

Reaseheath
College



ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT & LOCAL NEEDS DUTY 2024-25





CONTENTS

- 5 Priorities
- 7 Duty To Review Statement
- 8 College Overview
- 10 Strategic Plan
- 11 Intent
- 14 Informing the Priorities
- 20 Collaboration
- 21 Process
- 22 Corporation Statement
- 23 Sources and Links



ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT PRIORITIES 24/25

Further development of our Level 3 T Level Portfolio as this will meet Govt strategy and ensure our courses work in conjunction with employers (Industry Focused) and our students are equipped for work (Career Ready)

- Animal Management and (L2 foundation year) – 250 learners

Further development of our Life Long Learning offer including:-

- Skills Boot Camps – 4
- EV training via Auto Skills Hub – 50 learners
- Multiply – 200 learners
- LSIF funded Digital 365 – 100 learners
- LSIF funded Simulator training

Further development of our Higher Level Skills offer including:-

- OfS grant to develop degree apprenticeships in Environmental Practitioner and Food Industry Technology professional for - 25/26
- Access to HE – Veterinary Nursing – 24/25
- Institute of Technology Yr 1 - Sustainable Agriculture & Animal Science - 24/25
- HTQ and Higher Apps development – Dairy Technologist, Horticultural & Landscape Technical Manager, Vet technician, Outdoor Learning Specialist, modern methods of Construction, Community Sport, Leadership & Management - 25/26
- Higher Diploma and Higher Certificate 1yr programme – 24/25

Working in partnership with partners, providers and employers to address identified skills gaps, the barriers to achieving them and cultivating innovation:-

- Institute of Technology with University of Chester, Cheshire College South and West, Warrington Vale Royal, Macclesfield College and JCB – launch September 2024
- Local Skills Improvement Fund with Cheshire College South and West, Warrington Vale Royal, Macclesfield College and Independent Training Providers
- Development of our apprenticeship offer with JCB, First Bus, Eden Programme
- Institute of Sustainability and Food Innovation with the University of Chester and employer partnerships such as Lely

Enhancing our bespoke programmes to ensure our students are Career Ready and have developed high aspirations, confidence, resilience, digital and employability skills:-

- Be More - all learners
- Career Ready – FE learners
- Apprentice + - Apprentices
- Future Focus – HE learners

Development of our leadership and ensuring staff have the appropriate skills required:-

- Skills Matrix for each area supported by a dynamic CPD programme
- Extension and strengthening of our Aspire leadership programme
- Engagement with industry to align and update staff skillsets
- Implementation of a Learning Management system to track and assess performance
- Masterclass series for our CMT designed to enhance and expand current skillsets and business thinking.



23 /24 Objectives – summary of progress

Further development of L3 T Level - GREEN

T Level portfolio has been successfully expanded with the introduction of:-Land Based Service Engineering

- Agriculture
- Food Science
- Tree and Woodland Management and Maintenance

There will be circa six hundred T Level learners at the college for 24/25 and these learners have been performing well. There has been good employer support and engagement.

Development of Higher Level Skills – GREEN

- BSc in Sustainable Agriculture has commenced delivery with numbers expected to increase in 24/25 and access to the new IOT infrastructure and equipment.
- The Institute of Technology KPI for yr 1 are on target to be met across the HE provision
- OfS bid successful to further develop Degree Apprenticeship offer
- L4 Construction delayed to Sept 25 start when staffing expected to be able to support
- HTQ not yet available for land based provision

Enhancement of Life Long Learning offer – AMBER

- YR 2 targets for Multiply were met
- Skills Boot Camp – not successful – re shaped for 24/25 offer
- Carbon Literacy Training – 250 completed
- Simulator Hub – operable in 24/25
- EV & Welding Training – 150 completed
- Building Heroes Construction training – 62 completed

Development of our leadership and ensuring staff have appropriate skills – GREEN

- Good progress was made in delivering our Aspire programme for future leaders with two cohorts completing. Managers also attended AoC Senior Leaders and Landex Middle and Senior Leaders development courses.
- Skills Matrix for each curriculum area are reviewed and discussed at executive meetings and further support identified. CPD delivered across the college in support of skills gaps and statutory training.

Working in partnership with partners, providers and employers to address identified skills gaps, the barriers to achieving them and cultivating innovation – GREEN

- Institute of Technology on track for launch Sept 24 – infrastructure and offer
- LSIF funded projects in place and delivery commencing for Sept 24
- 11 Industry Skills Boards held to identify and address skills gaps with employers
- Solution focused employer partnerships continue to support the required pipeline of workforce eg JCB, First Bus, Eden partnership,

Local Needs Duty 2024-25

Board review of how well the college meets skills needs

The Board of Governors have conducted a review of the college's approach, determining how well the curriculum meets local, regional, and national skills needs. The Board has carried out its review through oversight, challenge, and discussion with internal and external stakeholders via:

- Regular Board strategic review sessions to consider the curriculum offer in the context of local, regional, and national skills priorities and specifically commissioned labour market intelligence.
- Setting and monitoring progress against agreed Skills Measure Key Performance Indicators.
- Active involvement at Board level in Industry Skills Boards with employers, community, and education providers.
- Board level strategic collaboration with key local and regional partners for example the Institute of Technology and the University of Chester, as well as more widely with Land Based colleges.
- Board involvement in the college self-assessment and external validation process and tracking progress against the college quality improvement plan.
- Review of learner and employer survey feedback and key performance data including destinations.
- Governor engagement via curriculum area link visits to triangulate data reported and considered in meetings as well as deep dives into key areas such as careers provision and progression.
- The Board of Governors concludes that the college makes a strong contribution to meeting local, regional, and national skills needs and the Board will continue its focus on the priorities set out in the Accountability Agreement 2024-25 via its newly constituted Curriculum Skills and Stakeholders Committee.

Reaseheath College & University Centre is a specialist land-based and technical college celebrating one hundred years of leading education and training. Our influence and reach is local, regional and national, offering high quality provision in Further Education, Higher Education and Apprenticeships

We are the third largest employer in the sub region and contribute significantly to the region's economic prosperity.

We play an active part in the ambitious development of the rural and national economy through our close working with and continued support for a range of industry organisations, key stakeholders and employers. Our place on the national land based stage is confirmed through our offer of 1,000 accommodation places supported by a nationally recognised range of student services ensuring the welfare and wellbeing of our student body.

The University Centre Reaseheath works in partnership with the University of Chester and provides Higher Education opportunities ranging from Foundation Degrees through to Masters Degrees including the new development of industry led Higher Level Apprenticeships.

The college campus and estate has the potential of a significant development in research led activities. Our highly qualified and industry trained workforce is keen to take the lead in providing the link between front line academic research and the implementation of this research into the various industry sectors we serve.

Together with our ambitious plans to ensure the relevance and currency of our curriculum offer, this will provide the platform to confirm our graduating students as Industry Focused, Career Ready.

Further Context:-

- Specialist independent land based college - one of eleven remaining in England
- National as well as local - 50% of our students come from outside of Cheshire & Warrington
- 67% of our students are in SSA3 – Ag, Hort & Animal Care
- Curriculum Offer – Land Based Service Engineering,

Reaseheath Offer mapped against identified skills need

	LSIP	National	Cross Cutting	Evidence
Construction	✓	✓		LSIP RH LMI LEP
Institute of Sustainability and Food Innovation	✓	✓		National Food Strategy National Sustainability Strategy LSIP Landex
Institute of Technology	✓			LEP
Academy Land & Environment	✓	✓		UK Strategy Food & Ag National Sustainability Strategy TIAH Strategy Landex LSIP
Food		✓		National Food Strategy Landex
Ag.Tech		✓		Landex National Food Strategy UK Strategy for Ag Technologies
Dairy Tech		✓		Dairy Sustainability Framework Landex UK Dairy Roadmap
Bus & Coach		✓		National Bus Strategy
Construction Plant		✓		LEP RH LMI
Rail		✓		LEP
An.Man	✓			LEP
Digital	✓	✓	✓	LSIP LEP RH LMI
Employability Skills	✓	✓	✓	LSIP LEP RH LMI
Net Zero - Green Skills	✓	✓	✓	LSIP LEP RH LMI

Agriculture, Horticulture & Floristry, Land & Environment, Animal Management, Construction, Bus & Coach, Construction Plant, Rail, Food Technology, Business & Events, Foundation Studies, Sport & Public Services including Adventure Sports, Motor Vehicle and Equine.

£90 million into Leading Edge facilities to support students and employers :-

- Construction Centre
- University Centre Reaseheath
- National Food Centre
- Horticulture & Environment Sustainable Technologies Centre
- Engineering Academy over two locations
- Equestrian Centre including show centre
- Animal Management Centre including mini zoo
- Farm with forthcoming Institute of Technology
- Business Hub
- Sports Centre with sports hall, Astro turf pitches and specialist training studios and labs
- Leading Edge technology including robotic milking, vertical farm, immersive classroom, food processing hall, food innovation lab, laboratories and smart glass house
- Residential accommodation for 1,000

The college is currently in the process of investing over £3 million in specialist equipment to support delivery of qualifications across the college.

Reaseheath College and University Centre is a designated specialist land based provider and the only such provider in

Cheshire & Warrington. There are only eleven independent such colleges remaining in England.

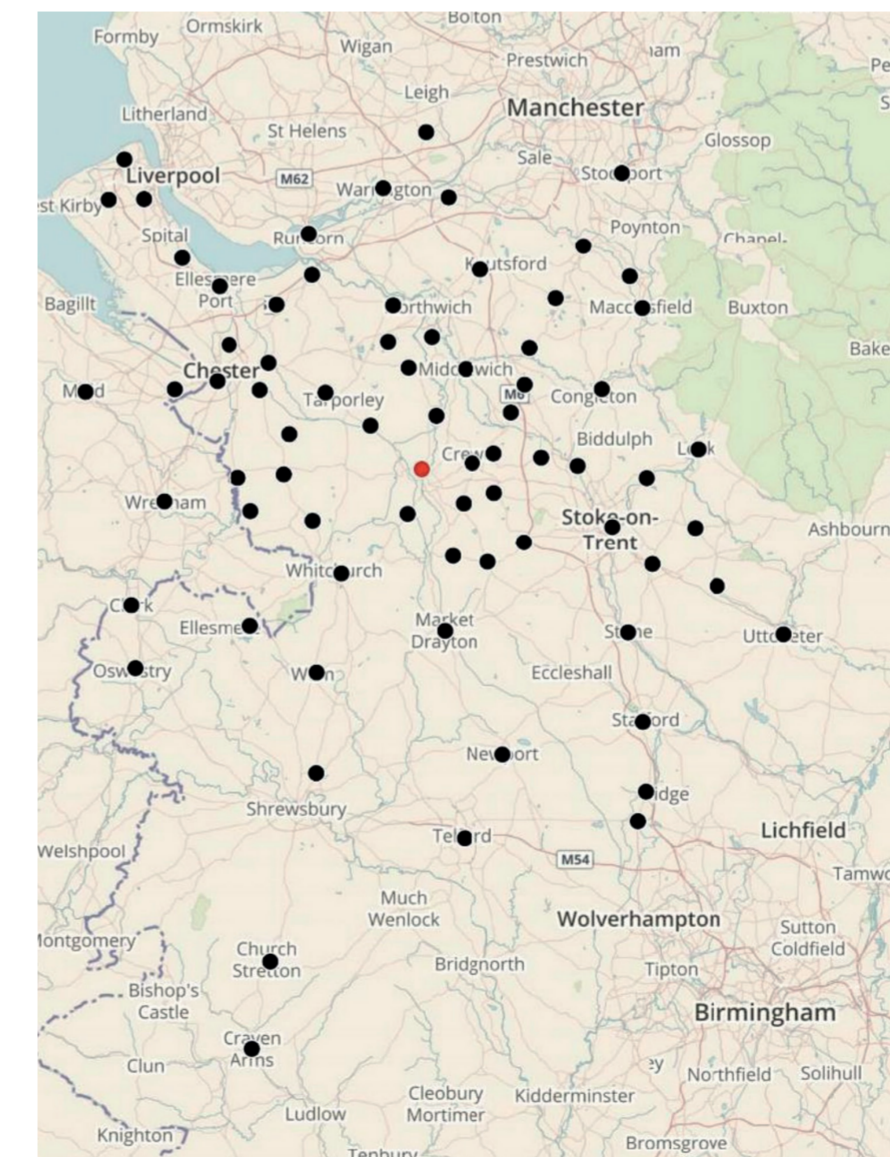
With fifty percent of students coming from outside Cheshire & Warrington the college is truly a national provider, especially in relation to higher education, apprenticeships and some FE subjects such as agriculture and food. Nearly seventy percent of our students are in land based SSA 3 subjects. Reaseheath is the sole provider in the UK for the Dairy Technologist L5 Apprenticeship and delivers 63% of the Land Based Service Engineering L3 Apprentices to the sector.

Regionally in 2021, full-time learner equivalent (FTLE) achievements relative to its surrounding wider region, Reaseheath College accounted for almost 25 percent (c.900) of all agricultural, horticultural and environmental conservation FTLE achievements and over 21 percent (c.1,000) of all animal care and veterinary science FTLE achievements. The vast majority of achievements being at L3 or below.

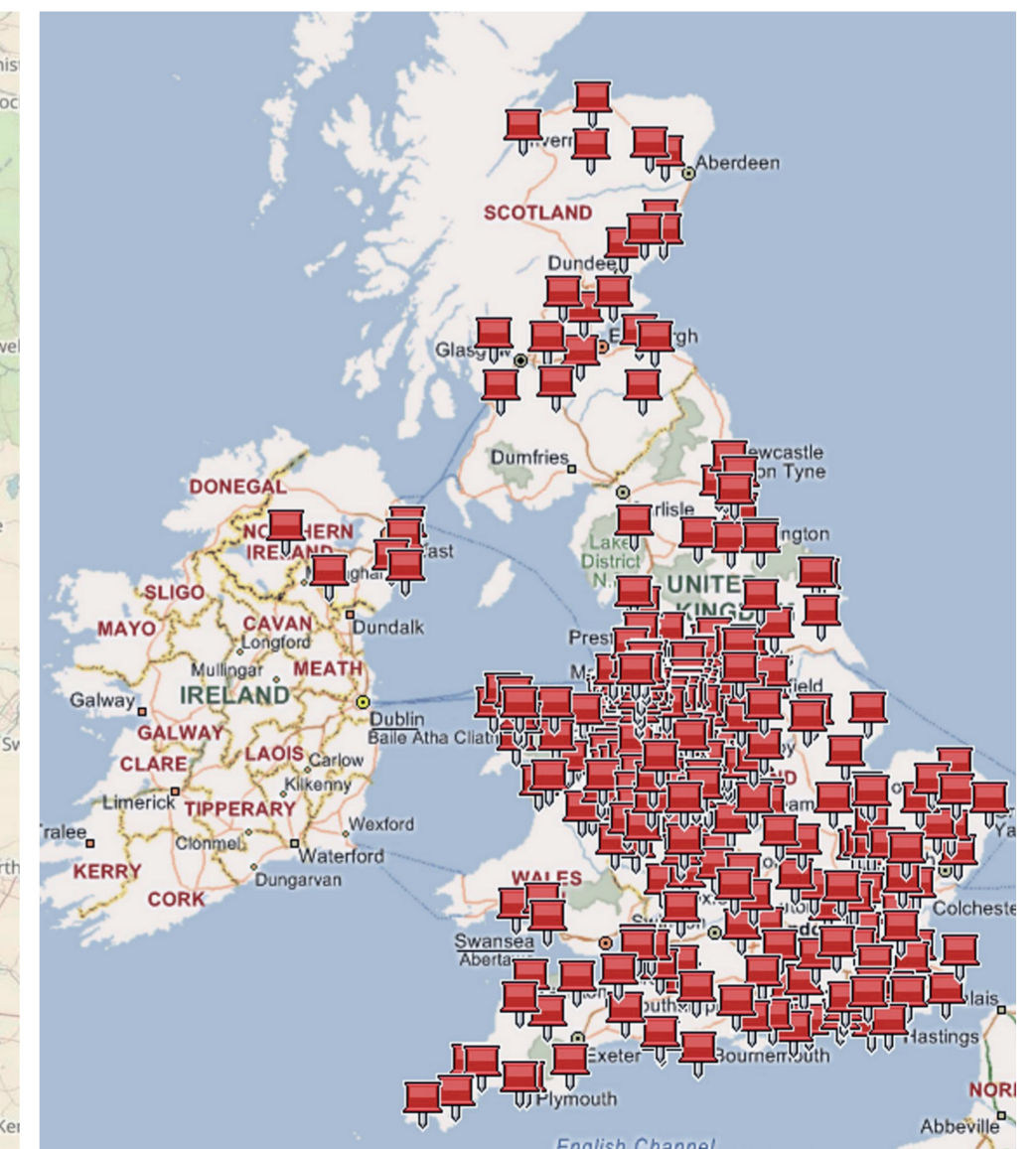
This regional and national picture derives from our specialist provision and the substantial investment in specialist facilities, equipment and residential accommodation. (see page 6)

To support that regional and national picture it is absolutely imperative that the college has substantive accommodation for up to 1,000 full time students and block release apprentices as well as over thirty bus routes with high quality coaches supporting the regional access to the specialist facilities and staffing expertise.

Regional bus routes to Reaseheath



National learner recruitment for Reaseheath



REASEHEATH STRATEGIC PLAN

Mission:-

Industry Focused Career Ready

The Reaseheath Strategic Plan runs from 2019 - 2024 and identified five strategic priorities:-

Our Offer

Robust and technically challenging in content. Effective in driving positive attitudes and behaviours. Pedagogically innovative to ensure that students develop transformational technical skills and knowledge

Our People

To have the right people with the right skills in the right roles

Our Environment

Creating an environment to give students the skills that employers need for the jobs of the future

Our Employers, Innovation and Scholarly Activity

The new Business Hub will be the focal point for businesses seeking support from our staff and students, and access to our facilities and resources to develop new concepts, products, services and solutions.

We will nurture, develop and extend our relationships with businesses, public sector and private sector partners so that our students and clients have relevant technical and professional skills gained through work placements, high quality apprenticeships, professional training, and applied research and innovation activities.

Working with businesses and partners to understand and meet skills and knowledge gaps, and commercialise and exploit innovation. We will help them to grow and succeed, and thereby create new land-based job opportunities.

Our Core Systems and Processes

Fundamental to achieving our ambitious strategies of Offer, People, Environment and Employers is a group wide infrastructure that ensures:-

- Students at all levels and delivery models have the very best educational and developmental experience
- Staff are supported in their workload and have time to consider their own and the institutions development
- Our stakeholders and partners experience the very best customer service
- That Reaseheath is considered a forward thinking and innovative organisation

Our major outcomes for each priority can be found here

<https://www.reaseheath.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/RH-Strategic-Plan-2019.pdf>

Our Reaseheath intent is to produce Industry Focused Career Ready Students with a study programme that offers:-

- Additional qualifications that add value to the sectors each student studying in
- High quality work experience placements utilising our extensive employer network
- Development of maths and English skills
- High quality technical skills at the core
- Development of employability skills, aspiration and resilience through our Be More & Be Ready programmes as well as green skills and digital skills as a cross cutting theme
- A clear line of sight to industry through our careers advisors, skills boards and career conversations as well as employer engagement within the study programme
- High quality technical skills

Our intent is further realised by ensuring our offer is up to date, forward thinking and credible, with employers at the heart. This has included:-

- The college being an early adopter of technicals, standards and T Levels
- A pilot for the extended work placement programme
- Development of a middle year for T level students
- The development of new professional certificates using innovation funding to support professional upskilling
- A Forest College to support those in NEET
- An Internship programme to support our Foundation learners into employment
- Development of Higher Level Apprentices within our University Centre
- Programmes in collaboration with industry such as our EDEN programme within the Dairy Tech sector, our Bus & Coach provision with First Bus and our Ag Eng provision with JCB
- Supported our students for the jobs of tomorrow in Horticulture, Agriculture and Environment by ensuring through our Academy of Land and Environment they are benefiting from a range of skill development across all three areas which reflects the employer feedback and jobs

Fundamentally our intent is to produce a person rather than a qualification, a skill rather than a syllabus, work ready rather than assessment trained. Qualifications, their content and its assessment is of course important but must be a means to an end, not the sole being.

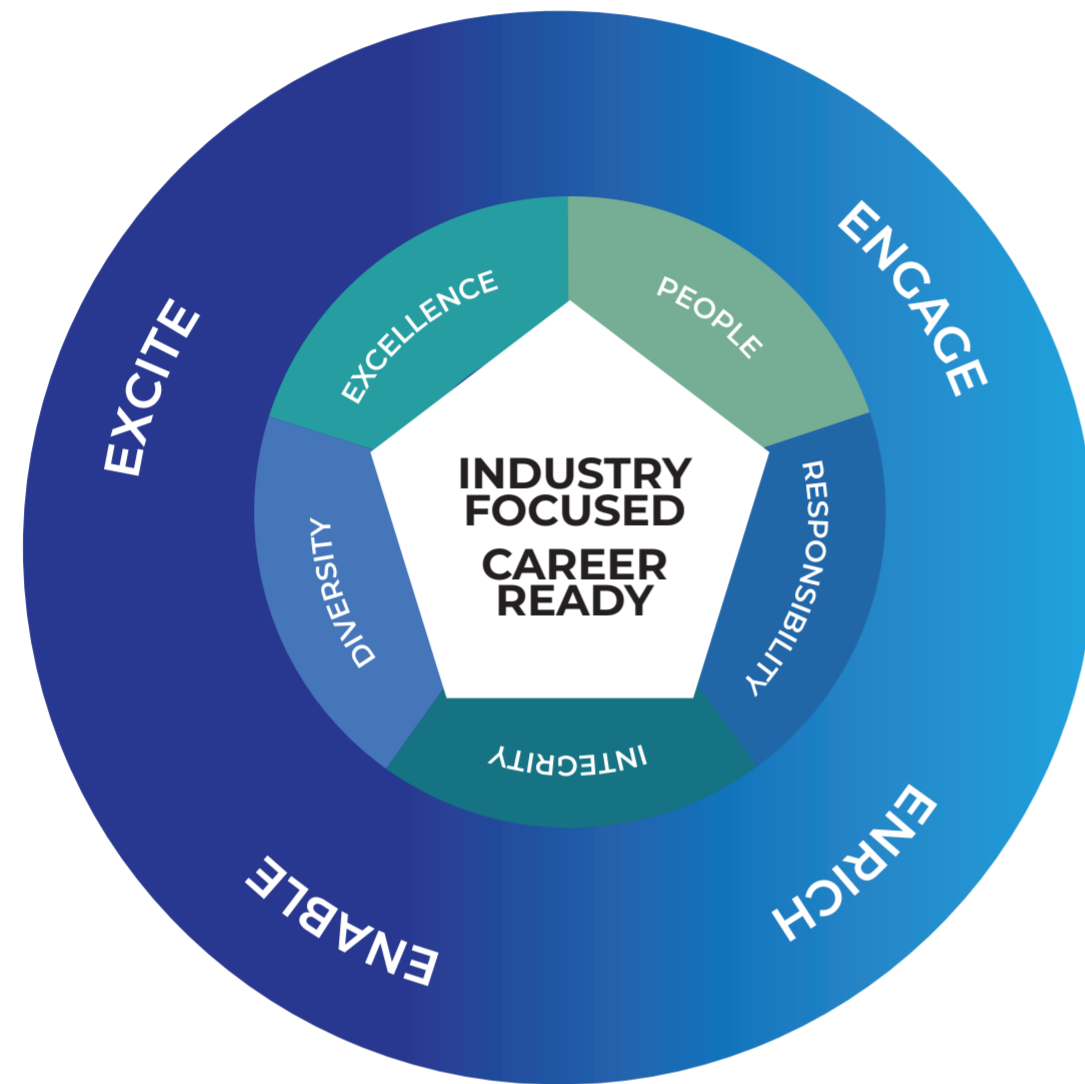
Developing people to improve their life outcomes and chances is our passion. Realising potential, ensuring opportunity becomes reality and providing employers with the skills and attributes to enhance their business and productivity.

Improving our students resilience, ethics and skills is at the heart of all our programmes and will ensure we are Industry Focused and Career Ready.



Reaseheath Strategic Plan 24-27

Intent



We will do this by:

- Developing Career Ready learners who have the technical skills, transferable skills and aptitudes to thrive and progress in the work place or to higher levels of education.
- Aligning our offer to address industry skills gaps by working in partnership to drive sustainability and productivity.
- Delivering a Reaseheath Experience for our staff and learners that is centered on personal development, community, inclusivity and has high aspirations.
- Telling the Story to enthuse and attract the workforce of tomorrow to the career paths and opportunities that exist.
- Delivering an outstanding quality of education.
- Addressing key national priorities such as food security and protection of the environment.

CURRICULUM INTENT

Intent	Implementation
<p>Qualifications that are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant • Challenging • Meet employer/industry demand • A range of accredited and skills based in order to provide individualised study programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist technical core qualifications that are recognised by the sector and additional industry qualifications • Recognised short qualifications and college industry skills certificates
<p>A curriculum that develops</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical expertise • Positive work place behaviours • Long term knowledge and skill development • Preparation for employment through industry experiences, work placements and our BE Ready programme • A comprehensive 'Reaseheath Experience' for all learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended work placements & middle year • Learning technical skills through practical application in a range of settings • The Reaseheath 'BeReady' programme & Passport that focusses on personal development and life skills
<p>Resources and staff expertise that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer industry specific learning • Develop STEM and Transferable Skills • Are at the 'leading edge' of the sectors we serve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over £80m invested in specialist teaching resource and equipment • Learning that takes place in a range of commercial & STEM environments • Work with a range of industry leaders and employers to ensure relevancy
<p>A nurturing model of support that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fosters inclusive recruitment, progression and employment • Removes barriers to learning • Facilitates high expectations for all • Welcomes learners to the Reaseheath family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive tutorial wellbeing and support resource • Significant investment to ensure sector leading support services • College PRIDE Values intertwined throughout curriculum • Strong focus on citizenship and community • Free transport & subsidised accommodation

INFORMING THE PRIORITIES

Since the 2008 financial crisis productivity has flatlined, currently the UK has 0.4% productivity growth which is less than half of the G7 average. The UK has some of the most productive companies in the world, however, 7/10 are performing below average compared to international peers. A 1% improvement in productivity over the next 5 years equates to approximately £98m injection into the UK. Key factors to realising this are the uptake of technology adoption, innovation and business efficiency.

Reaseheath supports vital national sectors to help achieve this. The entire agri-food supply chain, from agriculture to final retailing and catering, is estimated in 2018 to contribute £121 billion or 9.4% to gross value added. Excluding agriculture and fishing, the food sector contribution to GVA increased by 5.6%. The food and drink sector manufacturing industry remains the single largest manufacturing sector in the UK, contributing significant GVA of almost 29 billion. The UK exported £23.6 billion of food, feed and drink in 2019 and is one of the top 12 food and drink exporters. Employment for the whole food supply chain that includes agriculture and fishing is 4.1 million people, making up 14% of national employment.

Agri-tech is a well established and important UK sector. The land based engineering industry has an estimated turnover of approximately £4 billion annually with approximately half the equipment sold through dealerships and half exported. The current recruitment requirement into the sector of 1,000 a year is predicted to grow over the next five years and there will be a need for an increasing proportion of the workforce to be skilled to level 4. Reaseheath is delivering approximately 63% of the Land Based Service Engineering L3 Apprenticeships to the sector.

Agriculture science and technology is rapidly becoming one of the world's fastest growing and exciting markets. It is driven by global changes: a rising population, rapid development of emerging

economies with western lifestyle aspirations and growing geopolitical instability around shortages of land, water and energy.

A technology revolution is also taking place. Breakthroughs in nutrition, genetics, informatics, satellite imaging, remote sensing, meteorology, precision farming and low impact agriculture mean agri-tech has huge potential for development and to provide solutions for major global issues such as food security and the sustainability of planet Earth.

Britain's 12,000 dairy farmers are among the worlds most dedicated and professional, managing millions of acres of pasture land and 1.9 million cows including 162,000 in Cheshire. The value of milk production in the UK is 4.77 billion, producing 15 billion litres of milk. Approximately 71 percent of the total area of the United Kingdom was used as agricultural land in 2020 with the agricultural sector contributing more than 9 billion GVA. Latest Government figures also show that exports of cheese and butter have risen by 17% and 20%. The dairy sector employs 24,000 people at processing sites around the country and in addition dairy farms employ 50,000 more people. Reaseheath is the sole provider of the Dairy Technologist L5 Apprenticeship standard in the UK.

The network of specialist colleges and universities providing land based learning delivers over 80% of all long specialist land based further education qualifications. They also deliver a majority of all land based higher education. Supporting vitally important national strategies around Agri-Food and Sustainability the network is crucial to ensuring these sectors get the skills they need to realise these strategies. Provision in Agriculture, Agri-Tech, Dairy Tech, Horticulture, Environment Management and Food and drink supports these sectors, strategies and the mission to adopt technology and innovate. STEM is at the heart of our provision, a green laboratory driving that innovation.



INDUSTRY SKILLS BOARDS SUMMARY REPORT

Industry engagement and partnership working has always been firmly rooted at the core of our mission and offer, to ensure that we are able to prepare our learners to be career ready, and to ensure that as a College we adapt and innovate to meet the emerging skills needs of our sectors.

Employer engagement in the design and delivery of our programmes to ensure we are industry focused, and that students and apprentices receive industry standard delivery to prepare them for the work of work or the next stage in their full-time education journey is at the core of our mission, 'INDUSTRY FOCUSED, CAREER READY'.

With this purpose in mind, and in line with our Industry Engagement Strategy, during 2023/24 academic year the College held its first series of Industry Skills Boards. The Boards consisted of external stakeholders and industry representatives, student and alumni bodies, Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) colleagues from the Employer Representative Body (South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce & Industry), college staff and governors. The Boards met to engage industry in sharing LMI data for their relevant sector, to review the curriculum offer across our FE, HE, Apprenticeship and full cost provision, to identify areas of curriculum, knowledge and skills development, and through discussions gather information to:

- inform and direct our approach to engagement with industry;
- identify skills gaps and emerging new skills needs;
- provide test and challenge to our offer; and,
- identify opportunities for industry engagement in the design of the curriculum offer

The College held 11 Industry Skills Boards between December 2023 to March 2024 covering the curriculum offer for: Agriculture, Animal Management, Business, Construction, Countryside, Engineering, Equine, Food, Horticulture, Public Services and Sport.

LMI data was shared with each sector to test and challenge the findings, and to discuss the key issues and skills gaps that face their industry and individual business, to ensure that we are considering these factors in the design and delivery of our programmes across FE, HE and Apprenticeships. We can take confidence that the cross-cutting themes we identified are also reflected in the work that was undertaken through the LSIP.

Curriculum Area Managers delivered presentations providing an:

- overview of current offer and key skills developed;
- overview of LMI and our current understanding of the industry skills gaps; and, overview of destinations of our learners

Discussions were then focused around, but not limited to, the following key themes:

- what are the skills gaps in the industry and have we correctly identified them?;
- is our offer right for the industry and to address the skills gaps (FE, Apps, HE, Adult and Commercial to be considered)?; and,
- what should our priorities be, in relation to the industry, and what changes are needed.

It was reassuring that cross cutting themes that the college had already identified were confirmed, including:

- Communication
- Teamworking
- Digital Skills (Microsoft 365 and some bespoke industry relevant packages)
- Building resilience

The detailed report for each of the 11 skills boards is available and used to aid curriculum planning and design.



Cheshire and Warrington Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) Priority Areas

The LSIP identified five themes following consultation with employers and utilising existing LMI:-

Theme 1 - Technical Skills

1. Manufacturing
2. Health & Social Care
3. Life Sciences
4. Digital - cross cutting
5. Low Carbon (including Green Skills) - cross cutting

Theme 2 - Accessibility

Theme 3 - Employability Competencies / skills

Theme 4 - Ensuring Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance is sufficient

Theme 5 - Ensuring there are enough Educational Professionals to deliver the provision

The thematic feedback from our employers at our industry networking events has identified the need as:-

- Skills gaps identified at Level 4&5 (Agriculture and all Engineering sectors - Ag Engineering in particular, in relation to alternative fuel/energy sources)
- Management training at L3 & L5
- Clear pathways through from L2 to L7
- Decarbonisation – what it means for their business, how to undertake carbon audits, how to develop a carbon reduction plan and support in implementing it
- Digital skills, communication and interpersonal skills

There is extensive LMI from our own Reaseheath commissioned LMI for the sectors we serve. This very much corroborates the LMI carried out for the LSIP and by the LEP previously.



In summary:-

- In terms of total job numbers within the wider economy around Reaseheath College (Cheshire and Warrington LEP and surrounding areas within 2-hour travel time) occupations linked to the business and construction sectors account for the most, approximately 876,000 and 465,000 jobs each. Combined they account for close to 17 per cent of jobs in regional economy
- In comparison, land-based occupations, areas in which Reaseheath College's curriculum is particularly focused, account for a smaller share jobs in the regional economy, approximately 2.4 percent or almost 150,000 jobs
- Positively, at a wider regional level, jobs numbers in each of these sectors are projected to grow in the coming years, albeit at different rates. Animal related occupations are projected to grow the fastest by 2030, growing by 4.5 percent while at the other end of the spectrum, job numbers relating to engineering are projected to grow more slowly, approximately 1.3 percent

The top specialised skills vary considerably across sectors reflecting the diversity of tasks and job roles in each.

- **Land:** Gardening and horticulture skills feature strongly, as do skills such as risk-analysis, machinery operation and animal/veterinary care. The diversity of skills reflects the sector's diversity in terms of occupations
- **Animal:** Specific veterinary skills (such as surgery and medical ultrasonography) are highly sought after by employers, as are skills such as animal care, nursing and animal husbandry

• **Business:** Finance and accounting related skills are frequently required by employers in this area. More general cross-business skills such as procurement, data analysis, marketing, customer-relationship management and project management are also sought after

• **Construction:** Traditional construction skills such as carpentry, plumbing and machine operation continue to be in high demand. Professional skills such as a knowledge of civil engineering, computer-aided design (CAD), and quantity surveying are also desirable

• **Sport:** Coaching, fitness training, lifeguarding, and instructing are among the most demanded specialised skills for this sector in addition to an understanding of the human anatomy, physiology and an ability to work with children

• **Engineering:** A knowledge of the major engineering disciplines such as mechanical, civil and electrical are highly sought after in this sector. Other top skills include an understanding of machinery, automation, as well engineering design skills, including CAD

• **Food:** Warehousing, and skills relating to effective production operation, as well as a knowledge of food safety and sanitation standards are desirable for these roles. Skills relating to specific food-types are also sought after, such as baking and butchering

• **Software skills:** Software skills are seen to be important to the occupations of only some of the chosen sectors, such as business and engineering (who frequently require a knowledge of programming skills or CAD, respectively)



Green Skills

- Demand for green skills has grown across all sectors over the previous 5 years, albeit to differing degrees
- Land-based sectors have the highest proportion of job postings requiring green skills, approximately 15 percent, with its recent growth likely driven by an increasing number of jobs relating to the environment and conservation. Top green skills here include ecological knowledge, arboriculture, and a host of specific environmental focused areas such as consulting, science, impact assessments, health and laws
- Green skills are also frequently sought after by employers of construction and engineering roles relating to the built environment. Top skills include geotechnical / environmental / renewable engineering as well as wastewater management and an awareness of environmental policy and green building standards
- Environment Health and Safety (EHS) – the practical aspects of protecting the environment and maintaining health and safety – as well as awareness of achieving Net-Zero emissions both appear frequently across sectors reflecting a growing environmental awareness among employers
- While the animal and sport-related sectors have seen proportionally the highest growth over time, it is important to emphasise that demand for green skills in these sectors remains very low



LEP LMI

Skills, Education and Employment Key Challenges Identified Over Last Few Years

1. Employers more likely to have skills vacancies and shortages and reporting bottom-line business impact
2. Strong and increasing demand for Level 3+ skills – the proportion of the working age population with Level 4+ skills is comparable with England but rate of growth of L4+ has reduced significantly and converged with the English average – this has impact on productivity. Also significant reduction in apprenticeships
3. Impact of Covid and other recent shocks to the labour market – we now have a tight labour market but also increased numbers of long-term unemployed and economically inactive and reduction in numbers of people able to afford digital
4. The gaps in attainment and progression rates of young people eligible for free school meals c.f. those not eligible for FSMs is too big and has been for last 15 years and likely to increase as a result of Covid
5. Where young people live affects their level of attainment and progression
6. The gender gaps – some occupations only drawing on the skills of half the population
7. Information failures - local residents not aware of new technologies or job/career opportunities

As well as the national and global focus on the environment and a sustainable future, Cheshire East Local Authority have made sustainability at the heart of its local plan. The college has been working in partnership with Cheshire East to deliver the Sustainability Network, helping connect and support businesses in their journey to net zero.

The college has utilised Strategic Development Funds to support engagement with employers through the Business Hub, develop short courses for employers themed around sustainability and improved infrastructure to deliver carbon auditing and other sustainability training.

The priorities for Reaseheath support the identified need :-

- The Government's reforms to L3 qualifications in T Levels and increased focused within them on work readiness and core skills such as digital and sustainability
- The Government's reforms to increase Life Long Learning to support skills gaps. Our expansion of the offer, its accessibility and bite size courses that are more in keeping with employer ask
- The national drive to Net Zero and a sustainable future, including key sectors such as Food, Agriculture, Agri-tech, Environment and important national strategies. At the core of our offer
- The Institute of Sustainability and Food Innovation in conjunction with University of Chester.
- The need to develop employability skills as well as the technical skills which employers have consistently identified as a core requirement. This can be seen through the college intent and wrap around programmes in the college such as Be Ready
- The need to improve Higher Level Skills through Higher Technical Qualifications or Degree Apprenticeships. Expansion of this offer. The new Cheshire & Warrington Institute of Technology

The LSIP identified some key challenges to delivering on the priorities of which the main one was the recruitment of specialist technical staff to deliver the training. Resolving this is going to be central to success and will involve working more collaboratively with industry and for Government to support through ensuring colleges are able to be competitive in the labour market.

In addition the college will continue to support the work of the Pledge in Cheshire & Warrington and the National Land based college to ensure young people are increasingly aware of the wealth of career opportunities and the high value jobs of tomorrow, in addition to our own schools engagement.

The college has worked hard to ensure there are no attainment gaps between students of differing needs including those identified as SEN and has an inclusive offer from Entry level through to Level 6.



COLLABORATION

Reaseheath is committed to working in partnership and has a proud history of employer and provider partnerships leading to positive outcomes for students and employers.

The college is a member of Landex alongside membership of the National Land based College, Land Based Learning Ltd and Land Based Assessment Ltd. This collaboration allows us to work together with fellow specialist land based colleges to share best practice, deliver excellence, develop leadership, benchmark performance, develop qualifications with employers and awarding bodies, provide an EPA service and develop learning materials for all members to utilise.

The college has a substantive strategic partner in the University of Chester with the aim to make this a sector leading partnership, taking forward vital skills areas of sustainability, green skills and food innovation especially. The Institute of Sustainability and Food Innovation will combine expertise and specialist facilities from both partners to provide leading edge experiences and services for students and employers.

The college has also worked in collaboration with local Cheshire & Warrington FE colleges to achieve the:

- Institute of Technology for Cheshire & Warrington - a joint venture
- Strategic Development Funds where we have set out clear areas of work for each college
- Construction ACT college where working in collaboration we have shared best practice and expertise, harnessing new technology
- Business facing teams working more in collaboration on bids and opportunities to jointly service employer needs

The college works with over seven hundred employers, including in partnership with leading UK companies in Dairy Tech, Food, Agritech, Construction Plant, Rail and Bus & Coach. This has helped to lead the national skills conversation in these areas and to work together to provide solutions to labour and resource challenges.

The college works with leading sector organisations in the sectors we support to ensure we have a joint understanding of skills needs and developments. These include the Royal Horticultural Society, British Horse Society, National Farmers Union, Institute of Agricultural Engineers, Construction Industry Training Board.

The college works with key bodies such as local authorities and local enterprise partnership to deliver on skills needs and identified priorities. The college has worked with Cheshire East LA to develop a sustainability network and two working towards Net Zero conferences. The college is working with Cheshire East LA and CE colleges on strategies for those in NEET, disadvantaged or are a SEND student. The work with the Local Enterprise Authority encompasses improving careers guidance by connecting employers and providers to young people via the Pledge, a labour market intelligence and data group, the digital skills partnership, maximising local growth funds and bid work collaboration.

The Principal is the Landex Chair, a director of the National Land Based College, the Chair of Land Based Learning, a board member of the Local Skills Improvement Plan, a member of the Cheshire and Warrington Rural Strategy group and the college representative on the CE Schools Partnership.



FORMULATION OF ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

This accountability statement has been built utilising the following:-

- Governor Strategy days
- A series of Industry Focused Networking Events across all our sectors
- The college's existing strategic plan
- LMI commissioned by the college into the specific sectors we serve
- LMI provided through the Local Enterprise Partnership
- Research provided via Landex on the national picture for land based colleges and land based provision
- DfE identified skill priorities
- Skills Boards in the 24/25 curriculum planning process have further strengthened the linkage between LMI and curriculum planning
- The Local Skills Improvement Plan
- Employer engagement via participation on industry partnership groups including those the college has led on
- National Strategies such as Food, Dairy, Sustainability



CORPORATION STATEMENT

On behalf of the Reaseheath College Board of Governors, 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 the 13th July 2023.

The plan will be published on the College's website within three months of the start of the new academic year and can be accessed **from the following link (when live)**.

Marcus Clinton
Principal & CEO Reaseheath College
& University Centre

Date: 24.5.24

Jane Cowell OBE
Chair of Governors

Date: 24.5.24



SOURCES AND LINKS

- Cheshire & Warrington Local Skills Improvement Plan
- Landex – Strategic review of specialist land based provision in England
- Reaseheath commissioned LMI on sectors we serve – Lightfoot
- National Food Strategy – Future of Food
- National Sustainability Strategy
- National Land Based College
- Reaseheath College & University Strategic Plan
- Reaseheath College & University Industry Networking Events
- UK Clean Growth Strategy
- Cheshire and Warrington LEP Skills report 2022
- Cheshire and Warrington LEP Labour Market Assessment Report 2022
- Cheshire and Warrington LEP Strategic Economic Plan
- Cheshire and Warrington LEP Local Industrial Strategy
- Cheshire East Local Plan
- World of Opportunity – Careers in Landbased Engineering
- Dairy Sustainability Framework 2020-2025 Strategic Plan
- UK Strategy for Food and Agriculture
- The Institute for Agriculture and Horticulture Strategic Plan
- The Dairy Roadmap
- Dairy UK
- UK Strategy for Agricultural Technologies
- Reaseheath Industry Skills Board Report



Reaseheath College
Nantwich
Cheshire
CW5 6DF

✉ fe-enquiries@reaseheath.ac.uk

☎ 01270 613242

💻 reaseheath.ac.uk



European Union
European Structural
and Investment Funds