



2026 – 2031 Strategic Plan

Delivering opportunity through
outstanding professional,
technical and lifelong
education.



A strategy for learners, employers and communities.

Transforming Lives Strengthening Communities Powering the Future Economy

Foreword

Education changes lives. Skills shape the future.

For almost fifty years, New College Durham has transformed lives through education.

Every year we support thousands of people to achieve their ambitions – whether they are taking their first steps towards employment, progressing to university, developing higher technical skills, returning to education later in life or building successful careers with employers across our region.

We are equally proud of the contribution we make beyond our classrooms.

As one of the North East's leading further and higher education institutions, we play an important role in strengthening local industry, supporting innovation, empowering communities, collaborating with regional partners, and helping to drive sustainable economic growth.

The years ahead present exciting opportunities.

Artificial intelligence, digital innovation, the transition to greener industries, and changing employer needs and learner requirements are reshaping the world of work. At the same time, social justice and inclusion remain central to who we are. We will continue to lead with excellence and adaptability to ensure opportunities are available for everyone.

New College Durham is well placed to meet these challenges.

Recent investment in facilities including the National Battery Training and Skills Academy, the Construction Centre of Excellence, the North East Institute of Technology, T.H.E. Hub, the NCD Training and Skills Development Centre and our 4G sports facilities demonstrates our long-term commitment to our communities, sector partnerships and our determination to prepare learners for the future while supporting employers, industries and communities to succeed.



These investments have been made possible through careful financial stewardship, responsible governance and a long-term commitment to sustainability – ensuring the college remains financially resilient while continuing to invest confidently in learners, staff, facilities and innovation.

This strategy sets out our ambitions for the next five years.

It has been shaped by the voices of our students, staff, employers, governors and partners, and supported by a comprehensive framework of delivery plans to ensure we translate bold ambitions into real-world impact.

Together, they will contribute to three simple ambitions:



Transforming Lives



Strengthening Communities



Powering the Future Economy

Together, they will guide every decision we make and every opportunity we create.

Andrew Broadbent
Principal and Chief Executive

Stephen King
Chair of the Board

In Action

Investing in our future



National Battery Training and Skills Academy

Powering skills for a sustainable future.



Construction Centre of Excellence

Building skills.
Building futures.



North East Institute of Technology

Driving innovation.
Creating opportunities.



T.H.E. Hub Technical and Higher Education Hub

Higher education
closer to home.



NCD Training and Skills Development Centre

Real training. Real
opportunities.



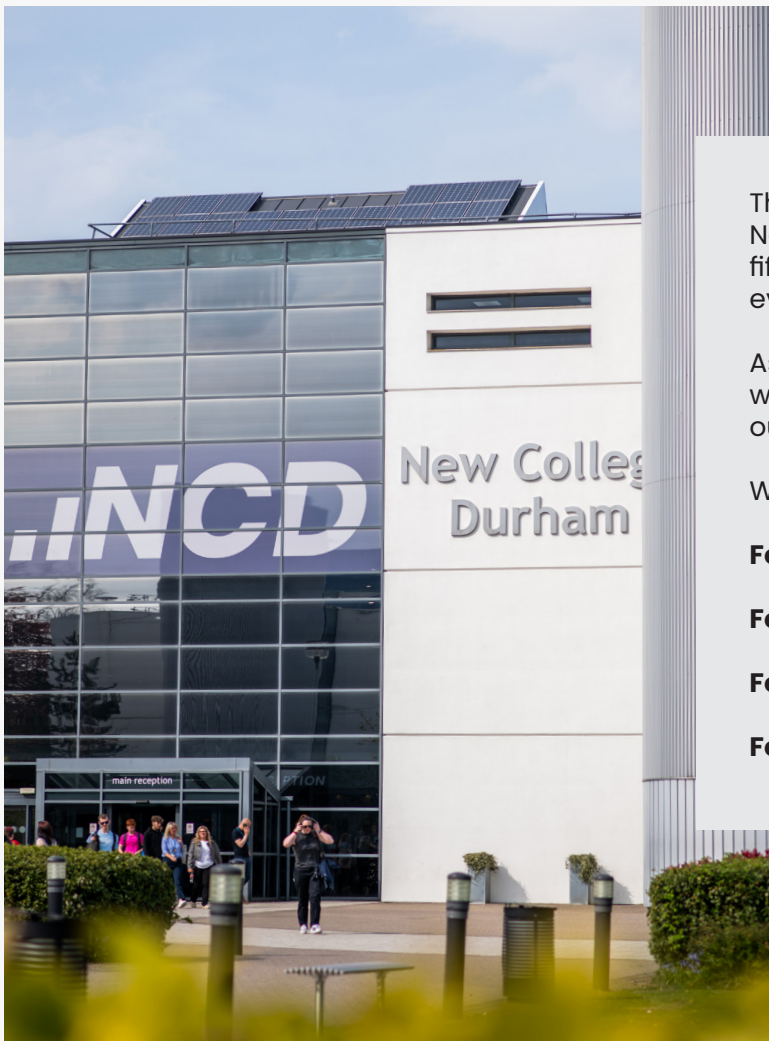
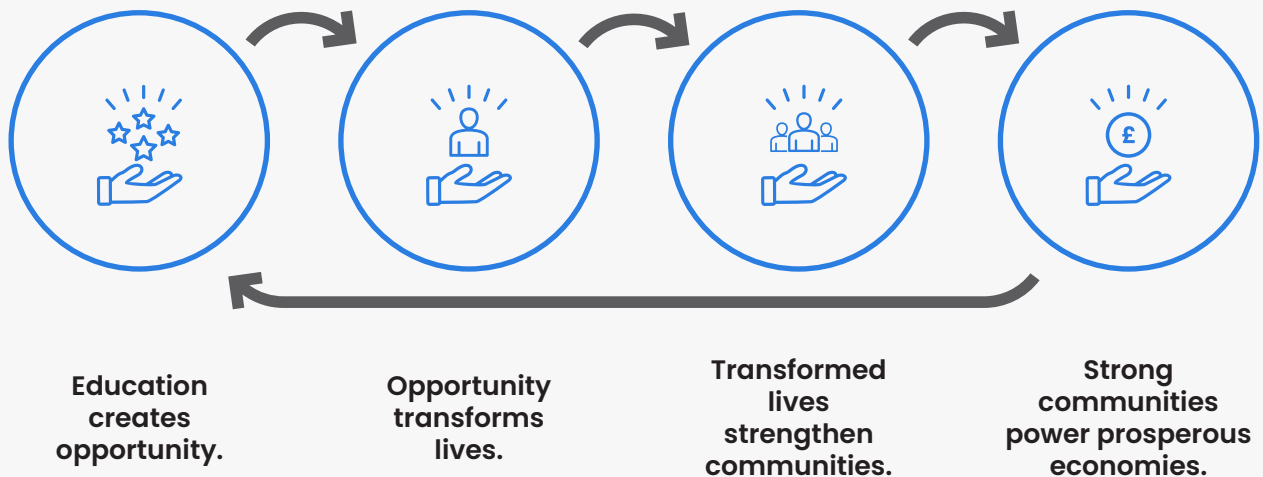
4G Sports Facilities

Active communities.
Stronger futures.



Our Purpose

Why we exist



This simple belief has shaped New College Durham for almost fifty years and continues to guide every decision we make today.

As education, technology and the world of work continue to evolve, our purpose remains constant.

We exist to create opportunity.

For learners.

For employers.

For communities.

For future generations.

Our Mission

At New College Durham, we are catalysts for positive change, driving social, economic, and environmental impact. We inspire and enable individuals of all abilities to unlock their full potential, igniting their careers and enriching our communities. Our commitment to delivering high quality professional, technical, and lifelong education empowers people to shape a better, brighter future.

In partnership with employers and communities, we provide the skills, knowledge and experiences people need to shape a better, brighter future.



Our Vision

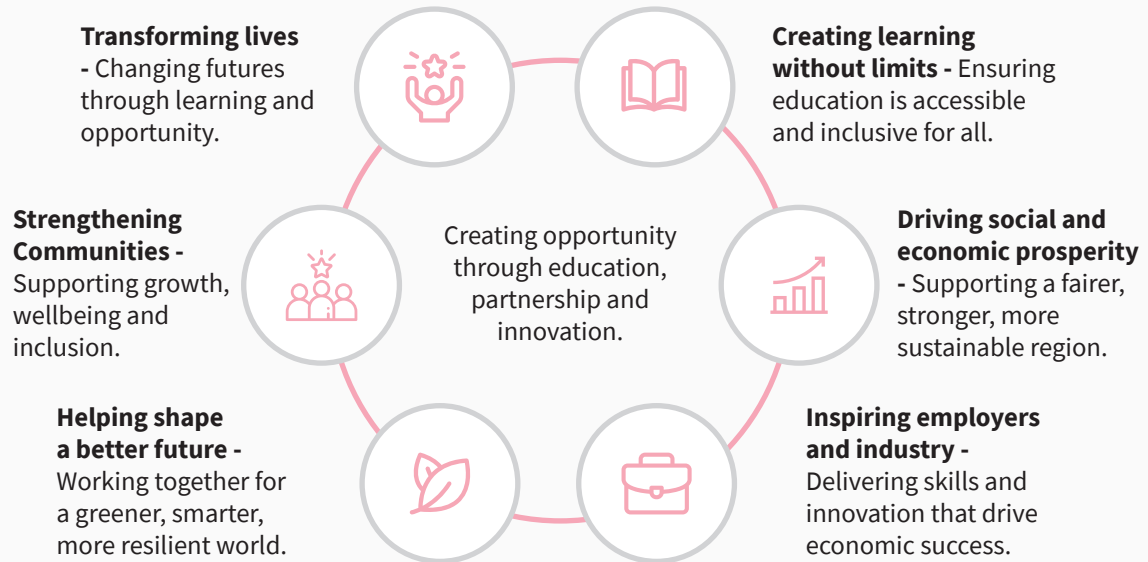
New College Durham will transform lives, strengthen communities and power the future economy by being a trailblazer in further and higher education, recognised for exceptional skills training, academic excellence, innovation and civic leadership.

We aim to be a beacon of innovation and quality, recognised not just in the North East Mayoral Strategic Authority (North East MSA) region, but throughout the UK and across the globe.



Our Civic Role

Our civic role is to create opportunity through education, partnership and innovation across the North East and beyond.



Our Values

Our six values create the foundation of everything we do and together they make up **ASPIRE**.

When we live our six values every day, we live ASPIRE.

A



Accountability - Taking responsibility for our actions and impact.

S



Safeguarding - Creating safe, supportive and respectful spaces.

P



Partnerships - Working collaboratively with our communities.

I



Inclusion - Ensuring opportunity for everyone.

R



Respect - Building trust, valuing diversity and integrity.

E



Excellence - Striving for higher standards and continuous improvement.



Did you know?

New College Durham supports learners from every level through programmes which provide professional, technical and academic study and skills, alongside our own projects and social and community activity right across the region.

The World Around Us

Shaping tomorrow starts today.

The world is changing faster than ever before.

Artificial intelligence is transforming industries. The transition to greener technologies is creating new careers. Employers are demanding higher technical skills. People are changing jobs more frequently and learning throughout their lives. Communities are evolving, bringing new opportunities and new challenges.

Education has never been more important.

As one of the North East's leading further and higher education institutions, New College Durham has a responsibility not only to respond to change, but to help shape it.

Over the next five years we will continue to work with learners, employers and partners to ensure education remains relevant, inclusive and focused on the future.

This strategy sets out how we will do exactly that.



Looking ahead

The future belongs to organisations that embrace change, build partnerships and invest in people.

New College Durham is one of them.

The Forces Shaping Our Future



Our Three Ambitions

Three ambitions. One shared purpose.



**Transforming
Lives**



**Strengthening
Communities**



**Powering the
Future Economy**

**Everything within this strategy is
focused on creating lasting impact.**

Not only for learners. But for employers.
Communities. And the wider region.

Our ambition is simple.

To make a positive difference
wherever we can.

That ambition is expressed
through three commitments.



Did you know?

New College Durham works
with hundreds of employers
each year to shape
curriculum, develop talent
and support innovation
across the North East.





Ambition
One

Transforming Lives

**Education creates confidence.
Confidence creates opportunity.
Opportunity changes lives.**

We will inspire learners of every age and background to achieve their ambitions through exceptional professional, technical and lifelong education.

IN ACTION

From classroom to career.

Sarah studied GCSE maths and English at NCD before progressing to study an Access to HE diploma, which enabled her to continue to university to pursue her career.

“I chose to study at NCD as I had previously completed my GCSEs there. I liked the support from my lecturers and the content of the Access to HE course.

“Studying at NCD gave me a massive confidence boost in my academic ability.

“After completing the diploma, I studied a BA in History and then an MA in museum and artefact studies at Durham University. Following this, I continued my journey at university to achieve my PgCE.”

Sarah Goodridge

Access to Higher Education in Humanities





Ambition
Two

Strengthening Communities

**Strong communities
create opportunity.**

We will continue to be a trusted civic partner, improving lives through inclusion, partnership, wellbeing and lifelong learning while supporting local communities to flourish.

IN ACTION

A hub for our community.

Our new 4G sports facilities are used every day by local schools, community groups and residents of all ages—promoting health, wellbeing and opportunity for everyone.

Durham Athletic Football Club

Durham Athletic Football Club is a two-team grassroots football club formed in 2025. The club was created through the passion and commitment of local parents and coaches, with the aim of bringing back a club that many of the players' parents proudly represented during the 1990s. From the very beginning, our focus has been on creating a positive, inclusive environment where young players can develop both on and off the pitch.

The pitch has become a vital part of our club's success. Its outstanding quality enables us to deliver enjoyable, structured coaching sessions all year round, helping every player improve their technical ability, confidence and love of the game. Reliable access to a first-class facility has played a significant role in the progress of both of our teams.

Paul White, Coach and Club Secretary, said:

“Since we started using the facility in 2025, both of our teams have developed immensely. Every visiting team comments on the quality of the pitch and the facilities available to us. The staff are incredibly helpful and work tirelessly to maintain such a fantastic environment, and we're extremely grateful for everything they do. Having access to a facility like this has made a real difference to our players' development and to the overall experience we can offer as a grassroots club.”





Ambition
Three

Powering the Future Economy

**Skills enable productivity.
Innovation enables prosperity.
People make the difference.**

We will continue to develop the skilled workforce that employers need while supporting innovation, higher technical education and regional economic growth.

IN ACTION

Skills that drive innovation.

Through partnerships with employers, our learners work with industry-leading technology and real projects—gaining the skills and experience that businesses need to grow and innovate.

“Tridonic are working in partnership with the college on the engineering apprenticeship scheme to help develop future technicians, engineers and leaders. The collaboration will help us develop and equip the next generation to enjoy working in the Electronics Manufacturing sector and realise their potential in County Durham.”

Ben Kennard BEng CEng MIMechE MIET, Manufacturing and Supply Chain Manager, Tridonic

TRIDONIC



Looking ahead

These ambitions are delivered through four strategic pillars that will guide every decision we make between now and 2031.

Four strategic pillars. One shared goal.

The previous pages have described the impact we want to have.

These four strategic pillars describe how we will achieve it.

Together they provide a clear framework for every investment, every partnership and every decision we make between now and 2031.

They shape not only this strategy, but also every supporting curriculum, corporate and operational strategy across the college.



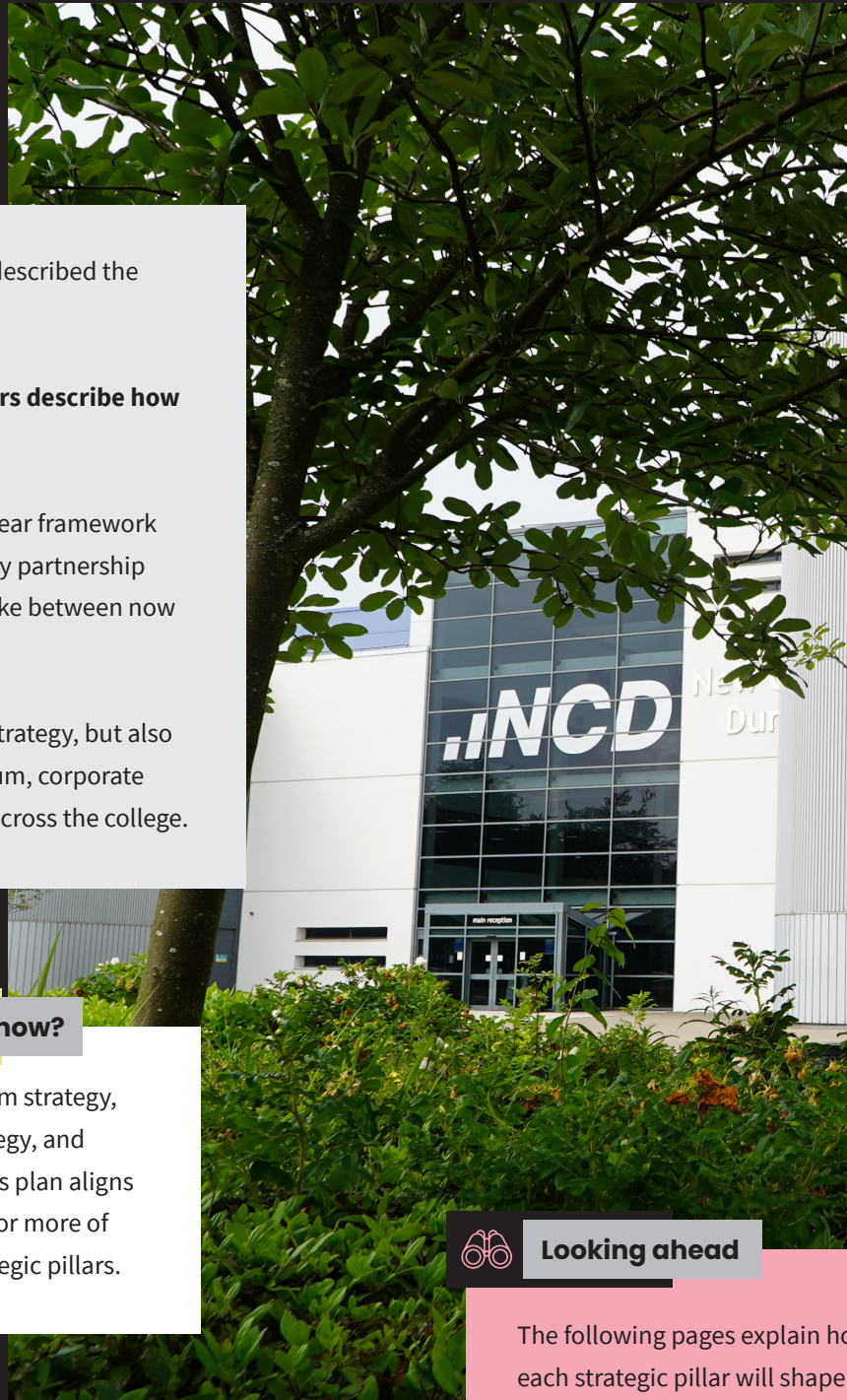
Did you know?

Every curriculum strategy, corporate strategy, and annual business plan aligns directly to one or more of these four strategic pillars.



Looking ahead

The following pages explain how each strategic pillar will shape the future of New College Durham.





Our Purpose

Transforming Lives
Strengthening Communities
Powering the Future Economy



Our Four Strategic Pillars



FUTURE SKILLS & CURRICULUM

Preparing learners
with the skills,
knowledge and
confidence to succeed
in a changing world.



STUDENT SUCCESS

Creating exceptional
learning experiences
where every learner
can achieve their
potential.



PEOPLE & CULTURE

Empowering
our people
to innovate,
collaborate and
deliver excellence.



REGIONAL IMPACT

Working with partners
to strengthen
communities and
power the future
economy.



2031 Strategic Outcomes



Supporting Strategies

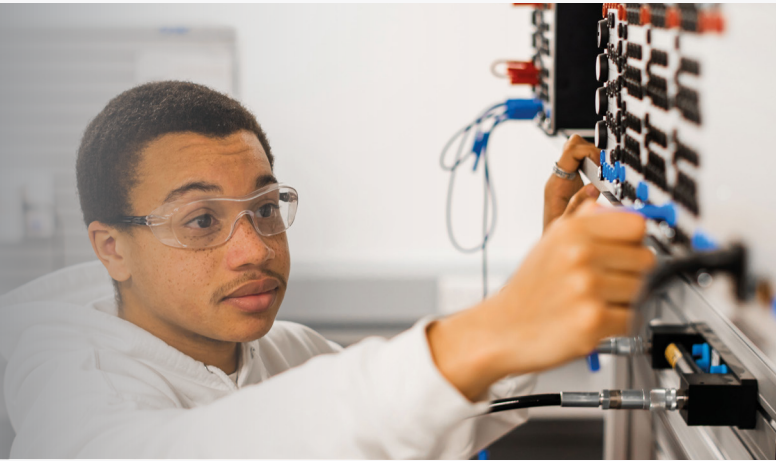


Annual Delivery Plans // KPIs // Governance

STRATEGIC PILLAR ONE

FUTURE SKILLS & CURRICULUM

Preparing people for the future economy.



WHY THIS MATTERS

The world of work is changing faster than ever before.

Artificial intelligence, advanced manufacturing, digital technologies, modern construction methods, healthcare innovation and the transition to a greener economy are transforming the skills employers need. At the same time, people are increasingly learning throughout their lives, adapting to new careers and developing higher levels of technical and professional expertise.

New College Durham has a vital role to play in preparing learners for this future.

We will continue to deliver an outstanding curriculum that is ambitious, inclusive and co-created to meet the needs of learners, employers and our region. Through innovation, collaboration and investment, we will ensure every learner develops the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to succeed in a rapidly changing world.



Did you know?

Our curriculum is shaped through close collaboration with employers, industry partners and regional stakeholders to ensure learners develop the skills businesses need today, and those they will need in the future.

OUR STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

Between 2026 and 2031 we will:

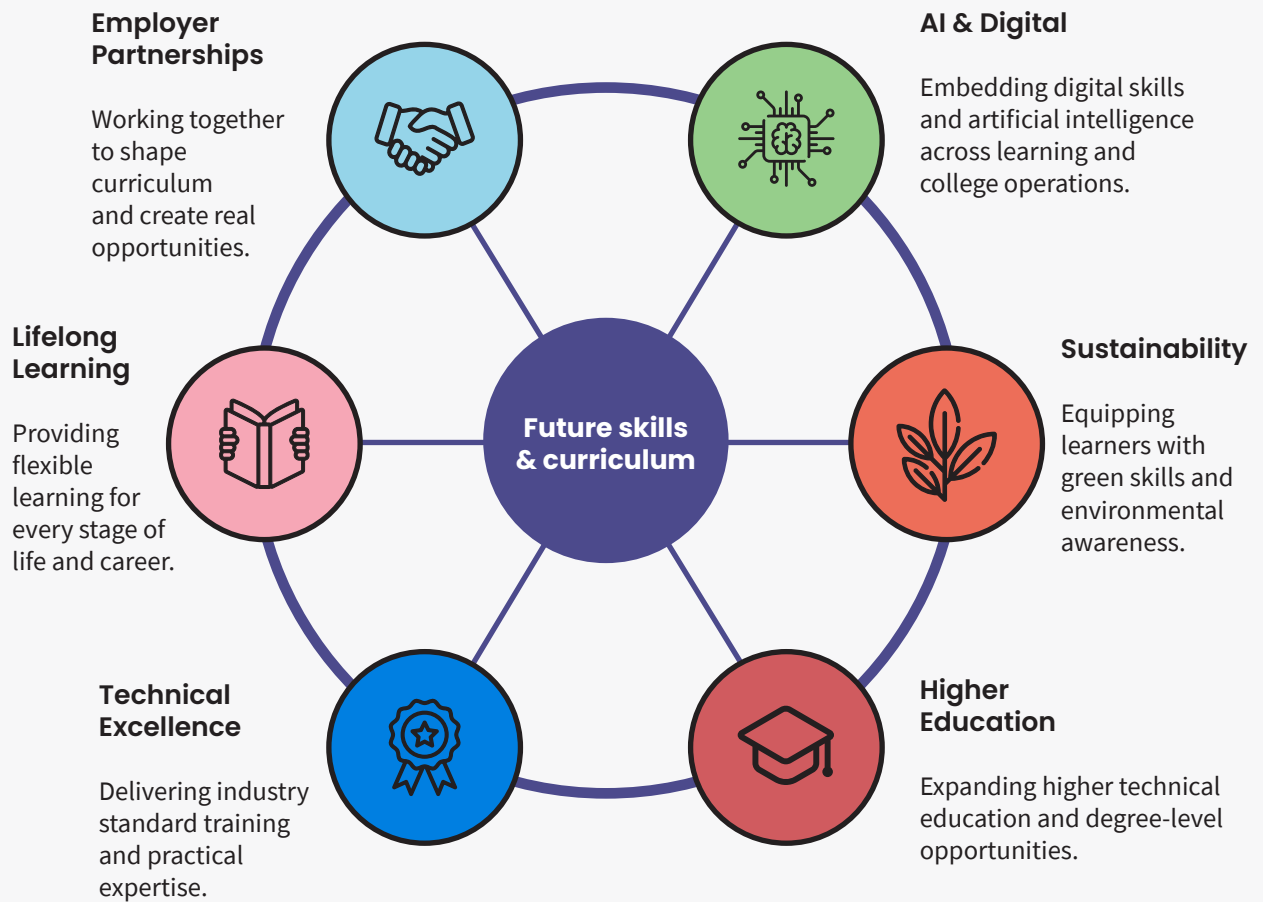
- Deliver an outstanding, high-quality curriculum that inspires achievement and ambition.
- Design education and training in partnership with employers to meet current and future workforce needs.
- Expand higher technical education and professional learning aligned to regional and national priorities.
- Embed digital capability, artificial intelligence and sustainability across learning and teaching.
- Invest in cutting-edge learning environments, technology and industry-standard facilities.
- Continuously review and evolve our curriculum to reflect emerging industries and future opportunities.



Looking ahead

By 2031, New College Durham will be recognised as one of the UK's leading providers of professional, technical and higher education, preparing learners with the skills, confidence and adaptability to succeed in the industries and careers of tomorrow.

Building skills for tomorrow.



IN ACTION

Advanced Manufacturing Technical Excellence College



Supporting the future skills of advanced manufacturing and engineering talent.

Construction Centre of Excellence



Developing the workforce needed to deliver modern construction, retrofit and net zero ambitions.

STRATEGIC PILLAR TWO

STUDENT SUCCESS

Enabling every learner to achieve their potential.



WHY THIS MATTERS

Success is about much more than gaining a qualification.

It is about building confidence, developing skills, creating opportunities and enabling every learner to realise their potential.

At New College Durham, we believe exceptional education is built around exceptional learner experiences. Every learner should feel welcomed, supported, challenged and inspired to achieve more than they thought possible.

Whether studying full-time, completing an apprenticeship, progressing through higher education, returning to learning as an adult or developing English language skills, every learner deserves the opportunity to succeed.

Our commitment is to create an inclusive environment where ambition is encouraged, wellbeing is supported and achievement is celebrated.

OUR STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

Between 2026 and 2031 we will:

- Deliver outstanding teaching, learning and assessment that inspires ambition and achievement.
- Create an exceptional learner experience where every individual feels they belong.
- Promote wellbeing, inclusion and personal development alongside academic and technical success.
- Support learners to progress confidently by developing skills, confidence and enterprising mindsets needed for employment, apprenticeships, higher education, further learning or self-employment.
- Strengthen learner voice so students actively shape the future of the college.
- Remove barriers to participation and success through inclusive support and accessible learning.



Did you know?

More than qualifications...
New College Durham supports learners from every background, providing careers advice, wellbeing support, enrichment opportunities and personalised guidance that helps people succeed both in education and beyond.



Looking ahead

By 2031, every learner who joins New College Durham will benefit from an inclusive, inspiring and ambitious learning experience that prepares them not only for employment, but for lifelong success.

THE LEARNER JOURNEY



BELONG

A welcoming community where every learner belongs.

LEARN

High-quality teaching and practical learning that builds skills and confidence.

ACHIEVE

Celebrating success and supporting learners to reach their goals.

PROGRESS

Clear pathways into employment, apprenticeships, higher education or further learning.

SUCCEED

Thriving in careers and contributing to their communities.

INSPIRE

Sharing experiences and encouraging others to achieve their potential.



ESOL

Building confidence and a new future in County Durham.

LEARN

Developing new skills through expert teaching and hands-on learning.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Progressing to a degree and achieving ambitions.

PROGRESS

Gaining experience and taking the next step towards a rewarding career.

SUCCEED

Building a successful career and a brighter future.

INSPIRE

Mentoring and supporting the new generation of learners.

IN ACTION: Real stories, real impact.



ESOL

"All I could say is 'hello' when I arrived." Suppakrit worked really hard with his ESOL tutors, and soon progressed onto computing & IT at NCD.



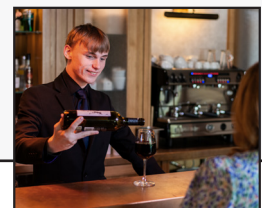
ADULT LEARNING

AESC employees are being upskilled to assume leadership and mentorship roles, while new recruits gain core knowledge and skills required for their production roles.



HIGHER EDUCATION

Francesca wanted to return to education at 21 and found she could balance studying and working full-time at NCD University Centre.



THE COPPER POT

Charlie Jones has always dreamt of making his mark in the culinary world. Charlie was given the opportunity to develop his very own tasting event at the college's training restaurant.

STRATEGIC PILLAR THREE

REGIONAL IMPACT

Creating lasting impact across our region.

WHY THIS MATTERS

New College Durham exists to serve more than our learners. We exist to serve our communities, employers and the wider region.

As a civic institution and regional anchor organisation, we have a responsibility to create opportunities that extend beyond our campuses.

Whether supporting economic growth, improving social mobility, developing future skills, promoting health and wellbeing or helping businesses innovate, our success is measured not only by what happens inside the college—but by the positive impact we create beyond it.

Working together with employers, universities, schools, local authorities and regional partners, we will continue to play a leading role in shaping a stronger, more inclusive and more prosperous North East.

OUR STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

Between 2026 and 2031 we will:

- Strengthen partnerships that support regional growth and prosperity.
- Lead the development of future skills in priority sectors through collaboration with employers and industry.
- Improve access to education and opportunity for people of every age and background.
- Support healthier, stronger and more inclusive communities through education, wellbeing and civic engagement.
- Contribute to regional innovation through research, technical excellence and knowledge exchange.
- Ensure our environmental sustainability ambitions contribute positively to our communities and future generations.



Did you know?

Every year New College Durham works with hundreds of employers, public sector organisations, schools, universities and community partners to create opportunities that benefit learners and the wider North East.



Looking ahead

By 2031, New College Durham will be recognised not only for educational excellence, but as one of the North East's most influential civic institutions - helping shape future skills, supporting regional prosperity and creating lasting opportunities for the communities we serve.

Community Engagement

Working together with communities across the North East to understand local needs, co-create opportunities and strengthen social mobility and inclusion.

Sector Partnerships

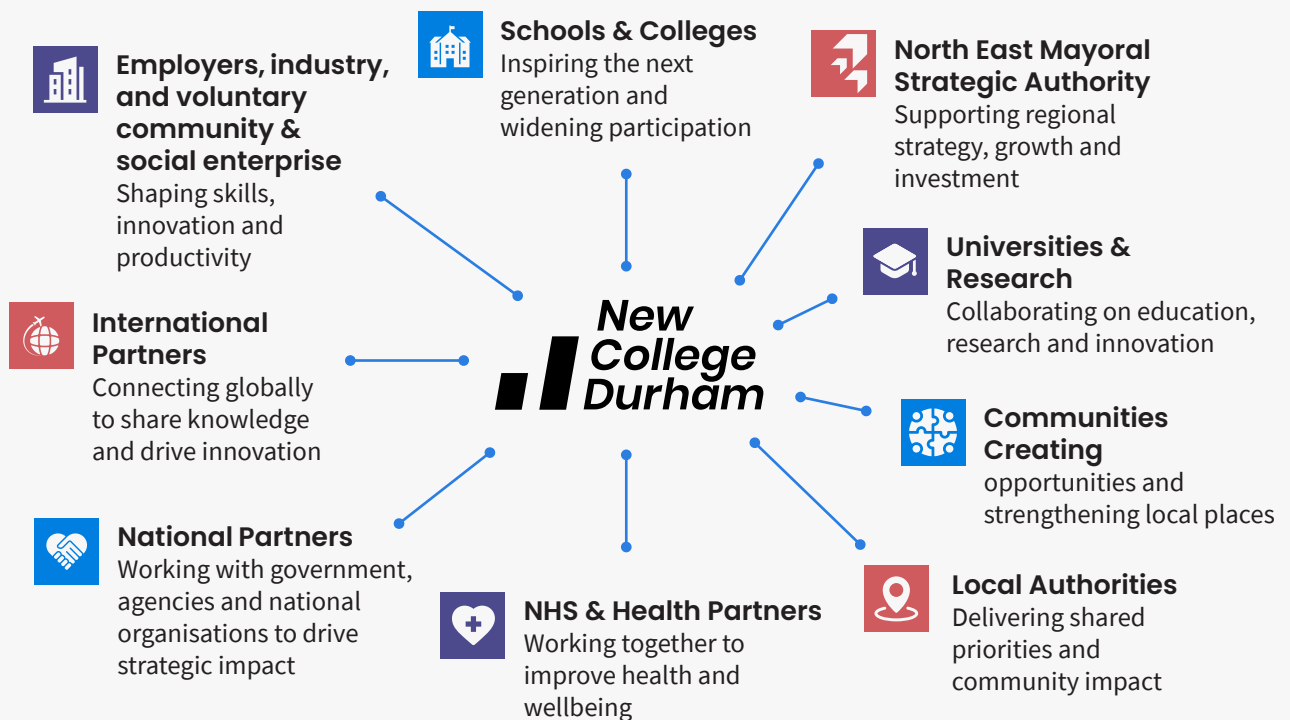
We lead the way in bringing together employers, industry, education, and key stakeholders to drive innovation, shape future skills and ensure our education and training meets the needs of our region.

Representation & Collaboration

We lead the way in representing and collaborating with regional and national partners to influence policy, secure investment, share best practice and champion the North East on the national stage.

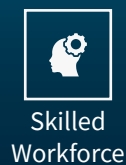
Our regional ecosystem

We work in partnership across the North East and beyond to create opportunity, innovation and lasting impact.



Investing in our region

Through sustained investment in specialist facilities, employer partnerships and community assets, we are creating environments that benefit learners, employers and communities alike. These investments reflect our long-term commitment to regional prosperity, inclusion and opportunity.



Our impact, together

Working together, we are transforming lives, strengthening communities and powering the future economy across the North East and beyond.



STRATEGIC PILLAR FOUR

PEOPLE & CULTURE

Empowering our people to inspire others.



WHY THIS MATTERS

The success of New College Durham is built on the dedication, expertise and passion of our people. Every outstanding learner experience, every successful partnership and every innovation begins with colleagues who are committed to making a positive difference.

As education and the world of work continue to evolve, we must continue investing in our people, creating an environment where everyone feels valued, supported and empowered to succeed. Our ambition is to be recognised as an employer of choice—attracting, developing and retaining talented people who share our commitment to transforming lives, strengthening communities and powering the future economy.

Together, we will create a culture where innovation is encouraged, collaboration is celebrated and wellbeing is a shared priority.

OUR STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

Between 2026 and 2031 we will:

- Develop an inclusive, high-performing and values-led culture where everyone feels they belong.
- Invest in leadership, professional development and career progression for all colleagues.
- Support health, wellbeing and work-life balance, recognising that great people deliver great outcomes.
- Empower colleagues to innovate, collaborate and continuously improve.
- Celebrate success, recognise achievement and strengthen employee engagement.
- Ensure our workforce has the skills and confidence to embrace new technologies, artificial intelligence and future ways of working.



Did you know?

Every colleague contributes to our mission—whether teaching, supporting learners, maintaining our campuses, developing partnerships or enabling the college to operate effectively. Every role makes a difference.



Looking ahead

By 2031 New College Durham will be recognised not only for educational excellence, but for its culture—one where talented people choose to build their careers because they are trusted, supported and inspired to make a lasting difference.

Our culture in action

Our values, ASPIRE, shape everything we do - from how we lead, to how we work together, and the impact we create.



In action: Real People, Real Impact



ASPIRE Awards

Celebrating colleagues who live our values and make a real difference.



Staff Development

Learning, sharing and growing through training, coaching and industry engagement.



Teaching in Action

Passionate teachers inspiring learners and creating outstanding learning experiences.



Employer Engagement

Working alongside employers to keep curriculum relevant and industry-led.



Collaboration

Cross-college teams solving challenges and improving learner outcomes.



Learner Support

Supporting learners with SEND, ESOL and wellbeing to thrive and achieve.

SUCCESS IN 2031

The future we are building together.

Introduction

Every strategy should have a destination.

This is ours.

By 2031, we want New College Durham to be recognised not only for educational excellence, but for the lasting difference we make to learners, employers, communities and the economy.

Success will not be measured solely through qualifications or financial performance. It will be measured by lives transformed, opportunities created, partnerships strengthened and the positive contribution we make to society.

This is the future we are working towards.

Financial Strength and Stability: A Key Enabler

Outstanding financial health over 18 consecutive years enables us to invest with confidence in our people, facilities and innovation. This financial strength provides the resilience and capacity we need to deliver our ambitions and secure a sustainable future for generations to come.



Looking ahead

Everything we do between now and 2031 contributes to these ambitions. Together we will unlock opportunities, inspiring success and strengthening the communities we proudly serve.

OUR VISION FOR 2031



Outstanding Education

Recognised for excellence across further and higher education.



Inclusive Communities

Creating opportunity for people of every age, background and ability.



Learner Success

Support learners to progress confidently by developing skills, confidence and enterprising mindsets needed for employment, apprenticeships, higher education, further learning or self-employment.



Talented people

A great place to learn. A great place to work.



Innovation

Nationally recognised for technical excellence and future-focused learning.



Employer Confidence

Employers see New College Durham as their trusted skills partner.



Sustainable Future

Supporting environmental responsibility while creating lasting social and economic impact.



Regional and National Leadership

Helping shape skills, innovation and economic prosperity across the North East and beyond.



Delivering Our Strategy

Turning ambition into action.

How we will deliver

This strategy is supported by a comprehensive framework that ensures our ambitions translate into meaningful action.

Our delivery framework aligns strategic priorities, operational planning and performance management across every area of the college.

Governance



Corporation monitors delivery

Providing oversight, challenge and strategic direction to ensure our ambitions are achieved.



Committees monitor performance

Standing Committees scrutinise progress, risk and impact across key areas.



Senior Leadership delivers

The Executive Leadership Team drives implementation, ensuring the strategy is embedded across the college.



Everyone contributes

Every colleague plays their part in turning our strategy into real outcomes for learners, employers and communities.

Our four strategic pillars create one shared direction.



Preparing people for the future.



Enabling every learner to succeed.



Creating lasting impact across our region.



Empowering our people to inspire others.



Did you know?

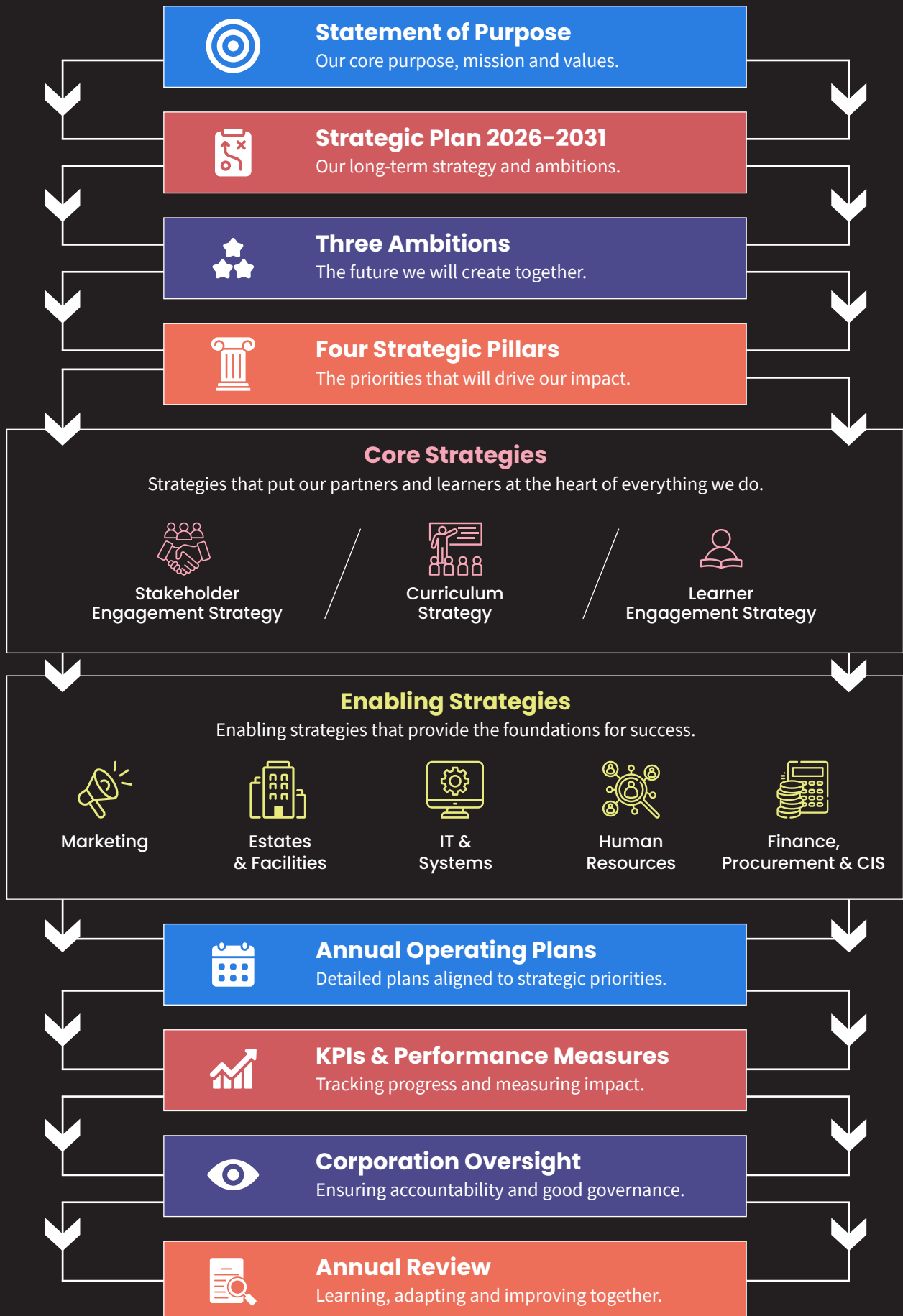
The strategy has been shaped through engagement with learners, staff, employers, governors and regional partners - and will continue to evolve as new opportunities emerge.



Looking ahead

This strategy is a living document. It will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant, responsive and ambitious.

The Strategy Hierarchy



Why New College Durham Matters

Making a difference every day.

From our learners and colleagues to our partnerships and communities, these numbers tell the story of New College Durham and the impact we create together.



10,000+ Learners Each Year

Young people, adults, apprentices and higher education students.



Outstanding Financial Health

Outstanding financial health for over 18 consecutive years.



1000+ employers

Working with us each year to develop skills, innovate and grow their businesses.



1,200+ apprentices

Building skills, experience and careers across a wide range of industries.



£40m invested over the last strategic plan

Investing in people, facilities and innovation to create opportunity.



Did you know?

We support learners from across County Durham, the North East and beyond, helping people achieve their potential and build brighter futures.

Leading through partnership & innovation

AMTEC Lead College



Leading the UK's Advanced Manufacturing Technology Excellence College for the North East.

North East Institute of Technology



Driving the technical education and innovation across the region.

Construction Centre of Excellence



Developing the workforce for housing, infrastructure and Net Zero.

T.H.E. Hub



Technical and Higher Education Hub. Higher education closer to home.

Strong Community & Civic Partner



A trusted partner in creating opportunity and driving positive change.

The Copper Pot



Real learning in a real restaurant, creating exceptional experiences for our community.

Hair & Beauty Training Salon



Providing real-salon experiences and industry-standard training.

Community & Sports Facilities



High-quality facilities that support health, wellbeing and community participation.

Supporting Every Learner to Succeed



Tailored support, an inclusive environment and opportunities that help everyone thrive.

Recognised for excellence

Our commitment to quality, inclusion and innovation has been recognised through a range of national awards and accreditations.



Transforming lives

We do more than teach. We transform lives—opening doors to education, employment and a better future for our communities.



A shared story. A shared future.

These numbers reflect our past.

Our ambitions shape our future.

Together, we will continue to create opportunity, inspire success and make a lasting difference.



20+ International Partners



£Millions invested in facilities & people



100+ Schools & Colleges Engaged



Committed to a sustainable future



Strong community & civic partner

Mia Carter

T-Level Childcare & Education

Mia said:

“I decided to study at New College Durham as it was one of the first colleges to offer T-Levels and I thought the course would provide me with exciting opportunities.

“One of the best things about studying at NCD has to be the support I received. My tutors were there for me throughout the course.

“I hope to become a teacher so progressed to the childhood studies degree at NCD in the University Centre building. I am also working three days a week alongside the course at a private nursery.”

Laura Harwood

BSc (Hons) Health and Social Care (Top-up)

Laura said:

“I cannot fault my time at New College Durham! The support you get is second to none, on both an academic and personal level.

“Completing and gaining the full degree qualification has allowed me to progress to work as part of the neurodevelopmental assessment team for Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust

“Studying with NCD has helped me to go onto a career I love.”



Our learners. Our people. Our communities. Our future.
Together.



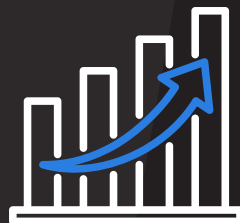
Transforming Lives

Creating opportunity and
changing lives.



Strengthening Communities

Building pride, inclusion and
social impact.



Powering the Future Economy

Driving growth, innovation
and a skilled workforce.



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