provide additional information and support. The Partnerships have worked across multiple projects to better the prospect of learners across the region, including directly engaging with schools (from Year 6) to drive consideration of STEM subjects and technical education, NEET Kick Start Programmes and innovative supportive internships with Yeovil District Hospital, Leonardo Helicopters and Thales.

PLACE LEADERSHIP GROUP & NEXT GEN

Yeovil College is committed to supporting our community. The Place Leadership Group (PLG) was formed in March 2020 by Yeovil College, to leverage strengths and opportunities in Yeovil and across South Somerset, North & West Dorset. Its objective is to describe a vision for the next 30 years and incrementally implement that change. With representatives from Somerset and Dorset Council, and the assistance of external consultants, the PLG now consists of Senior Management figures from key Innovation, Aerospace, Manufacturing, and Healthcare sectors.

Yeovil College is also a central participant, acting as an anchor for the group, via its employer hub, aligning vocational and academic curriculums with employment requirements across the PLG area of influence. The PLG partners with County and District Councils as well as Yeovil Town Council and now consists of over 30 key CEOs and lead decision makers from local businesses (Leonardo's, Honeywell, Thales, Numatic etc) as well as leaders from civic institutions (Somerset Council, South West Business Council, Somerset Chamber, Yeovil Chamber etc.) and community leaders (DWP, Yeovil College etc.). It's 8-point plan has clear intent and has delivered impact to the region.

The College is also committed to its future generation as we are already aware that attainment and aspirations within the local community are behind regional and national averages, and that talent attraction and retention is the key business challenge throughout the region. Yeovil College, in partnership with the South Somerset /Mid & West Dorset Place Leadership Group (PLG), formally launched the Next Generation network on the Thursday September 8th, 2022, following 12 months of development work. The Next Generation provides a space for 'young professionals' to network with their peers while also facilitating their participation and engagement in regular workshops, guest speaker events, training, personal and professional development sessions and social events.

The brainchild of the South Somerset / Mid & West Dorset Place Leadership Group (PLG), the intent is to encourage young people from across an array of businesses in South and Somerset and mid/west Dorset to meet monthly, becoming part of a network who learn from one another, share experiences, build friendships, and contribute thoughts and ideas to the PLG who, amongst other things, look to develop the area as a preferred 'destination' location for young professionals – creating community.

An underlying objective for the Place Leadership Group is to develop a greater insight as to what key issues influence this generation in their career decision making and with input from this group the PLG is better understanding how to attract and retain talented young professionals and the next generation of leaders to businesses across this region. It is believed that developing a 'community' of young people, mainly in the early stages of their careers, and providing them with opportunities to grow their networks, knowledge and skills, is a great place to start. The group is being supported and sponsored by Yeovil College and is free of charge to attendees.



LOCAL NEEDS DUTY – SELF ASSESSMENT

The Corporation body of Yeovil College have completed a strategic review of how the education and training provided, meets the local, regional and national needs. The College's curriculum is significantly aligned to LSIP priorities, with close working relationships with Somerset Chamber, the Dorset / Somerset Local Authority, Business West (through its trailblazer work and WEIoT relationship) other education providers and many different stakeholders. The Corporation is assured of this position giving the Colleges reputation within its community and continued financial growth. The College meets the local skills needs from our scrutiny of the curriculum offer, employer and learner feedback, sustained growth in key sectors and national priorities, continued high metrics in the apprenticeship accountability framework and continued strong outcomes and progressions for our learners.

Our duty to review has identified the following considerations which will further enhance and strengthen what the College does for our learners and economy, locally, regionally and nationally:

- Further understand the need for productivity across the region and how these skills can be then implemented across all programmes of study.
- Collate the top wider soft and professional skills identified to demonstrate these across the whole college.
- Identify the top Digital skills (including AI) needed for all learners on all programmes to ensure these are embedded in all programmes of study.
- For the College to explore opportunities within Knowledge Transfer Projects (KTPs) with Innovate UK in relation to digital capabilities, AI and advanced manufacturing requirements.
- For the College to continue its focus on SEND learners and aspire that their achievements and opportunities are equal to those learners without these needs and disabilities.
- To gather information and intelligence regarding the speed of AI integration and how best the College responds with its curriculum outside of Skills Bootcamps in the future.

Yeovil College are continuing to meet the needs of local learners and preparing them to maximise their potential and contribute to both the local and national economy. Clear pathways of progress are clear for our learners. Our commitment to Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) with the College successfully in achieving whole organisational accreditation to the Matrix Standard in February 2024 and revalidation in February of 2025.

As the only college in South Somerset and the tertiary provider for Yeovil, we are the largest and most diverse post-16 option for our local community across South Somerset, North and West Dorset and therefore have a responsibility to offer a curriculum that empowers our learners to develop the knowledge and skills demanded by our diverse economy. The College is committed to involving employers in the effective design and implementation of the curriculum areas as evidenced through our Employer Forums, Place Leadership Group, Stakeholder Engagement and Self-Assessment Reports and Action Plan processes.

Wider Community Provision

The College offers a range of evening language, maths and English classes, aimed at adults over 19. These make an important contribution to local needs in terms of community-based provision which is focused on supporting the visitor economy, as well as hospitality and cultural industries.

ESOL (English as a Second or Other Language) programmes are delivered on site but also in the workplace with bespoke cohorts designed specifically for employers. These programmes contribute to the local needs by offering essential skills development (including English, maths, digital literacy and employability) to progress young people, including refugees and asylum seekers.

Yeovil College continued to be inclusive to its community, The College has been ranked in the top 50 employers in the prestigious National Centre for Diversity (NCFD) 'Top 100 Most Inclusive Workplaces Index for the last two years in a row and was additionally shortlisted as a nominee for the prestigious Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Heroes Awards, supported by the Skills and Education Group.

These awards celebrate individuals and organisations that are leading the way in championing diversity and inclusion within their workplaces and the education sector and confirm the Colleges inclusive commitment.



**EXTRAORDINARY
FUTURE**

Yeovil
College

ANNUAL OBJECTIVES

After conducting thorough analysis of the skills requirements and reviewing the major factors influencing the skills demands of the region, Yeovil College are committing to the following annual objectives for the Academic Year 25/26. The College is focused on delivering these specific targets. This strategic focus is designed to maximise our impact by capitalising on our existing strengths and addressing sectors where there is considerable potential for improvement or expansion. Our approach ensures that we not only reinforce our areas of excellence but also strategically evolve our curriculum to effectively meet the changing needs of the region.

Our targets for 25/26 are as follows:

1. Further deliver innovative, market responsive and national priority Skills Bootcamp provision in Electric Inspection & Testing including Solar Photovoltaic and Electrical Charging Retrofit, Leadership & Management – Entry and Advance, CAD & Additive Manufacturing, Application of AI for Business, Advanced AI & Autonomy and Factory of the Future (4.0) (Wave 6). Increase the overall volume to 200+ learners undertaking Skills Bootcamps in the academic year.
2. Open new facilities in Construction and Sport. Aligned the governments 'Biggest building boom' in a generation through planning reforms the new construction facility with further support the ambition regionally to build more homes and key infrastructure. The new Sports facility continues the Colleges dedicated to delivering a top-tier sports education, teaching, and learning curriculum. We strive to elevate the standards of sport, football, athletic aspirations and physical health within our community.
3. In the Foundation Learning programme continue to improve employment outcomes for individuals with SEND through initiatives like Project Search. Implement a new collaborative supported internship programme with new stakeholders at Ryland Farm / Future Roots – delivering a trailblazing land based supported internship for the region and a new collaborative 'Digital Future' programme from September 2024.
4. Implementation of new Digital Devices for our Foundation Learning programme to provide digital access to CEIAG resources, careers education software for external and internal work experience monitoring and accessibility support.
5. In Adult education, increase the use of the Yeovil College online and blended learning platform to increase the availability and options to offer for flexible and accessible education – specifically focusing on the Health, Early Years, Business and emerging Green Skills agenda. Bring in new digital online learning qualifications using the YC EQUAL platform. Deliver off-site Performing Manufacturing Operations and Business Improvement Techniques qualification for our employers – ensuring productivity and future competitiveness for our business community.
6. In higher education, confirm a new Higher Education Partner and develop new curriculum in Social Work and Digital and validate delivery for September 2026 implementation.
7. Deliver a new Higher Technical Qualification (HTQ's) in Dentistry aligned to our Digital Dental ambitions for NHS England.
8. Further continue the growth of Apprenticeships on programme at Yeovil College with a particular focus for starts within Engineering, Construction, Digital Dentistry (Laboratory Technician) and Business provisions. Develop a new collaborative 'maritime' Engineering Apprenticeship programme between key subsea/maritime primes in the region.
9. Through its collaboration with the 14-19 partnership implement the 'South West Work Experience Partnership (SWWEP) to support the UK government outlined plans for a new work experience requirement for post 16 learners. Aiming to provide all school and college students with two weeks of work

experience (50 hours). This initiative, part of the "Get Britain Working" white paper, is intended to boost young people's employability.

CONFIRMATION OF GOVERNANCE SIGN OFF

On behalf of the Yeovil College Corporation, it is hereby confirmed that the

plan as set out above reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the corporation at their meeting on 25th June 2025. The plan will be published on the college's website within three months of the start of the new academic year and can be accessed from the following link: <https://www.yeovil.ac.uk/about/corporation/>

Chair of Governors

Dated:



Principal/ Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

Dated:



APPENDICES & REFERENCE SOURCES

<http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/social-mobility.html>

<https://www.britishtscienceassociation.org/news/new-report-inequity-science-engagement-uk>

https://www.exeter.ac.uk/media/universityofexeter/centreforsocialmobility/images/Social_Mobility_in_the_South_West_Report.pdf

<https://heartofswlep.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/2023-24-Heart-of-the-SW-LEP-Workplan.pdf>

<https://skillslaunchpad.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Heart-of-the-South-West-Skills-Launchpad-2021-2024-5mb-V2.pdf>

<https://skillslaunchpad.org.uk/skills-strategy/>

<https://heartofswlep.co.uk/growing-our-economy/productivity-strategy/strategic-economic-plan/>

<https://www.productivity.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/FEC-Summary-Report-FINAL-150323.pdf>

<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/39333/documents/193104/default/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-strategy-making-the-most-of-everyones-skills-and-talents>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-for-jobs-lifelong-learning-for-opportunity-and-growth>

<https://greatsouthwest.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/GSW-HVM-Technical-Report.pdf>

[Independent Economic Review - The Great South West](#)

[How much does the defence industry contribute to UK regions?](#)

Ofsted - <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/31/130805>

Financial Statement - [YC Report Financial Statements 2023-24](#)