



Accountability Statement and Local Needs Duty 2026/27

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HEART OF
WORCESTERSHIRE
COLLEGE

HoW College Overview

Heart of Worcestershire College is a General Further Education College providing education to circa 6500 young people and adults. The College's offer is distinctly vocational, technical, higher and adult skills education. Young people study a range of subjects with 27% studying at Level 1 and below, 38% at Level 2 and 25% at Level 3. The percentage of Entry and Level 1 learners is higher than that of the 23/25% of all further education students. Approximately 550 apprentices study at the College, 49% at Intermediate Level, 43% Advanced and 8% studying higher level apprenticeships.

College Mission: To improve lives through learning.

College Vision: To be recognised for nurturing the brilliance of every student and addressing the skills needs of local and regional employers, through innovative and impactful education.

About Us

 **£35M**
TURNOVER

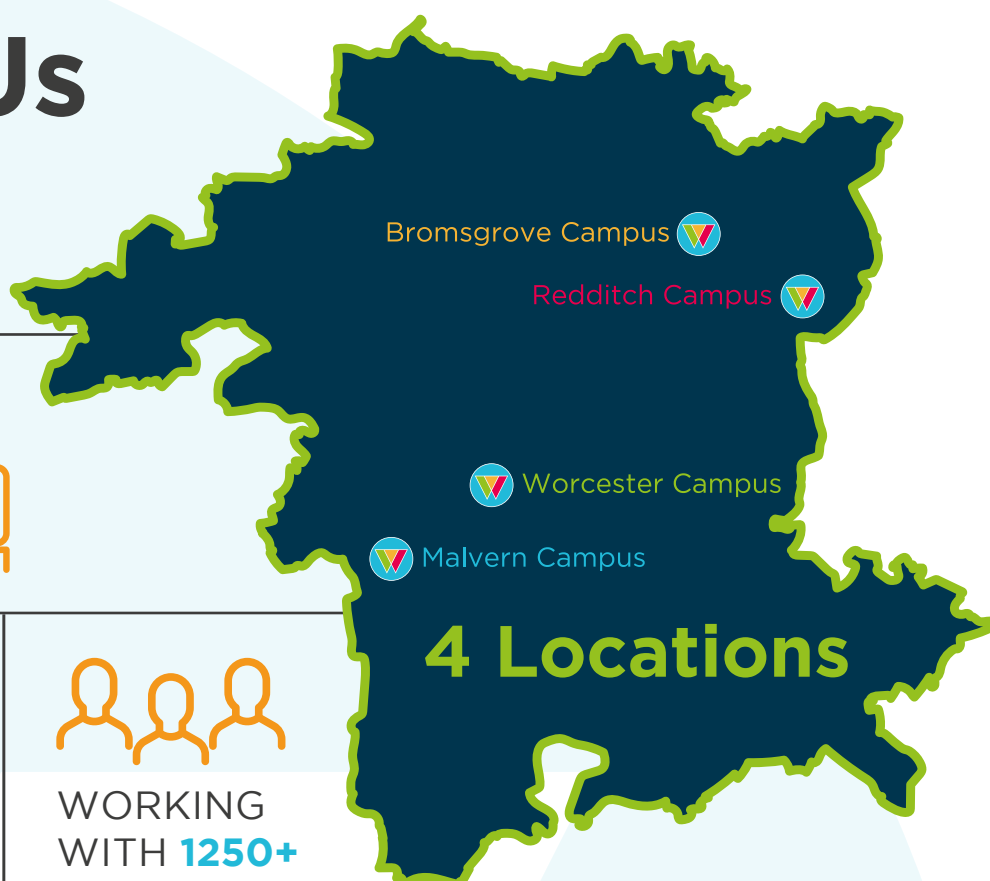
OVER
593
STAFF



Largest provider in Worcestershire for 16-18 and adult provision and a significant provider of apprenticeships.



WORKING
WITH **1250+**
EMPLOYERS



6762
Students



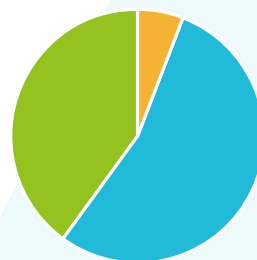
- 16-19 - **2826**
- Adult Skills - **1565**
- Apprenticeships - **586**
- Tailored Learning - **477**
- Higher Education - **294**
- Loans - **92**

% Students
by site



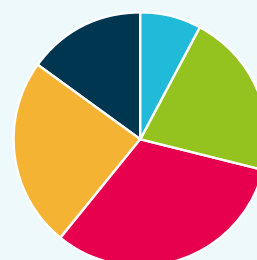
- Worcester - **53.28%**
- Redditch - **29.65%**
- Bromsgrove - **14.81%**
- Malvern - **2.26%**

HoW College
Apprentices by level



- Intermediate (L2) - **48.9%**
- Advanced (L3) - **42.6%**
- Higher (L4+) - **8.5%**

HoW College
Learners by level



- Entry Level - **7.2%**
- Level 1 - **19.49%**
- Level 2 - **37.93%**
- Level 3 - **24.63%**
- Level 4+ - **10.75%**

The strategic objectives of the College are represented as 7P's:

Strategic Theme	Strategic Objective
Purpose	Providing a high-quality curriculum, focussed on careers and the delivery of excellent outcomes for all.
Place	Delivering from inspirational and safe learning environments.
People	Offering a culture of support, kindness and engagement for staff and students with high expectations of ourselves and others.
Prosper	Focusing on appropriate growth opportunities and efficient and effective delivery.
Partnership	Being an anchor institution for Worcestershire employers and our communities.
Potential	Preserve and innovate today to thrive tomorrow, ensuring we meet skills needs and have a reputation for technological advancement.
Planet	Raising awareness of, and delivering on, our sustainability commitment.



College Offer

Heart of Worcestershire College is an 'anchor institution' in our region and works in collaboration with others to meet the needs of employers in our region. The College's provision is important to:

- Upskill existing employees to ensure they remain equipped with the skills employers need;
- Reskill employees whose jobs may be at risk and those who are unemployed to help them remain economically active;
- Support and re-engage those who have left school without 5 GCSEs at 4 – 9 grades enabling them to have better life chances;
- Train the next generation of the workforce so that they are well prepared for employment and the job roles needed both now and in the future in the region.

HoW College - meeting skills needs

The local, regional, national and emergent priorities are detailed below along with the detail of where HoW College provides curriculum offers in these areas. The following two tables demonstrate that HoW College' curriculum is aligned to key priorities.

Skilled Area	Local priority	WMCA priority	NATIONAL priority	EMERGENT or local priority	HoW College Offer
Aerospace		✓			
Advanced manufacturing/Engineering	✓	✓	✓		✓
Agritech	✓				
Business Services	✓				✓
Construction	✓	✓	✓		✓
Creative Content Production and Gaming		✓	✓		✓
Defence			✓		
Digital and Technology	✓	✓	✓		✓
Health and Social care	✓		✓		✓
Health tech and Med tech		✓			✓
Leisure, Travel and Tourism including Hospitality and Catering	✓			✓	✓
Life Sciences			✓		
Logistics and Distribution/Haulage and Logistics		✓			
Manufacturing	✓	✓	✓		
Manufacture of future housing		✓			
Manufacture of Electric light vehicles and associated battery devices		✓	✓		
Maintenance of Electric light vehicles	✓				
Modern and Low Carbon Utilities		✓	✓		Under review
Professional and Financial Services and Supply	✓	✓	✓		✓
Public Services				✓	✓
Science and Maths					✓

HoW College Contribution by provision type

Skills Area	16-19	Apprenticeships	Adult	HE
Aerospace	Delivered by colleges in Birmingham.			
Advanced Manufacturing/Engineering	✓	✓	✓	✓
Agritech	Delivered by WCG.			
Business Services	✓	✓	✓	✓
Construction	✓	✓	✓	✓
Creative Content Production and Gaming	✓		✓	✓
Defence	Delivered by other Colleges; Solihull College, Sandwell College			
Digital and Technology	✓	✓	✓	✓
Early Years	✓	✓	✓	✓
Health and Social care	✓		✓	✓
Health tech and Med tech	✓		✓	
Leisure, Travel and Tourism including Hospitality and Catering	✓	✓	✓	✓
Life Sciences	Delivered by other colleges: BMet, South & City College, Solihull College, Walsall College, Dudley College, Halesowen College			
Logistics and Distribution	Delivered by other colleges: BMet, South & City College, Walsall College, Dudley College, Halesowen College and Sandwell			
Manufacturing	✓	✓	✓	
Manufacture of future housing	Delivered by other colleges: Dudley College			
Manufacture of Electric light vehicles and associated battery devices	Delivered by; Birmingham Colleges, University College Birmingham, Wolverhampton College			
Modern and Low Carbon Utilities	Energy Advisor course in development.			
Professional and Financial Services and Supply	✓	✓	✓	✓
Public Services	✓		✓	✓
Science and Maths	✓		✓	



Performance 2025/26

In 2025/26, the College delivered strong and tangible impact across its priorities through targeted curriculum growth, strengthened employer engagement and continued improvement in learner outcomes. In health and care, work with the NHS supported the launch of new T Levels in Health, in Redditch and Worcester, the delivery of digital skills and leadership programmes for NHS staff, and the integration of the Tech-Enabled Care Academy into study programmes, contributing to increased student numbers and improved career readiness. In construction and digital, the College expanded its offer through new provision, including Property Maintenance and Electrical Installation apprenticeships, alongside increased digital participation, resulting in significant growth in learner numbers across these priority areas. Overall curriculum expansion, including new and enhanced courses, contributed to an increase of 336 students.

The College also strengthened access, inclusion and progression. Sector-based work programmes for adults were delivered with all vacancies filled, while funding across adult skills, WMCA provision and tailored learning is expected to be fully utilised in 2025/26. Work with schools to engage 14-16 learners demonstrated positive impact on attendance, behaviour and aspirations, with expansion planned, and increased participation across the College is expected to contribute to a reduction in young people becoming NEET. SEND provision was further enhanced, including significant growth at the National Star at HoW College provision on the Worcester campus, enabling more learners with complex needs to access high-quality local provision. This strong focus on inclusion was recognised by Ofsted, with the College identified as 'Strong' for inclusion.

Learner outcomes have continued to improve, with more courses performing above national average and apprenticeship achievement rates increasing to 68.1% in 2024/25, above the national rate, alongside continued improvement in 16-18 and adult achievement rates. These improvements, combined with deeper employer involvement in curriculum design and delivery, contributed to the College being recognised as 'Strong' for Skills by Ofsted.

Overall, the impact of the year's work is a larger, more responsive and inclusive curriculum, more learners developing relevant skills, and stronger progression into employment and further study in line with workforce and economic needs.



PLAN FOR 2026/27

The College's skills objectives for 2026/27 are aligned to the overall strategic objectives with a particular emphasis on purpose, partnership, potential and planet. These skills objectives are relevant and where possible, aligned to the Government's Industrial Strategy, and are areas where vacancies in the region are expected to increase and will provide opportunities for employment in key growth areas. The skills objectives will also support the delivery of the LSIP priorities in the region. Our skills and accountability targets for 2026/27 are detailed below:

ACCESS, INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION

1. Subject to funding, collaborate with DWP, to expand the College's offer for NEETs aged 16-18 and unemployed adults and additionally increase capacity for 14-16 provision to support schools whilst continuing to host and work collectively with the Youth Hub in Redditch.
2. The College will utilise the Inclusive Mainstream Fund to further strengthen its capacity to support learners with additional needs within high-quality mainstream provision. This will support our strategic objective to improve access, inclusion and participation, particularly in response to increasing demand for SEND provision and the need to remove barriers for vulnerable and disadvantaged learners. Funding will be targeted to enhance teaching practice, support effective transitions into and through the College, and enable learners to engage, progress and achieve within vocational and technical programmes. This will align with our broader commitment to ensure all students, regardless of starting point, are able to develop the skills, behaviours and confidence required for employment and progression. In preparation for SEND reforms, the fund will support workforce development and strengthen inclusive approaches across curriculum areas, ensuring that support is embedded within mainstream delivery.
3. Continue to grow SEND capacity including National Star at HoW to support the region's sufficiency requirements.

COMMUNITY AND CIVIC CONTRIBUTION

4. Strengthen community and civic engagement and extend the reach of the College by increasing the use of college facilities for community benefit, raising student awareness of and participation in volunteering and community based projects, and supporting activity that benefits local communities. This will contribute to civic pride and community cohesion, students' readiness for work, while also encouraging increased staff engagement in local initiatives and improving understanding of community and sector needs.

PRIORITY SECTORS

5. Further expand capacity for learners studying Health and Social Care, including investment in the College estate where appropriate.
6. Continue to deliver and increase capacity to support businesses through short courses in leadership and management, including exploring viability of new modular apprenticeship units in AI, and enhance communications to improve awareness, understanding and access. This includes working with the new Growth Hub Account Manager to strengthen two way referrals, encourage greater business engagement, increase take up of HR and people management support through the Growth Hub, and improve overall system navigability.
7. Launch HoW Sustainable and develop a programme to embed modern and low carbon construction across all construction courses, alongside further opportunities for adults to upskill within the construction sector.
8. Review and, where appropriate, adapt the College's offer in Birmingham and the West Midlands to align with WMCA priority sectors and targets.
9. Increase the development, competence and confidence of digital skills to support the LSIP's priority of improving digital literacy.

APPRENTICESHIPS

10. Grow apprenticeship numbers and strengthen the College's reputation as a sector leader. This includes the introduction of new standards: Property Maintenance Operative L2, Administration Assistant L2 and Multi Channel Marketer L3, supporting increased access to entry level employment opportunities for young people.
11. Engage fully in the region wide campaign to increase engineering apprenticeships and continue to grow Level 4 pathways within this sector.

HIGHER LEVEL SKILLS

12. Grow higher level programmes to increase the number of learners studying at Level 4 and Level 5, in line with Government priorities. This includes the launch of Level 4 Access to Aesthetics, HND Public Services and HTQ in Engineering.

WIDER SYSTEM ENGAGEMENT

13. Enhance support for schools and parents in relation to Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG), supporting achievement of Gatsby Benchmarks with a particular focus on identified 'cold spots'. This includes myth busting with parents and carers around FE, post 16 and post 18 pathways.
14. Continue to grow employer engagement in activities that support students by providing clear, practical and manageable ways for employers to engage with the College.
15. As a Qualifications Pioneer, prepare for the implementation of qualifications reform and work with colleges and partners to support effective communication. This includes ensuring each qualification has a clear purpose and progression pathway.
16. Work with colleges across the West Midlands to reduce NEETS and improve skills, contributing to the success of the technical excellence colleges in the region.
17. Strengthen strategic alignment with evolving local and regional governance structures by proactively engaging with emerging authorities (including potential Mayoral Combined Authority arrangements) and existing partnerships, ensuring the College's curriculum and skills offer remains responsive to changing economic priorities and maximises opportunities for regional collaboration and investment.



