

DRAFT ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

PUBLISHED MAY 2023



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1. Mission & Purpose (History & overview)

- 1.1 Oaklands has a proud heritage of providing responsive, transformational education. We opened our doors to men and women in 1921. We have provided our students with the knowledge and skills to achieve their individual ambitions and make a valuable contribution to their communities. Whilst the operating environment for further education remains challenging, we are confident that our history of seizing opportunities and working closely with our partners puts us in a good position to ensure our continued success.
- 1.2 Our Vision is that by 2027 we will be *A sustainable educational trailblazer inspiring our learners and our community to achieve their potential in a changing world!*
- 1.3 Our Mission is to *Prepare every learner for work, a rewarding career, and life's opportunities. By treating every student as the individuals they are, with care, passion and understanding in a professional, contemporary, and community-focused environment they will value and enjoy.*
- 1.4 As a college we are committed to the values of:
 - Excellence and Innovation
 - Collaborative Learning
 - Inclusion & Happiness
 - Integrity & Accountability
- 1.5 Our daily life and work is underpinned by the following cross-cutting themes:
 - Sustainability & the environment
 - Happiness and wellbeing of our college community
 - Digital transformation
 - Equality, diversity and inclusivity
- 1.6 A copy of our Strategic Plan 2022-27 can be found here: https://www.oaklands.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Oaklands_College_Full_Strategic_Plan_A4_v9-reduced-file-size.pdf

2. Our Strategic Aims and Objectives:

2.1 Strategic Aims

1

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

2

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

3

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

4

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

5

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

2.2 Our Strategic Objectives relating to each of the above aims are:

1. Deliver continuous **outstanding teaching, learning, assessment, and enrichment**, providing an environment that builds skills and knowledge.
2. **Inspire our learners** to attend, learn and achieve above the national quartile.
3. Drive a professional culture of **continuous improvement** through high-quality training, coaching and performance management to sustain an outstanding quality of education.
4. Achieve high levels of **satisfaction** among all key stakeholders to raise the College's profile.

1. Develop **Centres of Excellence** with key partners that are locally and regionally relevant and recognised nationally and internationally.
2. Continually develop our curriculum strategy to **meet employment and economic priorities** by increasing participation in education and skills to progress people into or within work.
3. Establish ourselves as a **collaborative** college that increases its number of strategic partners to develop skills, promote productivity and prosperity in the region.
4. Establish a **strong and respected brand** that listens and responds to all its stakeholders.

1. Deliver the College estate masterplan and strategy to **maximise our assets** to the benefit of our stakeholders, ensuring they meet our 7 design principles:
 - Smart, Sustainable, Safe, Sector employer engaged so developments have relevant industry input and support, Stakeholder engaged, Strategic, Social corporate

responsibility.

2. Create a **digitally SMART campus** through embracing current and future technologies and industry best practice.
3. Effectively manage the estate to model best practice in **regulatory compliance**.
4. Create a **carbon neutral estate** by 2050, realising 15% of this by 2027.

1. A college that is at the forefront of, and leading in **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity** by embedding effective practices in all we do.
2. Nationally accredited as an **employer of choice** that promotes a consistent culture of trust, innovation, enterprise, and teamwork, where both staff and students feel valued and recognised.
3. Renowned for delivering a **safe and secure** environment that allows learners to thrive.
4. Delivering **more than just a qualification**, through enrichment and work experience activities that develop a portfolio of skills learners require to progress to their chosen destination.

1. Deliver an **annual positive College contribution** generating cash for future investments through growth and financial prudence.
2. Maintain a **financially viable curriculum** offer with increasing learner numbers that allows for cost effective delivery and value for money.
3. Ensure we have constant access to **effective data sources and management information** to enable swift and evidence-based decision making.
4. Maintain effective management and control as well as **audit compliance** to meet regulatory requirements.

3. Curriculum intent

- 3.1 Curriculum at Oaklands College is ambitious and accessible. It is responsive to the individual ambitions of learners and the needs of the communities we serve. It supports students to overcome barriers and provides the skills required to realise their full potential.
- 3.2 For learners at all stages of their lives, we are committed to providing:
 - the right course with the right support to excel
 - more than a qualification
 - the wider knowledge needed to progress to positive next steps
- 3.3 The curriculum offer is kept under review to allow us to respond to new and emerging needs identified by our stakeholders and Government. Areas of strategic curriculum growth have been identified for 2023/2024 in line with Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs). These include:
 - Developing a wide and robust adult learning offer to include,
 - Professional Development Centre: Health Tech.
 - Professional Development Centre: Early Years and Education.
 - Professional Business Centre: Leadership and Management courses.

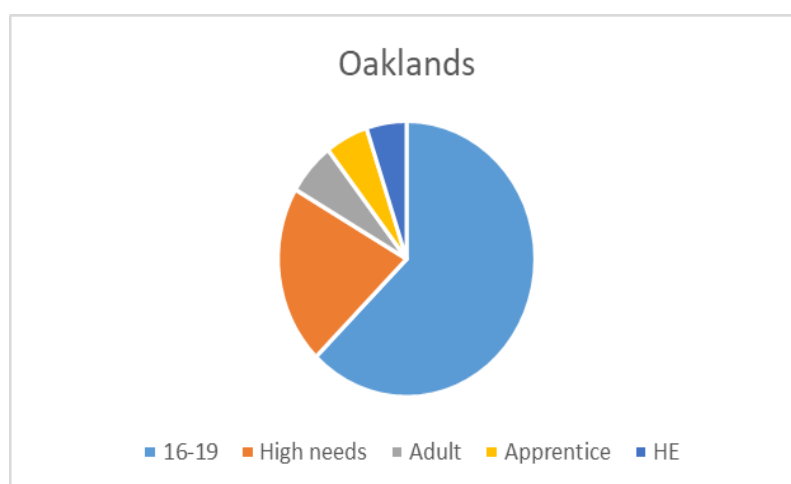
- Teaching Academy: Synergy between teacher training, quality improvement and internal career progression.
- Developing an online and blended suite of programmes to support digital developments.
- Centre of Excellence for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision including new build.
- Creative Industries with the growth of Film & TV in the region.
- Construction including sustainable construction and green technology.
- Hospitality Culinary Academy.
- Institution of Sporting Excellence.

4. College overview, Context and Place

- 4.1 The delivery of the best possible teaching learning and support is central to our planning. Students have access to more than 1,500 full and part-time courses across our campuses in St Albans, Borehamwood, and Welwyn Garden City. We are nationally renowned for our sports academies, where sporting and academic excellence are given equal importance. Many of our alumni compete globally or continue their sport and education in top US universities. Oaklands remains ambitious, developing additional centres of excellence including SEND provision, Engineering, Care, Early Years, Agritech and Creative Industries. We are well-placed to move from being a locally significant college to one which is recognised more widely regionally and nationally.
- 4.2 We follow national policies to break down the artificial barriers between 'academic' and 'vocational' training. In doing this, we will increase our student income across all provision.
- 4.3 The College serves a large geographical area including Hertfordshire and the London boroughs of its Barnet and Enfield. Our LSIP partners are Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce and BusinessLDN. We work in partnership with the Federation of Small Businesses, London Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Confederation of British Industry and the Mayor of London.
- 4.4 Many learners travel from outside our core area to attend our sports academy programmes. 74 students live on campus.
- 4.5 We have 4,441 students. Of these, 3,065 are 16 to 18. A further 962 are 19-plus and funded either through the Adult Education Budget or the Advanced Learner Loan. We have 414 Apprentices.
- 4.6 Oaklands has 839 members of staff with a full-time equivalent of 559 (10/05/2023).
- 4.7 We have 97 feeder schools in Hertfordshire of which 24 are in St Albans, 10 in Hatfield and 7 in WGC.
- 4.8 We have 969 courses.
- 4.9 93% of our 16–18-year-olds progress to a positive destination.
- 4.10 91% of our adult learning loan students progress to a positive destination.

4.11 Our overall achievement for 21/22 was 84.4%

4.12 Oaklands College learner breakdown:



5. Approach to developing the accountability statement

5.1 This accountability statement has been developed in line with the college strategic plan, the curriculum strategy and the annual operating plan. We have used national, regional and local research, including local market information, and insight from employers and stakeholders. We have also drawn from the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP).

5.2 Developing in line with employers and stakeholders

5.2.1 Oaklands College is committed to working with stakeholders to inform curriculum planning, course development and improvements to the estate. It has strong partnerships with Hertfordshire County Council, the Hertfordshire LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) and the district councils of Hertsmere, Welwyn and Hatfield and St Albans. Employment and skills boards are emerging, keeping Oaklands at the centre of skills development.

5.2.3 The changing nature of the economy post-Brexit and post-COVID means the college's ability to understand and meet the needs of local employers is more critical than ever. We are developing strong stakeholder and employer relationships to remain responsive and agile.

5.2.4 The College has established a #GETCAREERREADY Strategy which puts employers at the centre of curriculum design, innovation and estate planning. We create inspiring and industry-leading environments. Employers ensure students leave the College ready for work.

We implement #GETCAREERREADY through:

- Industry boards which include several employers to support the strategic development of our curriculum and our estate.
- Industry insight events which welcome employers to the campus to inspire learners into their future careers. Employers also support the College in other ways, such as work experience, live project briefs and curriculum support.

6. Contribution to National, Regional and Local Priorities

6.1 National Context

- 6.1.1 The pandemic has produced social and economic harm, with adverse impacts on physical and mental health, and on the education of adults and particularly young people. Inequality of opportunity has become more entrenched.

Much of the operating environment for further education has changed in terms of the employment landscape, working practices and study methods. The pressure on public finances will restrict future investment. FE has been the education sector most affected by the austerity measures of the past decade.

Employers have stressed the importance of home-grown skills post-Brexit. There is a growing consensus that further education has the key role to play.

The imperatives of climate change and the range of climate commitments made by the Government prioritise new green technologies. The Skills for Jobs White Paper, leading to the Skills and Post 16 Education Act 2022, heralds important opportunities and obligations for FE.

The policy commitments are to ensure that there is “Lifelong learning for opportunity and growth”, the realising of higher technical qualifications, and preparing young people for a portfolio/digital career. This aligns entirely with our mission, as does the Government’s determination to “prioritise the courses and qualifications that enable people to get great jobs.”

This policy statement identifies the pre-eminent role of FE in delivering the skills essential to economic growth. It also makes clear what Oaklands has always believed - that further education and training are equally about fulfilment and enrichment on a personal level. This agenda for FE has been set in the wider policy context of Levelling Up, defined as giving everyone “the opportunity to flourish”. Oaklands is, and will continue to be, at the forefront of turning those ambitions into reality.

6.2 Level 4 or above qualifications (Census 2021)

- 6.2.1 Across England and Wales, 33.8% of residents aged 16 years and over indicated that their highest level of qualification was at Level 4 or above.
- 6.2.3 In England, the region with the highest proportion of people with Level 4 or above qualifications was London (46.7%), followed by the South East (35.8%).
- 6.2.4 **For St. Albans** the percentage of those aged 16 or over with level 4 or above was **53%** (Watford is 41.1%, Welwyn Hatfield 37.3%, Dacorum 37.8%, Hertsmere 39.6%, East Herts 38.6% and North Herts 41.5%).

6.3 No qualifications (Census 2021)

- 6.3.1 In England and Wales, 18.2 % of people had no qualifications.
- 6.3.2 Locally the rate is: St Albans 10.1%. Watford 15.9%. Welwyn Hatfield 14.3%. Dacorum 14.7%. Hertsmere 16%, East Herts 13.8, North Herts 13.6%. Cambridge 9.6%.

6.4 Regional Context

6.4.1 *“Hertfordshire will be among the UK’s leading economies, helping to realise the full economic potential of the assets and opportunities within the ‘Golden Triangle’ of London – Cambridge – Oxford.” (Hertfordshire LEP, 2021).*

6.4.2 Hertfordshire’s economic output, measured as Gross Value Added (GVA), is around £33.8bn. The county has 72,000 mostly small enterprises in sectors including pharmaceutical, accountancy and construction. Within Hertfordshire there are 719,709 jobs. Employment has grown by more than 14% in the last decade.

Expected employment growth 2022-2027 is 1.9%. The total working population is 745,542. Most of these jobs are filled by people who live in Hertfordshire. More than 310,000 working age residents have at least degree-level qualifications. More than 4.4% (March 2022) have no qualifications.

6.4.3 Hertfordshire is made up of 10 districts and boroughs varying tremendously in character and size. The three largest towns are Watford, Stevenage, and Hemel Hempstead. Combined, they are about the size of a small city such as Nottingham. Hertfordshire also boasts smaller historic settlements which have grown organically over time, including St Albans. Oaklands College sits within three local district councils. It attracts students from ten district councils within Hertfordshire, Greater London and further afield due to its sporting excellence.

6.4.4 Hertfordshire has its unique Garden Cities and New Towns which have seen accelerated growth over recent decades and have substantial major business and knowledge-based assets. Significant investment is required to deal with continuing socio-economic issues, whilst enabling areas to be fit for the emerging 21st Century economy.

6.4.5 The Hertfordshire LSIP was published in May 2023 by the Chamber of Commerce with input from the four Hertfordshire colleges. It found:

- 86% of employers are likely to take action to upskill staff in the next 12 months.
- 70% are likely to use external training providers to upskill their staff in the next 12 months.
- One in 5 employers reported that, in 12 months prior to Covid, they had a hard to fill vacancy. In most cases this was prompted by applicants being low-quality, low-skilled, under-motivated or unsuitable because of their attitude to the job.
- Employers predicted that in the next three to five years they would need greater numbers of staff with digital, technical and practical skills.
- 47% of employers were considering taking an apprentice. There are widespread reservations around candidate quality and a need to reassure employers who have had a poor previous experience.
- 17% of employers said they would be likely to support employees to undertake a higher qualification in the next three years, even though cost is cited as a significant barrier.

6.4.6 The Oxford - Cambridge Arc

The Oxford-Cambridge Arc is a geographical area identified by the Government as “globally significant”. It contributes more than £110 billion to the economy each year and supports more than two million jobs.

It covers Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Oxfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire. Hertfordshire’s proximity to the Arc, and to London, places it in a strong position to benefit from this investment.

6.4.7 Hertfordshire’s Challenges

6.4.7.1 Despite strong performance across education, skills and employment, there are underlying concerns in three broad areas:

- unemployment
- productivity
- inequality

6.4.7.2 The 568 responses from the LSIP employer survey found the following:

- 38.4% of businesses had no contact with any skills providers.
- 70% of companies plan to recruit in the next 12 months.
- Lack of suitable technical skills is the biggest problem with potential recruits.
- Time constraints were the biggest barrier to providing staff training.
- Access to short modular sector-specific courses was the most common request from businesses.
- Over the next three to five years, businesses said priorities would include careers information and training in IT and digital skills, English and maths.

6.4.7.3 The Oaklands employer and stakeholder engagement strategy articulates the need for engagement with SMEs in our industry boards & events.

6.4.7.4 The problems Hertfordshire business face in recruitment based on skill level are documented in the LSIP:

- 6.7% said they get candidates insufficiently adept at maths and English.
- 45.5% said employees lacked the right employment skills.
- 43.2% said employees lacked the right technical skills.

6.4.7.5 Businesses highlighted the barriers to engaging with training as:

- Location (12.2%).
- Time (48.5%).
- Relevance (32%).
- Cost (31.5%).
- Knowing where to find the right course (19.1%).
- Other (18.6%).

6.4.8 The London Factor

- 6.4.8.1 In 9 out of 10 Hertfordshire districts more than 10% of the resident workforce is employed in London.

6.4.9 Refugees and Asylum Seekers

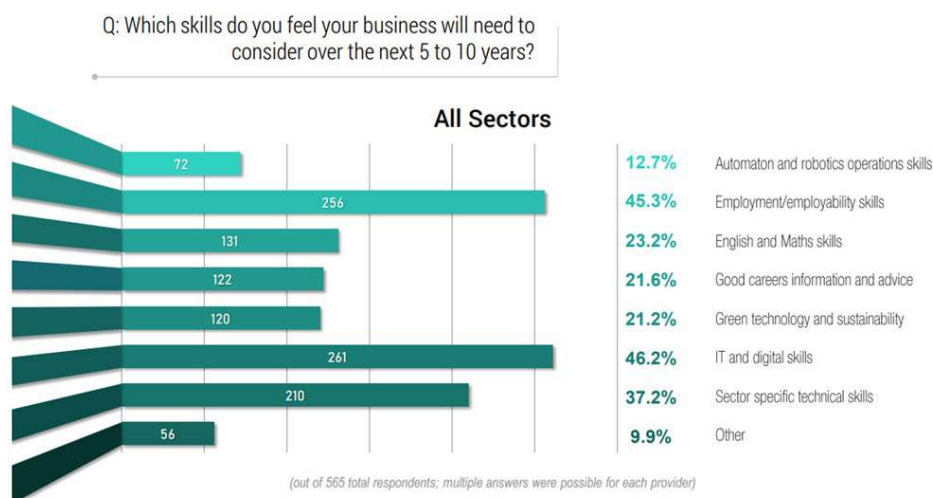
- 6.4.9.1 The arrival of refugees from Syria and Ukraine has generated additional demand for ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) and other training. People come with a wide range of education levels. Some have high skills levels but need specific qualifications for a licence to operate in their field in the UK.

6.4.10 Herts IQ (Hertfordshire Innovation Quarter)

- 6.4.10.1 Herts IQ is an Enterprise Zone creating more than 3 million square feet of sustainable commercial space for future-facing businesses, with access to London within 30 minutes.
- 6.4.10.2 It aims to connect technology, talent, and research. It focuses on Agritech, smart construction, bioscience, gene technology, artificial intelligence, robotics and big data.

6.5 Local priorities and skills shortages:

- 6.5.1 The LSIP clearly identifies professional communication as a key skill. More can be done in colleges to develop this in the future workforce.
- 6.5.2 Problem-solving and confidence-building were also highlighted.
- 6.5.3 Research from Lloyds in 2020 found 17 million adults in the UK do not have the digital skills needed for work. The increased amount of working from home following the pandemic has made this problem more acute.
- 6.5.4 The LSIP asked which skills businesses need to consider over the next 5-10 years. The results are shown below:

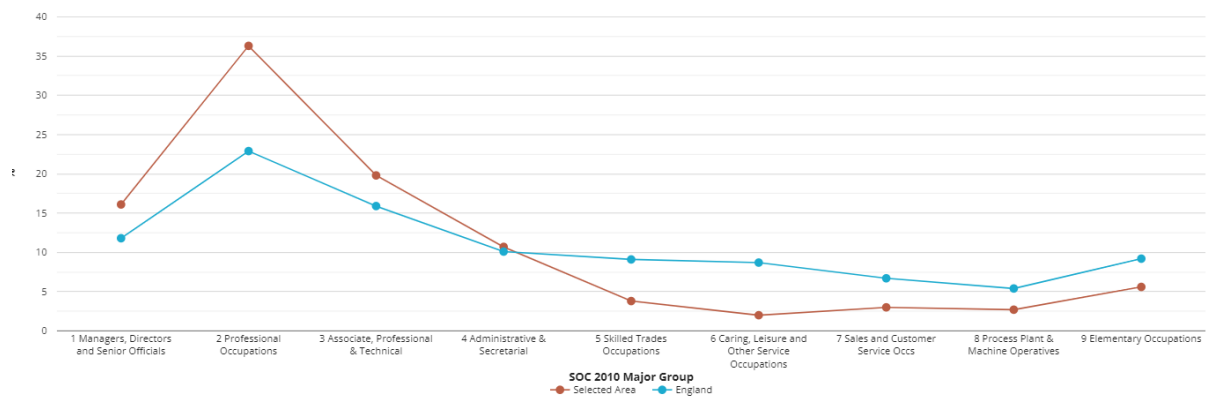


6.5.5 Taken from the ONS Employment Skills Survey (2027), the following are top skills shortages:

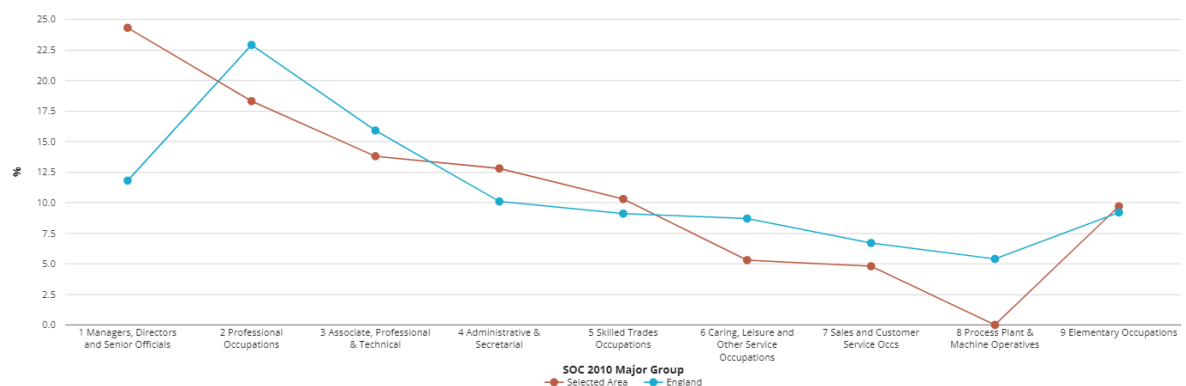
1. Carpenters and Joiners - 242k jobs (66% shortage).
2. Welding trades – 70k jobs (62% shortage)
3. Metal Machining setters and setter operators- 50k plus jobs (62% shortage)
4. Butchers – 37k jobs (58% shortage)
5. Vehicle technicians, Mechanics, and Electricians – 193k jobs (51% shortage)
6. Veterinarians – 26k jobs (51% shortage)
7. Veterinary Nurses – 16k jobs (51% shortage)
8. Beauticians and related occupations – 102k jobs (51% shortage)
9. Hairdressers and Barbers – 227k jobs (50% shortage)
10. Metalwork production and maintenance fitters – 182k jobs (49% shortage)

Top occupations are as follows:

6.5.6 St Albans:



6.5.7 Welwyn & Hatfield:



6.5.8 Lifelong Learning

6.5.8.1 A key focus of the LSIP was on Lifelong Learning. A key strategic focus in The Oaklands College strategy is to grow our adult delivery. The report articulates the following:

- Lifelong learning can take many forms, such as attending workshops, training programmes, seminars, online courses, or reading books and articles. It can also involve informal learning through personal experiences, hobbies, and interactions with others.

6.5.8.3 Some of the benefits of lifelong learning include:

- Career advancement: Lifelong learning can help individuals stay current with industry trends and changes, acquire new skills and knowledge, and remain competitive in the job market.
- Personal growth and development: Lifelong learning can help individuals expand their horizons, develop new interests and hobbies, and gain a deeper understanding of the world around them.
- Improved cognitive function: Lifelong learning has been shown to improve cognitive function, memory, and overall brain health.
- Social connections: Lifelong learning can provide opportunities for individuals to meet people, share ideas, and develop social connections.

6.6 Hertfordshire LSIP Priority Sectors

- Life Sciences, with a focus on Advanced Therapies including Cell and Gene Therapy.
- Engineering and Manufacturing.
- Creative, focusing on film and media.
- Built Environment, especially modern methods and clean technology.
- Agritech.
- Digital and green skills, which cut across all industries.

It also takes the view that Hospitality and Tourism has seen the most drastic drop in business number as well as appeal and needs to be prioritised to bring it back to pre-COVID-19 levels' Hertfordshire LSIP 2023.

6.7 Greater London LSIP Priority Sectors

• Report not yet published 11/5/23

6.8 The Hertfordshire Skills Employment Strategy (2021-24)

6.8.1 The Hertfordshire Skills Employment Strategy (2021-24) sets out strategic themes which are aligned to the Oaklands Strategic Plan.

- Theme 1. Unlocking emerging talent. Supporting people aged 16-24.
- Theme 2. Adult Learning and Development. Working towards full employment, promoting lifelong learning and retraining opportunities.
- Theme 3. Skills to grow. Enabling small and medium sized businesses to build their workforce.
- Theme 4. Priority and growth sectors, harnessing the opportunities and investing in skills of the future
- Theme 5. Placemaking, seizing the opportunities of Hertfordshire's business assets together with the proximity to London and other key economic areas.

6.8.2 Hertfordshire's Local Enterprise Partnerships Priorities

6.8.3 Hertfordshire LEP identifies three cross-cutting themes which underpin development across the county. These are cited as enhancing digital skills, supporting Hertfordshire’s “Net Zero Future” and social mobility and inclusivity. Oaklands College’s cross-cutting themes are described as sustainability, equality, diversity & inclusion, mental health & well-being, and digital transformation. The table below shows how the College’s themes map against those of the LEP.

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6.8.4 Hertfordshire LEP, LSIP and Oaklands College Cross Cutting Themes

LEP Cross Cutting Theme	LEP Priorities	LSIP Cross Cutting Themes	LSIP Priorities	College Linked Cross Cutting Theme(s)	College linked Priorities
Enhancing Digital Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritised Digital Skills Strategy and Action Plan. • Links to skills bootcamps. • Learning from LEP areas. Delivering Digital Skills Partnerships. • Development of Hertfordshire Institute of Technology. • Work with FE and HE to deliver the full breadth of digital skills required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority sectors for Hertfordshire. • Significant skills gaps to address. • Priority demographics; 16-24, 50-plus career professionals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All sectors – Essential skills, digital skills, and green skills. A combination of approaches is needed to address these, including on-the-job training as well as short courses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Transformation • Equality, diversity, and inclusion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable SMART Campus • Inclusive & Thriving Community • Beneficial Partnerships • Outstanding Teaching, Learning & Assessment
Supporting Hertfordshire's "Net Zero Future."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise the global shift to green growth. • Identify how to contribute to the White Paper "Powering Our Net Zero Future." • Integrating skills and employment action planning through the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority sectors for Hertfordshire. • Significant skills gaps to address • Priority demographics; 16-24, 50-plus career professionals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property and construction • Life sciences – SME landscape changes regularly but could use skills from other industries. • Engineering and manufacturing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability • Equality, diversity, and inclusion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable SMART Campus • Inclusive & Thriving Community • Beneficial Partnerships • Outstanding Teaching, Learning & Assessment
Social Mobility and Inclusivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build an inclusive economy creating opportunities for all. • Achieve social mobility where residents choose their destination and are given the education, training and employment support they need. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority sectors for Hertfordshire. • Significant skills gaps to address. • Priority demographics; • 16-24. • 50+ career professionals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are skills needs specific to niche / specialised industries or employers local to sub-regions. • Creative industries • Hospitality and tourism, which has been hit by the pandemic and a lack of people being attracted to enter. • Health and care. • Education and childcare. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health & Well Being • Equality, diversity, and inclusion. • Digital transformation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive & Thriving Community. • Beneficial Partnerships. • Outstanding Teaching, Learning & Assessment.

6.9 Hertfordshire Skills Framework

- 6.9.1 The Hertfordshire Skills Framework Survey was completed by 120 businesses in 2017. It looked at their perceived skills needs and the gaps among people leaving schools, colleges, and universities.
- 6.9.3 Every employer expressed the vital role of work experience in helping young people transition from education into work.
- 6.9.4 The research consistently shows an overall desire that school, college, and university leavers possess a set of core knowledge, skills, and experience traits. These characteristics are considered more important than the subject matter of a qualification.

7. Stakeholder engagement

7.1 Colleges

- 7.1.1 Working with the other three Hertfordshire colleges on joined up approach to skills as seen in the joint working on the Strategic Development Fund (SDF) Bid.

7.2 Universities

- 7.2.1 Strategic alliance with the University of Hertfordshire to ensure we meet the demands of the skills White Paper.
- 7.2.2 Working with other universities on projects that cannot be achieved with our alliance partner to meet the skills needs of the area and region.

7.3 Civic Partners

- 7.3.1 Oaklands has built excellent relationships to inform local skills needs. These include the Hertfordshire LEP, Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce, Hertfordshire County Council and district councils.
- 7.3.2 Oaklands has a good relationship with Jobcentre Plus. We established Borehamwood Job Club in partnership with the Department for Work and Pensions.
- 7.3.3 We have an excellent relationship with Sport England and the Herts Sports Partnership due to the quality of our facilities and sports academies. Jointly, we launched the Oaklands Aspirational Estates Masterplan in mid-2022.

7.4 Employer Partners

- 7.4.1 The College works with a wide range of local businesses, other education providers, local government and public services.

Our focus on employers will become stronger still as FE's natural affinity with employers and with the complex, changing world of work receives fresh support, encouragement, and investment.

Oaklands prepares people for employment opportunities not just locally and regionally but nationally and internationally. We align both our curriculum offer and our wider support to learners with the aims and priorities of Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership. Identified

regional priority and growth sectors include Science and Technology, Creative, Business, Engineering, Construction and Health and Social Care. Encouraging greater numbers to access the 16-plus education and skills training pathways delivered by FE coincides with an added growth opportunity for Oaklands with the demographic upturn of the local 16-19 age group. We have both the estate capacity and expanding high quality-facilities to accommodate this growth.

We are determined to work with local partners to ensure that the availability and cost of travel to outstanding opportunities present no obstacles to our learners.

We are also determined to seize opportunities for co-investment and partnerships to deliver future skills needs and enhance life chances.

7.4.2 Oaklands works with several employers through a variety of engagement opportunities. These include Industry Boards, Industry Insight Events, work experience, volunteering & curriculum support.

7.4.3 Oaklands is an active member of employer and industry groups including the CBI helping to inform skills policy and influence.

7.5 Schools

7.5.1 Oaklands works with local schools to support the CIAG (Careers Information, Advice and Guidance) curriculum in schools by offering guest speakers and opportunities to access the Oaklands campus and curriculum offer.

7.6 Community

7.6.1 Oaklands supports the local community in a variety of ways including access to training through Step2Skills and Multiply both on campus, through distance learning and at local community venues.

7.6.2 Oaklands contributes to the communities we serve through active involvement on the WGC and St Albans and BID teams.

7.6.3 Oaklands hosts several community engagement events including Communities First.

8. Curriculum Planning

8.1 Our curriculum is built and designed with the following considerations:

- Outside in. The basic premise of curriculum design will be based on an assessment of external rather than internal factors.
- Meeting Employer skills needs and skills gaps. Employers must be central to any curriculum planning and fully embedded in the decision-making process.
- Flexibility. Curriculum needs to respond to ever-changing external factors.
- Financial viability. Contribution analysis and course-costings must be completed.
- Aligned to Oaklands Strategy & Curriculum Strategy.
- The curriculum planning cycle at Oaklands is designed to ensure we provide learners with real skills for the real world.

9. Self-Assessment

- 9.1 **SAR (Self-Assessment Report):** The Oaklands College SAR grades the college as GOOD overall for the 2021/22 academic year. The December 2022 inspection saw three judgements of Significant Improvement against the priorities set out in the previous Ofsted visit.
- 9.2 **Ofsted:** In December 2022 Oaklands was judged as making significant progress in our Ofsted monitoring visit.

10. Ambition for growth

- 10.1 The College Strategic Plan: The [Strategic Plan](#) sets out the growth ambition and the SMART objectives to meet that ambition.
- 10.2 The strategic targets are as follows:
- An increase in income by 20% to £40m.
 - Increase learner numbers to at least 10,000. Sustain good or better financial health.
 - Increase 16-18 learners to 3,670 and income by £2.7m.
 - Increase adult learners to 5,000 and income by £2m.
 - Increase commercial income by £3m.
 - Increase HE learners to 571 and income by £2m.
 - Divest up to £1.5m of apprenticeship income and replace with relevant employer provision.
 - Grow training provision and services to employers by 50%.
 - Maximise the commercial opportunities of the Oaklands estate.
 - Develop strategic partnerships with Hertfordshire County Council, the Local Enterprise Partnership, our district councils, the University of Hertfordshire and the three Hertfordshire colleges.
 - Achieve a carbon neutral estate by 2050, realising a 15% reduction by 2027.
 - Gain an Ofsted Grade 2 or better.
 - Complete the current estates capital programme on time.
 - Be an employer of choice with high levels of staff satisfaction.
 - Develop our brand identity and impact in the marketplace.
 - Ensure students' satisfaction and attainment rates are in the top quartile of colleges.
 - Ensure students undergo high-quality, meaningful experiences in the world of work.
 - Ensure students have access to high-quality blended learning.
 - Achieve a reputation for technological innovation.

11. Corporation Statement

- 11.1 On behalf of the Oaklands College corporation, it is hereby confirmed that the College plan as set out above reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the corporation at their meeting on 15th May 2023. The plan will be published on the College's website within three months of the start of the new academic year.

1. Related Documents

- a. Strategic Plan
- b. Annual Operating Plan
- c. Curriculum Strategy

- d. Curriculum Annual Reviews
- e. Employer and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy