

Inspire Education Group

ACCOUNTABILITY AGREEMENT

2023-24



Inspire
Education Group

*Peterborough and Stamford,
Thriving Together*

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WELCOME

Inspire Education Group (IEG) is a fantastic place to study and work. Our mission shapes everything we do 'to transform lives through inspirational education and training'. This mission is more than a statement, we live by it every single day, placing our students, staff and our communities at the very centre of what we do. We are relentless in our approach to do our absolute best for the communities and employers we serve.

This agreement details how we will continue to meet the needs of our students, staff, stakeholders, employers and the wider community.

It is aligned to our strategic plan and our curriculum strategy.

I am delighted to share with you our annual accountability agreement.

Rachel Nicholls
*Principal and Chief
Executive Officer*



OUR VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

VISION
"To be the first choice provider of education and training in our region"

MISSION
"To transform lives through inspirational education and training"

Inspire
Education Group

I

Innovative

N

Nurturing

S

Sustainable

P

Passionate

I

Inclusive

R

Respectful

E

Excellent

PURPOSE

The Inspire Education Group mission is to ‘transform lives through inspirational education and training’.

Inspire Education Group (IEG) was formed in August 2020, following the merger between Peterborough Regional College, now known as Peterborough College, and New College Stamford, now known as Stamford College. IEG is a large and successful provider of further and higher education in Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire. IEG operates its higher education provision through University Centre Peterborough, a wholly owned subsidiary company. IEG also delivers specialist commercial training, such as MOT testing qualifications and Gas Centre certification for local, regional and national employers.

IEG works effectively with both devolved (Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority) and non-devolved administrations (Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership) to support their strategic skills plans in their regions. This brings many opportunities to provide innovative and flexible skills development to meet student, employer and stakeholder needs.

As an organisation we are determined to make a positive difference to the employers and communities we serve.

We do this by:

- Creatively designing solutions and curriculum to meet particular challenges and needs.
- Developing highly effective relationships and being a reliable partner who always delivers.

- Seeking opportunities and ways to share practice across the regions.
- Ensuring we are aspirational for all our students.

As a group, IEG promotes ‘Careers, not Courses’ and is well positioned to support all students to have a clear progression pathway into their chosen careers. A well-planned careers programme, underpinned by strong and effective relationships with employers, is key to enabling students to access local and national apprenticeship opportunities. Our dedicated Jobshop provision, initially funded by the Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA), at Peterborough College, is key to enabling students to secure employment

As recognised by Ofsted (March 2023) IEG makes a strong contribution to meeting local, regional and national skills needs.

STRATEGIC PLAN AND PRIORITIES

Our Strategic Plan was written in 2021 and presents a positive and deliberate strategy to deliver a strengthened local and regional skills offer, recognising the advantages of a single organisation with one vision, shared and relevant education and training opportunities, and a relentless focus on quality, standards and excellence.

Through the plan our aim was to secure our place in Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire as a first-choice provider, delivering excellent education and training and achieving recognition as an outstanding college group.

Our focus is to develop and deliver inspirational learning opportunities across our two campuses, responding to growth in the city of Peterborough, the rural catchment of Stamford and the surrounding towns and villages. Our goal is to meet the demographic uptrend in the number of young people by maintaining a broad and inclusive post-16 curriculum in our key locations and improving access to and participation in higher education.

We are determined to increase capacity to deliver more apprenticeships, higher technical qualifications, degrees, and specialist training for employers. Our determination and drive to work with key stakeholders to tailor our provision to local skills needs and develop opportunities for upskilling, retraining, personal progression and business growth was and remains critical to our success.

This continues to be an exciting time for the Inspire Education Group and we believe our ambitious and forward-looking Strategic Plan, which will be refreshed in the summer of 2023, will ensure we continue to make a demonstrable and positive contribution to the communities we serve.

Since its publication, national skills policy has developed further, therefore this annual accountability agreement and plan takes account of these changes and this will also be reflected in our updated strategic plan 2023-2026.



STRATEGIC PLAN

2021-2024



Peterborough and Stamford, Thriving Together

OUR VISION AND MISSION

VISION

"To be the first choice provider of education and training in our region"

MISSION

"To transform lives through inspirational education and training"

OUR VALUES

- I Innovative**
We are enterprising, responsive and adaptable
- N Nurturing**
We are supportive, caring and friendly
- S Sustainable**
We deliver strong finances that support reinvestment and environmental gains
- P Passionate**
We are ambitious, inspirational and aspirational
- I Inclusive**
We provide opportunities for all, respecting and celebrating the diverse communities we serve
- R Respectful**
We promote high standards through a culture of challenge, support and professionalism
- E Excellent**
We always deliver the very best that we can



Strategic Objective 1: ACHIEVE EXCELLENCE

Be recognised as an outstanding college group, delivering inspirational education and training which enables young people and adults to achieve their ambitions and promotes social and economic prosperity in our regions.



Strategic Objective 2: FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Ensure robust financial management which returns an annual surplus and supports investment in the Group infrastructure and provision of industry-standard learning facilities.



Strategic Objective 3: VALUE OUR PEOPLE

Support and invest in our people and their wellbeing, creating an exceptional working environment where colleagues feel valued and empowered.



Strategic Objective 4: GROWTH

Grow and diversify the Group in response to local, regional and national needs, developing opportunities for upskilling, retraining, personal progression and business growth.



Strategic Objective 5: POSITIVE IMPACT

Make a positive contribution to the economic and social prosperity of the communities we serve in Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire and our wider regions.

CONTEXT AND PLACE: THE COMMUNITIES WE SERVE

Inspire Education Group is a large general further education college group with two main campuses, Peterborough College and Stamford College. IEG serves a wide catchment area primarily across southern Lincolnshire, the City of Peterborough, Greater Peterborough, Fenland and into Rutland. Student success is our priority and informs strategic and operational decision making.

Transport limitations in our rural catchment areas across Greater Peterborough, southern Lincolnshire, Fenland and Rutland makes accessing education and training difficult for some individuals and we heavily subsidise college transport to enable residents to attend IEG.

QUALIFICATIONS OF LOCAL POPULATIONS

In terms of qualifications, Peterborough has lower educational attainment when compared to South Kesteven, see table 1.

Table 1 - Highest Level of Qualification

	South Kesteven %	Lincolnshire %	Peterborough %	Cambridgeshire %
Other qualifications	2.7	3.1	3.7	2.5
NVQ4 and above	30.1	25.6	26.2	39.8
NVQ3 and above	18.0	18.5	15.4	16.6
Apprenticeship	6.5	6.0	5.5	4.9
NVQ2 and above	15.5	13.9	14.4	12.2
NVQ1 and above	10.5	10.4	12.3	8.9
No quals	16.9	19.5	22.4	15.1

(Source NOMIS 2021)

EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Economic activity data clearly indicates the differences between South Kesteven and Peterborough, where Stamford College and Peterborough College are based. Whilst South Kesteven has lower levels of economically active residents this is

significantly impacted by the volume of retired residents. Unemployment is higher in Peterborough, in addition there are higher volumes of disabled residents and those who look after family or the home.

Table 1 - Economic Activity

	South Kesteven		Lincolnshire		Peterborough		Cambridgeshire	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Residents over 16	118,011	100	640,207	100	167,574	100	559,648	100
Economically active (excl FT students)	69,507	58.9	354,237	55.3	103,950	62.1	336,911	60.2
In Employment	2,598	2.2	339,448	53	98,644	58.9	325,809	58.2
Unemployed	392	0.3	14,789	2.3	5,336	3.2	11,102	2.0
Economically active and FT student	1,678	1.4	12,226	1.9	3,122	1.9	12,807	2.3
In Employment	1,286	1.1	8,932	1.4	2,325	1.4	10,250	1.8
Unemployed	392	0.3	3,294	0.5	797	0.5	2,557	0.5
Economically inactive	46,826	39.7	273,744	42.8	60,472	36.1	209,930	37.5
Retired	32,061	27.2	175,243	27.4	28,974	17.3	118,314	21.1
Student	3,933	3.3	28,662	4.5	7,401	4.4	40,475	7.2
Looking after home or family	4,523	3.8	26,812	4.2	10,040	6.0	21,642	3.9
Long term sick or disabled	3,687	3.1	26,882	4.2	7,453	4.4	15,908	2.8
Other	2,622	2.2	16,145	2.5	6,604	3.9	13,591	2.4

(Source NOMIS 2021)

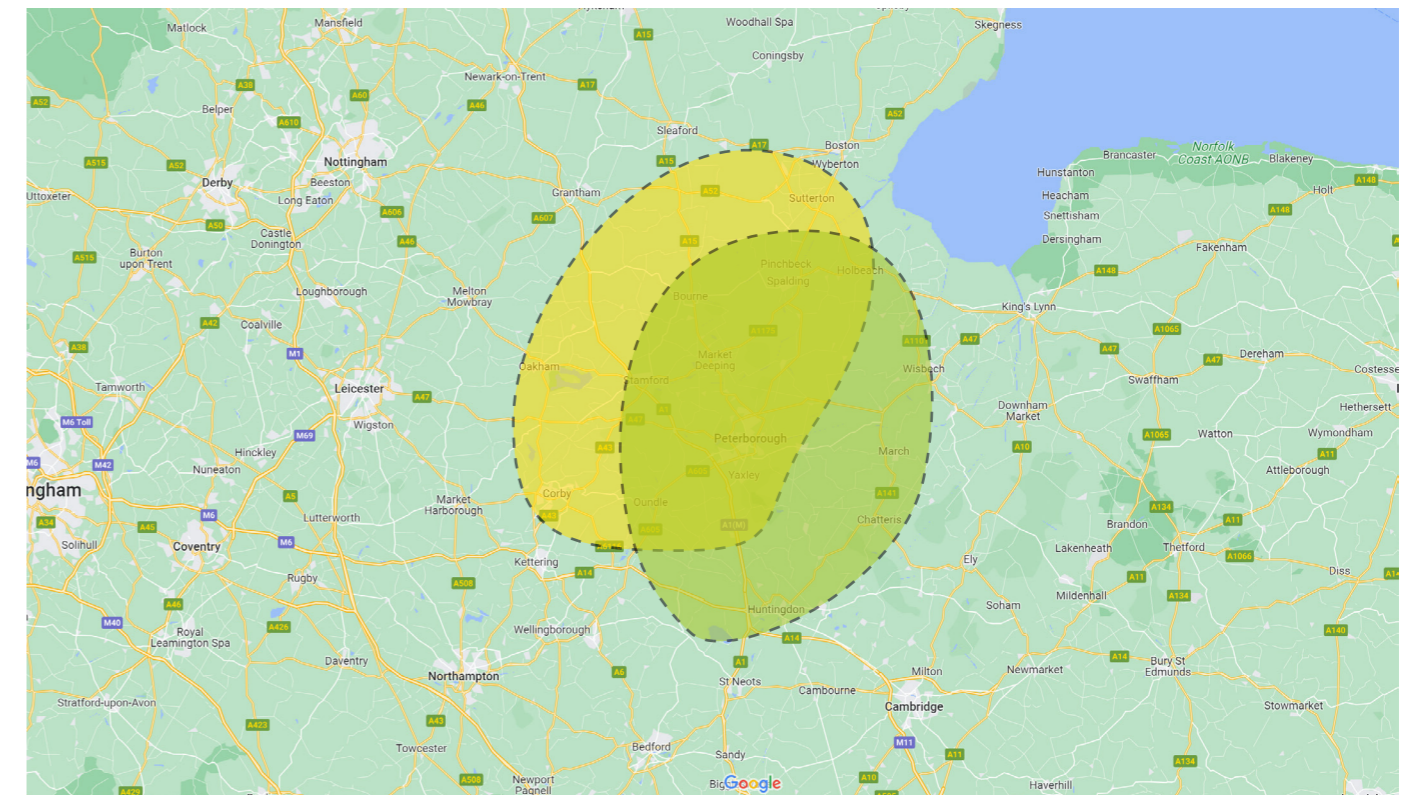
CATCHMENT AREA

Our mix and balance of provision reflects the regions we serve, with Stamford College having a significant Level 3 offer to reflect local school performance and GCSE attainment levels and Peterborough College delivering significant volumes of Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications. In addition, Peterborough College has a significant volume of adult provision, targeted at those who wish to retrain or who are unemployed as well as ESOL and English and maths for those individuals who have recently moved to the region, often as asylum seekers or refugees.

Whilst there are differences within the catchment areas we serve, the majority of businesses across the region have less than 10 employees. In the Peterborough and Cambridge area this accounts for 77% of business, with only 5% of businesses having more than 50 employees.

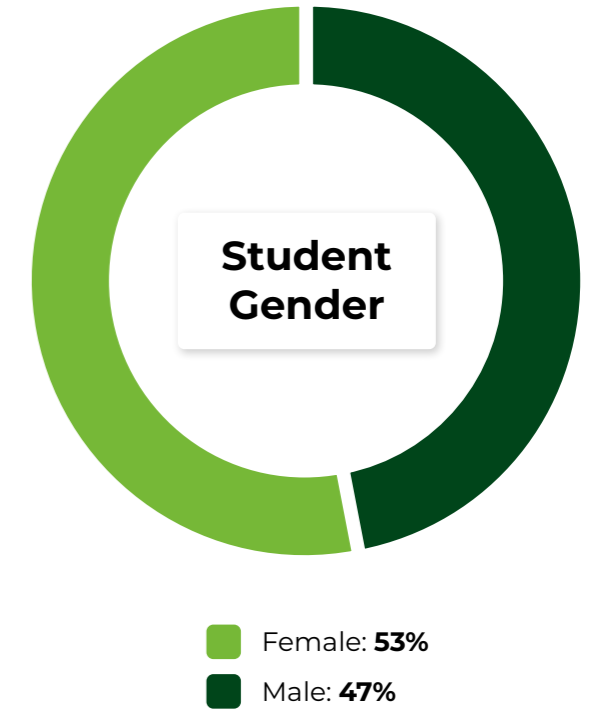
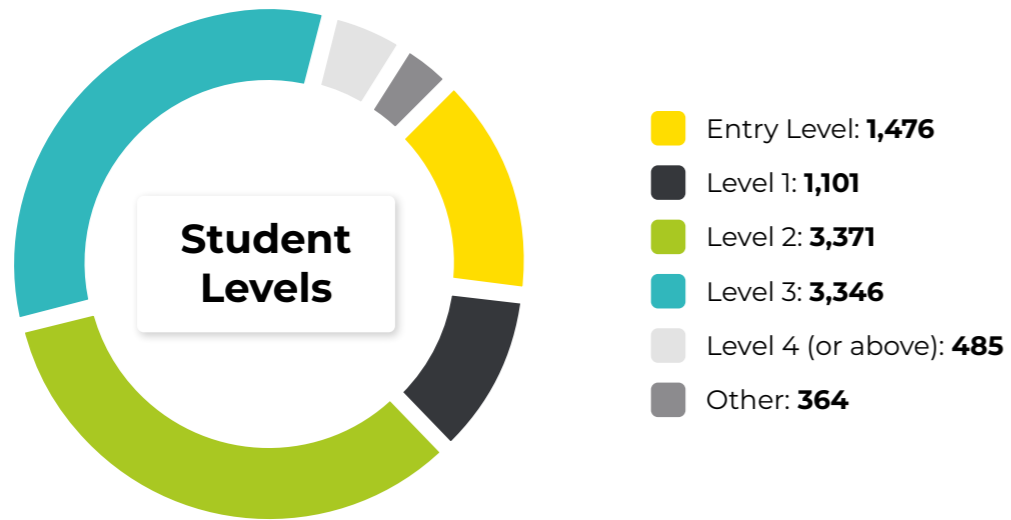
Our geographical reach and varied markets and communities that we serve mean that we are deliberately broad in our offer in terms of vocational and technical courses and academic A Level subjects. We serve rural and urban areas, as well as prosperous and deprived communities. We recognise that a significant majority of our students, particularly in Peterborough, face barriers to economic inclusion and prosperity and we see it as our moral duty to do everything we can to enable social mobility

The map below shows our wide catchment area which spreads eight districts and six key locations.



OUR STUDENTS

10,884 students studied with the Inspire Education Group during 2021-2022.



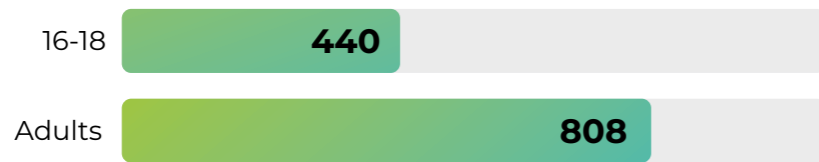
IEG Full-Time Students: 4,367



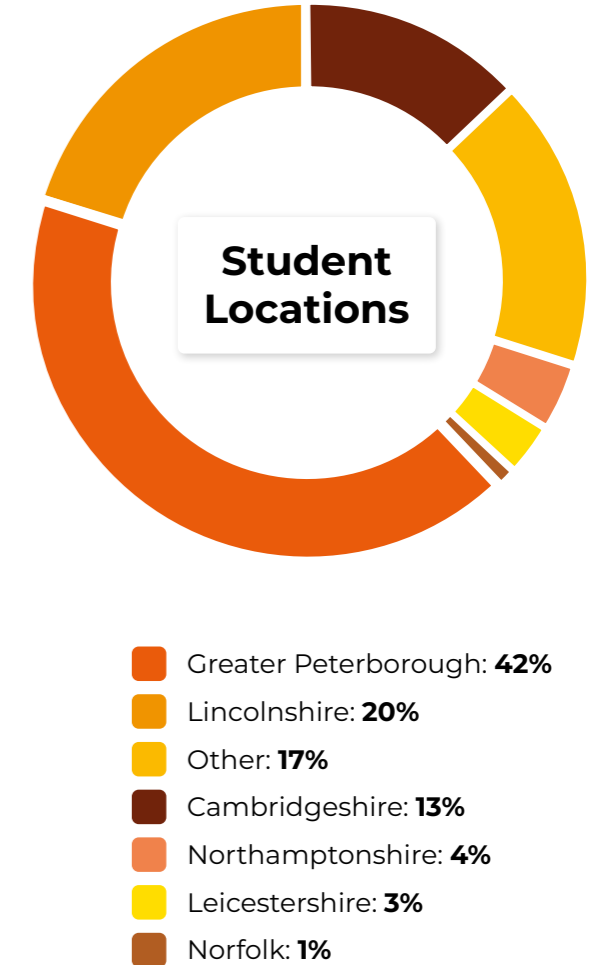
IEG Part-Time or Distance Learning Students: 4,546



IEG Apprentices: 1,248



IEG Higher Education Students: 797



APPROACH TO DEVELOPING THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

Leaders and Managers have worked to establish relationships with key stakeholders across devolved and non-devolved authorities in Peterborough, Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire, seeking opportunities to secure capital and revenue funding to deliver the skills provision for the local communities and have a strong track record of delivering successful projects.

Our response to the emerging priorities from both Greater Lincolnshire and Cambridge and Peterborough Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIP) are outlined in the aims and targets we have set for 2023/24.

The development of this plan has been undertaken by the Group Executive Team, with significant input from the Governing Body who have worked together to ensure the aims and objectives align with the local and regional skills needs.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Our strategic commitment is to ensure IEG is an anchor institution in the region, valued by stakeholders, employers and communities as a provider who can be relied upon and deliver for the people it serves.

This plan was formulated and agreed as part of the Governor Development event in May 2023 and the board will be regularly updated on progress and any evolution of the plan throughout the year.

Significant external work has been undertaken to position IEG as a reliable and innovative partner, particularly in Peterborough where reputation had been less than positive.

The group is now very much integrated into the local communities which it serves and the stakeholders that are partners in the skills landscape. This statement has therefore been influenced by and had input from the following stakeholders:

- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA)
- Lincolnshire County Council
- Cambridgeshire Chamber of Commerce
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Lincolnshire and Rutland Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLLEP)
- Local Employers
- Opportunity Peterborough
- Peterborough Citizens
- Peterborough City Council
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Job Centre Plus
- NHS



ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHER PROVIDERS

IEG has very good relationships with other providers within the education sector. In Cambridge and Peterborough, the Combined Authority acts as convener of a regional Principals network and providers have collaborated on a variety of funding opportunities. These have included the Strategic Development Fund, Community Renewal Fund and various Innovation Fund Projects to ensure a coordinated approach to meeting local skills challenges.

In Lincolnshire, we have had a coordinated approach to the Strategic Development Fund project supported by GLLEP, in collaboration with Tec Partnership, Lincoln College, Boston College, Grantham College, Franklin 6th Form College, John Leggott College, DN Group and Riseholme College. We have also collaborated with Lincoln College Group to deliver HGV Training across Lincolnshire funded by the GLLEP Labour Market Growth Fund.

The Strategic Development Fund project supported by Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority, in collaboration with College of West Anglia, Cambridge Regional College, City College Peterborough and West Suffolk College has seen all providers benefit from specific capital investment with a commitment to share those resources. The SDF funding has also enabled investment in immersive technology to ensure all students have equal access to high quality training. IEG continues to ensure that all students have access to online learning and have developed online learning platforms that are accessible and user friendly. Following the successful SDF project a partnership has been established with the national Retrofit Academy to deliver training to local employers to support the retrofitting of 27 million homes by 2050.

CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL PRIORITIES

The strategic curriculum intent of IEG responds to the key priorities set out in the Skills for Jobs White Paper 2021. Our curriculum is designed to enable all students, no matter where they live or their background, to gain the skills they need to progress in work at any stage of their lives. We place employer needs at the centre of our curriculum to ensure that we meet local and regional skills needs.

Our curriculum is forward thinking to ensure we are training students for skills gaps that exist now and, in the future, in sectors the economy needs including construction, digital, clean energy and manufacturing. We prioritise English and maths as we know that this has a profound impact on future life opportunities and economic wellbeing.

Managers use LMI tools Lightcast and Vector to inform their curriculum planning and this is enhanced further by Skills Investment Plans provided by GLLEP and CPCA. Curriculum design is supported by an established employer network ensuring that skills delivery is closely linked to local employer need.

NATIONAL PRIORITIES

The Department for Education have recently published (April 2023) national skills priorities which have been agreed across Government and are areas with high volumes of vacancies which are expected to increase; long term structural barriers to recruitment, retention, and progression issues; and are important in providing opportunities for employment in key growth areas such as green jobs, creative industries and science and technology (including AI and quantum computing).

These sectors are:

- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Digital and Technology
- Health and Social Care
- Haulage and Logistics
- Engineering
- Science and Mathematics

REGIONAL PRIORITIES

The Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) identify the following priority sectors:

- Health and Social Care
- IT and Digital
- Construction
- Education and Professional Services
- Agri-Tech and Food
- Life Sciences
- Logistics and Distribution
- Manufacturing, Advanced Manufacturing and Materials

The Greater Lincolnshire LEP (GLLEP) have identified the following priority sectors:

- Agri-Food
- Manufacturing
- Visitor Economy
- Energy
- Health and Care
- Ports and Logistics
- Defence and Security

IEG DELIVERY AGAINST PRIORITY SECTORS

	IEG Delivery	National priority	Priority - CPCA	Priority GLLEP
Construction	•	•	•	
Manufacturing	•	•	•	•
Digital and Technology	•	•	•	
Health and Social Care	•	•	•	•
Haulage and Logistics	•	•	•	•
Engineering	•	•		
Science and Mathematics	•	•		
Education and Professional Services	•		•	
Agri-Tech and Food			•	•
Life Sciences	•		•	
Visitor Economy	•			•
Energy	•			•
Defence and Security	•			•

As a large general further education college group, we would expect to have delivery and provision in the majority of these priority sector areas. Volume of delivery varies between priority sectors. For example, the volume of provision within the energy sector is currently low, however we are planning to significantly grow and develop this provision. This is implicitly linked to our proposed new building, the Centre for Green Technology which we plan to construct on the Peterborough campus, subject to securing further capital investment.

IEG are actively involved with the production of Local Skills Improvement Plans. In Cambridgeshire work is ongoing with the Chamber of Commerce to develop their LSIP, providing examples of skills development and demand identified by the stakeholders working with IEG.

IEG have hosted events for the Federation of Small Business who are leading on the Lincolnshire LSIP and have been involved in initial meetings and a Provider Steering Group to draft the LSIP. IEG work closely with the GLLEP Skills Board and the Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority to ensure we are delivering the skills the regions we serve need. In addition, IEG is an active member of the Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Stamford Chambers of Commerce, attending networking events to engage employer support for curriculum development. The Principal and Chief Executive is also a board member of the Peterborough and Stamford Chamber of Commerce.



AIMS AND OUTCOMES

AIM 1: ACHIEVE EXCELLENCE

Priority

Be recognised as an outstanding college group, delivering inspirational education and training which enables young people and adults to achieve their ambitions and promotes social and economic prosperity in our regions.

Current Number 2022-23

16-18 year olds: 4600.

Targets for 2023-24

1. Ensure that all 16-19 study programme students in 2023/24 gain core transferable skills through a combination of:
 - Social action project.
 - An industry placement.
 - Work experience.
 - Participation in skills competitions.
2. Review tutorial and careers programme to ensure work readiness is embedded into all study programmes.
3. Ensure that over 80% of students achieve a positive destination in 2023/24.
4. Improvement of Apprenticeship Provision to be at least 'Good' and to align to the local priorities and specialisms.

Impact and/or Contribution towards National, Regional and Local Priorities for Learning and Skills

Improve work readiness is a key theme identified in the Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough LSIPs including focus on communication, resilience and confidence in the workplace for a sustainable future.

Enable students to achieve further study/ meaningful employment contributing to the vocational skills needs of Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire.

The IEG Ofsted Inspection in March 2023 recognised that the quality of education across the group is now Good with Outstanding areas of provision being identified for Adults and High Needs. The only aspect that did not meet 'Good' standard was the delivery of apprenticeships. The rapid improvement plan in place aims to ensure that we can evidence improvement to at least 'Good' by June 2024. The apprenticeship provision will be remodelled to meet local priorities and better use of Levy funds.



AIM 2: FINANCIAL STABILITY

Priority

Ensure robust financial management which returns an annual surplus and supports investment in the Group infrastructure and provision of industry-standard learning facilities.

Current Number 2022-23

IEG Annual Capital Programme - £3.5M.

Targets for 2023-24

1. Grow 16-18 provision by at least 2.5% in 2023-24 - focussed on priority sector areas.
2. Develop an Estates 'Master Plan' for IEG ensuring that it is aligned to curriculum development, need and growth sectors which is resilient and sustainable.
3. Ensure that minimum of £3.5M capital is invested by IEG each year and priority given to key sectors and areas.
4. Commence building of the Centre for Green Technology on the Peterborough campus.

Impact and/or Contribution towards National, Regional and Local Priorities for Learning and Skills

A positive financial position which is sustainable and achieves growth means that we will be able to invest in our estate and resources, ensuring that students learn in industry standard facilities.

We will also be able to invest and develop new areas of curriculum, particularly around 'green skills' for example modern methods of construction, retrofit and electric vehicle technology.



AIM 3: VALUE OUR PEOPLE

Priority

Support and invest in our people and their wellbeing, creating an exceptional working environment where colleagues feel valued and empowered.

Current Number 2022-23

May 23 – 70 vacancies across IEG and staff costs currently at 62.5% (target 65%).

Targets for 2023-24

1. Develop and deliver an IEG People strategy with clear focus on recruitment and retention of staff, EDI, Mental Health and Wellbeing – reduce vacancy levels and increase staff costs as a % of income to sector levels of 65%.
2. Pay and rewards review to ensure success in attracting high calibre staff to deliver excellence and meet the skills demand.
3. Innovative Regional EDI Co-ordinator post supported by CPCA to ensure EDI strategy is relevant and enables staff at IEG to respond to the diverse needs of our local communities.

Impact and/or Contribution towards National, Regional and Local Priorities for Learning and Skills

This post will also support the development of EDI across the CPCA region and address issue that employers do not always see the benefit of recruiting a diverse workforce.



AIM 4: GROWTH

Priority

Grow and diversify the Group in response to local, regional and national needs, developing opportunities for upskilling, retraining, personal progression and business growth.

Current Number 2022-23

Adult growth achievable in CPCA region – achieve £2.5M allocation in 23-24.

Targets for 2023-24

1. Implement T Level roll out with four new programmes starting in 2023/24, Construction, Engineering, Digital and Health.
2. Develop wider HTQ offer within University Centre Peterborough – two courses in 2023-24.
3. Support innovative projects to meet local demand – HGV training, Online ESOL.
4. Increase volume of adults studying Level 3 qualifications and above.
5. Introduce new 'Green curriculum' RetroFit and EV charging courses.
6. Explore and review digital curriculum to address digital skills gaps - Introduce new Coding provision at Level 5.
7. Support workplace digitalisation and develop skills around AI.

Impact and/or Contribution towards National, Regional and Local Priorities for Learning and Skills

We will continue to develop curriculum specialisations that meet national, regional and local needs and priorities for both part and full-time students.



AIM 5: POSITIVE IMPACT

Priority

Make a positive contribution to the economic and social prosperity of the communities we serve in Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire and our wider regions.

Targets for 2023-24

1. Further develop and position IEG as an anchor institution and reliable partner that delivers for the regions and communities it serves.
2. Develop and roll out new 'Employer Academies' to formalise the relationship between IEG and employers. Establish 3 in 2023-24.
3. Open the Centre for Green Technology £12M new build on the Peterborough campus in 2024-25.
4. Promote our leadership and management course offer to employers to address identified issue in Lincolnshire LSIP.

Impact and/or Contribution towards National, Regional and Local Priorities for Learning and Skills

Work more closely with employers to ensure the curriculum is co-designed and meets the needs of employers and supports both LSIP priorities. Address issues raised in Cambridge and Peterborough LSIP which suggests employers have an insufficient understanding of skills and qualifications as well as potentially increase employer involvement in work placements.



Self-assessment and endorsed by Ofsted February 2023: IEG makes a strong contribution to contributing to local and national skills needs and these are our priority actions to support this.

CORPORATION STATEMENT

On behalf of the Inspire Education Group Corporation, it is hereby confirmed that the college plan as set out above reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the corporation at their meeting on 11 May 2023.

The plan will be published on the group's website within three months of the start of the new academic year and can be accessed from the following link www.ieg.ac.uk.

Chair of Governors – Ian Jackson



Principal/Chief Executive and Accounting Officer – Rachel Nicholls



Dated: 26 May 2023

Reference to Relevant Supporting Documentation

Colleges should provide links below to any other key documents that are referred to or directly relevant to the college plan, such as LSIPs; annual financial statements; performance dashboards; and Ofsted inspections.

- [Inspire Education Group Strategic Plan - 2021-2024](#)
- [IEG Annual Report - 2021-22](#)
- [IEG Financial Statements 2021-22](#)
- [IEG Ofsted Inspection Report - March 2023](#)

- [Greater Lincolnshire LEP Priority Sector Growth Areas](#)
- [Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Employment and Skills Strategy 2022](#)

Links to follow:

- LSIP – Greater Lincolnshire Emerging Priorities
- LSIP – Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Emerging Priorities

Inspiring
the next
generation

 Inspire
Education Group





This document can be made available in large print, audio, and Braille. Translation can also be available upon request.