



# ACCOUNTABILITY AGREEMENT



PLUMPTON  
COLLEGE

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**PLUMPTON COLLEGE IS 1 OF 12 INDEPENDENT LAND-BASED COLLEGES NATIONALLY FOUNDED IN 1926**

**75 % OF CURRICULUM IS SPECIALISED LAND BASED**

**CURRICULUM SPANS 19 DIFFERENT SUBJECT AREAS**  
*RESPONDING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF A DIVERSE LABOUR MARKET*

**CURRICULUM OFFERED ACROSS SEVERAL STUDY TYPES**  
*PROVIDING TRAINING AND EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS FROM A RANGE OF BACKGROUNDS*

**14-16 16+ COURSES UNIVERSITY COURSES**  
**APPRENTICESHIPS BUSINESS**  
**LEISURE & ADULT COURSES**

*PROGRAMME FOR THOSE IN SCHOOL AND/OR HOME EDUCATED TO ACCESS A VOCATIONAL CURRICULUM ALONGSIDE GCSEs, BEFORE PROGRESSING ONTO FULL TIME STUDY*

**1,200 16-18 YEAR OLDS ON LEVEL 1- 3 PROGRAMMES**  
*STUDENTS COME FROM ACROSS THE SOUTH EAST, MAINLY FROM EAST AND WEST SUSSEX*

**FULL TIME STUDY**

**COLLEGE'S FASTEST GROWING PROVISION TYPE**  
**500 APPRENTICES EMPLOYED ACROSS THE UK**  
*APPRENTICES ENGAGE WITH THEIR OFF THE JOB LEARNING ONLINE OR AT COLLEGE*

**APPRENTICESHIPS**

**BERKSHIRE**  
**SURREY**  
**KENT**  
**SUSSEX**

1926  
PLUMPTON COLLEGE

PLUMPTON COLLEGE



UNIVERSITY COURSES

## OFFERING HIGHER EDUCATION FOR OVER 30 YEARS

WITH OVER 200 STUDENTS ON FOUNDATION, BACHELORS AND MASTER'S PROGRAMMES

STUDENTS FROM LONDON AND THE SOUTH EAST, WITH SOME RECRUITED NATIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY MAINLY DUE TO SPECIALIST PROVISION IN WINE EDUCATION; THE ONLY UK PROVIDER.

## DELIVERING A SUITE OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINING FOR EMPLOYERS IN THE LAND-BASED SECTOR

TYPICALLY INDUSTRY COMPETENCY QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED BY LAW



LandPro TRAINING

## EDUCATION AND TRAINING DELIVERED AT ONE GARDEN BRIGHTON

THE COLLEGE'S HORTICULTURE OF EXCELLENCE, GARDEN AND VISITOR ATTRACTION OPENED IN APRIL 2021 WHERE WE RUN OUR PART-TIME ADULT PROVISION



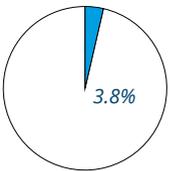
## PARTNERSHIP WITH EDUCATION FUTURES TRUST

A CHARITY AIMED AT ENGAGING AND SUPPORTING MARGINALISED GROUPS - THE PARTNERSHIP WILL INTRODUCE A GREEN, ENVIRONMENTAL AND LAND-BASED CURRICULUM DELIVERED BY PLUMPTON AT THE FIRS, HASTINGS

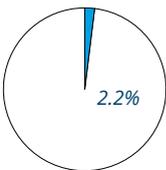


## EAST SUSSEX HAS A REAL DIVERSITY OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILES

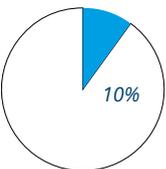
INCLUDING RURAL, URBAN AND SEASIDE COMMUNITIES



NEET RATE FOR 16-17 YEAR OLDS MARGINALLY LOWER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE - AND GRADUALLY INCREASING SINCE THE PANDEMIC

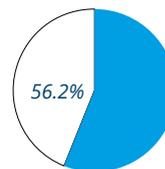


UNDER 25 YEAR OLDS WITH SEND AND/OR DISABILITY IS HIGHER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE COMPARED TO 1.8%

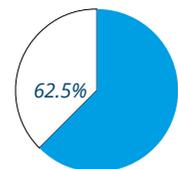


COASTAL TOWNS BETWEEN NEWHAVEN AND HASTINGS ARE CLASSIFIED AS BEING IN THE TOP 10% OF DEPRIVED PLACES IN THE UK

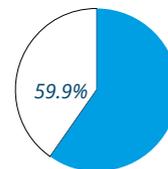
ADULTS ACROSS THE AREA HAVE TYPICALLY FEW HIGHER-LEVEL QUALIFICATIONS, HAVING A LEVEL 3 OR ABOVE



ADULTS IN DEPRIVED COASTAL TOWNS



REGIONALLY



NATIONALLY



OUR  
STRATEGIC PLAN  
*2022-2027*

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The College has changed much in the past five years, attracting close to 40% more students across the diverse range of study types, levels and subjects, as well as commencing a near £20m investment programme as part of our site masterplan.

The rationale for growth in college student numbers and footprint has undoubtedly been the significant national skills gaps which exists in the land-based sector. This has been well documented for several years yet these industries are currently going through further seismic changes. Informed by new legislation, yet driven by a multitude of global factors, including climate change and food security (only exacerbated by recent events such as the pandemic and Brexit) these industries require new approaches, practices and mindsets.

Education, training and skills development have a more predominant role to play in this than ever before and the College is very well placed to play a pivotal role in the changes required amongst the industries we serve.

Our new Strategic Plan sets out our priorities in doing so and our new ambitious vision for the future, with collaborative partnerships at the heart.

Scan QR to view Local skills improvement plans (LSIPs) and local skills improvement fund (LSIF):



Scan QR to view Strategic Plan 2022-27:



<b>2.1 STRATEGIC PLAN HEADLINES</b>
<b>2.1.1 OUR VISION</b>
To be the leader of land and environmental education and training in the South East, renowned for our cutting-edge practice.
<b>2.1.2 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:</b>
<b>A) OUR PURPOSE</b>
To inspire and equip our students with the skills, knowledge and attributes which meet the future needs of industry.
<b>B) OUR PEOPLE</b>
<b>Our Culture</b>
To be a diverse and vibrant community in which staff and students embody our values, have a strong sense of belonging and flourish.
<b>Our Partners</b>
To have a nurturing and collaborative relationship with our local community and employers which enhances both the experience of our students and the professional development of the workplace.
Plumpton College's engagement with local regional and national partners is crucial for the College to fulfil its role as an educational hub. By aligning its offerings with local workforce demands, fostering partnerships with employers, and contributing to the community's economic growth, the College not only benefits its learners but also plays a vital role in the sustainable development of the local area.
<b>Our Staff</b>
To attract, develop and retain a highly skilled, ambitious team of staff empowered to deliver our core purpose.
<b>C) OUR PLACE</b>
To play a transformational role in the environmental sustainability of land-based industries, showcasing best practice and integrating the highest standards of sustainability into our curriculum.

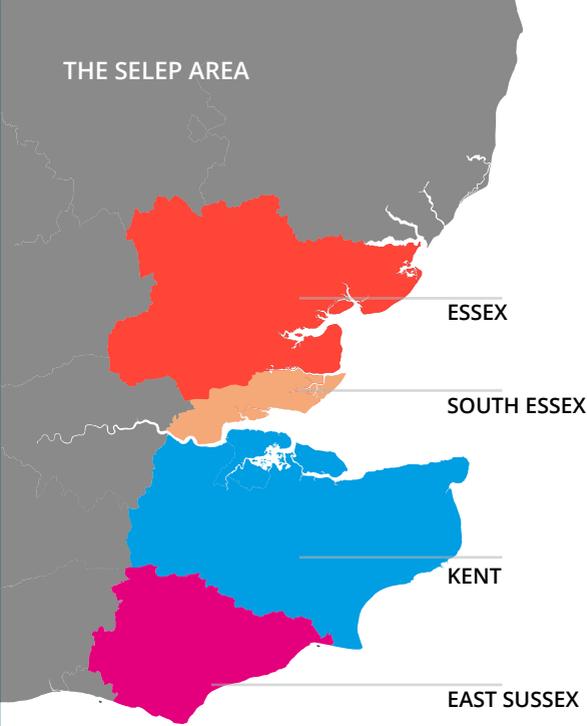


## OUR KEY STAKEHOLDERS

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## THE SELEP AREA



College Leaders and Managers play a prominent role as members of numerous local and regional skills forums such as The Local Skills Improvement Plan and Skills East Sussex.

Such involvement enables an excellent understanding of the skill needs in Sussex and beyond, as well as developing key relationships with new stakeholders, gaining their professional judgements on new entrants to their workforce and what additional support we can provide.

This enables us as a training provider to tailor our provision to the sectors and jobs markets for local and regional employers.

### 3.1 LANDEX

The College are members of this land-based education sector membership body which provides valuable insight and labour market intelligence relating to national skills needs, as well as a vital lobbying and influencing role within both the DfE and across relevant governmental departments such as DEFRA. The Principal is a Board member for Landex.

The College's own membership of Landex provides an opportunity for staff to engage in critical industry led CPD. An annual Peer Review challenges our Curriculum Intent and Implementation, it stress tests the impact curriculum design is having on the learners' outcomes and their personal development. Senior Leaders are involved in the return visits to other member training providers enabling a rich knowledge transfer from across the Land-Based College Community.

### 3.2 SOUTH EAST LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP (SELEP)

The College sits within the South East LEP, but given its catchment area, also has close working relationships with the Coast to Capital LEP. Both bodies have supported college capital development projects through the Local Growth Fund, which has enabled the building of Centres of Excellence in AgriFood and Horticulture.

The South East LEP also provides a rich source of labour market intelligence and the Principal chairs its Skills Working group which brings together employers and training providers from across the LEP region to ensure a strategic approach is taken to meeting need.

### 3.3 FE SUSSEX

Plumpton leaders work closely with our Local Further Education Provider counterparts. As the only land-based provision in the area, there is minimal crossover in the Curriculum offer but where this occurs in the minority of cases, there is clear differentiated provision enabling learners in the local area to make informed decisions about course choices.

The collaborative nature of this working with all other providers in the county is best reflected in our being successful as a trailblazer for the Government's Strategic Development Fund (SDF) and, in conjunction with Sussex Chamber of Commerce, the Local Skills Improvement Plan.



AgriFood Centre



One Garden Brighton



### 3.5 SUSSEX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND THE LOCAL SKILLS IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Plumpton has been involved in the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) since its inception. The College's engagement with the LSIP holds immense significance for the organisation, its learners and the broader community. By actively participating in this plan, Plumpton can contribute to the development and enhancement of local skills, fostering a thriving and sustainable community.

Engaging with the LSIP allows Plumpton College to align its educational offerings with the evolving needs of the local workforce. By understanding the skills gaps and demands of the area, the College can tailor its curriculum and training programmes to equip students with the relevant competencies required by local employers. This alignment enhances learners' employability skills and ensures they are prepared for meaningful careers within their community.

### 3.6 EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

The College are group members and regular contributors to Skills East Sussex. Plumpton represents the Land, Agriculture and Environmental priority sector. Our membership in Skills East Sussex is a critical part of our curriculum development and ability influence key stakeholders about the importance of our sector and opportunities available to upskill the community; it allows the College to collaborate, stay informed, enhance employability, have a voice, and access resources that contribute to the development of a skilled workforce and the success of its learners in the local and regional context. The College also works closely with Hastings Borough Council on the new Greener Towns Project and Brighton and Hove City Council.

Following a pilot programme in 2020/21, Plumpton Horticulture staff have been working with East Sussex County Council this academic year on a re-engagement programme for adults in East Sussex. Participants have all been, in the recent past, homeless on the streets across East Sussex.

In addition, Plumpton has engaged and is delivering the Multiply Programme, part of the Government's levelling up strategy. Plumpton has long championed the need for greater higher-level STEM subject skills to support the changing landscape of Land-Based Industries and this programme naturally provide greater reach and opportunities for new entrants and existing workforces for our sector.

### 3.7 UNIVERSITY OF GREENWICH

Earlier this academic year Plumpton officially announced a new partnership with the University of Greenwich. This exciting new chapter of Higher Education at Plumpton now includes two new undergraduate FdSc Programmes in Sustainable Land Management and Sustainable Horticulture Management. These programmes were successfully validated at an event in the new AgriFood Centre at the beginning of March.

These two new programmes join Plumpton's existing HE provision in Wine Business, Wine Production, Viticulture & Oenology, Veterinary Nursing & Physiotherapy, Animal Behaviour and Equine Science. All courses were welcomed by Greenwich into their partnership offer and align to the local and regional requirements of employers for higher skilled entrants into their sectors.





HOW WE ARE MEETING  
LOCAL, REGIONAL &  
NATIONAL NEEDS

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#### 4.1 SECTOR SPECIFIC EMPLOYERS

Curriculum Managers have developed overarching Intent Statements to evidence the journey curriculum planning has undertaken, which external stakeholders have been consulted, alongside local market intelligence sources, to support the development of study programmes and funded adult provision.

Programme Managers are empowered to select and implement robust qualifications to support the skills development and identify additional qualifications, including Certificates of Competency and work-related Personal Development Programmes, to enable Plumpton learners to be highly competitive in the job market and/or ready for higher technical study.

Plumpton meets, as a minimum, with key stakeholders once a year. All areas undergo a Curriculum Advisory Panel or Strategic Industry Liaison Board.

Priority areas have been informed through Strategic Industry Liaison Boards, targeting employers who need workforce development, tackling issues of skills shortages, raising awareness of career opportunities and developing the employment skills that stakeholders believe hold the most value for progression in the industry.

Other areas of the College hold Curriculum Advisory Panels, these meetings bring together the relevant stakeholders to inform curriculum developments, identify workforce skills shortages and provide employers with an opportunity to shape an extra-curricular programme to develop competencies required by industry.

As well as Plumpton's active involvement in the LSIP and SDF 1 & 2 projects, the College actively engages stakeholders from across the sector to inform the development of curriculum and meet the skills needs of local, regional and national employers.

The Strategic Development Fund has enabled collaboration with other FE providers to develop sustainable programmes of learning and resources, testing these programmes with our stakeholders, providing them with confidence that Plumpton is at the forefront of our sectors.

The College's Business Services department has been established to support business prosperity for employer partners by providing immediate, medium or long-term training and talent attraction solutions. The department is split into three distinct areas, Apprenticeships, Recruitment Support and Land Pro Training. Each area providing specialist advice, guidance and training based on the specific needs of each employer. By continually engaging with employers and employment support services e.g., Department of Work and Pensions, the department can provide support to curriculum areas to ensure that the College offer meets current and future training and staffing needs.

The College's Careers team, along with School Liaison colleagues, engage local education providers to inform them of the national skills shortage in Land-based subjects. Curriculum Managers present to school colleagues about the career opportunities and curriculum offer to change the perception of Land-based education as manual and non-academic.



Left: Brand new CAD Suite

Right: Automatic milking robot - Lely Astronaut A5

## 4.2 ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Plumpton College is proud to be the sole provider of Horticulture training nationally for The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS).

Plumpton ensures that the work underpinning this significant development is achieved through a close partnership and aligning high quality teaching and learning meeting the needs of the RHS.

Learners benefit from a bespoke timetable of activity including enrichment opportunities, a diverse delivery from industry and teaching professionals.

Plumpton also delivers the nationally recognised and world leading RHS accredited qualifications from One Garden in Brighton and has been recognised for facilities and delivery as a Grade 1 Education Provider.

## 4.3 NATIONAL TRUST

Plumpton is also in its first year of delivery for National Trust Horticulture Apprentices in the South of England.

Plumpton is working closely with Pershore College, who deliver to the North of England, sharing resources, training strategies and CPD opportunities. Moreover, The National Trust have also chosen Plumpton as delivery provider for the new Organic Market Garden Apprenticeship.

## 4.4 WINEGB

The College works collaboratively with this membership organisation representing over 65% of the UK's vineyards and wine producers. The Principal chairs its national Training and Education Group, which has commissioned national reports into skills needs within the sector over the next ten years. As a result, the Training and Education Group, which comprises employers from across the country, has worked closely with the College to develop a national viticulture apprenticeship programme, utilising an existing government approved standard.

The College has also developed a regional training programme to ensure skills needs are met based on localised need and more recently was funded to produce a National Competency Framework for the wine industry.

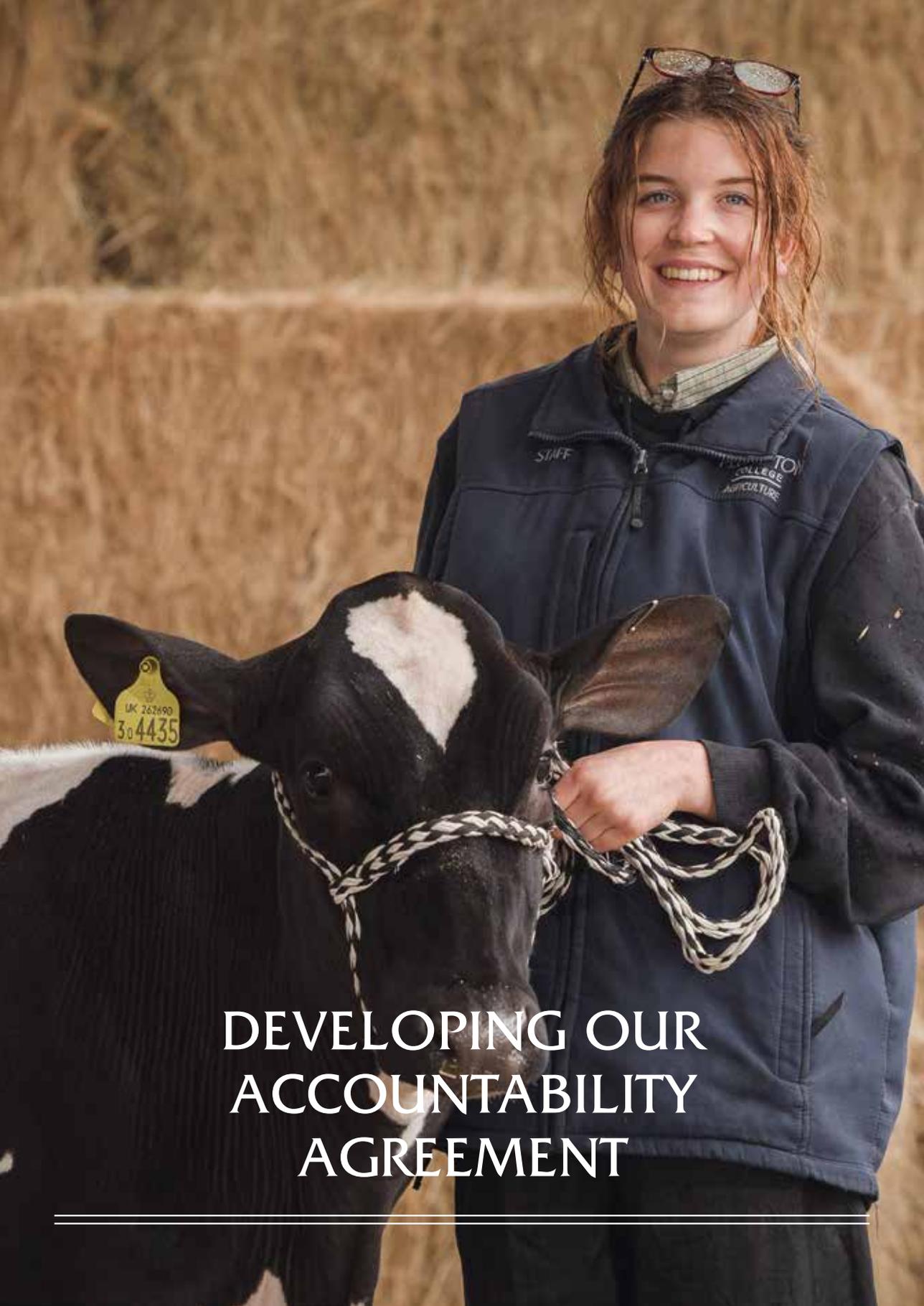
## 4.5 NFU AND CLA

The College works very closely with these two member organisations, which between them cover over 90% of UK farmers and landowners. Collaborating on thought leadership and knowledge exchange events for the industry at a regional level, curriculum leads have also worked with NFU members in Sussex to tailor level 3 college provision specifically to their skills and knowledge requirements.

## 4.6 ROYAL COLLEGE OF VETERINARY SURGEONS

As the leading provider of Veterinary Nursing education and training in the south of England, the College works closely with its professional body to accredit apprenticeship and foundation degree programmes and to inform a programme of extensive training and development for clinical coaches based in veterinary practices. This training is again shaped to meet local need and ensures that apprentices are effectively supported in their workplace delivery to consistently meet the national professional standard.





# DEVELOPING OUR ACCOUNTABILITY AGREEMENT

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As the timeline below demonstrates, the College has engaged in a significant period of industry engagement over the past two years, driven by the development of our new Strategic Plan and further enhanced by the deep dive activity undertaken from each of the two rounds of SDF and LSIP we have been instrumental to.

College governors have been fully part of the consultation and engagement programme of this activity. As such, they have a strong awareness of local and regional skills needs. All Governors have undertaken training on how the College engages and interacts with external stakeholders, there is a sub-group of 'Link-Governors' aligned to curriculum areas providing support and challenge and there is a nominated 'Link Governor for Skills' working with the College's Skill Nominee.

College governors undertake an annual skills and knowledge assessment aligned to our strategic priorities and this is used to inform professional development and future governor recruitment.

<b>JUNE 2021</b>
Initial consultation with Governing Body
<b>OCTOBER 2021</b>
College Management Team consultation
<b>SEPTEMBER 2021</b>
FE Sussex awarded trailblazer for SDF and Sussex Chamber for LSIP
<b>NOVEMBER 21-MARCH 22</b>
All staff and student consultation events and opportunities
<b>DECEMBER 21-MARCH 22</b>
Employer and stakeholder engagement events
<b>MAY 2022</b>
Final consultation with Governing Body
<b>AUGUST 2022</b>
Launch of Strategic Plan at Staff Conference
<b>DECEMBER-FEBRUARY 2023</b>
College staff and governors' part of LSIP2 workshops
<b>JANUARY 2023</b>
College Governing Body training regarding employer engagement
<b>FEBRUARY 2023</b>
College Skills Group formed (includes nominated Link Governor)
<b>MAY 2023</b>
Draft of Annual Accountability Agreement presented to SMT
<b>MAY 2023</b>
Final Annual Accountability Agreement approved by Governing Body

# 2023/2024 ACTION PLAN

TARGET	INTENDED IMPACT	STRATEGIC PLAN REF.
<p><b>CHANGING PERCEPTIONS OF CAREERS IN THE LAND-BASED SECTOR:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. School Advisory Panels and engagement with Heads</li> <li>2. A diverse schools liaison strategy and offer regarding Careers, STEM and future careers</li> <li>3. 14-16 provision for schools</li> </ol>	<p>Continue to provide schools and Colleges with a clear understanding of the Land-Based sector, the future employment opportunities and fulfilling careers that are in high demand by the sector.</p> <p>Ultimately, to inform the planned growth in 14-18 student numbers as set out in the College's strategic plan and five-year KPIs.</p>	<p><b>OUR PLACE</b></p>
<p><b>INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Gaining IoT status</li> <li>2. Enhanced curriculum at L4 and above</li> <li>3. Clearer progression pathways for all programmes to L4</li> <li>4. Increase the Digital Literacy Skills of our learners</li> </ol>	<p>Plumpton is recognised as a centre of excellence for technological advancement for the land-based sector and employers will have the confidence that learners from Plumpton will have the most up to date skills for their sector.</p> <p>A commitment to establishing first class educational facilities to support the development of learners in our priority sectors in the newly opened AgriFood Centre and One Garden Brighton.</p> <p>Increasing the Digital Literacy Skills of all our learners across the levels to ensure that they are fully prepared for future industry and modern life in Britain.</p>	<p><b>OUR PLACE</b> <b>OUR PURPOSE</b> <b>OUR PARTNERS</b></p>
<p><b>PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Investing in a programme of enrichment and learner development</li> <li>2. Developing industrial upskilling through sector specific competency training as identified by employers</li> <li>3. Continuing to develop the Literacy and Numeracy skills of our learners</li> </ol>	<p>Learners develop wider skills and personal attributes, creating resilience, independence and higher order thinking beyond the scope of qualifications.</p> <p>Learners graduate with the skills required to access employment and have the relevant competencies to enhance future workforces.</p> <p>Learners are able to collaborate with the wider College Community, become involved in Social Action Projects and develop their knowledge in key environmental and social issues.</p> <p>Learners, regardless of previous attainment will continue to be exposed to the literacy and numeracy skills required to access roles in the industry, be competitive through application processes and work with confidence in these critical skills areas.</p>	<p><b>OUR PEOPLE</b> <b>OUR CULTURE</b></p>

TARGET	INTENDED IMPACT	STRATEGIC PLAN REF.
<p><b>SUSTAINABILITY:</b>  <b>To deliver the next stage of our Sustainability strategy to include:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Embedding contextualised sustainable practices across all subject areas</li> <li>2. Improving the carbon literacy of all staff and students</li> <li>3. Developing a bespoke programme of sustainable practice for local and regional stakeholders</li> <li>4. Developing our college campus to become more sustainable</li> </ol> <p>Learners will be educated, embrace and apply the latest subject related sustainable practices, influencing the needed change in sector practice.</p>	<p>Learners will be educated, embrace and apply the latest subject related sustainable practices, influencing the needed change in sector practice.</p> <p>Plumpton continues to transform the operational running of the organisation; tangible developments will enhance learner experience and provide opportunities for learners to engage in the most recent environmental and sustainable practices.</p> <p>Plumpton has developed and delivered bespoke modular short courses to industry in response to stakeholder requirements. Through the LSIF further developments will continue to enable Plumpton to be fully responsive to industry needs.</p> <p>Plumpton has committed to an estate strategy that puts sustainability at its heart, the wider estate is under review to ensure that it is providing opportunities for learners to gain these skills for future application and enhance the local community.</p>	<p><b>OUR CULTURE</b>  <b>OUR PLACE</b>  <b>OUR PARTNERS</b></p>
<p><b>TO PLAY AN INSTRUMENTAL ROLE IN MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE SUSSEX LOCAL SKILLS IMPROVEMENT PLAN</b></p>	<p>Investing in tailored training programmes that align to outcomes of the final LSIP report.</p> <p>Further developing industry partnerships that drive innovation, enhance capacity and resources, and address skills gaps.</p> <p>Provide high-quality education and training that aligns with the local skills needs, promotes employability, and supports economic development in the community.</p>	<p><b>OUR PLACE</b>  <b>OUR PARTNERS</b></p>
<p><b>STAFF RECRUITMENT:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Build on attracting, training and developing new entrants (Induction+, Teacher Training)</li> <li>2. Staff Industry Insights programme</li> </ol>	<p>To safeguard the delivery of specialist land-based subjects through supporting, training and upskilling new teaching staff into the sector.</p> <p>Staff continue to benefit from the opportunity to engage, refresh and upskill their subject specific knowledge through external industrial training and development. Staff will implement their industry insights into their planning.</p>	<p><b>OUR PEOPLE</b></p>
<p><b>DESTINATIONS:</b></p> <p>Through LMI with stakeholders we are aligning the needs of the sectors we serve to the skills and attributes we deliver to our learners, increasing positive outcomes for employment and further study</p>	<p>Increasing positive outcomes for Employment and further study at higher levels. Resulting in Educational establishments, parents/carers and prospective learners recognising the future careers in the land-based sector.</p>	<p><b>OUR PLACE</b>  <b>OUR CULTURE</b></p>

## RELEVANT SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Scan QR to view  
 SELEP Skills  
 Strategy



Scan QR to view  
 Sussex LSIP



**IMMERSIVE EDUCATION**

***FOR A CHANGING WORLD***

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