

ACCOUNTABILITY

STATEMENT

2026–27



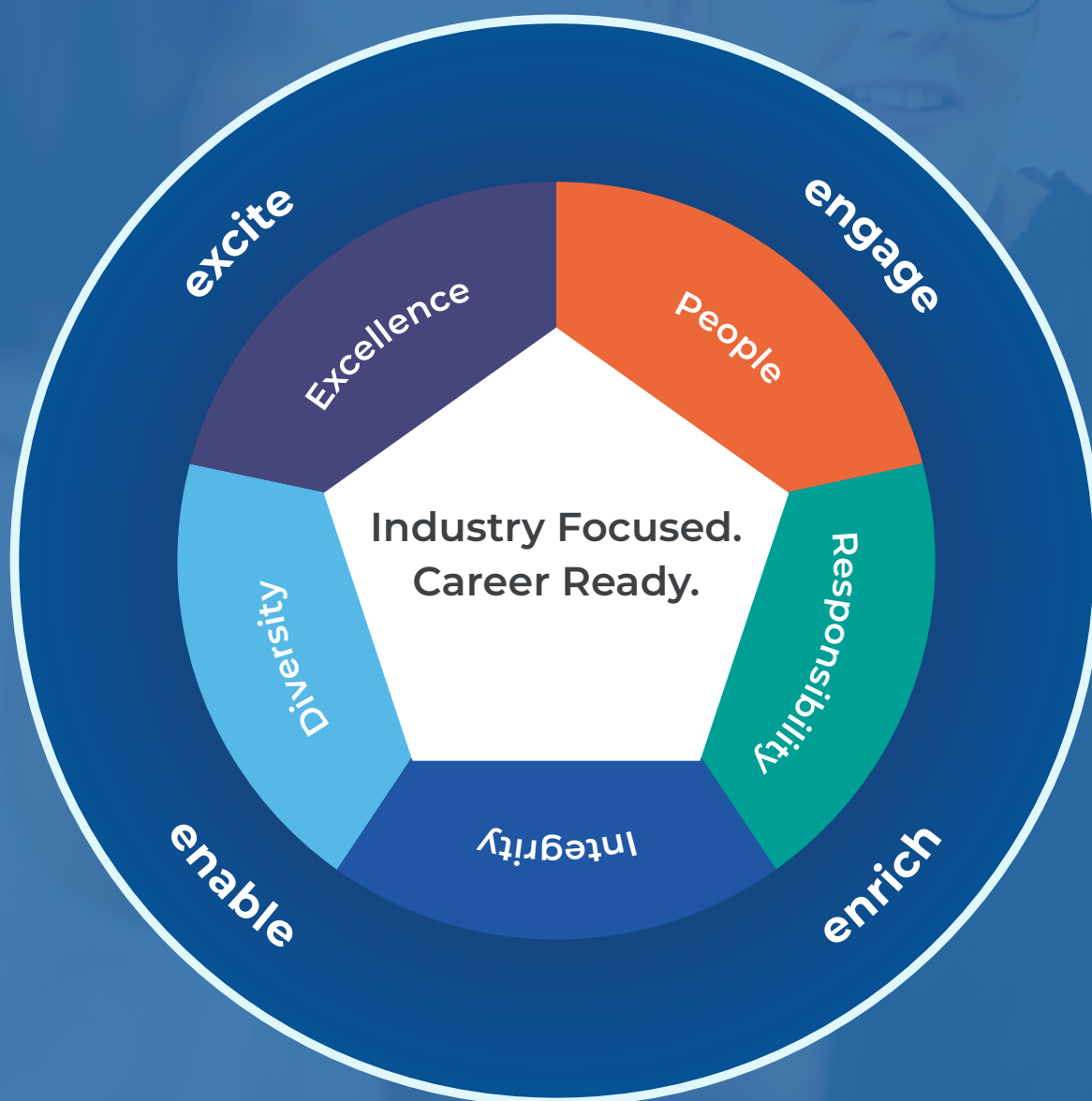
INDUSTRY FOCUSED, CAREER READY.

SECTION 1

PURPOSE

The college's mission to be Industry Focused and Career Ready predominantly supports the land-based sector as a specialist college but also a number of other carefully chosen sectors which fit with national priorities such as food security, construction, business and a number of engineering sectors in bus and coach, rail and construction plant.

It is important across this narrower offer that our facilities are leading-edge, and our students are developed to be career ready and both are in close collaboration with employers, and that our offer is inclusive in every respect.



Our purpose can be clarified by our stated intent in our strategic plan to:

- Develop career ready learners who have the technical skills, transferable skills and aptitudes to thrive and progress in the workplace or to higher levels of education.
- An inclusive offer with high ambitions for disadvantaged learners who will achieve as well and have the same expectations to progress into work as their peers.
- Align our offer to address industry skills gaps by working in partnership to drive sustainability and productivity.
- Deliver a Reaseheath experience for our staff and learners that is centred on personal development, community, inclusivity and has high aspirations.
- Tell the story to entice and attract the workforce of tomorrow to the career paths and opportunities that exist.
- Deliver an outstanding quality of education.
- Address key national priorities such as food security and protection of the environment.

Our provision is important to:

- Protect the environment, develop farming and growing, and reduce carbon emissions.
- Ensure food security regionally and nationally.
- Support the construction sector to deliver on government priorities.
- Produce engineers and technicians that are needed in dairy technology, food technology, rail, agri-tech, construction plant, motor vehicle and electric vehicle technology, and bus and coach.
- Develop science, maths and English skills across all our provision, so that our students can be at the heart of tomorrow's technology and innovation powering the country forward.
- Help all our students grow as individuals, overcome challenges and become more able to progress into work and improved life outcomes.

Our strategic plan was recently updated in 2024/2025 and the main developments since then have been around the qualification reform taking place including maths and English stepping stone qualifications, expansion of routes to work or progression at Level 2 and the introduction of V Levels at Level 3. There will be devolution in Cheshire and Warrington and there has been the new Ofsted toolkit including the change in grading, the secure fit as opposed to best fit and the focus on inclusion.

Our 4E strategic plan links well to these changes and the new LSIP 2.0

Engage



Focuses on our curriculum development to ensure it is inclusive and there has been much development of our progression pathways and new provision at Entry Level and Level 1 as well as work to improve transition and in year support for those at risk of becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET) with our Future Tracks Programme.

Our offer supports the LSIP priorities in agri-tech, business, construction, environmental technologies and food security.

Enrich



Supports our career ready mission and works to ensure that feedback from employers is dynamically pursued in the college. Our career ready offer, work placement strategy, student life culture and land-based ethos in livestock duties help our students develop resilience, teamwork and communication skills.

SECTION 2

CONTEXT AND PLACE

Reaseheath College & University Centre is a designated specialist land-based and technical college with over one hundred years of leading technical education and training. The college has residential, further education (FE), higher education (HE), apprenticeship, adult, 14–16 education, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), high needs and works from classroom, specialist practical environments and employer settings.

The college offers provision from Entry Level to Level 7 (from September 2026) and is a local, regional and national provider with 50% of students coming from within Cheshire and Warrington and 50% travelling from elsewhere in the North West and across the country.

The College's core land-based and technical offer attracts students from the North West but travelling from across the UK are apprentices into block release apprenticeship provision in agricultural engineering, bus and coach, construction plant, dairy technology and rail. HE students also travel from across the UK and some FE provision also attracts students from outside the North West due to specialist facilities available such as agriculture and food.

To support access to the college, there is extensive residential accommodation and 24 bus routes transporting students from Cheshire and Warrington and surrounding counties.



The majority of students will therefore access the college through the college bus routes, or by being residential full time or on block release. A small minority will walk in from the nearest town Nantwich, or receive a lift in from places such as Crewe. As some of our 17 year old students pass their driving test they will begin to drive in for their second year of study.

Two thirds of our core FE cohort (2,100) study at Level 3 and the offer is highly inclusive with 336 Educational Health Care Plans (EHCPs) (16%) of which 310 are high need (92%). 1,224 of our students in FE declared a learning need (58%).

This is forecast to continue the year-on-year growth in 2026/2027 with a projected 353 EHCPs of which 332 will be high need based on applications and those progressing.

In 2025/2026, 845 (40%) needed to resit maths GCSE and 732 (35%) needed to resit English GCSE as they had not achieved a grade 4. Of these, 316 entered the college with a grade 3 in maths and 371 with a grade 3 in English.

The college works with 24 local authorities due to our specialist provision with the largest numbers in Cheshire East (108), Chester West and Warrington (83), Wirral (34), Staffordshire (31), and Stoke-on-Trent (16).

The college is now working to support the new combined authority for Cheshire and Warrington which will elect the first mayor in 2027. The college works closely with the LSIP board for Cheshire and Warrington and the employer representative body the South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce.

It is more challenging to cover the specific economic and social characteristics of the 24 number of local authorities and by the nature of the specialist provision we are supporting sectors that are more regional and national such as the importance of food security and environmental security.

However, looking at Cheshire and Warrington as a region:

- The labour market needs more qualified people at Level 3 and above.
- Skills shortages are more prevalent than the England average.
- Employers report difficulty in recruiting skilled workers and the need to upskill the existing workforce.
- There is a shortage of STEM and technical qualifications with a demand for engineers, technicians and process operators, and a shortage of engineering and construction trades.
- There is a demand for green skills and net zero and all sectors need data and digital skills.
- There is a significant gap between advantaged and disadvantaged learners and educational attainment is strongly linked to where people live. This affects school attainment and progression to higher education.
- Cheshire East and Warrington are below the national NEET average and Chester West and Chester are in line with national.
- HE participation is below the national average.
- There is not enough take up of apprenticeships.

SECTION 3

DEVELOPING THE

ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

The accountability statement is overseen by our Curriculum, Skills and Stakeholders Committee who reports to the main college board who have ultimate sign off.

This committee comprises governors who have close links with employers and often sit on employer boards. They receive updates and data from the executive on:

- National policies such as on SEND and NEET
- Qualification reform such as maths and English, Level 2, Level 3 including T Levels, V Levels and higher level qualifications including HTQ
- LSIP and combined authority strategies
- Feedback from our Curriculum Validation Events with employers

Committee members were also invited to attend business planning events where curriculum managers presented their vision to develop their curriculum in line with national priorities and the College's strategic direction. They also attended board development and strategy days.

The executive is well connected, attending and often chairing numerous regional and national network meetings across FE and HE, as well as visiting other providers and attending conferences.

The College is well connected to, and a patron of, our Employer Representative Body (ERB) and are represented on the LSIP board. The college has worked hard to ensure our specialist provision is represented within the LSIP 2.0 and within the priorities set out by the new combined authority. The rural nature of Cheshire and Warrington, and the importance of food, farming and the rural economy are now much more visible and align closely with the college provision.

The college believes collaboration is important and works closely with other colleges in Cheshire and Warrington to ensure strategy is aligned to support the local authorities and the new combined authority, with a new director role in the process of being appointed to further support this. This can then build on the work to date including the Institute of Technology (IoT) and construction collaboration. It is anticipated the relationships formed will continue to help ensure we reduce duplication and work cohesively to support initiatives to reduce NEET for example.

A collaboration with Myerscough College is in place with a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to support a North West Agri-Food Innovation Hub as well as other opportunities to support provision and staff due to the shared land-based specialism. The college has long worked closely with the University of Chester and this has supported curriculum development and the progression of our higher level qualification offer. The college as a member of Landex continuously works closely with the network of land-based provision across England.

The college works extensively with employers but has evolved our skills boards into curriculum validation events which are supporting more direct feedback into then influencing the design of the curriculum including content and sequencing.

Employer partnerships are fundamental to the College's offer. Meaningful partnerships have not only helped to co-create provision but have also provided access to high-end equipment that the College could not otherwise have afforded. In one case, a partner also contributed towards staff wages, helping the College secure the expertise required to deliver the provision. We consult employers and representative bodies across all the sectors we work with and attend all conferences and network events to ensure we are well informed. We have also worked with acknowledged sector expert consultants to ensure our curriculum is progressed in the right way including high needs, HE and maths and English.

SECTION 4

CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL PRIORITIES

The college contributes well to national, regional and local priorities.

16%
construction

9%
food

20%
agri-tech and
engineering

16%
agriculture and
environment

27%
animal management
with strong science content

These figures are a percentage of full time FE and apprenticeships combined.

50%
of apprenticeship starters are aged 16–18, compared with
a national average of 23.6% and an average of 25% across
Cheshire and Warrington.

In addition, over 1,000 students retook maths or English, with 544 needing to retake both.

Over 100 students accessed our Future Tracks Programme provision supporting them to stay on programme and to transition from pre 16 to post provision.

The college has embraced T Levels as an early adopter and now has 756 T Level students planned for 2026/2027 which is 36% of FE provision. These courses have more funded hours and a higher core content including science, industry knowledge, key theories and concepts, core skills for work, health and safety and data, maths and digital skills. They also include work experience and an employer set project. As such the content and structure closely matches the identified need from employers regionally and nationally. We have also seen an increase in progression to HE from the T Levels which again matches the Government's call that two thirds of young people progress to high level provision. This includes progression through high quality technical routes.

HE students also undertake sustainable agriculture and food-related degrees or higher-level apprenticeships.

The College has been working to ensure that it offers an inclusive and ambitious curriculum. This has chiefly involved:

- Improving progression routes so that students have more options.
- Ensuring our Entry Level and Level 1 routes are more clearly defined and have clear progression routes alongside improved information, advice and guidance.
- Ensuring that students with SEND, high-needs students and other disadvantaged students are accessing courses at all levels with integrated support.
- Strengthening the options at higher levels to access and progress with the development of foundation courses, Access to HE, HTQ and Masters access.
- Our offer is multi-dimensional with a strong offer in FE, HE and apprenticeships, maximising the opportunity to access and progress.



To further strengthen the inclusivity, progression opportunities and alignment with local, regional and national priorities the following aims have been identified for the 2026/2027 academic year:

Accountability Statement Objectives proposed for 2026-2027

Aim	Strategic Objective	Success Measures	Alignment	Comparison with 2025/2026
Increase higher-level skills and progression pathways	Expand higher-level technical and professional education pathways to increase progression into Levels 4–7 study and higher-skilled employment, supporting regional productivity and skills growth.	• Launch agreed new higher-level provision including HTQs, HNC/ HNDs and postgraduate opportunities. • Increase internal progression from Level 3 programmes. • Achieve growth in learners progressing to higher-level qualifications or skilled employment. • Strengthen employer engagement to ensure curriculum relevance.	• Lifelong Learning Entitlement. • The National Higher Technical Qualifications agenda. • Cheshire & Warrington skills priorities.	0-40 across the new offer. 14-20% internal progression.
Deliver an inclusive curriculum that improves participation and life chances	Provide an inclusive curriculum that removes barriers to participation, improves social mobility and enables learners from all backgrounds to achieve positive educational, employment and personal outcomes.	• Develop targeted provision for NEET learners. • Expand Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement framework (RARPA) and supported learning opportunities. • Improve English and maths achievement. • Increase digital inclusion and essential digital skills participation. • Reduce NEET participation rates across the college's catchment.	• Social mobility agenda. • Department for Education inclusion priorities. • Local authority and Skills England focus on participation and equity.	0 – 50 NEET specific offer. 20-40 SI & Forest College. 150-200 RARPA.
Strengthen agri-tech, food security and sustainable land-based skills	Lead the development of specialist skills in agri-tech, food security and sustainable land management, addressing current and future workforce requirements within the land-based sector.	• Introduce new qualifications aligned to emerging sector needs. • Increase learner participation within agri-food pathways. • Strengthen employer and industry collaboration. • Improve progression into agri-tech careers and higher-level study. • Create The North West Agri-Food Innovation Hub with Myerscough College.	• LSIP priorities. • National Food Strategy themes. • Agri-tech and sustainability workforce development.	0 – 100 learners enrolled on new qualifications.

Aim	Strategic Objective	Success Measures	Alignment	Comparison with 2025/2026
Grow the construction and green skills workforce	Expand construction and retrofit skills provision to support net-zero ambitions, housing growth and regional infrastructure development.	• Increase learner numbers in construction trades. • Introduce retrofit and sustainable construction pathways. • Expand employer partnerships. • Improve progression into employment in priority construction occupations.	• Net Zero Strategy. • Local Skills Improvement Plan. • Construction Industry Training Board priorities.	0 – 30 learners on retrofit provision. 180-250 learners enrolled in construction trades.
Grow our apprenticeship provision	Develop apprenticeship provision that responds to evolving employer demand, increases productivity and supports workforce development across key sectors.	• Introduce new apprenticeship standards. • Increase apprenticeship participation in priority sectors. • Improve achievement and progression outcomes. • Enhance employer satisfaction and engagement.	• Growth and skills levy reforms. • Employer-led skills agenda. • Regional workforce development priorities.	0 – 40 apprentices enrolled on new standards.
Champion equity, inclusion and learner wellbeing by creating a curriculum and support model that enables every learner, regardless of background, need or starting point, to achieve, progress and thrive.		• Narrow achievement gaps between learner groups. • Improve attendance, retention and positive destinations. • Increase participation from under-represented groups. • Strengthen SEND, wellbeing and safeguarding support. • Evidence positive learner progression and social mobility outcomes.	• Equality, diversity and inclusion. • Ofsted themes around inclusion. • College mission and civic responsibility. • Student wellbeing and safeguarding priorities.	All within 5%. Attendance 90%. Retention 93%.

- New apprenticeship standards in 2026/2027 planned:
 - Assistant farm manager
 - Property maintenance
 - Business administration
 - Marketing
- Level 7 Masters Provision – September 2026
- Additional agri-food qualification – September 2026
- Expansion of NEET / SI / Forest College provision through 2026/2027
- HNC Construction September 2026

			Progress
1.	In line with our curriculum intent, continue to deliver an inclusive curriculum offer to address Government priorities, remove barriers to progression, and develop essential work readiness skills.	• Progression routes at all levels • Transition support • Career ready curriculum	Progression routes have been strengthened and numbers progressing have increased by 100. Bespoke resource has been in place to support transition and retention has increased by 3%. The career ready curriculum continues to respond to student and employer requested topics.
2.	Develop a more extensive adult skills offer, with a specific focus on addressing industry skills gaps and green skills, whilst also supporting local needs and the devolution process in Cheshire and Warrington.	• Skills boot camps • Community maths and English, building on the Multiply programme • Construction skills (ages 16–18)	A Skills Bootcamp took place, and bids were submitted for further programmes. More adults accessed Access to HE provision offer which was expanded. A gap remains until adults are once again able to join T Level or equivalent provision.
3.	Carry out a high-needs review, working closely with key partners to address local needs, implementing all necessary changes to maximise outcomes and increase opportunity.	• Revision of Foundation curriculum and pathways especially at Level 1 • Improve information, advice and guidance to ensure learners are on the correct level	Review was carried out and offer was revised and information, advice and guidance strengthened. Projected achievement result and progression have increased as a result.
4.	Promote the development of higher-level skills, with an emphasis on science related content, through the use of HTQs along with level apprenticeships.	• New HTQ provision • Level 7 provision • Higher level apprenticeships	New HTQ provision is in place and will run in September 2026 as will a new Level 7 and new Level 0 offer. Access to HE offer was expanded and grew numbers in 2025/2026.
5.	Develop agri-food provision to meet, and influence, key national strategies that align to our specialism.	• New Agri-Food Strategy • Agri-food additional qualifications ahead of larger curriculum development	An agri-food additional qual has been developed for launch in September 2026 and work with Myerscough College has developed for The Agri-Food Innovation Hub for 2026/2027.
6.	Develop a strategy to increase the College's green skills offer, specifically focusing on the expected growth brought about by the net zero transition.		A sustainability school saw 10,000 student numbers take an additional qualification in sustainability. A retrofit insulation qualification will be delivered in 2026/2027.
7.	Develop a MoU with Myerscough College to develop a cohesive North West land-based offer to better service learners and our employers whilst also strengthening specialist staffing capacity, professional development and quality enhancement.		MoU has been signed and work will gather momentum in 2026/2027.

SECTION 5

INCLUSIVE MAINSTREAM

GRANT

The college is using its Inclusive Mainstream Grant to transition towards the reformed SEND system by:

- Increasing the number of maths and English lecturers to reduce group sizes and improve outcomes.
- Using specialist national expertise to support the English team in their pedagogy to improve outcomes.
- Increasing the number of inclusive learning advisors and inclusive learning practitioners to ensure there is strong liaison with the curriculum leads and tutors and thereby strengthen the team around the learner to improve outcomes.
- Developing bespoke capacity to strengthen transition from pre 16 to post 16, programmes to support learners remain on programme and NEET provision.
- Developing our inclusive estate and facilities including assistive technologies, reset spaces and bespoke classroom environments.

SECTION 6

LOCAL NEEDS DUTY

The Board of Governors conducted a review of the College's approach in 2025.



SECTION 7

CORPORATION

SIGN OFF

On behalf of the Reaseheath College Board of Governors, it is hereby confirmed that the College's plan, as set out above, reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the Corporation at its meeting on 17th July 2026.

The plan will be published on the College's website within three months of the start of the new academic year and can be accessed [here](#).

Marcus Clinton

Principal & CEO
Reaseheath College & University Centre



Date: 17/07/26

Jane Cowell OBE

Chair of Governors
Reaseheath College & University Centre



Date: 17/07/26

SECTION 8



View our accountability statement here:

SECTION 9

SOURCES AND LINKS

[Cheshire & Warrington Local Skills Improvement Plan](#)

[Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington](#)

[Cheshire and Warrington Combined Authority](#)

[Strategic planning and local plan](#)

[Reaseheath Strategic Plan 24-27](#)

[Assessment of priority skills to 2030](#)

[A UK government food strategy for England](#)

[Reaseheath College and University Centre Annual Review 2024/25](#)







Reaseheath College and University Centre, Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 6DF

01270 613168

fe-enquiries@reaseheath.ac.uk

reaseheath.ac.uk