

Lancashire
Local Skills
Improvement
Plan



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Lancashire Local Skills Improvement Plan: Progress Report

June 2024

www.lancashirelsip.co.uk



This progress report has been prepared in accordance with Local Skills Improvement Plans: Stage 2 Guidance (dated November 2023) and is intended to review progress against the local skills improvement plan published in August 2023. This report was produced in June 2024, but publication was delayed due to the pre-election period.

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Who is this publication for?

The first Progress Report of the Lancashire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), published August 2023¹, provides an overview of what has been achieved so far, the impact, and what is still to be achieved against the priorities set out in the LSIP.

Employers who have engaged with the development of the LSIP priorities will see how their recommendations are being addressed. Those who have yet to get involved will see how the LSIP is helping shape local skills provision and learn how they can be part of the next stage.

While employers are the primary audience for the Progress Report, providers and other local stakeholders will also benefit from understanding the wider picture of what has happened so far and the important role they can play in implementing LSIP priorities.

Summary of the LSIP

Lancashire's LSIP is led by the North & Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, supported by the East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce. As one of eight areas who ran a Trailblazer LSIP², Lancashire has been working on LSIPs since 2021 and have engaged with over 1,200 individual employer organisations in that time.

The Lancashire LSIP covers the area of Lancashire County Council, and the unitary authorities of Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen. Within Lancashire County Council are 12 district authorities: Burnley, Chorley, Fylde, Hyndburn, Lancaster, Pendle, Preston, Ribble Valley, Rossendale, South Ribble, West Lancashire, and Wyre.

Through a mix of surveys, focus groups, roundtables, one-to-one interviews, and analysis of labour market information, the LSIP produced a number of key priorities as expressed by employers.

Common challenges across different sectors became evident:

- Finding skilled, experienced staff or new people to enter the industry to train.
- Work readiness of people entering the workforce for the first time.
- Increased digital needs across most job roles, not just specifically digital jobs or within the digital sector.
- Employers not sure how navigate the skills system and a need for them to find training easily and better understand available apprenticeships, T Levels and Skills Bootcamps.

Each sector also identified specific priorities regarding shortages in job roles and other skills required.

This Progress Report will show the cross-sectoral priorities and how they are being addressed. It will then do the same for each priority sector.

Whilst the LSIP is a plan there is a need for it to also be a process to oversee and support implementation of the solutions. The Chamber, as lead ERB of the LSIP, is not going to be delivering on most of the skills need priorities as

¹ 'Lancashire Local Skills Improvement Plan', North & Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, June 2023 - <https://www.lancashirelsip.co.uk/downloads/Lancashire%20LSIP%20report%202023.pdf>

² 'Lancashire Local Skills Improvement Plan Trailblazer', North & Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, May 2022 - https://www.lancashirelsip.co.uk/downloads/LSIP_Report_31%20March%202022_Website_Publication.pdf

this is dependent on how providers respond. The Chamber is responsible for developing and supporting the collaboration between employers, providers and stakeholders to start to deliver on these priorities.

Following the release of the Emerging Priorities in March 2023 and the Lancashire LSIP report in August 2023, providers have started to embed employers' needs in their curriculum planning and this can be seen in their Annual Accountability Statements. The county's FE Colleges have a duty to respond to local skills needs in these Statements and in their actions. How well they're succeeding in addressing employer needs is now assessed as part of Ofsted's enhanced inspections.

This report features the initial response to the LSIP as well as planned future activity.

The LSIP process is proving to have reach beyond the initial scope of the project. The strong employer voice and interactions around employment issues has seen the Chamber's LSIP team asked to partake in working groups and consultations tackling economic inactivity, health & work, and SEND employment.

Alongside FE colleges and private training providers, the LSIP has built close collaborative relationships with the Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub, Careers Hub, the Universities, local authorities, DWP, and other stakeholders representing different sectors including CITB, AMRC NW, NW Aerospace Alliance, Northern Automotive Alliance, Road Haulage Association, Skills for Care, and the Electrical Contractors Association.

Strategic and economic context update

Lancashire Devolution

Lancashire's political landscape is in the process of significant change.

In November 2023, the Government announced it would be willing to enter into a Level 2 devolution deal with Lancashire County Council, Blackburn with Darwen Council and Blackpool Council. The deal, if given final approval, will transfer new money and powers from central Government to a newly created Combined County Authority, allowing it to tackle key local priorities.

One of the priorities for the proposed Lancashire County Combined Authority is skills and adult education³:

“We will work collaboratively with employers, skills and training providers, local authorities and other stakeholders to support people to develop their skills throughout their lives and attract business to Lancashire because of our highly skilled workforce.”

A key focus is to improve the county's productivity which lags behind the rest of England. There are significant differences between districts in Lancashire with three local authorities in the top 25% nationally and six areas in the lowest performing 25%.

“The Proposed deal includes new powers to better shape local skills provisions to ensure these meet the needs of the local economy. This will include devolution of adult education, the core Adult Education Budget, and the opportunity to further refine the Local Skills Improvement Plan. Funding for Free Courses for Jobs will also be devolved and will be ring-fenced. The policy framework for proposed LCCA includes the Duty to prepare a skills and employment strategy for the LCCA Area.”

At the time of writing the General Election has been announced and member authorities of the proposed CCA are working with government to understand the implications of the general election on the devolution timetable.

Lancashire Skills & Employment Strategic Framework Update

The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub have updated the Strategic Framework for 2024-29⁴. The Framework was refreshed in 2023 with the LSIP involved in the consultation process.

Carrying on from the previous framework four key themes are used to help articulate the aims and objectives of the framework. These are largely unchanged but with the addition of 'Social Value'. The key themes are:

- **Future Workforce** - working with education and business to establish a talent pipeline and future workforce that meets the current and future demands of the local labour market.
- **Inclusive Workforce** - supporting unemployed and inactive residents into sustainable employment.
- **Skilled & Productive Workforce** – working with business to drive up skills in Lancashire's workforce to boost productivity.

³ 'Lancashire County Combined Authority: The Proposal', Lancashire County Council, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council and Blackpool Council - <https://council.lancashire.gov.uk/documents/s229904/Appendix%20B.pdf>

⁴ 'Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework 2024-29', The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub - https://issuu.com/visitlancashire/docs/8990_lancsskills_employmentstratframea3

- **Social Value** - providing a more consistent approach to capturing Social Value that contributes to achieving Lancashire 2050 priorities.

These themes are underpinned by an **Informed Approach** - taking an evidence-based approach to identifying the skills and employment issues facing Lancashire's businesses and industries.

The previous framework referenced the LEP's 'Pillars of Growth'. The LEP ceased to exist in March 2024 and its functions are transitioning to local authorities and eventually the LCCA. There is a new economic strategy in development over the summer of 2024 which may highlight new priorities to be taken into consideration in future skills strategies and LSIP work.

Economic Update

Latest economic data from 2022 for the county suggests there is no need for any change in the original priorities compared to the 2020 data used in the original report. There is little evidence to suggest that recruitment has become significantly easier.

While there remains a disparity of prosperity between different areas of Lancashire there are some emerging policy levers which aim to tackle some facets of these challenges. In particular, the Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB's WorkWell vanguard. This pilot aims to support some 5,000 residents across Lancashire and South Cumbria, dropping into all corners of Lancashire with vanguard areas in Lancaster and Morecambe, West Lancashire, Blackpool, Preston, Burnley and Blackburn with Darwen, as well as Barrow-in-Furness in South Cumbria.

The Chambers and LSIP are engaged as the prospect of reducing the number of skilled, experienced people from leaving the workforce is something that will help ease recruitment and skills pressures.

Interesting growth in priority areas does indicate sub-sectors that may need extra focus over the next year. In particular, Aerospace and "Manufacture of Other Transport Equipment" has grown and is now almost 7 times as concentrated in Lancashire as is typical nationally.

Growth and relative importance to the Lancashire economy is seen across the Manufacturing sector especially in Textiles, Rubber and Plastics, as well as Petroleum, Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals.

The Construction sector has also grown and increased its economic importance but now employs 3,000 fewer people.

Hospitality, Leisure & Tourism businesses have also seen growth and the county's sector is now more important to the local economy than is typical nationally.

Health & Social Care's contribution to the Lancashire economy has reduced although it still remains higher than is nationally typical. There are more reports coming from within the sector, however, that staffing is becoming increasingly difficult. Something that will require further research is in Childcare and Early Years which is anticipating an increasing demand due to the increased availability of free childcare hours. This has the potential to lead to staffing problems in the near future.

Priorities and actions (Roadmap)

The LSIP highlighted the key priorities of employers and a roadmap of how to start tackling them.

Listed below are the main cross-sectoral priorities:

Priority	Action	Partners	Timescales	Method of implementation	Monitoring arrangements	Progress Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Attracting people to shortage occupations and sectors > Introduce employers to adult careers organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Engage cluster groups to raise awareness of opportunities >Engage Careers Hub to help raise awareness with careers advisors/leads >Engage adult careers organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >ERB >Employers >Careers Hub >JCP >National Careers Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Routes to inform and promote opportunities to partners in place by June 2025 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Sectoral business clusters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Progress reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On track. >Initial clusters in progress with involvement from key partners >Further activity on this priority needed in some groups
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Ensure provision is aligned to needs > Ensure employers continue to be engaged during course development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Work with providers to embed LSIP employer needs embedded within curriculum design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >ERB >Providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >New courses introduced across 23/24 & 24/25 academic years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Curriculum planning > Skills Bootcamps – 24/25 >Extra provision from LSIF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Starts / enrolment data >Accountability agreements >LSIF KPIs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On track >Early action has been taken by providers to implement new courses and with numbers increasing in key areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop new shorter, modular, relevant courses reacting to upskilling needs and changing employer requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Skills Bootcamps provision to match priority areas >New provision introduced by colleges >UK SPF funding to feature shorter provision in priority areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >ERB >The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub >Local Authorities >FE Colleges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >New courses introduced across 23/24 & 24/25 academic years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Skills Bootcamps – 24/25 >AEB >Extra provision from LSIF >UK SPF skills provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >New Skills Bootcamps courses >LSIF progress reports & KPIs >LA updates on UK SPF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On track >Skills Bootcamp provision meets many priority areas and other identified needs >Colleges have started to introduce shorter course provision utilising LSIF funded facilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve future staffing and skills planning among smaller employers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Develop support for SMEs to help them implement effective skills planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >ERB >The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Workshops to take place and a toolkit to be developed by Jan 2025 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Sectoral business clusters >Workshops >Toolkit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Progress report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not started >Planned activity during 2024/25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers require greater support to navigate the skills system and providers need to build trust with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Raise awareness of apprenticeships, T Levels and Skills Bootcamps >Develop training map of provision in Lancashire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >ERB >Providers > The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Demonstrable improvement in awareness by March 2025 >Accessible training maps in place by March 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Sectoral business clusters >Events >Chamber publications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Survey results >Apprenticeship vacancies advertised >T Level placements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In progress >Promotion of apprenticeships to employers through Early Connect pilot >Programme of T Level promotional

employers		>Lancs WBLE Forum	2025	>Early Connect programme	offered	work being developed with DfE and colleges >Evolve page developed by The Lancashire Colleges and Lancs WBLE Forum
Develop a greater understanding among young people of what is needed and expected in the workplace	> Engagement with schools and colleges features examples of behavioural expectations	>Careers Hub >ERB >The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub >Providers	>Work readiness / employability embedded in colleges across 23/24 & 24/25 academic years >Work Readiness language project launched in schools for 24/25 academic year	>Work Readiness language project for schools	>Accountability agreements >Progress report	On track >Colleges are reporting increased employability work ongoing across the curriculum and this is demonstrated in accountability agreements and strategic plans >Work readiness project on track to be launched in schools for the new academic year

Despite the recency of the LSIP publication there are already very positive responses to the priorities of employers.

Ensuring provision is aligned to needs

Lancashire’s FE and Sixth Form Colleges refer to the LSIP during **annual curriculum reviews** as part of business planning processes. In responding to the Local Needs Duty and preparing their **Annual Accountability Statements** Governing Bodies review how well the education and training they provide meets local needs as identified in the LSIP alongside the Lancashire 2050 Strategy and feedback they receive directly from individuals and employers. Thus the LSIP is informing curriculum change.

Three **Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF)** projects are being delivered collaboratively by **The Lancashire Colleges** in direct response to the LSIP.⁵ Through the **‘Skills for Sustainability’, ‘Digital, Cyber and AI Employability Skills’** and **‘Farm to Fork’** projects the colleges are working closely with local employers to enhance and design new courses that respond to their skills needs.

They are encouraging employers to get more involved in skills delivery through offering Masterclasses and work experience opportunities for students helping to promote careers in the sector, they are also supporting college staff to update their skills by providing CPD and other opportunities.

Finally, the funding is allowing the colleges to invest in state-of-the-art teaching and learning spaces ensuring that students are able to learn on industry-standard equipment, helping to prepare them for successful careers.

⁵ <https://www.tlc.ac.uk/projects-activities/lisif/>

The **Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub** has recently announced the latest wave of **Skills Bootcamps**.⁶ The LSIP findings were shared with employers and providers during the consultation and course design stage. With the courses announced nearly 90% can be linked to recommendations within the LSIP. The remaining courses are all in niche areas but have all had to demonstrate an employer need for the training.

The Skills Bootcamps announced cover the following areas which all feature either as LSIP priority sectors or within skills needs of employers:

- Construction
- Digital
- Engineering & Manufacturing
- Logistics
- Healthcare & Education
- Leadership
- Business & Marketing
- Green Energy & Sustainability

Support for employers to navigate the skills system

The LSIP described how employers find the skills system and local offer complex and difficult to navigate. In response, **The Lancashire Colleges** have commissioned a number of pieces of work that aim to make it simpler for employers and individuals to understand the different courses available and how they map to different occupations through progression pathways from entry level to higher level courses.

‘Evolve’⁷ is an easy-to-use digital directory of courses that have been designed specifically to support existing employees to develop or update their skills in the fields of sustainability and digital technology. Evolve is currently being piloted and if popular then the colleges will look to broaden the content to other topics.

Curriculum and Pathway Maps are in production; they will summarise the main skills pathways to careers in priority sectors and occupations, helping young people and adults to map out their journey and to see the progression routes that will take them to their chosen careers.

Work Readiness / Employability Skills

What was referred to as ‘employability skills’ in the LSIP will now be referred to as ‘work readiness’, following conversations with employers, providers and stakeholders which made it clear that ‘employability skills’ means something different to everyone.

While the LSIP primarily deals with post-16 education and skills, there is an acceptance that working with young people before they reach college, start apprenticeships or enter the workplace as crucial to improving the work readiness of those entering work for the first time.

⁶ <https://www.lancashireskillshub.co.uk/skillsbootcamps/>

⁷ <https://www.lancsforum.co.uk/evolve/>

Working alongside the **Careers Hub** and the **Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub**, the Chamber has helped in the development of a common language for work readiness. This has been created using information from various research including the LSIP, and a standalone survey to employers.

The intention is to implement within schools using the Skills Builder framework. The proposal has been approved by Skills Builder, presented to school careers leads at the Careers Hub Conference in June 2024, and made available online for them to access⁸. From there this should be able to be implemented within schools in time for the start of the 2024/25 academic year.

Once launched there is interest in using the same language within post-16 education and for out of work adults.

Post-16 providers have also been working to improve employability provision. Many have embedded employability enrichment activities within the curriculum while others are in the process of doing so.

Low Carbon & Sustainability

What has been achieved so far?

There has been considerable activity already in relation to green skills. In particular, as will be featured throughout the sectoral analyses, there is much new provision being developed in the areas of construction and retrofit, EV maintenance, catering & hospitality, and farming.

What still needs to be achieved?

Within the LSIP was the recognition that employers are not clear on how the move to net zero and improved sustainability will affect their business. That includes how to plan for the change to job roles and the skills needed.

Over the next phase of the LSIP work will take place with employers to help them understand the impact of low carbon and sustainability, and how to plan ahead to have the right skills in place. This activity will feature in the different sectoral clusters and separate workshops.

⁸ 'Work Ready Lancashire: Shared Common Language', Lancashire Careers Hub, June 2024 - <https://lancashirecareershubs.co.uk/work-ready-lancashire/>

Digital

Priorities and actions

The priorities relating to digital skills address needs both in digital roles and the digital sector, and for more general digital skills required across different sectors. Digital roles are an important part of Lancashire’s job market with significant growth coming over the coming years, especially with the opening of the UK Cyber Force in Samesbury.

As well as specifically digital roles there is an increasing need for digital skills across a variety of job roles across all sectors as digital technology and ways of working become more common. This has also exposed a need for better understanding among smaller employers of digital transformation and how to plan for the digital skills needed across the workforce.

Priority	Action	Partners	Timescales	Method of implementation	Monitoring arrangements	Progress Status
<p>Sector occupations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Software developers / engineers >Web developers >Computer support specialists >Computer systems engineers / architects >Cyber security technicians <p>Digital skills requested in other sectors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Data analysis >Web design >Digital marketing >Excel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Increase relevant courses and participation >Promote careers opportunities >Introduce short upskilling and job entry training >Collaborations of employers and providers to develop short, flexible upskilling opportunities for existing staff members as well as building digital confidence and competence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Providers >ERB >Careers Hub > The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >New courses introduced across 23/24 & 24/25 academic years >Routes to inform and promote opportunities to partners in place by June 2025 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Curriculum planning > Skills Bootcamps – 24/25 >Extra provision from LSIF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Starts / enrolment data >Accountability agreements >New Skills Bootcamps courses >LSIF progress reports & KPIs 	<p>On track</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Positive responses from some providers so far with commitments to digital, new courses and increased learner numbers >New Skills Bootcamps have been introduced addressing key LSIP needs >Positive initial activity from the LSIF digital project with more to come especially in terms of employer engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Support employers to understand the changing digital landscape > Ensure information to employers and provision is kept as up-to-date as possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Support employers who need help to understand the impact and opportunities of digital transformation as well as future skills planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >ERB >Sector business clusters >Providers > The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Effective processes in place to provide necessary information and support to employers by June 2025 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Information sharing through clusters >Events / workshops >Information shared through Chamber channels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Progress reports 	<p>Not started</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Work on how to better disseminate this information is scheduled for the 2024-25 period.

What has been achieved so far?

There has been significant progress in starting to deliver on the digital skills required by employers.

The **LSIF 'Digital, Cyber and AI Employability Skills'** project has started to develop facilities and improve equipment in order to deliver new digital training, covering the needs of different sectors and roles, not just those that are specifically digital. This will include the development of shorter training opportunities for businesses to access.

As of the end of May 2024, the LSIF project reported that partner colleges have already introduced 16 new level 3-5 courses directly aligned to LSIP priorities with 158 learners having completed the new provision. Employers have also started to release or loan staff to help develop or teach new provision.

The most recent wave of **Skills Bootcamps** respond directly to much of the requested skills providing short, modular training which cover both upskilling of existing staff and providing skills to those aiming to enter the workforce from unemployment. Digital priorities being provided for the Bootcamps include:

- Data analysis
- Digital marketing
- Software development
- Computer support

Some local authorities have utilised UK SPF projects to tackle digital skills issues, some looking at upskilling existing workers, while others focus on giving economically inactive residents basic digital skills as part of a wider employability programme.

What still needs to be achieved?

Work will take place over the next year to implement and deliver the informative support for employers on digital transformation. This will include support for employers to better prepare for changing job roles and how to plan for meeting their current and future skills requirements.

This support will work with the existing clusters and new clusters as they are launched. The LSIP team will collaborate with providers and other local stakeholders to provide practical advice through events, workshops and online information.

As the LSIF 'Digital..' project continues until March 2025, the FE colleges will be seeking to engage closely with employers in the following areas:

- Employers releasing / loaning staff to help develop or teach new provision
- Employers introduced to new specialist equipment or technology for adoption in their business
- Employers providing industry placements to FE teaching staff.

Manufacturing & Engineering

Priority	Action	Partners	Timescales	Method of implementation	Monitoring arrangements	Progress Status
Sector Occupations: >Manufacturing Engineers >CNC Machinists >Electrical & Multi-Skilled Maintenance Engineers >Tool Makers Other skills requested by the sector: >Data analysis >Procurement >Project & change management >Leadership, management & supervisory >Digital confidence & competence	>Increase relevant courses and participation >Promote careers opportunities >Introduce short upskilling and job entry training >Collaborations of employers and providers to develop short, flexible upskilling opportunities for existing staff members as well as building digital confidence and competence	>Providers >ERB >Careers Hub > The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub	>New courses introduced across 23/24 & 24/25 academic years >Routes to inform and promote opportunities to partners in place by June 2025	>Curriculum planning > Skills Bootcamps – 24/25	>Starts / enrolment data >Accountability agreements >New Skills Bootcamps courses	On track >Early indications of new provision and increased learner numbers >New Skills Bootcamps courses supporting some sector roles and other roles needed by the sector

What has been achieved so far?

Manufacturing & engineering was the first of the new LSIP business clusters to be launched. Regular bi-monthly meetings have been held bringing together a variety of manufacturing companies, providers and local stakeholders. The initial focus for the cluster was to look at ways to raise the profile of the sector.

Colleges are reporting increases in starts on courses supporting shortage occupations particularly in engineering and electrical subject areas.

The latest round of Skills Bootcamps has announced some courses supporting the sector, looking at developing skills in additive manufacturing, 3D printing and CAD. There are also non-sector specific courses which support the additional skills needs of manufacturers: data analysis, leadership & management, and procurement.

What still needs to be achieved?

Continue the work of the cluster on raising the profile of the sector and develop a plan to help employers attract more people to key roles. This will be a collaboration between employers, the Careers Hub, adult careers support, and providers.

Continued involvement of employers to work directly with providers in the development of new delivery and curriculum design. For example, Burnley College will be developing modular training around digitalisation in engineering as part of the Lifelong Learning Entitlement and the Modular Acceleration Programme pilot.

Engineering T Levels are increasing both in numbers of places and with new providers starting in September 2024. With providers already expressing concerns over finding enough placements for students, these increases will require greater engagement with employers for them to better understand T Levels and offer placements.

Health & Social Care

Priority	Action	Partners	Timescales	Method of implementation	Monitoring arrangements	Progress Status
Sector Occupations: >Health Care Assistants >Staff Nurses >Registered Nurses >Mental Health Practitioners >Occupational Therapists >Midwives >Registered Mental Health Nurses >Adult Care Workers Upskilling need: >Care leadership & management	>Increase relevant courses and participation >Promote careers opportunities >Introduce short upskilling and job entry training >Collaborations of employers and providers to develop short, flexible upskilling opportunities for existing staff members as well as building digital confidence and competence	>Providers >ERB >Careers Hub > The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub	>New courses introduced across 23/24 & 24/25 academic years >Routes to inform and promote opportunities to partners in place by June 2025	>Curriculum planning > Skills Bootcamps – 24/25	>Starts / enrolment data >Accountability agreements >New Skills Bootcamps courses	On track >Increases in provision especially T Level >Skills Bootcamps featuring sector specific training

What has been achieved so far?

There is good coverage across the county for courses covering health & social care in both L2&3. Training beyond L3 for those entering leadership roles is primarily through apprenticeship routes.

More providers are delivering the Health T Level with it now delivered by 8 colleges. One other college has paused delivery due to concerns about the assessment.

There are new Skills Bootcamps to be delivered across the following topics:

- Leadership & management in health & social care
- Early years
- Education, health and social care
- Healthcare administration
- Pharmacy

What still needs to be achieved?

A planned social care cluster has not started as discussions are ongoing about linking up with existing care employer groups with Skills for Care and through Lancashire County Council. Employer engagement work will commence on how best to promote the sector and attract more people to health and care roles.

There are reports of more pressure developing on childcare employers due to the need for greater numbers of qualified staff. This requires further research with employers to understand the scale of the issue and how it will be best tackled.

Construction

Priority	Action	Partners	Timescales	Method of implementation	Monitoring arrangements	Progress Status
Sector Occupations: > Plumbing, Heating and Ventilation Engineers >Quantity Surveyors >Carpenters and Joiners >Construction Managers >Construction and Building Trade Supervisors >Electricians/ Electrical Engineering >Roofers	>Increase relevant courses and participation >Promote careers opportunities >Introduce short upskilling and job entry training	>Providers >ERB >Careers Hub > The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub	>New courses introduced across 23/24 & 24/25 academic years >Routes to inform and promote opportunities to partners in place by June 2025	>Curriculum planning > Skills Bootcamps – 24/25 >Extra provision from LSIF >Sector business clusters	>Starts / enrolment data >Accountability agreements >New Skills Bootcamps courses >LSIF progress reports & KPIs	On track >There is increased access to courses with numbers growing in some shortage areas
Retrofit: >Support businesses in the sector to understand new technologies and opportunities available	>Provide employers within the sector with the information they need to understand how to move to green technologies and retrofit opportunities	>ERB > The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub >Providers >Industry bodies	>Platforms for sharing information with regarding green technologies to be in place by June 2025	>Sector business clusters >Workshops	>Progress reports	Not started >Planned activity during 2024/25

What has been achieved so far?

Two separate LSIP clusters have been set up to cover construction and trades. One is in direct support of the construction and retrofit elements of the LSIF 'Skills for Sustainability' project. The other is a new cluster for companies engaged in civil engineering, groundworks and plant operations. Both clusters are bringing together employers, skills providers, and key industry stakeholders such as the CITB and Electrical Contractors Association.

The LSIF project has significant focus on construction and trades, particularly tackling green skills and retrofit. This includes new course provision at levels 3-5, improved facilities for new and existing learners to take advantage of, increased employer engagement, and new training for teaching staff.

New Skills Bootcamps are to be delivered across a wide range of topics:

- CAD for construction
- Construction management / leadership / supervision
- Estimating
- Plant – excavator, roller dumper, telehandler, forklift truck
- Groundworks
- Bricklaying
- Streetworks
- Heating & heat pumps
- Retrofit advisor

What still needs to be achieved?

The LSIF project is ongoing until March 2025 and engaging employers in activity and new course development will be key.

The work informing employers of the opportunities available through green technology including retrofit will get underway over the next year. A collaboration between the Chamber, industry bodies and providers will help employers better understand low carbon technology and how to get the right skills to take advantage.

Hospitality, Leisure & Tourism

Priority	Action	Partners	Timescales	Method of implementation	Monitoring arrangements	Progress Status
Sector Occupations: >Kitchen Porters / Kitchen & Catering Assistants >Chefs – Commis & Professional Chef >Catering & Bar Managers >Bar Staff >Waiting Staff >Housekeeping Staff >Receptionists >Business administrators >Digital Marketers >Events Managers Other skills requested by the sector: >Excel & basic software packages >Digital confidence & competence >Cellar management upskilling >Leadership, management & supervisory	>Increase relevant courses and participation >Promote careers opportunities >Introduce short upskilling and job entry training >Collaborations of employers and providers to develop short, flexible upskilling opportunities for existing staff members as well as building digital confidence and competence	>Providers >ERB >Careers Hub > The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub	>New courses introduced across 23/24 & 24/25 academic years >Routes to inform and promote opportunities to partners in place by June 2025	>Curriculum planning > Skills Bootcamps – 24/25 >Extra provision from LSIF	>Starts / enrolment data >Accountability agreements >New Skills Bootcamps courses >LSIF progress reports & KPIs	On track >New provision has been developed along with improved facilities >There is good collaboration in place to work on raising the sector's profile as a career destination

What has been achieved so far?

The LSIF 'Farm to Fork' project deals specifically with the catering and hospitality sector. The purpose of the project is to:

- Develop provision, curriculum, resources and facilities in line with recognised job opportunities and feedback/input from employers on expected skills sets for employees.
- Consider food waste, carbon reduction (food miles) and sustainability.

- Developing Front of House provision.
- Developing Chef skills and experience of staff and students.
- Bringing teaching facilities, resources and equipment in line with modern industry standards with the input of employers. This includes the movement towards induction cooking, rather than gas.
- Develop a career path in line with qualification opportunities.
- Recognise the need to improve the perception of the industry in terms of Hospitality & Catering.

The colleges involved have all invested LSIF spend on updating kitchen and restaurant facilities to improve the quality of provision. So far new level 3 course options have been developed, employers engaged in the development of the provision, staff undertaking industry placements and engaged in relevant CPD.

An LSIP business cluster has been established for Catering & Hospitality in support of the 'Farm to Fork' LSIF project. The cluster is being led by Blackburn College in their role as project's lead college. The cluster is a collaboration between a good range of employers including bars, restaurants, events venues, and hotels, alongside providers and industry stakeholders.

While the group is in position to support the course development activity of the LSIF, they are particularly keen on addressing the industry's image and raising the profile of career opportunities.

While there are no Skills Bootcamps which deal with sector specific needs, there are some available relevant to other required skills, such as:

- Leadership & management
- Digital marketing

There are intentions among colleges to increase numbers in catering and chef provision as well with West Lancashire College looking to re-introduce catering & hospitality.

What still needs to be achieved?

Work will need to be done in collaboration with the LSIF colleges to promote activity and increase employer engagement in new delivery and use of facilities. There are ambitious targets of increased numbers of learners commencing on the new provision from September and for employers to engage with it.

The cluster group work with employers and stakeholders to raise the profile of the industry and encourage more people to consider a career in the sector will get underway. It will provide a good opportunity for employers to help shape this activity and promote themselves as a destination for new industry entrants.

Transport & Distribution

Transport & distribution incorporates a variety of employer types including logistics, warehousing, public transport, and other companies where transportation is an important part of their operations.

Training for driving and warehouse occupations is primarily delivered by private training providers through commercial courses or through funded programmes like Skills Bootcamps. Vehicle mechanics and technicians are also delivered through colleges.

Priority	Action	Partners	Timescales	Method of implementation	Monitoring arrangements	Progress Status
Sector Occupations: >Large Goods Vehicle Drivers >Vehicle Technicians, Mechanics and Electricians >Van Drivers & Couriers >Warehouse Operatives, Fulfilment Associates & Pickers/Packers >Transport Managers >Coach and Bus Drivers	>Increase relevant courses and participation >Promote careers opportunities >Introduce short upskilling and job entry training >Collaborations of employers and providers to develop short, flexible upskilling opportunities for existing staff members as well as building digital confidence and competence	>Providers >ERB >Careers Hub > The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub	>New courses introduced across 23/24 & 24/25 academic years	>Curriculum planning > Skills Bootcamps – 24/25	>Starts / enrolment data >Accountability agreements >New Skills Bootcamps courses	On track >New courses are being funded through the Skills Bootcamps >Automotive mechanic / technician training is increasing especially in relation to new EV technology

What has been achieved so far?

A new LSIP cluster has been created for the sector including all of the employer types listed above and providers. Initial discussions suggest that driver shortages are easing, supported by previous Skills Bootcamps delivering an influx of drivers and upskilling existing drivers.

There is a mixture of opinion among employers about the move to electric fleets. For those moving over to electric vehicles there is an increased focus on EV mechanics coming through the colleges. As well as EV being incorporated into full time vehicle mechanic courses there is new provision, facilities and being introduced through the LSIF 'Skills for Sustainability' project and a new Skills Bootcamp.

There are also new bootcamps for the following topics:

- HGV drivers
- International freight
- Warehouse & storage – fork-lift truck operation

What still needs to be achieved?

The business cluster will need to be established and consider what areas they want to focus on over the next year. As with other sectors this is likely to be how to attract more people to the sector, especially in shortage areas like warehousing and vehicle mechanics.

Farming & Agriculture

Challenges in the sector focused on how to attract new people to the workforce. Many who do try to enter the industry struggled at school and this provides barriers to accessing the vocational training required within the sector.

Increasing environmental and sustainability requirements within the industry are also an issue for employers unsure of skills needed, working practices and technology.

Priority	Action	Partners	Timescales	Method of implementation	Monitoring arrangements	Progress Status
Sector Occupations: >General farm worker	>Increase relevant courses and participation >Promote careers opportunities >Introduce short upskilling and job entry training >Collaborations of employers and providers to develop short, flexible upskilling opportunities for existing staff members as well as building digital confidence and competence	>Providers >ERB >Careers Hub > The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub	>New courses introduced across 23/24 & 24/25 academic years >Routes to inform and promote opportunities to partners in place by June 2025	>Curriculum planning	>Starts / enrolment data >Accountability agreements	On Track >Increases in provision taking place including more providers delivering for the sector >Work to do with employers and stakeholders around improving the perception of the sector

What has been achieved so far?

Myerscough College are a specialist land-based college and are the main provider of skills training for the sector in Lancashire. There are others introducing more limited courses for the industry including Burnley College and Lancaster & Morecambe College, both introducing Animal Handling / Management courses for the 2024/25 academic year.

The LSIF 'Farm to Fork' has a farming element alongside the catering & hospitality work. Through this Myerscough College are developing 'off-grid' facilities and a sustainable approach to farming. This will involve improving awareness among farming employers of new technologies and the skills needed to move towards greater sustainability.

The LSIF has also helped Myerscough increase employer engagement with the creation of two new Farmer Networks. The activity is also aimed at improving the perception of the industry through increased knowledge of science and modern working practices including environmental technologies.

What still needs to be achieved?

The continuation of the LSIF project and the need to engage the sector's employers in the activity and new provision. Also, activity to build on improving the perception of the industry and raise awareness of career paths within the industry.

What has been achieved so far?

Considering the LSIP was only published in August 2023, the response from skills providers has been positive with new courses being introduced and funding being used to respond to employers needs as featured in the LSIP.

The latest wave of Skills Bootcamps are closely aligned with LSIP needs with nearly 90% responding to priorities.

With the first cluster groups underway and employers agreeing what they want to focus on in collaboration with providers and stakeholders, a new way of tackling ongoing industry issues is in progress.

What still needs to be achieved?

Employer Support

Activity supporting employers with understanding new technologies and with planning staffing and skills is to get underway from Autumn 2024. This will cover information and planning in digital, low carbon & sustainability, and general support for SMEs in skills planning.

Apprenticeships & T Levels

Apprenticeship starts are struggling, in particular as a route for 16–19 year-olds entering the workplace. There is more interest in starting an apprenticeship than there are opportunities being offered by employers. As a route to attract new staff members and develop a skilled workforce, apprenticeships support the aims expressed by employers through the LSIP.

Raising the profile of apprenticeships in collaboration with local partners and to support the continuation of the Early Connect pilot will be a central part of activity in the next phase.

Similarly, T Level placements are proving difficult to find in some areas and subjects. With T Level courses becoming more prevalent, especially as they replace BTEC provision, the need for employers to provide placements will become more important.

Activity is being planned with DfE and The Lancashire Colleges to promote T Levels to employers starting this Summer.

Institute of Technology

The Lancashire & Cumbria Institute of Technology (L&CIoT)⁹ is getting underway. Employer engagement is a key element of IoT planning and delivery.¹⁰ This will support LSIP priorities while introducing new higher level technical training in the following areas:

- Construction
- Computing & Digital
- Engineering & Manufacturing
- Automotive
- Health & Medical Professionals
- Science

There will be a lot of opportunities for employers to engage directly with skills providers and other stakeholders in the following activity:

- Helping shape new provision
- Giving direct support to providers through supporting teaching delivery or giving industry placements to teaching staff
- Working with careers organisations and industry bodies to improve perception of different industries as a career destination
- Developing a greater understanding of topics including the move to net zero, recruitment and skills planning, apprenticeships and T Levels, new digital technologies and skills
- Helping direct the future conversation around skills and employment through clusters and other groups.

⁹ <https://landciot.ac.uk/>

¹⁰ 'Barometer Report 2024', Lancashire & Cumbria Institute of Technology - <https://vivapr-institute-of-technology-north-west.pantheonsite.io/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/IoT-Barometer-Report-2024-compressed.pdf>



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