

SKILLS PLAN & ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT 2025





VALUES

Be Collaborative
Be Aspirational
Be Respectful
Be Empowering
Be Supportive

VISION

**The college of choice for the city of
Portsmouth and our region**

MISSION

**Shaping our city's future by unlocking the
potential of its learners**

STRATEGIC GOALS

- 1. Inspirational, aspirational and inclusive place to work and learn**
- 2. Responsive and relevant curriculum offer**
- 3. High quality teaching, learning and assessment**
- 4. Trusted partner for the communities we serve**
- 5. Stabilised and sustainable finances**

Plus, three enabling themes:

- 1. Embrace digital technology in all we do**
- 2. Beacon of sustainability best practice**
- 3. Consolidation before expansion**

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COLLEGE ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

The College is required by the Department for Education (DfE) to produce an accountability statement to set out the focus of curriculum over a 2-year period in line with the overall College Strategy. This should be written to support the annual accountability statement that outlines the funding the college will receive to provide training. This document incorporates this requirement.

1. Purpose

The plan outlines how the college will support local, regional and national priorities. It is developed in response to the Skills Act (2021), following the Skills for Jobs White paper, increasing the accountability of colleges to contribute towards developing current and future skills demands. The plan is written to compliment the identified curriculum specialisms of the College Strategic Plan (2022 – 2026) and contributes towards several strategic priorities identified within the strategy.

2. Context and Place

In August 2021, Highbury College and Portsmouth College merged to form the City of Portsmouth College (COPC). The organisation is a general further education college in Portsmouth, Hampshire, England. Total income in 2023-2024 was c£34m. Portsmouth is located within the Solent Region. Hampshire Chamber of Commerce is the ERB leading on the development of the region's first LSIP, which the college has actively engaged with and supported. Portsmouth City Council is a unitary authority. The College also works closely with Hampshire County Council. Collaboration with local colleges is positive, strengthened further by successful collaborative bids and projects as part of the most recent SDF projects. The College also works very closely with the University of Portsmouth.

The City of Portsmouth College delivers one educational and training solution for the businesses and communities of the city and the local region. The College has more than 60 years of experience, during which time it has built a strong reputation for academic, technical and professional programmes. It also has close relationships with those working in various industries which ensures the ever-changing needs of employers in the area are met.

COPC provides vocational and academic education and training, from first-step courses to university level foundation degrees, specialised services for business, and education in the community. Courses include A Levels, T Levels, vocational diplomas (BTECs), GCSEs, foundation degrees, apprenticeships, dedicated SEND provision and unaccredited leisure courses. The College actively promotes lifelong learning and delivers a wide range of adult courses at more than 50 community venues in and around Portsmouth, as well as at four College campuses. The College is also a provider of apprenticeship training in the southeast and currently offers apprenticeships in more than 20 subject areas.

2.1 Location

COPC has four campuses, delivering a range of education and training opportunities:

- Highbury Campus specialises in delivering vocational and technical education.
- North Harbour Campus specialises in delivering construction courses, building services and other trades. It is also the home of the Net Zero Training hub.
- Sixth Form Campus specialises in delivering a range of academic programmes including the broadest range of A Levels in the city of Portsmouth.
- Arundel Campus located in the city centre, specialises in delivering English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programmes, childcare (early years), railways and employability programmes for the local community.

2.2 Students and our communities

Students and apprentices have access to a broad range of resources across the College's campuses, including world-class learning and sports facilities. The College offers a comprehensive curriculum, minimising the need to travel, and draws on expertise from each previous college. The newly merged College supports a broad course offer for students and apprentices of all ages, meeting local and national skills needs. The newly formed College provides a city-wide careers and course advice service, supporting every member of the community in their lifelong learning choices.

2.3 Demography

The population of Portsmouth is currently 212,700 and is forecast to increase by 5% to 222,300 by 2026. Although it is an ageing population and proportion of young people will decrease slightly, the absolute numbers increase. The population of young people in year 11 in Portsmouth schools rises over the next 5 years.

The city has several areas of high deprivation with Charles Dickens Ward in the centre of the island being the most deprived ward. In addition, there is considerable building within the City with a projected further increase in young people. There is forecast to be a 5.5% increase in dwellings (or 5,030 additional dwellings) by 2026, up from 91,460 dwellings in 2019.

2.4 Employers and businesses

The merged College has increased the capacity to respond to employers' training and apprenticeship needs across the south of England and further afield. Employers and businesses can influence the complete curriculum offer in the city, supporting the future workforce and economy. There are opportunities for employers to use the world-class College facilities for their own training needs and to access bespoke training for their staff, organised by the College. Employers and businesses can help shape the talent of the future by influencing a wide number of work experience and industry placement activities, which will strengthen the pool of potential employees in the future. The new College, as a larger organisation serving the city, is better placed to bid for skills programmes to support the development of south Hampshire.

The college is engaged with over 500 employers in Portsmouth and the wider Solent region, a significant majority of which being SMEs, to inform and support the intent and implementation of the curriculum to ensure the college delivers the desired impact for all students. Key employer partners include:

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| ■ The Abri Group | ■ KA Watts Electrical | ■ Portsmouth Football Club |
| ■ Compass | ■ Mountjoy | ■ Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust (Queen Alexandra Hospital) |
| ■ Global Ceramics | ■ National Maritime Systems | ■ RJC Mechanical |
| ■ HBS Group | ■ National Air Traffic Systems (NATS) | ■ South Coast Refrigeration Services |
| ■ H M S Collingwood | ■ National Health Service (NHS) | ■ Spinnaker Tower |
| ■ Halfords | ■ PMC Construction and Development | ■ Taylor Wimpey |
| ■ Hampshire Plumbing and Heating | ■ Pompey in the Community | ■ VIVID Housing |
| ■ Horizons Carpentry and Joinery | ■ Portsmouth City Council (PCC) | |

2.5 Schools and parents

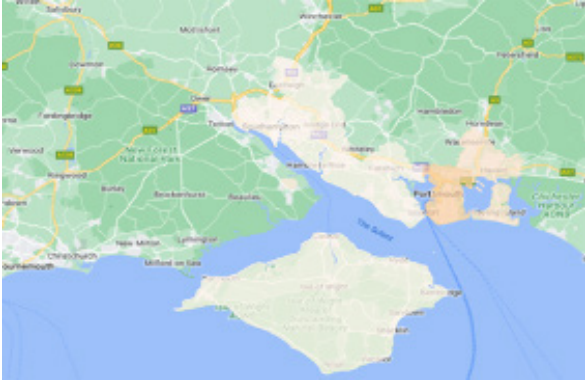
City of Portsmouth College provides a cohesive and broad curriculum offer, which has been carefully planned to ensure there are clear ladders of progression leading to positive outcomes and next steps for our students. Working in close partnership with schools and parents, we provide the right support and expert advice to ensure the right choices are made. The breadth and depth of our offer means we have the right programme of study for everyone.

City of Portsmouth College has a well-established relationship with a high number of Secondary Schools over a wide geographical span. We are the first-choice destination for the significant majority of young people leaving school in Portsmouth.

2.6 Travel to learn

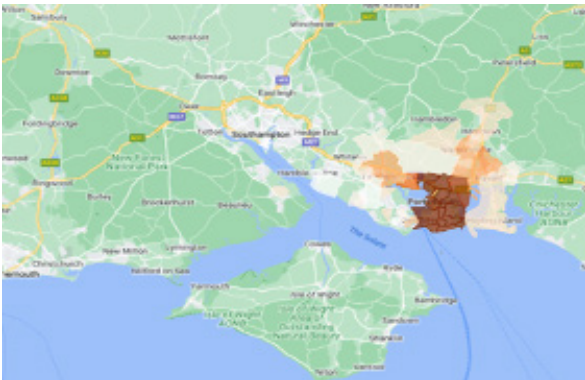
APPRENTICESHIPS

The majority of apprentices live and work in Portsmouth:



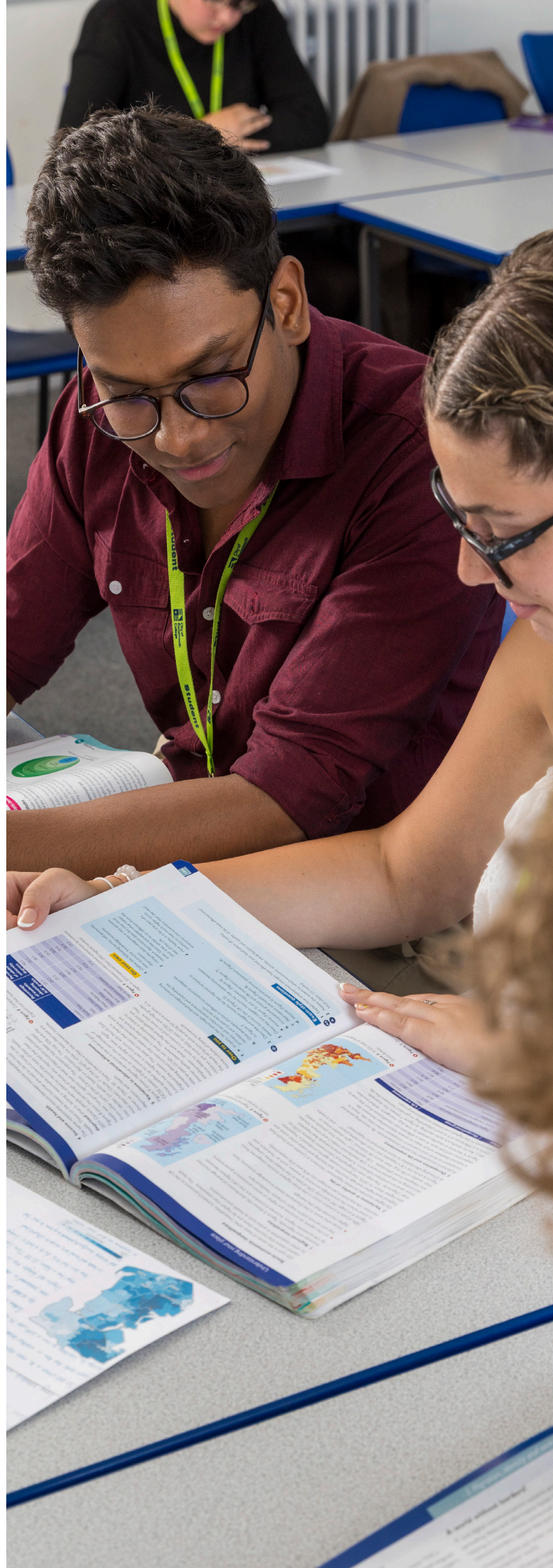
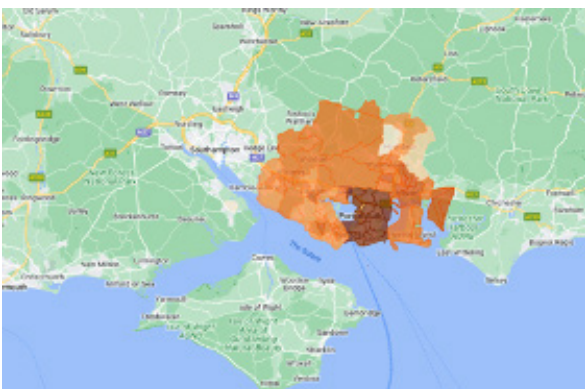
16-19 STUDY PROGRAMME

The significant majority of young people studying at the College live in Portsmouth, with a concentration in the Southern and Eastern parts of the City:



ADULTS

A significant proportion of adult students live in Portsmouth but the college has a wider geographical reach given the nature of the provision, for example FE and HE online courses:



3. Approach to developing the Accountability Statement

In arriving at the objectives for the coming year, the college has considered a wide range of supporting information including:

- Vector local market intelligence – used throughout the curriculum planning process
- Portsmouth City Council Economic goals
- Solent Partners priorities
- Solent LSIP outcomes
- National Priorities

The various ways in which the College engages with stakeholders to plan, develop and deliver education training and support are set out in the college's curriculum strategy and supporting sub strategies relating to Employer Engagement, Schools Liaison and Apprenticeships. Key Employer Partners, who assist Curriculum Planning and sequencing of the curriculum for the college in a variety of ways, are reflected later in this statement, and more specifically through the separate employer engagement strategy.

The College works collaboratively with other local providers and partners in the city and wider county area, notably through formal and informal local networks, including the Portsmouth Education Partnership (PEP), Portsmouth Schools Network, Hampshire Chamber of Commerce, Business South, Shaping Portsmouth, Solent Partners and local authority led projects.

The college has close relationships with local universities in particular the University of Portsmouth for which we work collaboratively to support student progression.

The schools in the Portsmouth area are predominantly 11-16. While there is a University Technical College offering post 16 provision, their offer is specialist. The college therefore has an important role in working with schools to ensure young people are well informed about the full range of post 16 options available, progression routes, and the employment and career opportunities that are open to them.

The college has worked in partnership with other local colleges

in the Solent area to ensure the skills gap around NetZero is decreased. In conjunction with this we have also worked with Shaping Portsmouth on the Decarbonisation plans for Portsmouth and Unloc to support the youth of Portsmouth and surrounding area to understand the requirements of NetZero.

The college recognises that the local and national landscape is dynamic in terms of both policy direction and economic conditions. The college will therefore continue to measure the currency and relevance of the Accountability Statement (and the broader Curriculum Strategy) throughout the academic year through:

- **Stakeholder Advisory Boards** - feedback from key stakeholders
- **Employer forums** - deep dives gathering stakeholder feedback on specific sector skills needs
- **Policy review** - horizon scanning (three year look out) reviewing education and skills policy direction
- **Economic conditions review** – reviewing local and national economic conditions via RCU data analysis and intelligence gathered from various stakeholder groups (for example DWP, Business South and Chamber of Commerce)
- **Curriculum mapping** – continual review of curriculum alignment to local and national skills needs that informs the annual curriculum planning process

3.1 Portsmouth and its Priorities

Portsmouth is one of the most densely populated cities in the country. It has the fourth largest economy in the South East, with a broad employment base and is the national home of the Royal Navy.

The city has a number of key economic development priorities up to 2029:

STRENGTHEN THE PORTSMOUTH BRAND

- Build the brand: the great waterfront city
- Become a destination city for ideas and innovation
- Create a marine and maritime engineering and/or clean growth innovation quarter
- Build on the strengths of the advanced manufacturing and engineering cluster
- Boost innovation, research and creativity to attract entrepreneurs and support the economy

PUT PEOPLE AT THE HEART OF REGENERATION

- Prioritise a qualifications progression skills strategy for local talent
- Address low educational and pupil attainment in Portsmouth
- Empower residents in Portsmouth to raise the city's economic activity rate

INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLACE

- Push for new and improved public transport links regionally and locally.
- Delivery of major transport infrastructure in Portsmouth.
- Improve the city's housing offer.
- Upgrade local place infrastructure and enhance the city waterfront.
- Increase digital connectivity and utilities capacity.
- Embrace Portsmouth's environmental and wildlife assets and tackle climate change

CREATE A THRIVING AND COMPETITIVE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

- Invest in and strengthen the visitor and creative industries sector.
- Diversify the economy into more knowledge-based sectors.
- Revitalise the city centre, and high streets across the city.
- Make Portsmouth the most business-friendly city with the best support for businesses.



3.2 Solent's key sector priority areas

HEADLINE SKILLS NEEDS INCLUDE:

- Digital and knowledge skills to support across the economy and the specific digital and knowledge-based sectors.
- Advanced manufacturing and engineering in new industries and to replace an aging profile in existing industries.
- Hospitality and tourism sector
- Construction
- Computing/IT
- Qualified health professionals
- Soft skills such as written communications, negotiation, customer service, team working and emotional intelligence.
- Leadership and management

3.3 Solent Partners

Solent Partners has a number of headline priorities for action:

- **To provide leadership for the Solent Marine and Maritime Forum, ensuring that the priorities for action and investment priorities are delivered in partnership with the sector.**
- **To support Visit Solent, the South Hampshire and Isle of Wight Marketing Campaign, a bold and innovative campaign to boost the visitor and marine economy in South Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.**
- **Provide support for tourism activities in rural areas – The Solent Partners will allocate EAFRD funding to supporting tourism, recreation and leisure activities, destination development and marketing activities.**
- **To become the national leader and internationally recognised for its Low Carbon Green Economy, with specific support for:**
 - New Low Carbon and Green Technology - capitalising on the world-class research in the sub-region into green technologies and turning these into business opportunities, growth and jobs as well as supporting strong manufacturing.
 - Resource Efficiency in Homes and Businesses through supporting with ERDF, a Low Carbon Construction Hub, to act as a centre of excellence for the development and adoption of low carbon construction, waste energy reduction and renewable energy production techniques across the Solent.
 - Developing large-scale renewable energy such as tidal and offshore wind, together with small scale on homes and businesses and renewable and district energy schemes incorporated into new development where practical.

Whilst the college's ongoing curriculum development and design is informed by the Solent Partners priorities laid out in the LSIP, it is important to note that the education and training needs of residents and stakeholders in Portsmouth differ significantly to those in the broader Hampshire regional geography (the audience for the LSIP). It is therefore a strategic decision to align our curriculum only in part with the priorities outlined in the LSIP, and to continue to proactively work with Hampshire Chamber of Commerce to lead on shaping future iterations of the LSIP to better reflect the needs of Portsmouth. This is particularly relevant for the significant number of Portsmouth residents every year who need to undertake a Level 2 or below course, who are often hard to reach young people and adults in the City, using the Level 2 or below course as a platform to progress onto Level 3 and above courses and/or employment.

DEVOLUTION

On 6 February 2025, the Government announced that Hampshire County Council, Portsmouth and Southampton City Councils and Isle of Wight Council had been successful in their joint bid for inclusion on the Government's fast-track Devolution Priority Programme (DPP).

A regional Mayor will be elected to head up a new Strategic Authority across the wider region. The mayor will be responsible for driving local economic growth, strategic planning and infrastructure, strategic transport and other areas. Their powers and funding will be transferred from government departments.

This change will bring significant investment and additional powers to improve economic growth, skills, transport and regional collaboration in the area. The Mayoral Strategic Authority will work closely with local councils, focusing on responsibilities currently held by Central Government in Whitehall. Elections for a Mayor are expected to be held in May 2026.

City of Portsmouth College is committed to proactively participating and informing the developing strategy for Adult Skills Funding when it is devolved in 2026/27. It is important that the skills needs of our residents in Portsmouth are recognised in future planning and funding allocations for adults.

3.4 Solent Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) - 2023 and Deep Dives 2025

The LSIP has been structured around the following six priorities:

- Priority 1: Awareness and aspiration
- Priority 2: Navigating the skills ecosystem
- Priority 3: Proactive employer engagement
- Priority 4: A more agile skills ecosystem
- Priority 5: Pathways to skills
- Priority 6: Managing the skills transition

The ERB has identified the following as priority sectors for employment and skills development:

- Advanced manufacturing and aerospace
- Digital technology and computer science
- Visitor, creative and cultural industries
- Health and Social Care

PRIORITY 1

Awareness and aspiration: Ensure the skills ecosystem can improve the life chances of all communities across the Solent.

SPECIFIC OUTCOME FOR COPC:

TACKLING DEPRIVATION AND PROMOTING DIVERSITY

PRIORITY 4

A more agile skills ecosystem: Improve responsiveness by building on increased digitisation and the requirement for flexibility.

SPECIFIC OUTCOME FOR COPC:

FOCUS ON CORE COMPETENCIES AND BUILDING RESILIENCE

PRIORITY 2

Navigating the skills ecosystem: Reduce complexity and improve complementarity within the skills ecosystem in the Solent.

SPECIFIC OUTCOME FOR COPC:

IMPROVE COMPLEMENTARITY AND COORDINATION

PRIORITY 5

Pathways to skills: Acknowledge that career pathways are not linear and facilitate greater brokerage within the skills ecosystem.

SPECIFIC OUTCOME FOR COPC:

FOCUS ON PROGRESSION, INCLUDING ACROSS SECTORS. DELIVERY BY SECTOR SPECIALISTS

PRIORITY 3

Proactive employer engagement: Encourage employers to play a greater role shaping local provision and promote the benefits of engagement.

SPECIFIC OUTCOME FOR COPC:

DEVELOP AND NURTURE PARTNERSHIPS

PRIORITY 6

Managing the skills transition: As technology advances towards Industry 4.0, future proofing the skills ecosystem is key to securing success.

SPECIFIC OUTCOME FOR COPC:

NETZERO IS A FUNDAMENTAL PRIORITY

Four sectors have been deep dived to better understand current and emerging skills needs. COPC curriculum planning and delivery has been informed by the deep dive reports, most notably in Construction and Building Services where the college has an ongoing commitment to the development and delivery of high-quality training for managers, engineers and operatives at all levels.

CONSTRUCTION AND BUILDING SERVICES IN THE SOLENT REGION

Hampshire Chamber of Commerce is leading efforts to tackle skills shortages via the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP). Through a series of roundtable events, the LSIP has gathered input from several construction sectors including CITB, house / facilities builders, Infrastructure, recruitment, public sector or green, local authority and training and education providers. This has informed the deep dive into Construction and Building Services and has helped COPC to understand the current local landscape, their workforce challenges and skills gaps.

The employers reported that their hardest to fill vacancies are in leadership and management positions. COPC has responded to this by relaunching the HNC Level 4 in Construction in January 2024 and by developing, in partnership with University of Portsmouth, the Higher Education Certificate in Architecture and Interior Design which will be launched in September 2026.

The employers also reported that there is a shortage of Fire Safety and Health and Safety trained operatives in Construction. COPC has responded to this by embedding Fire Door and Safety training into the Carpentry and Joinery Level 3 Apprenticeship and

reinforcing the importance of the Health and Safety unit in all construction and building services study programmes, adult learning programmes and apprenticeship programmes.

Construction sector employers made clear that there is a shortage of Level 2 and Level 3 labourers in the Solent region. COPC has responded to this through the significant growth of the Level 1 multitrades study programme which acts as a curriculum progression pathway to a Level 2 trades programme. The Level 2 brickwork apprenticeship programme has also been retained and COPC has planned to further grow this provision in September 2025.

COPC introduced a Grow Your Own strategy in September 2024 which incentivises construction and building services workers to become dual professionals through the completion of the assessor award and/or teacher training. The college provides these aspiring teachers with subsidy to complete their training via the Teacher Training Fund (TTF). This responds directly to the feedback from construction sector employers regarding finding it difficult to employ tutors with recent on-site experience to train and assess the competency of their construction and building services workers (particularly in Electrical, Brick and Plumbing).

Construction and Building Services sector employers also outlined what skills are in most demand for their current and emerging job vacancies. They included soft/life skills, resilience, communication, teamwork, positive attitude, critical thinking, sector specific skills embedded early enough in training/working and the ability to balance own wellbeing and work. COPC has responded to this feedback by redesigning the tutorial and enrichment personal development programme for students and apprentices to include a greater focus on the employability skills outlined and through the provision of a more contextualised programme for each sector that embeds specific skills required for our students and apprentices wishing to work in those sectors. The new tutorial and enrichment programme will be launched in September 2025.

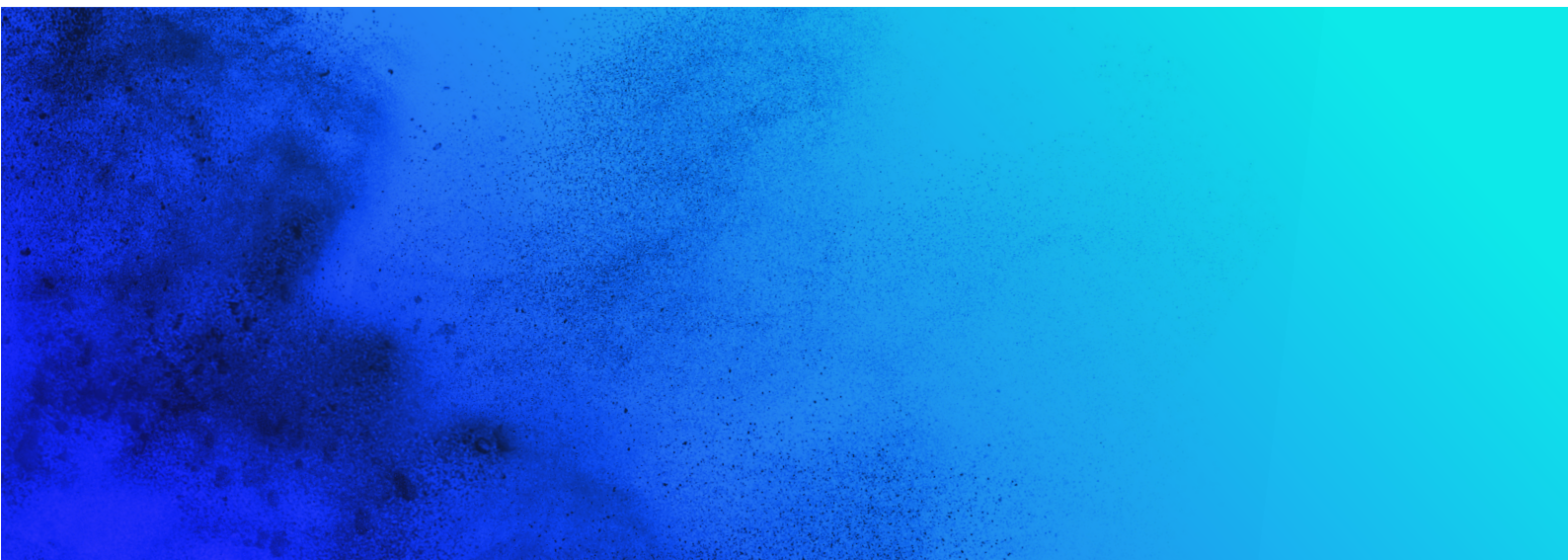
3.5 National priorities

National Skills Priorities have been agreed across Government 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 green jobs, creative industries and science and technology (including AI and quantum computing). The recent Skills England report, Industrial Strategy and Plan for Change outline that these sectors are:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ■ Construction | ■ Life Sciences |
| ■ Advanced Manufacturing | ■ Professional and Business Services |
| ■ Defence | ■ Clean Energy Industries |
| ■ Financial Services | ■ Digital and Technologies |
| ■ Health | ■ Creative Industries |

The college will prioritise curriculum development, where practical, through a small number of high-quality programmes that have been co-designed with employers in the sectors listed above and that have a strong track record of delivering good outcomes for learners. These programmes are:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| ■ T levels | ■ Skills Bootcamps |
| ■ Apprenticeships | ■ Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs) |
| ■ Free Courses for Jobs | |



3.6 Progress update for 2024/25

Over the past 12 months, City of Portsmouth College has continued to excel across a broad spectrum of academic and institutional achievements, further cementing its reputation as a centre of educational excellence and anchor institution in Portsmouth and South East Hampshire.

The College was officially rated 'Good' by Ofsted, a recognition of the sustained commitment of its staff and leadership to delivering high-quality education.

The College celebrated a third consecutive year of record-breaking Level 3 results, achieving a 96% overall pass rate across all campuses. Over 1,000 students successfully completed 1,671 academic, technical, and vocational qualifications, with 40 courses attaining a 100% pass rate—25 of which were delivered at the Sixth Form Campus, where 14% of students achieved straight A-A* grades. Additionally, 290 students secured places at their first-choice universities, including 48 at prestigious Russell Group institutions, while others progressed into elite apprenticeships with employers such as Rolls Royce.

The College also achieved a 100% pass rate in T Levels at its Highbury and North Harbour Campuses, significantly surpassing the national average of 88.7%, and saw similar success across 15 of 17 vocational courses, including IT, engineering, hospitality, and plumbing.

In a further testament to its inclusive ethos, the College proudly hosted the Supported Internship Awards, celebrating the outstanding accomplishments of students with additional needs. The College also continues to be the market leader in post 16 SEND provision, supporting over 250 high needs students in Portsmouth and East Hampshire.

The college has won several awards and received national recognition for the digital literacy training offered to over 500 adults in Portsmouth via the Digital City project.

Strategic Goals in 2024/25 Accountability Statement – Progress

STRATEGIC SKILLS GOAL 1

Further develop 4 new courses as part of the COPC curriculum offer in Health and Social Care, Hospitality, Logistics and Construction (including Net Zero courses) in response to Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) sector deep dives

- Two new courses have been developed: Net Zero - HNC Construction which has 6 enrolments and Gas Apprenticeships with 5 enrolments.

STRATEGIC SKILLS GOAL 2

Develop clear ladders of internal and external progression within technical education, that meet T level and HTQ priorities. Align curriculum development with local employer needs. This will be done by:

GENERATING 92 T-LEVEL ENROLMENTS IN HEALTH, COMPUTING, ENGINEERING, CONSTRUCTION AND CHILDCARE AND EDUCATION

The total T level enrolments for 2024/25 is 101.

- T Level Technical Qualification in Education and Childcare Year 1 – 18, Year 2 - 8
- T Level Technical Qualification in Health Yr 1 21, Year 2 - 5
- T Level Management & Administration Year 1 - 17
- T Level Digital Support Services Year 2 - 13
- T Level Foundation (AME Diploma Level 3) Year in Engineering – 19

16 HTQ / HE enrolments in Health or Construction.

- HE student numbers consist of 9 enrolments on the HNC Construction programme.
- Health did not run.

3% OF INCOME AS CAPITAL INVESTMENT, USED TO DEVELOP LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS IN PRIORITY SECTORS

- Capital expenditure budget of one million pounds, have invested in developing learning environments, including: ME Hub, Student Hubs, Social Spaces, T Level Zones in priority sectors, Health, Creative, Business and service industries.

100% OF T LEVEL STUDENTS SUCCESSFULLY PLACED IN MEANINGFUL AND RELEVANT INDUSTRY PLACEMENT

- 97% industry placements have already been achieved so far this year. 100% of industry placements will be achieved by year end.

STRATEGIC SKILLS GOAL 3

Continue to work closely with local schools to provide high quality careers advice and taster sessions that raise awareness of local career opportunities.

3185 STUDY PROGRAMME ENROLMENTS

- Study Programme enrolment numbers exceeded - 3369

125 PLANNED SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

- 99 school engagement events have taken place so far this year with 26 additional activities planned for the rest of the year.

2250 YEAR 11 APPLICATIONS

- 1813 year 11 applications received to date; it is forecasted that we will exceed the 2250 target by the end of the year.

40% POSITIVE DESTINATION FOR FULL-TIME FE STUDENTS - PROGRESSION INTO FURTHER EDUCATION

- 61.3% of full time FE students have progressed into Further Education

35% POSITIVE DESTINATIONS FOR FULL-TIME LEVEL 3 FE STUDENTS - PROGRESSION INTO HIGHER EDUCATION

- 22.3% of FE level 3 students have progressed into Higher Education

30% POSITIVE DESTINATIONS FOR FULL-TIME FE STUDENTS - APPRENTICESHIP / EMPLOYMENT

- 13.6% of full time FE students have progressed into an Apprenticeship or into employment

100% COMPLIANCE WITH THE 8 GATSBY BENCHMARKS

- 100% compliance achieved for the 8 Gatsby benchmarks
-

STRATEGIC SKILLS GOAL 4

Continue working closely with the City Council, in supporting the development of the first Digital City, reducing adult digital poverty, and promoting progression to employment.

328 IT/DIGITAL TASTER AND ADVANCED COURSE ENROLMENTS FOR ADULTS IN THE COMMUNITY.

- 1572 IT / Digital enrolments delivered to adults in the community.
-

STRATEGIC SKILLS GOAL 5

Transform the apprenticeship offer at the college, significantly improving the quality of the employer relationship and the quality of the apprentice experience in 2024/25, with a focus to then grow the provision in 2025/26

564 APPRENTICES IN LEARNING

- 509 apprentices in learning

3-STAR RATING (GOOD) ON FIND AN APPRENTICESHIP SITE

- 3-star rating achieved

62% APPRENTICESHIP PROGRESSION IN EMPLOYMENT

- 65% of apprentices in 23/24 were promoted by their employer post the completion of their apprenticeship with COPC

30% APPRENTICESHIP PROGRESSION – NEXT LEVEL APPRENTICESHIP/FURTHER RELEVANT TRAINING

- 22% of apprentices in 23/24 progressed onto the next level of apprenticeship

OVERALL ACHIEVEMENT RATE 60% FOR APPRENTICESHIPS

- Year-end projected achievement is 50% (longer term objective to exceed DFE target of 67% achievement by 26/27)

APPRENTICESHIPS PROVISION GRADED GOOD THROUGH SELF-ASSESSMENT PROCESS

- Apprenticeship SAR was graded Requires Improvement through the self-assessment process in October 2024 which was validated by Ofsted in November 2024.

STRATEGIC SKILLS GOAL 6

Mobilise the new Sustainability Strategy, further reducing the carbon footprint of the college in supporting local and national goals on net zero and the environment.

EMBEDDED INTO TUTORIALS:

- Sustainability (differentiated by level)
- Pollution, plastic and the environment
- Living sustainably
- Globalisation
- Sustainable life choices
- Campaigning for Change
- Sustainability - Healthy living
- A sustainable future
- Fast Fashion
- Ethical Consumerism

In addition, we promote opportunities such as the Big Beach Clean in September, Recycling Week in October, Global recycling day in March, National Walking Week in May and Plastic Free July.

ENRICHMENT

- Gardening club
- Turing application for 2025/2026 has been submitted to focus on sustainability mainly air pollution to link to the Portsmouth City Councils Health and Wellbeing strategy where air pollution is one of the top five priorities - Students will travel to Tanzania and Thailand where there are particular challenges linked to air pollution and health and wellbeing, linked to high areas of deprivation.
- Upcycling - for example the furniture at SFC that needs to be reupholstered, we have meeting to look at the Arts Award today and if this could form part of these wider cross college projects.
- Plans for SU - Sustainability officer.

9 EMPLOYER ADVISORY BOARDS IN PRIORITY SECTORS ALIGNED TO CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT (CONSTRUCTION AND BUILDING SERVICES, HEALTH, NET ZERO, ENGINEERING, DIGITAL, CHILDCARE AND EDUCATION, CREATIVE INDUSTRIES, BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES, HAIR AND BEAUTY AND HOSPITALITY AND CATERING).

- 6 Employer Advisory Boards have been held so far this academic year – Automotive, Hair & Beauty, Travel & Tourism, Business, Engineering & Construction. There are 4 EABs to be held later this year in Construction, Digital, Hair & Beauty and Health.

STRATEGIC SKILLS GOAL 7

Refine and relaunch the E6 Personal Development Programme (a six-strand initiative of courses, training and experiences focussed on soft skills in preparation for the world of work).

30% (488) FULL-TIME FE STUDENTS ENGAGED IN OVER AND ABOVE (E6) EXTRA-CURRICULAR ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

- 16% full time students engaged in extra- curricular enrichment activities through E6. It is forecasted that this figure will rise to 22% by the end of the year.

STRATEGIC SKILLS GOAL 8

Continue working collaboratively with the regional education providers to ensure a high quality, responsive and co-ordinated education and training offer for the Solent and wider region.

125 PLANNED SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

- 99 engagements held so far this year with 26 additional activities planned for rest of year.

4 NEW HIGHER EDUCATION COURSES DEVELOPED FOR A SEPT 24 ENROLMENT

- The FdSc Criminology will be launched in September 2025 in partnership with University of Portsmouth. COPC already offers the Foundation Degree Computing and the HNC Construction.



4. Contribution to national, regional and local priorities

STRATEGIC SKILLS GOALS	COPC STRATEGIC PLAN LINK	CONTRIBUTION TO LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL SKILLS	25/26 ACTIONS	25/26 KPI
Further develop the COPC curriculum offer in Health and Social Care in response to (a) Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) sector deep dives and (b) Skills England report	Strategic goal 2: Responsive and relevant curriculum	<p>Our Health curriculum will be further developed to ensure our students have the identified skills to progress into current and emerging jobs in the Health sector (as identified in the Solent LSIP Health Deep Dive report in 2025):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Care worker/home carer 2. Nurse practitioner 3. Social workers 4. Healthcare manager/director 5. Health associate professional 	<p>Existing Health curriculum to be repurposed to reflect the skills needs identified by sector employers (Portsmouth and Isle of Wight NHS University Hospital Trust; Portsmouth City Council; the University of Portsmouth).</p> <p>We will offer Health AAQs, vocational, technical and Access to HE qualifications covering levels 1-3. This will allow access to all learners and progression for students.</p> <p>Existing curriculum for adults studying Health VRQs (Levels 2 and 3) and Access to HE programmes in Health Science Professions, Midwifery, Nursing, Paramedic Science Humanities and Social Science (Level 4) will be repurposed to reflect the skills needs identified by sector employers (Portsmouth and Isle of Wight NHS University Trust and QA Hospital).</p>	5 repurposed courses

STRATEGIC SKILLS GOALS	COPC STRATEGIC PLAN LINK	CONTRIBUTION TO LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL SKILLS	25/26 ACTIONS	25/26 KPI
Further develop the COPC curriculum offer in Creative Industries in response to (a) Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) sector deep dives and (b) Skills England report	Strategic goal 2: Responsive and relevant curriculum	<p>Our Creative Industries curriculum will be further developed to ensure our students have the identified skills to progress into current and emerging jobs in the Creative Industries sector (as identified in the Solent LSIP Creative Industries Deep Dive report in 2025):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advertising and marketing 2. Architecture 3. Crafts 4. Design (products, graphics and fashion) 5. Film, TV, radio and photography 6. IT, software and video games 7. Publishing 8. Museum, galleries and libraries 9. Music, performing and visual arts. 	<p>CertHE Architecture course developed collaboratively with the University of Portsmouth in preparation for delivery in 26/27 with 15+ enrolments. Course designed in collaboration with University of Portsmouth, a qualified architect and informed by Employers including: ReformatLLP</p> <p>Development of BTEC Performing Arts course in collaboration with the Kings Theatre, embedding facilities and industry expertise into curriculum design, delivery and experience for our students.</p>	<p>1 new course</p> <p>1 repurposed course</p>

STRATEGIC SKILLS GOALS	COPC STRATEGIC PLAN LINK	CONTRIBUTION TO LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL SKILLS	25/26 ACTIONS	25/26 KPI
Further develop the COPC curriculum offer in Professional and Business Services in response to (a) Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) sector deep dives and (b) Skills England report	Strategic goal 2: Responsive and relevant curriculum	<p>Our Professional and Business Services curriculum will be further developed to ensure our students have the identified skills to progress into current and emerging jobs in the Professional and Business Services sector (as identified in the Skills England report 2024 and Solent LSIP 2023):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Financial services 2. Legal activities 3. Accounting, bookkeeping and auditing activities; tax consultancy 4. Marketing 5. Human Resources 6. Management consultancy activities 	<p>Increase in breadth of provision in Professional and Business Services in collaboration with Carys Manor (sustainable practices and skills) and with Portsmouth International Port (port power and moving to net zero).</p> <p>Launch new course: T-level in Marketing as a new course development in 25/26.</p> <p>Launch Mindful Education (ME) blended learning AAT adult part time courses and apprenticeships at Level 2, 3 and 4.</p>	<p>1 new T Level course</p> <p>3 new Apprenticeship courses (ME)</p>

STRATEGIC SKILLS GOALS	COPC STRATEGIC PLAN LINK	CONTRIBUTION TO LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL SKILLS	25/26 ACTIONS	25/26 KPI
Further develop the COPC curriculum offer in Digital Technologies in response to (a) Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) sector deep dives and (b) Skills England report	Strategic goal 2: Responsive and relevant curriculum	<p>In Hampshire, these technologies are leading innovation in several sectors including Maritime and Marine, Lifesciences, Financial Services, Aerospace and Defence and Advanced Engineering and therefore the development of our students' digital skills is a cross-cutting theme embedded into our college wide curriculum development.</p> <p>Our Digital Technologies curriculum will be further developed to ensure our students have the identified skills to progress into current and emerging jobs in the Digital Technologies sector (as identified in the Skills England report 2024 and Solent LSIP 2023):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. AI specialists 2. 5G specialists 3. Cyber Security specialists 4. Big Data analysts 5. Photonics specialists 6. Quantum specialists 	<p>Increase in breadth of provision in Digital Technologies in collaboration with Admiral Money for agile, project based and software work and The Southeast Cyber Resilience Centre and Forfend Information Security for Cyber development.</p> <p>Develop and launch new T-level in Digital Support & Security in 25/26.</p> <p>Develop and launch new Level 3 BTEC AAQ in IT (Cyber pathway) in 25/26.</p>	2 new courses

STRATEGIC SKILLS GOALS	COPC STRATEGIC PLAN LINK	CONTRIBUTION TO LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL SKILLS	25/26 ACTIONS	25/26 KPI
Continue working closely with the City Council, in supporting the development of the first Digital City, reducing adult digital poverty, and promoting progression to employment.	Strategic goal 4: trusted partner for the communities we serve	<p>Our vision is that we have a shared responsibility to ensure we are using technology to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Enhance teaching and learning 2 Reduce workload 3 Support accessibility and inclusion 4 Narrow the digital divide <p>so that every member of our community can select the right tool, for the right outcome, for them, in that moment in time.</p>	<p>Produce a joint branded Digital Skills programme targeted at hard-to-reach adults, and adults with low levels of digital literacy</p> <p>Increase in adults engaging in digital skills programmes linked to occupational ambitions.</p> <p>Reducing the digital poverty and skills gaps within Portsmouth.</p> <p>Year on year improvement in progression to employment, higher paid employment or higher learning.</p>	500 IT/digital taster and advanced course enrolments for adults in the community (22/23 baseline 252 enrolments)

STRATEGIC SKILLS GOALS	COPC STRATEGIC PLAN LINK	CONTRIBUTION TO LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL SKILLS	25/26 ACTIONS	25/26 KPI
To be recognised as the lead provider of clean energy education and training in the Solent region, specifically Air Source Heat Pumps and Retrofitting practices.	Strategic goal 2: Responsive and relevant curriculum	<p>Our Construction and Building Services curriculum will be further developed to ensure our students have the identified skills to progress into current and emerging jobs in the Construction and Building Services sector (as identified in the Solent LSIP Health Deep Dive report in 2025):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Architects 2. Surveyors 3. Engineers 4. Construction Workers 5. Labourers 6. Carpenters 7. Plumbers 8. Electricians 9. Gas Engineers 	<p>Creation of a centre of excellence for Construction and Building Services.</p> <p>Increase in apprenticeship numbers for standards in Construction and Building Services that embed Green principles</p> <p>Refocus the apprenticeship strategy to focus on our strengths in Construction and Building Services at the college, significantly improving the quality of education the employer relationship and the quality of the apprentice experience in 2025/26, with a focus to then grow the provision in 2026/27</p> <p>CertHE Architecture course developed collaboratively with the University of Portsmouth in preparation for delivery in 26/27 with 15+ enrolments. Course designed in collaboration with University of Portsmouth, a qualified architect and informed by Employers including Reformat LLP.</p> <p>Explore, develop and implement Skills Bootcamps for Construction (Net Zero) with Portsmouth City Council and wider construction skills with Hampshire County Council.</p>	<p>75 new apprenticeship starts in Electrical, Gas, RAC and Plumbing and Plastering / Drylining.</p> <p>3-star rating (Good) on Find an Apprenticeship site (22/23 baseline Good)</p> <p>Employer & Apprentice Survey results</p> <p>Overall apprenticeship achievement rate 56% (22/23 baseline 50%)</p> <p>Construction and Building Services Apprenticeship provision graded Good through self-assessment process (22/23 baseline Requires Improvement)</p> <p>2 Skills Bootcamps to be developed and delivered in 2025/26.</p>

STRATEGIC SKILLS GOALS	COPC STRATEGIC PLAN LINK	CONTRIBUTION TO LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL SKILLS	25/26 ACTIONS	25/26 KPI
<p>Develop Science, Engineering, Maths and IT curriculum to reflect the current and emerging skills needs of the Maritime and Aerospace industries in the Solent region, specifically in Satcomms and Hardware Engineering.</p>	<p>Strategic goal 2: Responsive and relevant curriculum</p> <p>Strategic goal 4: Trusted partner for the communities we serve</p>	<p>Our Science, Engineering, Maths and IT curriculum will be further developed to ensure our students have the identified skills to progress into current and emerging jobs in the Maritime and Aerospace sectors (as identified in the Solent LSIP report in 2023):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Robotics 2. Automation 3. Clean Energy 	<p>Develop strategic partnerships with key Maritime and Aerospace employers to support them with the talent and development strategies, including providing work experience for our students, IAG for our students via guest speaking during lessons and working with the college to match prospective apprentices to their apprenticeship vacancies / existing employees who require upskilling or reskilling.</p>	<p>Existing Science, Engineering, Maths and IT curriculum to be repurposed to reflect the skills needs identified by sector employers, working with key local partner such as QinetiQ, Carnival UK, Electrogear, BAE and Airbus.</p>

STRATEGIC SKILLS GOALS	COPC STRATEGIC PLAN LINK	CONTRIBUTION TO LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL SKILLS	25/26 ACTIONS	25/26 KPI
Refine and relaunch Personal Development to ensure all students and apprentices have the skills required to progress onto their next steps	Strategic goal 2: Responsive and relevant curriculum	The Solent LSIP sector deep dive reports published in 2025 highlighted a cross-sector theme that young people seeking employment in these sectors lack the essential skills employers need, specifically basic digital skills, resilience, communication, teamwork, positive attitude and critical thinking.	<p>Positive destinations for students engaging on the personal development and enrichment programme.</p> <p>Increase in students partaking in personal development programme and enrichment programme, with new programmes developed as part of the college's enrichment offer.</p>	<p>30% (488) full-time FE students engaged in extra-curricular enrichment activities (E6) – 22/23 baseline 8%</p> <p>Environmental and digital programmes embedded into enrichment offer</p> <p>Enrichment offer to be contextualised to curriculum areas to increase the number of students participating in personal development programme and enrichment activity</p>

STRATEGIC SKILLS GOALS	COPC STRATEGIC PLAN LINK	CONTRIBUTION TO LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL SKILLS	25/26 ACTIONS	25/26 KPI
Continue working collaboratively with the regional education providers to ensure a high quality, responsive and co-ordinated education and training offer for the Solent and wider region.	Strategic goal 4: trusted partner for the communities we serve	The Solent LSIF is a partnership involving several FE colleges, ITPs, the South Coast IoT, University Technical College ('UTC') Portsmouth, the Department for Work and Pensions ('DWP'), Hampshire CoC, relevant local authority organisations, in addition to a range of internal and external stakeholders from across the subregion. This integration seeks to align local priorities established by the Solent LSIP, with targeted actions aimed at meeting the evolving needs of the regional economy.	<p>Achievement of collaborative project goals that aim to deliver a more co-ordinated approach to the region's curriculum offer for young people and adults.</p> <p>Continue to work in partnership with University of Portsmouth to deliver educational pathways into employment and onto higher learning.</p> <p>To work with partner institutions to appropriately promote education and skills and COPC as part of the Portsmouth Centenary celebrations in 2026.</p>	<p>125 planned school engagement events (22/23 baseline 50) of which 5 to be undertaken as a collective group of Solent colleges</p> <p>1 new Higher Education course developed for a Sept 25 enrolment (22/23 baseline 2 new Higher Education courses)</p> <p>Collaborative and integrated Portsmouth Centenary events and marketing plan and activities to implemented in 2026</p>



CORPORATION STATEMENT

Our first strategic plan as a newly merged organisation, sets out a clear vision for the part we will play in helping to ensure a successful future for the city of Portsmouth – its businesses, its communities and its people. The coming together of our four campuses under a single college for all the people of Portsmouth puts the provision of 16-18, apprenticeships and adult education in a stronger position than ever before.

We can now play a central role alongside strategic partners who share our aspirations. One great college for one great city. The strategic plan sets out our commitment to the scale and quality of our provision as the leading provider of courses and apprenticeships. With a clear identity, an impactful leadership team and the expertise of our talented staff, we are looking to the future with renewed optimism and confidence. <https://www.city-of-portsmouth-college.ac.uk/media/uzzclahr/copc-strategic-plan-2022-2026-screen.pdf>

The Corporation has been actively engaged with the development of the accountability statement. The Corporation has approved this final draft and will formally approve the final document at the Board meeting in June 2025.

LOCAL NEEDS DUTY

Chairs and CEO's / Principals from the Solent region's General Further Education Colleges, and most Sixth Forms / post-16 Multi Academy Trusts, met as a 'Local Needs Duty Forum' on 18th May 2024. Alongside the colleges, representatives from Hampshire County Council, Portsmouth City Council, Southampton City Council and the Hampshire Chamber of Commerce came together to discuss the skills agenda and collaborative working. This collaborative event came at the end of the AoC Colleges' Week, which celebrates the contribution that colleges make to their communities. The day was facilitated by Amanda Melton CBE, ex-Principal of Nelson and Colne College and a previous expert panel member of The Independent Commission on the College of the Future.

The event offered a unique opportunity for key representatives from the county's public sector organisations to discuss their goals and objectives for skills growth in Hampshire, identifying areas in which greater collaboration would help.

The agenda included a review of the success of collaborative projects funded through the Strategic Development Funds and Local Skills Improvement Fund. Prior to the meeting, research was commissioned to review the colleges published accountability statements and draw conclusions on their collective response to the skills priorities identified in the Solent LSIP.

This review concluded that skills priorities are well met in Engineering, Health & Social Care and Childcare although there is more work to do in measuring the impact on progression into employment. And there are gaps in the Digital sector beyond Esports, and T-Levels and The Science and Maths offer for the region is generic, therefore requiring further development and engagement with employers to establish the

wider need.

The meeting resulted in a proposed action plan for future collaboration. Initial actions to be carried out before the next annual meeting of governors include:

The meeting resulted in a proposed action plan for future collaboration. Initial actions to be carried out before the next annual meeting of governors include:

- Agree a meeting structure and governance approach that facilitates ongoing collaboration and makes best use of the existing and proposed forums in place in the region.
- Develop the research to better map supply and demand.
- Focus our collaboration on high-impact regional skills challenges.
- Consider the benefit of continued wider collaboration for efficiency, improvement and value for public money.
- Enable governors to collaborate on specific roles, e.g. link governors' roles for skills or careers

List of supporting documents

1. **Strategic plan**
<https://www.city-of-portsmouth-college.ac.uk/about-us/key-documents/>

2. **Financial report 2023-24**
<https://www.city-of-portsmouth-college.ac.uk/about-us/key-documents/>

3. **LSIP report**
<https://www.hampshirechamber.co.uk/chamber-of-solutions/local-skills-improvement-plan/>

4. **Solent Partners Skills Plan**
<https://solentgrowthpartnership.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/solent-lep-skills-action-plan-local-skills-report-2022-final-final.pdf>

5. **Portsmouth Local Plan**
<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/services/development-and-planning/planning-policy/portsmouth-local-plan/>

6. **National priorities - The future of work: jobs and skills in 2030**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/jobs-and-skills-in-2030>

7. **Skills England report: driving growth and widening opportunities**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-england-report-driving-growth-and-widening-opportunities>

8. **Plan for Change**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-england-report-driving-growth-and-widening-opportunities>

9. **LSIP Deep Dive reports**
<https://www.hampshirechamber.co.uk/news/four-new-deep-dive-reports-now-available/>

10. **Get Britain Working**
<https://www.hampshirechamber.co.uk/news/four-new-deep-dive-reports-now-available/>

11. **Industrial Strategy**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/industrial-strategy>





Highbury Campus

Tudor Crescent
Portsmouth
PO6 2SA

Sixth Form Campus

Tangier Rd,
Portsmouth
PO3 6PZ

North Harbour Campus

Unit One, Harbourgate
Southampton Road
Portsmouth
PO6 4BQ

Arundel Campus

49 Arundel Street
Portsmouth
PO1 1SA

023 9238 3131

info@copc.ac.uk

copc.ac.uk



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