

Winter 2024/2025

Skills Essex

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Local
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Improvement
Plan

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Essex agenda



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Proud to work in partnership for Essex ▶▶▶

The Skills and Employability Team at Essex County Council stresses the importance of partnership working to overcome the skills issues facing the county.

It is our pleasure to introduce this special supplement published by BusinessTime in Essex magazine on which we have collaborated with Essex Chambers of Commerce. As a key sponsor of the Festival of Business, we are thrilled to help showcase the range of business activity and the exciting jobs and skills opportunities on offer.

Partnership is core to everything we do and we have been pleased

to support Essex Chambers of Commerce with the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), which is covered in the following pages. The LSIP is led by employers who have given their perspective on skills needs and workforce development priorities.

The Government has identified that delivering growth and economic stability are key priorities, including a commitment to "break down barriers to opportunity." Employability and skills lie at the heart of this ethos and Essex County Council is committed to ensuring the county has a workforce that is aspirational with the priority skills needed by businesses. We also aspire for an engaged business community that is committed to delivering good

quality employment. Collectively through this partnership we will create growth and prosperity for the county. The range of education and skills provision locally highlights the wide range of courses, facilities and support available to employers.

At Essex County Council, we believe strongly in the importance of skills to our local businesses, and we have a wealth of work underway which illustrates this. This includes our Apprenticeship Levy Transfer Service (EALTS) which has already supported over 860 apprenticeships and raised nearly £5 million levy funding. We have also supported our key sectors through programmes such as the HGV Driver training and the Social Care Recruitment programme. We also launched the Essex Green Skills Hub in the summer, as part of our ongoing work on sustainability and building on our Green Skills Pledge. Essex County Council has also just launched Essex 200, an Apprenticeship Support Fund for the county's SMEs. This provides SMEs with up to £2,000 in funding per apprentice.

Our Essex Careers magazine has gone from strength to strength and features employers and sectors across Essex such as construction, creative, space, engineering and health. All key information is collated on our Essex Opportunities portal, which features everything from jobs and careers to events and local training and courses. With much growth happening across the county, it's essential that we respond to skills needs. We will be launching more business-facing services and resources in the coming months so keep a look out!

The LSIP has provided an employer perspective on skills needs locally and has enabled all key stakeholders to work towards the same priorities. Essex County Council provided £610,000 additional funding to

support the £5.5 million Local Skills Improvement Fund delivering against the LSIP and which has helped to boost opportunities for employers and residents alike. This will include new facilities in colleges across Essex, responding to employer need in areas such as net zero, digital and immersive technology. The LSIP helps to inform our delivery and focus and to respond to skills shortages and needs locally. It also helps us to ensure we're maximising opportunities and helping to raise the profile of Essex nationally.

Looking to the future, we want to reshape how we engage with residents and businesses, enabling us to simplify the skills systems to reach more people than ever before via a personalised, inclusive service accessed at a time and on a platform that suits them. This work includes the ongoing development of our digital careers platform to support the effective exchange of labour and skills for residents and business. It also includes developing new business engagement structures via the launch of an 'accreditation programme' to recognise good quality employment practices and reward residents who make a positive step to employability. We are really excited to collaborate with our business community in these developments.

We hope that you'll find this supplement informative and helpful and are as inspired by all that's going on as we are. You can request information on any of the above initiatives, join our newsletter(s) or keep in touch with us via skills@essex.gov.uk

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Joanne Giles, Essex Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) Project Director, outlines why rising to the skills challenge is vital for the county's economic future.

In today's rapidly evolving economic landscape, the importance of a skilled workforce cannot be overstated.

For Essex, a county known for its entrepreneurial spirit and diverse economic sectors, the development and enhancement of local skills are pivotal. The Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) plays a critical role in aligning the skills of the workforce with the needs of local employers, thereby driving economic growth and sustainability.

A strong network between our colleges and independent training providers are essential for the success of our LSIP.

These institutions offer a wide range of training programs and qualifications that are tailored to the needs of local industries. By providing high-quality education and

The importance of skills and Local Skills Improvement Plan for the Essex economy

training, they ensure that individuals are equipped with the skills required to thrive in the modern economy. This network also fosters innovation and adaptability, enabling the workforce to respond to new challenges and opportunities.

The Role of Skills in Economic Growth

Skills are the backbone of any thriving economy. They enable individuals to

perform tasks efficiently, innovate, and adapt to new technologies and processes. In Essex, sectors such as advanced manufacturing, digital technology, health and care, and construction are particularly reliant on a skilled workforce. The ability to attract and retain talent in these areas is essential for maintaining competitiveness and fostering economic development.

Addressing Skills Gaps

One of the primary objectives of our LSIP is to identify and address skills gaps within the local economy. In Essex, extensive consultation with employers, data analysis, and evidence collection have highlighted several key areas where skills shortages exist. These include digital skills, green skills, leadership and management skills, and soft skills such as communication and teamwork. By focusing on these areas, we aim to ensure that the local workforce is equipped with the

necessary skills to meet your current and future demands.

Employer-Led Initiatives

Our LSIP is designed to be employer-led, ensuring that the skills being developed are directly aligned with the needs of our local businesses. This approach fosters a strong partnership between our employers, educational institutions, and training providers. In Essex, this collaboration has led to the creation of innovative training programs and facilities.

Enhancing Employability

For individuals, acquiring new skills enhances employability and opens up opportunities for career advancement. We are focussing on providing accessible and flexible training options, ensuring that people from all backgrounds can benefit. This includes initiatives aimed at improving digital literacy, offering leadership and management training, and supporting those with barriers to employment.

Supporting Economic Sectors

Essex's economy is diverse, with significant contributions from sectors such as advanced manufacturing, engineering, digital technology, health and care, and logistics. Each of these sectors faces unique challenges and opportunities. The Essex LSIP is helping to address these by providing targeted support and resources.

Promoting Innovation and Adaptability

In an era of rapid technological change, the ability to innovate and adapt is crucial. Our collaboration is helping to emphasise the importance of continuous learning and upskilling.

By fostering a culture of lifelong learning, these plans help to ensure that the local workforce remains agile and capable of responding to new challenges and opportunities. This is particularly important in sectors such as digital technology, where advancements occur at a rapid pace.

Economic Resilience

A skilled workforce contributes to the overall resilience of the local economy. By equipping individuals with the skills needed to thrive in various industries, The Essex LSIP is helping to mitigate the impact of economic downturns and sector-specific disruptions. This resilience is vital for maintaining economic stability and ensuring long-term growth.

Conclusion

In conclusion, our Local Skills Improvement Plan is vital to the Essex economy. It addresses skills gaps, enhance employability, supports key economic sectors, promotes innovation, and contributes to economic resilience. By fostering strong partnerships between employers, educational institutions, and training providers, our LSIP ensures that the local workforce is well-equipped to meet the demands of the modern economy. As Essex continues to grow and evolve, the importance of these initiatives will only increase, making them a cornerstone of the county's economic strategy.

Employers are the cornerstone of our objectives; the entire ecosystem of success begins with them. To learn more and join us in this journey, please contact us.

LSIP Report | Essex Chambers of Commerce



South Essex Colleges Group welcome the Local Skills improvement plan and have used this to plan a curriculum taking into account the key priorities.

Priority areas for the Group are Engineering, Construction and the Built Environment, Creative and Cultural, Digitech, Education, Health and Social Care, Professional Services and Transport and Logistics. These are offered across a range of courses for young people, adults and apprentices.

SECG is the largest provider of vocational and technical qualifications with specialist sites throughout the South of Essex. Split into three colleges with a College Principal overseeing the curriculum and working with local employers.

The Basildon Colleges at Basildon Town Centre, Luckyn Lane and Stephenson Road have specialist facilities offering a range of Digital and Creative Media courses, Engineering courses and Apprenticeships in a number of standards including, Engineering Technician (Mechatronics and Marine pathways), Maintenance Operation Engineering Technician, Machinist and Welding,

Building Services courses and apprenticeships in Plumbing and Electrical. Construction and Motor Vehicle courses and apprenticeships at Stephenson Road.

Thurrock College offers a diverse provision to young people and adults on courses from and Apprenticeships. Service Industries offers provision for in Hair and Beauty, Hospitality and Catering, Travel and Tourism, Business, Health and Care and Early Years.

The Construction and Building Services department offer provision in Multi Skills, Carpentry, Plumbing and Electrical installation.

Southend City College offers a variety of courses within the priority areas including Health and Social Care, Early Years Education, Creative and Professional Services across different levels including some adult provision.

SECG are also the lead college for the South East Institute of Technology offering courses at Level 4 and Level 5 in key specialisms of Engineering, Construction, Health, Digital and Logistics. Offering the latest higher technical qualifications throughout the Group. These courses have been designed with employers to enable students to gain the skills needed for the future. These courses include Higher Technical Qualifications in Construction Management, Leadership & Management, Mechatronics, Automation & Control Engineering, Health Professions, Cyber Security, Network Engineering and Data Analytics.

Each curriculum area works closely with employers to ensure that the curriculum is fit for the workforce of the future and provides work experience for students to develop their soft skills. SECG are working with the National Talent Agency to offer the students a qualification in Essential Work Skills.

At SECG, we have embraced AI and innovative learning technologies, including immersive suites and augmented reality tools within Metaverse learning. Our partnership with JISC has provided valuable insights and proven methods for further education.

SECG have embraced the offer of Skills Bootcamps offering HGV driving courses to train or upskill HGV drivers working closely with employers to design the curriculum and offer training in both Essex and the Midlands. Logistics apprenticeships are also offered in International Freight Forwarding, Warehouse, Transport and Warehouse Supervisors and LGV driving.

SECG offer a range of adult courses in preparation for work in a number of sectors including Security, Health & Social Care, CSCS for Construction, Forklift & Warehousing, Teaching Assistants, IT, Business Administration & Office Skills.

SECG are utilising innovation and tailored learning funding to offer bespoke courses for employers to enable them to upskill their staff, courses at present include welding, pre-team leading and power tool awareness. Our commercial offer includes green skills in Electric/Hybrid course in Motor Vehicle and Boats, Installation of EV chargers and Complex qualifications.

Please visit our website for more information www.southessex.ac.uk



WE ARE THE HEART OF COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION



Providing education and training to more than 2,000 learners

SOUTHEND Adult Community College (SACC) is Southend Borough Council's provider of adult education and provides education and training to more than 2,000 learners.

In addition, it provides community outreach provision and family learning in local community venues and employee training and assessment on employer premises.

Southend Adult Community College is the home of learning in Southend, providing accessible opportunities in education and training for young people and adults in the borough since 1994.

The council works very closely with Southend Adult Community College to provide the local community with every opportunity to achieve their full potential on a variety of courses that increase knowledge, help learners obtain a qualification, start their own business or enhance their well-being by discovering and developing interests that enrich quality of life.

The college provides community learning courses. This means studying part-time to learn a new skill, improve your wellbeing and explore new ideas and activities. It also offers community outreach provision and family learning in the college as well as in the local community.

You can enrol on accredited courses in English, maths and ICT. It also offers employability courses, vocational qualifications, ESOL courses and industry specific training for adults. For young people (16+), it offers full-time vocational programmes. In addition, it provides employee training and assessment on the employer's premises.

It has three activity centres: its main Southchurch Centre, an adult centre at Belfair's Academy in Leigh and a specialist centre for young adults with complex and profound learning difficulties and disabilities at its Westcliff Centre.

The college is an Ofsted Good Provider.

The college is committed to supporting every person in Southend to further their learning through a vibrant and innovative adult

education service. Its free English, maths and basic ICT courses will help you work towards a nationally recognised qualification.

It is committed to ensuring equality for all current and potential students irrespective of any disability, age, race, gender, special educational needs, religion, sexual orientation, or marital status.

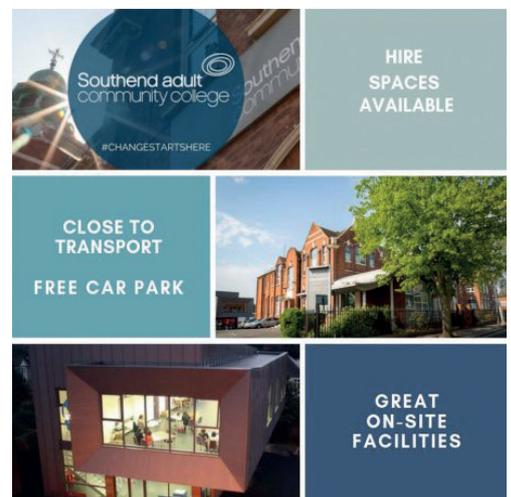
It strives to be a disability friendly college. It is fully committed to ensuring people with disabilities or impairments, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities are treated fairly.

It believes everyone should be able to work and learn in an environment that is free from harassment and bullying and will not tolerate such behaviour.

It can offer or can sign post you to free and impartial information, advice

and guidance on learning and entering work. This will help you in choosing suitable education or training; identify the skills you need to get back to work or help you to progress in your chosen career. It can also help with advice on how to fund your studies, childcare information, job applications and putting together a new CV (through our Job Hub).

If you are interested to find out more about the college, please call 01702 445700 or email sacc@southend-adult.ac.uk



Chelmsford College's empowering approach to the LSIP



Chelmsford College is a further education provider offering a range of full-time, part-time, apprenticeship and HTQ programmes for those aged 16+ across two campuses. With approximately 2,030 learners aged 16 to 18 years old and 400 adult learners, the College aims to provide lifelong learning and educational inclusivity. Moreover, Chelmsford College is among the institutions

that are dedicated to committing to action to ensure the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) is a success.

Based on a range of employer feedback, data and roundtable events, the LSIP has identified 10 priority sectors within Essex that require improvement. Chelmsford College is proud to support 8 of these 10 areas, including the following:

1. **Advanced Manufacturing, Engineering and Aviation,**
2. **Community and Voluntary,**
3. **Construction,**
4. **Creative and Cultural,**
5. **DigiTech,**

6. **Education,**
7. **Health, Care and Med Tech,**
8. **Professional Services**

Making headway in the above sectors, Chelmsford College offers these subjects at a variety of levels, appealing to a wide demographic. Advancing its offerings to higher education, Chelmsford College now offers higher technical qualifications in construction, engineering, health and social care, and digital skills, all due to start in 2025, benefitting the LSIP.

Aside from curriculum, the LSIP identifies skills priorities and skills system priorities requiring further support. With a dedication to excellence, Chelmsford College addresses many of the identified areas through various projects. For instance, one of the skills priorities is "green skills" aligning to Chelmsford College's vision to lead in sustainable practice. Aiming for net zero by 2040, they are developing ways to reduce emissions including developing its own in-house app, Nexus. The transformative app encourages learners and staff to make sustainable pledges in return for tangible rewards. Within just 10 months, the app earned them a finalist spot in the celebrated 2024 Green Gown Awards, under the "Creating Impact" category. David Warnes, the Principal and CEO of Chelmsford College, and his team look forward to the award ceremony.

Combining green skills with the skills system priorities of "Information, Careers Advice and Guidance", Chelmsford College's careers team have been working hard to organise its first Green Skills Fair in collaboration with Essex County Council and the Careers Enterprise Company. Taking place on the 4th of November 2024, the event aims to develop the green workforce of the future by hosting a range of speakers and exhibitors to inspire the next generation.

Funded by Innovate UK, Chelmsford College also runs a Steps 2 initiative focused on addressing inclusive employment, another LSIP priority. With a goal of equal opportunity, Chelmsford College has been working with local businesses to help vulnerable groups, including returning citizens, veterans, and people with SEND, enter the workforce.

Tackling another LSIP priority of "tutor shortages and capacity of providers to respond", Chelmsford College has an Inspire to Teach programme. The aim is to encourage

specialists to retrain and apply their knowledge to a teaching context. With a cohort of staff completing this programme, Sharon Wuyts (Business Lecturer at Chelmsford College) praised Inspire to Teach stating, "Completing my first academic teaching year while studying for my Level 5 Teaching Apprenticeship has been a gratifying experience. Each day brought challenges, and I've grown personally and professionally. Teaching has become my passion, and I look forward to many more years of inspiring and guiding students." Similar to this, the College further supports this priority with David Warnes chairing Federation of Essex Colleges (FEDEC) meetings surrounding tutor shortages.

Moving on, Chelmsford College focuses on the skills priority "digital skills and DigiTech" by having state-of-the-art facilities that encourage the use of these skills. A recent example includes the launch of the Igloo, an innovative space that uses 360-degree projectors to provide immersive experiences. Additionally, Chelmsford College is home to the Institute of Technology (IoT), which offers Level 3 and 4 construction and engineering courses. The IoT has a dedicated computer-aided engineering laboratory featuring a CAD suite, VR, rapid prototyping and 3D printing to facilitate this and further digital skills.

Emphasising both the "leadership and management skills" and "green skills" priorities, Chelmsford College has successfully won a bid to run bootcamp programmes focused on management and retrofit. Moreover, the college has a life skills team who promote useful skills and behaviours during lessons as well as running events dedicated to this. Ready Respect Safe (RRS) Week recently took place and involved a variety of guest speakers highlighting the importance of being ready, respectful and safe to learners. Ranging from drug and gang culture workshops to employment tips and beyond, RRS Week was a success and supported the "soft skills and behaviours" priority.

Overall, Chelmsford College progresses in various areas and continues to be an integral provider to the LSIP. By focusing on specific priorities and developing different initiatives, Chelmsford College has demonstrated a range of ways to drive change for the future.

To learn more about Chelmsford College, please visit www.chelmsford.ac.uk

Colchester Institute at the heart of green skills and workforce innovation

Colchester Institute is at the forefront of addressing the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) priorities, particularly focusing on Green Skills. As demand for sustainable technologies grows, the College has integrated sustainability and environmental responsibility throughout its curriculum, aligning with regional and national goals to create a skilled workforce for the future.

One of the most exciting examples of this commitment is the Net Zero and Renewables Training Centre, launched in September 2024. This state-of-the-art facility provides cutting-edge training in low-carbon technologies, including air source heat pumps, solar photovoltaic systems, and battery storage solutions. With an estimated demand for up to 600,000 annual heat pump installations under Government targets, these programmes will be vital in supporting the LSIP's call for increased local renewable energy skills capacity.

Partnerships with industry leaders Samsung, Worcester Bosch, and Gasway Services are critical to this success. These partnerships have provided the latest technology and know-how, in terms of the design of industry-relevant training programmes, ensuring students acquire practical skills that meet the needs of Essex's Green Skills Infrastructure Plan. This centre provides a complete range of opportunities from installation, commissioning and fault finding for each of the technologies.

Alison Andreas, Principal and Chief Executive explains, "Colchester Institute supports the Essex Green Skills Review by developing green skills content across our Level 3 programmes. Our region needs

this facility to help meet ambitious housing targets and assist homeowners and landlords with retrofit technology to reduce energy costs."

In addition to Green Skills, Colchester Institute is addressing critical healthcare skills shortages through its partnership with East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust (ESNEFT). One of these many partnership projects focuses on the delivery of a new Biomedical Science pathway, sponsored by the Trust, in an attempt to tackle the national shortage of biomedical professionals. This initiative supports one of the fastest-growing populations in England by developing the next generation of biomedical scientists.

In addition to sustainable technology, green skills and health training, other key areas driving the College's strategic curriculum planning include Engineering and Manufacturing, Construction, Motor Vehicle and Digital Skills training.

As an educational leader in professional, technical and vocational education, Colchester Institute is a leading provider of Apprenticeships, delivering apprenticeship training for well over 50 years. With 1,500 apprentices in learning at any one time, including nearly 600 new starts in the past year, the College is committed to working in partnership with local and national employers to drive economic growth and innovation, ensuring a skilled workforce for the future.

Through its extensive employer relationships and apprenticeship provision, the College works closely with organisations such as E2V, Hutchinson Ports, and Tesco Plc, providing tailored training solutions, apprenticeships, and higher apprenticeship opportunities to meet the specific needs of employers.

The focus on higher apprenticeships is essential in addressing Essex's priority sectors, including the aforementioned sectors, where a more advanced skillset is increasingly required.

Teledyne E2V, a world leader in high-performance technology,

collaborates with Colchester Institute to ensure its workforce is equipped with cutting-edge technical expertise. The College provides a range of apprenticeships and bespoke training programmes in engineering and manufacturing, helping E2V to address skills shortages while maintaining its competitive edge in a rapidly changing industry. Apprentices at E2V benefit from practical, hands-on experience and mentoring in the workplace, combined with academic learning at the College, ensuring they are equipped to develop a meaningful career in the Industry.

Hutchinson Ports, Port of Felixstowe, the UK's largest container port, is investing in the future by partnering with the College to recruit maintenance technician apprentices within its engineering department. This tailored approach helps the Port meet its workforce needs, providing training in areas such as supply chain management, mechanical engineering, and digital skills, ensuring a well-trained, future-ready workforce where apprentices work on live projects and state-of-the-art operational equipment.

Nick Luck, Hutchison Ports UK's HR Director and Director of Harwich International Port, acknowledges how investment in people is critical to the success of Hutchison Ports UK.

"The engineering departments at both the Port of Felixstowe and Harwich International are an integral part of the wheels that keep Britain moving. There is more to our ports than just moving containers.

Our commitment to attracting, developing and retaining the best employees is enhanced by our investment in apprentices. Our experienced engineering teams are committed to providing the engineering apprentices with constant support in the workplace whilst they work towards completing their professional qualifications through the training facilities at Colchester Institute."

Tesco, the UK's largest supermarket chain, has partnered with the College to deliver flexible, responsive training programmes, as part of a national contract, ensuring that their staff gain skills, in Engineering and Construction, for both existing staff and new recruits.

You can find out more about the Net Zero and Renewables Centre here: colchester.ac.uk/news

To find out more about our services to businesses visit our website at colchester.ac.uk/cibs

Apprenticeship details for employers can be found: colchester.ac.uk/employers



Iain Jacobs, Business Delivery Manager - Engineering Manufacturing and Construction - Net Zero and Renewables Centre.

The Digital Skills Gap

As an OFSTED outstanding college, The Sixth Form College Colchester is committed to providing opportunities for every student to develop a strong digital skillset and to build the confidence in navigating a constantly changing digital environment, which is vital in Higher Education and in future employment.

Simply put, the digital skills gap means there's just not enough people with the right digital skills to power companies' transformation now and in the future.

There is low supply and high demand for digital skills, and the gap continues to widen due to factors like:

- **Tech talent outpacing an already short supply**
- **Emerging technologies such as A.I. that amplify the need for digital skills**
- **High costs and disorganised approaches to traditional education that increase barriers to learning**
- **Access to digital infrastructure and skills limited by socio-economic status**

Introducing the Digital Skills Academy ▶▶▶

The Digital Skills Academy at The Sixth Form College was designed and developed to cater for our students' developmental needs, whether this is in learning how to navigate Data Analytics using Excel or to learn how to use Adobe Blender in a way in which will support employment in the future.

Digital Skills Academy learners are part of a community where they are supported to complete online courses and join online training events.

Having a strong digital skillset, and students feeling confident in their capabilities to navigate through a constantly changing digital environment, is very important here at The Sixth Form College Colchester, in Higher Education and ultimately in future employment.

Digital Natives ▶▶▶

Why does the generation known as 'Digital Natives' feel so behind? To start, the pandemic has shifted how in-person working environments, training, and mentoring take place.

With the global workforce now in a hybrid or remote environment, Gen Z has likely had limited opportunities to learn from colleagues who can provide career guidance and teach them the workplace skills they need to thrive. Gen Z recognise the necessity of developing digital skills for their future careers:

36% plan to acquire new digital skills and 40% see tech skills as essential to their future careers - but they are also frustrated their education didn't prepare them better for the world of work.

44% said they were only taught basic computer skills, while one in ten said they were taught no tech or digital skills at school.

Ellie Murphy

"I chose to study Digital Skills as an additional study as I wanted to develop the skills required to gain employment and be able to add employability skills to my CV.

I now feel more confident and have developed extensive analytical skills using Excel to analyse and interpret data for a business. I am looking into a career in Finance and feel like the skills acquired will be highly valuable for the future.

I would definitely recommend this programme to others as it is tailored to individual learner needs. The additional study really focuses on the type of skills employers are looking for."





NEW CITY COLLEGE

Green Skills ▶▶▶

Centre to train the next generation in low carbon

New City College (NCC) has completed its highly anticipated

Green Skills Centre which will provide state-of-the-art training for learners keen to work in the expanding green industries.

The skills centre has been created with a significant investment, and has transformed 120 sqm of former storage space at NCC's Epping Forest Campus, into Low Carbon and Retrofit labs with cutting-edge technology.

This project is part of the college's broader efforts to support the UK's transition to a net-zero carbon economy by equipping students with practical skills in renewable energy and green technologies.

As well as offering workers already employed in industry the chance to upskill, the Green Skills Centre will also provide a hub for school leavers to acquire hands-on experience with industry-leading equipment and access to courses that will prepare them for careers in this rapidly growing sector.

The space now housing the labs has been completely transformed. Previously used for storing materials within the bricklaying workshop, it now houses training bays equipped with advanced technology used by UK installers.

Courses offered include training on heat pumps, solar photovoltaic (PV) systems, and EV charging installation and maintenance. These low carbon technologies are crucial to the UK's renewable energy infrastructure and the fight against climate change.

New City College has partnered with industry experts to ensure that the training offered in the Green Skills Centre is aligned with current industry practices and that the training bays are designed with the latest equipment to give students a real-world learning experience that's directly transferrable to employment.

The courses provided by NCC come with industry-recognised qualifications, putting learners in the best position for job opportunities. Recognising that not all learners can attend in person regularly, the college has also developed online learning programmes that complement hands-on training.

Short courses for rapid upskilling

For professionals already in employment, NCC offers short courses aimed at providing rapid upskilling. These are tailored for those looking to transition into the green sector or expand their current expertise to take advantage of new business opportunities. The college has worked closely with awarding bodies and employers to develop these courses, ensuring they fill gaps in the market where specific training options did not previously exist.

Collaboration for net zero and local impact

New City College's LSIF (Local Skills Improvement Fund) project is a key initiative in supporting both the national net zero agenda and addressing the local skills needs of Essex employers and residents. Through close collaboration with LSIF partners, local and national employers, NCC has been able to ensure that its training programmes align with the evolving demands of the green technology sector. This collaboration is crucial in creating a bridge between education, training and industry.

One example of NCC's response to industry needs is the introduction of Drone pilot training courses. As drones become increasingly relied upon in the construction sector for tasks like surveying and thermal imaging, NCC saw the need to develop specialised training in this area.

Employer engagement at its heart

Employer engagement is at the heart of NCC's approach to curriculum development. Working collaboratively with employers, the college can quickly adapt its curriculum to meet emerging needs, ensuring that students are equipped with skills that are relevant to the current job market.

The college regularly hosts events and training sessions to bring employers and staff together where feedback is shared. This helps to shape the content of future courses and ensures they are responsive to industry changes.

Through bespoke training solutions, NCC tailors its offerings to the specific needs of local businesses ensuring the development of courses that meet their workforce needs.

Upskilling college staff for the future

Creating new courses requires highly skilled teaching staff. To deliver new training, NCC has worked closely with employers to develop strategies for upskilling existing staff. This has included career-changer programmes that allow professionals from industry to transition into teaching roles. Working alongside LSIF partners, NCC has also developed a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme, ensuring staff remain up-to-date with the latest industry innovations.

Bold step forward

NCC's Green Skills Centre is a bold step forward in supporting the transition to a greener, sustainable economy. With its focus on hands-on, practical training in low carbon technologies, the centre is equipping learners with the skills they need to succeed in a rapidly growing industry. By collaborating with local and national employers, LSIF partners, and industry experts, NCC is ensuring that its courses are aligned with the needs of the market.

As the green economy continues to expand, initiatives like the Green Skills Centre will play a pivotal role in providing Essex residents with the skills and opportunities to thrive in this dynamic landscape.

New City College Green Skills Centre, Epping Forest Campus, Borders Lane, Loughton IG10 3SA.
For more information:
www.ncctradeskills.co.uk
 Email ncclcommercial@nccLondon.ac.uk

SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE

TO FURTHER YOUR ORGANISATION

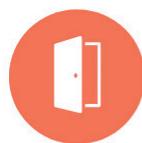
The Greater Essex Careers Hub's mission is to help every young person find their best next step. We achieve this through working with schools, colleges and employers to improve careers education and secure better outcomes for young people.

We can support you to develop new talent pipelines, close skills gaps and help young people to master essential skills for the workplace.



Insights

Provide insights to your role, industry & recruitment methods



Experiences

Open your workplace doors to visits from students & teachers



Promotion

Promote your opportunities to schools and college through us



CSR

Support to help you meet your social value responsibilities

careershubsouthend.gov.uk

www.greateressexcareershubsouthend.co.uk





Adapt and evolve key to USP's approach



In a rapidly changing world, education providers must adapt to meet evolving industry and economic needs. USP College, with its campuses in Benfleet, Grays, and the innovative XTEND Digital Campus in Canvey Island, stands at the forefront of this mission.

Through a dynamic approach that blends qualifications with practical skills and experience, the College prepares students for successful careers.

At USP College, every student joins one of five key sector areas: Creative Industries, Medical Technologies & Life Science, Sport & Healthcare Professionals, Financial & Professional Services, or Digital Innovations & Emerging Technologies. This structure ensures that students not only study their chosen subjects but also engage with specific career paths, learning both technical and transferable skills vital for future success.

Through Continuous Professional Development (CPD) days, networking events, workshops, guest speakers, industry trips, and work experience placements, USP College provides rich opportunities for personal and professional growth. Ofsted, in its 2024 inspection, praised this approach: "Staff and students have a clear focus on careers, and this contributes well to the development of students' personal and professional behaviours."

USP College's investment in state-of-the-art learning spaces ensures students train in industry-standard environments. The College boasts a Hospital Simulation Suite, Engineering Workshops with advanced equipment, Sport Science testing facilities, and cutting-edge Digital Labs.

The XTEND Digital Campus, the first of its kind in the region, and is home to advanced digital tools, including a motion capture studio, 360-degree content capture suite, and gaming labs. These facilities immerse students in emerging technologies like Virtual Reality (VR), Augmented Reality (AR), and Avatar creation, equipping them for careers in tech-driven industries.

The facilities at the XTEND Digital Campus allow the College to partner with local and national businesses to support digital upskilling initiatives. This cutting-edge facility offers a range of services tailored to meet the evolving needs of employers in the digital age. From Virtual Reality training solutions to the digitisation of training content, XTEND Digital Campus provides businesses with the tools and expertise to enhance their workforce's digital capabilities. The campus also specialises in digital content creation, enabling companies to develop engaging, industry-specific materials. By bridging the gap between education and industry, the XTEND Digital Campus ensures that both students and businesses are equipped with the latest digital skills and technologies, fostering innovation and growth in the local and national economy.

USP College's curriculum is designed to meet both local and national skills needs, preparing students for key industries now and in the future. Whether pursuing A-Levels, Vocational qualifications, T-Levels, or Higher Education courses, students receive an education that connects them directly to the world of work.

T-Levels, are designed to meet the growing demand for skilled professionals in fields such as healthcare, digital, and engineering. T-Level classrooms have been re-designed and equipped with industry-standard tools, giving students hands-on experience in their chosen field.

The College's vocational programs have also produced many success stories, including a Science student who completed a work placement at a local pharmacy, secured a part-time job, and is now studying for a Pharmaceutical degree at university.

The College's Academic/A-Level students are also high-achieving. This year, an A-Level Classical Civilisation, Psychology, and English Literature student secured a scholarship at the University of Cambridge to study law. No matter the path of study, the College values providing opportunities for experience alongside innovative teaching and learning practices to ensure the best outcomes for all students.

Collaboration with local employers is key to the College's approach, offering students the chance to gain hands-on experience and real-world insights. Whether through work placements, live project briefs, or course design input, these partnerships ensure that students graduate with the skills needed by employers.

One local healthcare employer noted: "Being able to deliver a collaborative programme in partnership with USP College is really supporting us to develop our future talent pipelines and bring young people into NHS and Social Care careers in our local communities."

The College has forged key partnerships with organisations such as the NHS and Amazon Tilbury as well as local businesses. These partnerships reflect the College's focus on employability, giving students access to crucial industry connections while ensuring that its courses remain up to date with the latest trends and demands.

For further information, go to www.uspcollege.ac.uk

When picturing the concept of skills, many people would visualise a professional footballer at the top of their game. Plainly, elite sport is one area that showcases in just a few seconds the value and importance of skills in a competitive context.

This is why top clubs spend millions of pounds on their academies – the football factories aimed at developing and enhancing the skills of the young players who aspire to being the next Lionel Messi. But it is not only a matter of coaching, and we in the broader business community could learn from how football clubs approach the job of skills development.

Because even in so cut-throat a competitive atmosphere as Premier League football, success is not always about the match result. Edd Vahid spent eight years as the Saints' Head of Coaching and Learning before taking up the role of Head of Academy Football Operations at the Premier League itself.

"We aim to have a first-team squad that's made up of 50% academy graduates," Vahid told Leaders In Sport while still at Southampton. "So, any young player that comes through the pathway has that major aspiration and can make that transition."

This combination of competition, coaching and culture sends a powerful message, and it is one we at RDA take on board. More than that, in fact; it goes to the very heart of what we are.

Develop Together – it's the RDA way

RDA is a Chelmsford-based consultancy providing advisory services around research-and-development tax credits and claims. By helping our clients get the most out of their R&D, we develop our own knowledge about their particular industry, staying at the very cutting edge of technology in new products and processes.

To do that, we have to ensure we recruit the very best talent, because our people are our strongest asset. This means hiring applicants who will understand and communicate the context, nature and implications of every innovation. At the same time, they will have to do so while working within the complex prescriptions of the prevailing tax legislation.

This is no easy feat, and that means identifying the right people is no simple task either. In the same way as a football club will send scouts to grassroots youth football matches to undergo an extensive talent-identification process, for RDA this involves a lengthy interview-and-assessment programme.

DEVELOPING THAT SCORE

How business can follow football



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NG SKILLS RE HIGHLY

otball in skills development



After first screening applications or headhunter recommendations, the candidate meets with our managing director. If successful, they are then interviewed by senior management. Next, they undergo a Predictive Index assessment to gauge whether they are a good fit for the company.

Then there is a meeting with our human-resources department and a skills test to determine suitability for the role, before a final interview with the managing director to complete the process. Six steps that have stood us in good stead in building a team of elite talent for R&D-tax consultancy.

Rigorous

But this rigorous recruitment initiative is only the start of the journey. Just as even the most naturally talented young footballer cannot expect to become an international star – they all need coaching along the way – we understand that a strong development culture demands a healthy helping of nurture too. This is why we have implemented a thorough programme for onboarding and coaching our new employees.

The very first phase of that process after meeting managers and filling out the required documentation for security clearance involves learning about the history of RDA. This ensures all our people have a grounding in what it means to be part of our team.

Then comes instruction on our products and services, our key clients, management and organisational structures and locations. Then our

new hires learn about the regulatory bodies, the anti-money-laundering legislation and the ISO accreditations that govern our activity.

This programme is common to every employee, no matter their role or seniority, because we know how important it is for everyone to understand what they are working towards. There is much, much more to the induction and early-phase training we provide – the staff handbook, discussion of the pension and medical provisions we offer, our human-resources partner and much else besides.

Teamwork

The core purpose of every step is to build engagement with our new recruit. To accelerate their inclusion and integration into the team, for them to absorb the overall mission, values and culture that we at RDA work so hard every day to foster.



Even so, we estimate it takes three years of mentoring and daily, hands-on experience for our people to develop the skills they need to become independent, client-facing workers who can run their own R&D assessments.

There are no corners to be cut in building the necessary knowledge, accountability and teamwork in the pursuit of excellence. It is no coincidence that these are also our values: Knowledge, Excellence, Accountability and Teamwork.

As any top football manager or coach would tell you, all these things go hand in hand in a highly skilled environment. And the best way to achieve them is to Develop Together.

to help your business grow, contact them on 044 026, or visit their website, www.rda.co.uk

ACL Essex: your partner in staff >>> training and development

W **HAT** better way to show your commitment to your employees than by investing in their development?

ACL Essex, part of Essex County Council, offers a range of courses and apprenticeships for businesses eager to recruit new talent or enhance the skills of their current teams.

Whether you need a digital expert to manage your online platforms or a numbers guru to keep your finances on track, or if you're looking to boost

green skills and project management capabilities, we have a diverse selection of opportunities that can benefit your business.

We understand different industries have distinct needs, and we know hiring and training can be expensive. That's why we provide a variety of fully funded and cost-effective training options and apprenticeships that can be tailored to fit your business's specific needs.

Apprenticeships: employers can greatly benefit from apprenticeships to bring in new talent or develop the skills of their existing employees. Our apprenticeship programmes vary in length depending on the specific area of study and level. We offer a diverse range of apprenticeships, including roles in accounting, team leadership, management, customer service, adult care, early years, IT, and facilities and warehousing.

Skills Bootcamps: for employers looking to rapidly develop the skills of their new team members, bootcamps are an ideal solution. With a subsidy in place, employers only need to contribute a maximum of 30% towards the course costs. We offer bootcamps in areas such as Digital Marketing, Early Years, and Project Management (Construction). Furthermore, employers have the chance to interview ACL learners who have completed a skills bootcamp and are actively seeking employment for any current job openings. Our Skills Bootcamp participants finish their training with the critical skills needed in these industries. Further information at www.aclessex.com/skills-bootcamps

Qualifications & Courses: employers can tap into a wide range of qualifications provided by ACL, which are applicable across various industries. These include areas like IT, cybersecurity, digital skills, counselling, management, coaching, accounting, retrofit, first aid, hair and beauty, and business, among many others, providing valuable skills for the workforce. By focusing on skill development, you can elevate employee morale, enhance retention rates, and ensure that your team's growth and wellbeing are at the forefront of your business strategy. Further information at www.aclessex.com/qualifications

Sector Bursaries (Fully funded training for healthcare and early years sectors): the Poppins Early Years Bursary and The Nightingale Care Bursary, aimed at supporting the early years and healthcare sectors in their skill enhancement and development. These bursaries enable employers to train both new and existing staff without incurring any training costs. The training provided includes apprenticeships, CPD courses, qualifications, and professional pathways, ensuring a well-rounded approach to workforce development. Further information at www.aclessex.com/poppins or www.aclessex.com/nightingale

If you have any questions, or would like to find out more, you can visit our website www.aclessex.com/employers or contact our team by emailing acl.businessdevelopment@essex.gov.uk or calling 03330 139 502.

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Thurrock Adult Community College (TACC) is based in Grays at The Old

Courthouse, Orsett Road, Grays RM17 5D. The college is easily accessible by public transport and is just a few minutes walk from Grays train and bus stations. Although TACC's main campus is in Grays the college delivers courses and training across the borough

TACC offers a wide range of workshops and courses for adult learners, providing accessible, flexible education designed to meet the needs of the local community. Courses include vocational skills training for work, staff CPD, maths, English, ESOL, digital, employability and personal enrichment. TACC supports individuals to find work, enhance their careers, change professions, or pursue new interests.

In the last academic year 96% of learners completed their course and 97% achieved their goals and qualifications.

Many of the courses are **free**, even for those residents who are employed.

The flexibility of part-time, evening, and online classes allows learners to balance education with work and family commitments with enrolments taking place continually throughout the year.

TACC recognises that many learners have school age children and so all their courses start and finish at times to allow for school drop offs and pickups.

All learners have access to personalised career advice and guidance (IAG) which enables them to make informed choices about their journey into the labour market or as they advance in their career.

Many residents are not quite ready to enter higher education and study at level 4 and above. A significant proportion of Thurrock's residents have no qualifications at all.

TACC provides a stepping stone to the higher-level courses, building on essential skills, study skills, confidence and introductory courses in the chosen sector.

TACC is committed to working closely with local employers and community partners to develop tailored learning programmes which align with job market needs and the priority sectors identified in the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP).

These include childcare and health and social care.

Childcare (Levels 1 and 2) and the Level 3 Diploma in Early Years Educator

These courses are designed to equip learners with the practical skills and knowledge needed to excel in these essential fields.

Highlights of the programme include:

- **Work Placements:** Valuable, hands-on work experience in collaboration with local schools and nurseries, helps learners to develop the real-world skills required to succeed as early years educators.
- **Support with DBS Checks:** TACC staff guide learners through the process of obtaining their Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, a crucial requirement for working with children.
- **Job Placement Assistance:** Through TACC's partnership with a specialist recruitment agency, learners are helped to secure employment which fits their skills and career goals.
- **Additional CPD elements e.g. Autism Awareness and ADHD Awareness, Paediatric First Aid**

Learning Support Assistant (LSA) qualifications at Levels 1 and 2.

These courses are designed to prepare learners for support roles within schools, providing practical placements to reinforce the skills necessary for a successful career in education.

Support for Learners includes:

- Information, Advice, and Guidance (IAG): TACC provide

personalised guidance to help learners make informed decisions about their career paths and educational progression.

- **Integrated Skills:** Employability skills, digital literacy, and essential English and maths are embedded into all courses to ensure learners are fully prepared for today's workplace.
- **Learning support,** including Learning Support Assistants in class, for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities
- **Financial support** with travel costs and childcare (subject to eligibility)
- **Loan of digital equipment** whilst studying at TACC (subject to eligibility)
- **Community and Safeguarding Focus:** TACC's programmes emphasise the importance of safeguarding and community engagement, contextualising these topics within the learners' field of study to ensure a well-rounded educational experience.
- **Additional CPD elements e.g. Autism Awareness and ADHD Awareness,**

Why Choose TACC

TACC's unique value lies in the **voluntary placements** offered, alongside **comprehensive support throughout the learner's journey.** From gaining practical experience to finding the right employment, TACC supports learners every step of the way.

Class sizes are small, typically 12-14 people, which enables TACC's experienced and qualified tutors to provide valuable intensive support to learners in their class.

Each learner has a pre enrolment interview and skills scan to ensure they are placed on the best course for their needs and are with other learners of similar abilities.

TACC is committed to providing educational support to Thurrock residents so that they can develop new skills to help fulfil their potential and achieve their personal and career related goals. There are so many new and exciting job opportunities due to arrive in Thurrock now and in the coming years, TACC is privileged to be part of that journey and to support local people to achieve their ambitions.

Thurrock Adult Community College





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Providing a united and strategic voice

THE Essex Provider Network (EPN) holds a specific remit, which is to provide a single strategic voice for all independent training, Further Education and Higher Education providers.

Its aim is to promote a collaborative approach towards increased levels of awareness of the contribution made to the county's economic growth by local training provision, particularly that of the independent training sector which typically delivers 68% of apprenticeships nationally. In order to support increased uptake of apprenticeships, the 'call to action' to Essex employers wishing to enhance their workforce development is to join forces with the independent training sector via the network.

The EPN network includes the majority of the local and national independent training providers operating in Essex, all Essex Further Education and adult learning colleges, Anglian Ruskin University, the University of Essex, plus a variety of awarding bodies and influential associate organisations, all of which contribute to a collaborative approach towards the development of a cohesive skills delivery objective.

In a time of rapid change, intense lobbying, funding initiatives, on-going training reforms, devolution planning

and the need for a collective response to plans for Local Skills Improvement (LSIP) strategies, our wider membership benefits from the network's cohesive approach.

EPN's strategic focus has also led to the network being in the unique position nationally of being a board member overseeing the development of the Essex LSIP. It is also a partner alongside Further Education college partners in the Local Skills Improvement Funding programme.

The network is fortunate to have in place strong strategic partnerships across Essex and neighbouring authorities, including major future capital development projects. It also benefits from a strong working relationship with the three Essex local authorities, plus many of the district councils, placing our members at the forefront of local skills and workforce development.

At regional level, we represent our membership on the East of England levelling up delivery partnership skills working group. This group is tasked with reporting to the Government's All Political Party Group, focusing on a strategic framework for levelling up skills in the East of England. The final report, published on May 18, can be access at (short version) Short-FINAL-Strategic-Skills-Framework-EE-LUDP-SUMMARY-single-pages.pdf (eastofenglandappg.org.uk) or (long version) FINAL-Strategic-Skills-Framework-EE-LUDP-v5.pdf (eastofenglandappg.org.uk)

An example of recent collaborative work is partnering with Essex County Council to support the apprenticeship levy transfer hub. A holistic provision menu has been incorporated onto the EPN website, linked directly within the Essex, Southend and Thurrock opportunities portals. EPN's website also hosts the ECC Green Skills portal, highlighting the wide arena of skills and future careers within this growing sector.

EPN continues to enjoy a strong working relationship with our colleagues at the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) in support of the continued emergence of identified adult targeted unemployed cohorts, successfully securing contracts for some of our independent training providers to design and deliver bespoke sector specific work-based programmes.

EPN also represents our independent training sector members' views and interests. It promotes the collective offer via the various sector Skills Advisory Groups which meet under the direction of the Essex Chamber of Commerce in its capacity as lead body for the LSIP, advising on skills provision linked to identified skills shortage areas across the county. This places the independent training sector in a strong position to bid for further funding opportunities and, importantly, gain access to supply chain contracts linked to various major infrastructure projects planned for Essex and neighbouring counties.

The network believes there has never been a more important time for Essex-based business and learning providers to work together collaboratively, to help build a strong and sustainable learning provision base in support of social inclusion and economic growth. The network already has a strong core membership of independent training providers, colleges, Higher Education providers and associate members linked to the training sector. The network is also very fortunate to receive backing and support from key agencies, including the Department of Education, Association of Employment and Learning Providers, Department of Works and Pensions, local authorities and OFSTED.

As the UK moves into a new era of Government, which we believe will result in greater funding autonomy for local authorities, the continued direction of the network is to maintain strong advocacy for increased learning opportunities. To achieve this, we need to widen and maximise participation for all Essex providers to become involved, supported by like-minded employers who recognise the value of continued workforce development.

For information on how to become a member of the Essex Provider Network or to find suitable training opportunities for your business, please check out the website, www.essexprovidernetwork.com

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HARLOW COLLEGE

supports key sectors within the LSIP

Harlow College actively supports key priority sectors within the LSIP, with a focus on the following:

Health Science

The college runs T Levels in the Early Years and Adult Nursing areas. T Levels are new Level 3 technical qualifications and are designed with leading businesses and employers to allow students the opportunity to solve real life problems in the health

science sector. As a result of our T level provision we have been able to forge strong partnerships with local healthcare providers, including The Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust and Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust, through industry placements and collaborative projects.

T Levels are an alternative to A Levels and apprenticeships and are equivalent to 3 A Levels. They focus on vocational skills and can help students into skilled employment, higher study or apprenticeships. Each T Level includes an in-depth industry placement that lasts at least 45 days. Students get valuable

experience in the workplace and employers get early sight of the new talent in their industry.

T Level Health learners all use Oxford Medical Simulation to practise their person-centred approach to care, using VR headsets to fully immerse themselves in the scenario. They then apply these skills in the college's new hospital ward and domiciliary care flat.

We are also launching a new Apprenticeship in Dental Nursing, allowing successful students to either progress to university or gain employment as a dental nurse in the public or private sector.

Aviation, Transport, Logistics and Engineering

Opened in 2018, Harlow College's partner college, Stansted Airport College (STAC), is the first airport college of its kind in the country, offering a range of technical and professional courses in the disciplines of aviation, engineering and event management.

Key areas for employment opportunities are logistics and supply chain, security and immigration, aviation (including cabin crew and customer services), aeronautical engineering and aircraft mechanics.

STAC has seen growth in student numbers and plans are now in place for Phase 2 expansion with the objective to increase the college's capacity from 500 to 900 students to support the anticipated demand from the airport expansion. The projected start date is Q4 2025 and key features will include a green transport hub for UKIC, a 147 Training and Assessment Centre and a security hub to support protective services.

To align with these expansion plans, there will be new additions to the curriculum, including expanding the logistics area to incorporate low carbon and net zero initiatives; establishing routes into pilot training and extending aircraft maintenance training to enable engineers to achieve CAT A and CAT B licensing, and developing pathways into policing and Border Force careers, supporting national security efforts.

Harlow College has recently opened the Electric & Hybrid Vehicle Training Centre, designed to give local people the chance to develop green skills qualifications in electric vehicle repair

and maintenance. The Centre's ambitions align with the new Labour Government's Green Prosperity Plan, designed to create thousands of skilled jobs in the net zero economy in the South East.

Construction and Building services

The growth of the college's T Level provision in the key areas of construction, plumbing and electrical is designed to produce a talent pipeline into the industry to meet the local skills demand, particularly around the new Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) development, where skilled workers will be in high demand to help meet building and infrastructure targets.

HGGT will deliver Garden Town led growth and regeneration for new and existing communities in and around Harlow. The initiative is managing the delivery of 16,000 new homes over the next nine years in four new Garden Town neighbourhoods in Water Lane, Latton Priory and East of Harlow with the fourth made up of seven new Garden villages in Gilston.

In April 2023 the college opened its new Renewable Energy Training Centre, in association with Mitsubishi Electric. It will enable future generations of heating engineers to train using green technologies as well as helping to reduce carbon emissions.

It is fully equipped with six Mitsubishi Electric Ecodan Air Source Heat Pumps, roof-mounted photo-voltaic solar panels, associated collection points and energy-storage unit and two electric vehicle charging points. The solar panels will provide enough energy to power the centre and any extra energy will be put back into the National Grid.

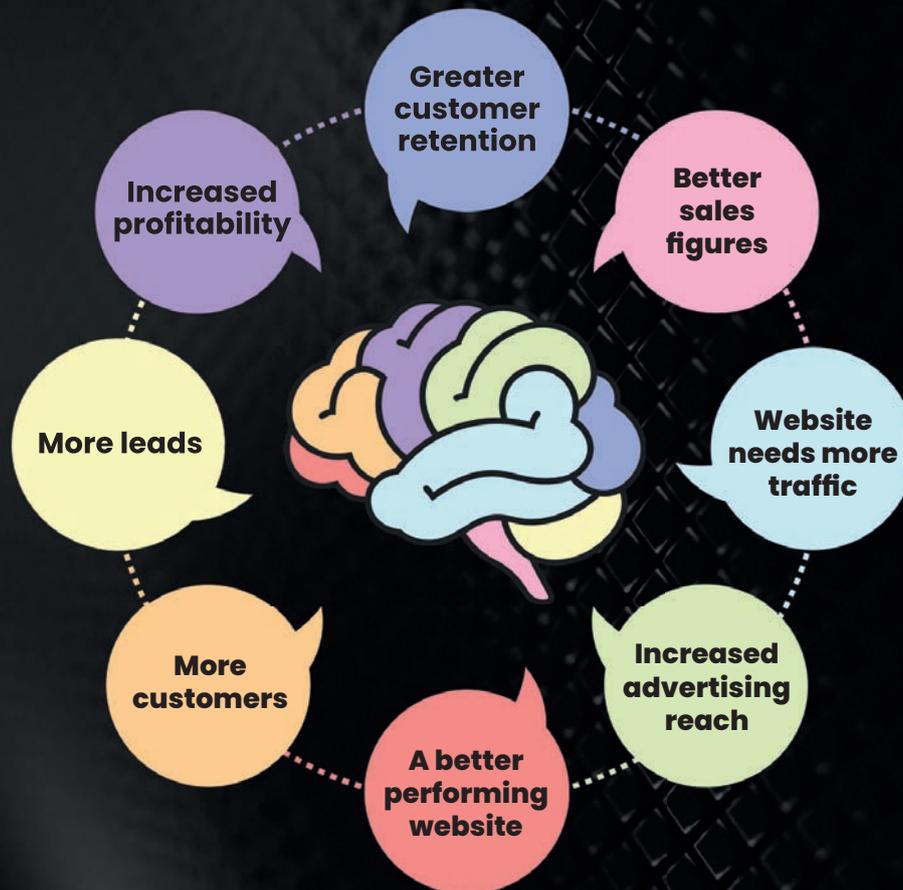
The wider aim is to offer training to local employers in the plumbing and electrical trades to enable them to be fully prepared to meet Government targets on energy efficiency.

In Essex, a huge retro-fit of homes will be needed to make them energy efficient, as Essex County Council have estimated that of the 630,000 homes across Essex, 60% of them fall below an EPC rating of D. Essex County Council's target is to retro-fit two thirds of housing stock by 2030 and 100% by 2040.

Fur further information, go to www.harlow-college.ac.uk

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Unlocking potential: Writtle College's commitment to land-based education



Writtle College, located in the heart of Essex, has been a cornerstone of land-based education in the Essex region for over a century. As part of the Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) family, Writtle College's evolving portfolio focuses on meeting Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) priorities, particularly in green skills, agri-tech, leadership and management.

T Level Offer

Alongside our range of Level 2 and Level 3 programmes for school leavers and adult learners, from September 2025, Writtle College will also offer a range of T Levels in Animal Management, Animal Science, Floristry, and Agriculture.

The new programmes are designed to meet the evolving needs of modern industries and provide 16-18 year old learners with the skills and knowledge required to excel in their chosen fields.

The new T Level provision represents a significant advancement in vocational education, combining rigorous academic study with practical experience. Each T Level includes a compulsory work placement, accounting for approximately 20% of the course duration. This hands-on experience is invaluable, allowing students to apply their learning in real-world settings and gain insights into industry practices. For employers, this presents an excellent opportunity to engage with emerging talent, contribute to their development, and potentially identify future employees. The remaining 80% – the academic study – is divided into two key components: the 'common core element' and the 'occupational specialism.' The

common core element is relevant to the industry area and is designed to provide future employees with a broad knowledge and understanding of the animal/agricultural sector, alongside the development of business and project management skills. The occupational specialism will then equip learners with the specialist subject knowledge, skills, and behaviours necessary to progress into employment in specialist roles.

In the Animal Management and Animal Science pathways, students will delve into the details of animal care, welfare, and management practices. The curriculum covers a broad spectrum of topics, including animal behaviour, health, and nutrition, preparing students for careers in animal care and veterinary services. The Agriculture T Level emphasises modern farming techniques, sustainability, and innovation. Students will explore crop production, soil science, and agricultural technology, equipping them with the knowledge to drive the future of farming. The Floristry T Level combines creative and practical skills, focusing on floral design, business management, and event planning.

Development of Apprenticeships

Writtle College's commitment to aligning its courses with local skills needs (LSIP) is also evident in its apprenticeship offerings. These apprenticeships are designed by industry to support local and regional businesses to provide apprentices with valuable career opportunities. The Veterinary Nursing apprenticeship offers comprehensive training for a career in animal healthcare. Apprentices learn about animal anatomy, physiology, and medical care, preparing them for roles in veterinary practices and animal hospitals. The Land-Based Service Engineering apprenticeship focuses on agri-tech and maintaining and repairing agricultural machinery, equipping students with the technical skills needed to support modern farming operations. The Horticulture apprenticeship covers plant cultivation,

landscape management, and garden design, preparing students for careers in gardening, landscaping, and environmental management.

These apprenticeships provide employers with a dual benefit: they offer a valuable resource while ensuring that the skills of their workforce are continually developed. By supporting employers, the college contributes to the training and development of staff, ensuring that they have the skills needed to meet the demands of their roles; whilst also providing opportunities to develop to higher level learning and skills as their career progresses.

Short Course Offer

Alongside its further education provision, Writtle College offers a comprehensive range of short courses, available as standalone programmes or bespoke solutions developed in conjunction with employers. These include courses in land-based machinery, arboriculture, gardening, and landscaping, as well as technical skills such as welding. Recently, we have launched new courses in art for wellbeing. Additionally we are able to offer conferencing facilities, including corporate team away days that can be tailored to business needs with a range of options including wellbeing at work, greener business solutions, sustainability, and personal skills development.

Kersty Ellis, Principal of Writtle College says, "At Writtle College we are committed to providing high-quality education and training that meets the needs of both learners and local employers. With a range of college courses, T Levels and apprenticeship programmes, alongside a diverse range of short courses, Writtle College is dedicated to helping individuals and businesses unlock their potential and achieve goals."

For more information, visit the college's website at www.aru.ac.uk/writtle-college or attend an open day or contact the college directly to learn more about Writtle College.

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Sarah Brockwell, part of the Business Coaching team on the Essex County Council-funded Group2Grow programme, said: "After placing a full-page advertisement in BusinessTime in Essex, promoting the Group2Grow Business Coaching Programme, we saw an immediate response in terms of website hits as well as applications to join the programme (which is 100% funded by Essex County Council). If you are considering investing in print advertising, BusinessTime in Essex is highly recommended. BusinessTime in Essex does what it says on the tin - promotes business in Essex!"

So if you'd like to be an active part of the next issue, rather than be on the outside looking in, contact Editor Peter Richardson on 01206 843225 or 07778 067614 – or email him at peter@pjrcomms.co.uk

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