



Askham Bryan College Accountability Statement

Contents:

Purpose	1
- Strategic themes	
Context and place	3
- Impact	
- Curriculum	
- Digital Learning Focus	
Approach to developing annual accountability statement	7
Timeline of accountability agreement development	9
ABC strategic themes	11
Corporation statement	13

Purpose

“We are a specialist land-based provider developing talent, to respond to current and future challenges for the economy and environment.”

Our world faces an unprecedented period of transformation and change. The way we work, eat, learn, spend leisure time, and our connection with the environment and landscape, will all evolve exponentially over the next decade. Individually and collectively, we are all custodians for our environment, and the demand for sympathetic management of that environment, be it for food production, environmental protection, crisis management or future planning, will be paramount to a stable, sustainable future.

In its 75-year history, Askham Bryan College has established itself as a cornerstone in delivering land-based skills, which are one of the region’s most distinct features, accounting for 17% of businesses in York and North Yorkshire (four times higher than average) and 5% of total jobs (3% higher than UK average). Equally these skills are of significant national importance, for example in sustainable food production as well as maintaining our natural environment. This is particularly relevant given the College’s geographical proximity and substantial student recruitment from rural areas, including the Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors’ national parks.

The importance of this sector is clear in the region’s priorities; both Agri-skills and green skills feature strongly in key documents which outline local and regional priorities. The College has significant strengths in this sector, both in terms of a well-established reputation and state of the art facilities with strong delivery in both traditional land-based skills and innovative delivery embracing emerging technologies such as mixed reality, immersive technology, remote sensing, and investments in precision agriculture.

‘Agri-skills’ are a confirmed priority sector in the local skills improvement plan (LSIP), whilst green skills and low carbon skills are cross-cutting themes in the same document. Equally, the York ‘Skills for Employment’ strategy, developed by local partners from Higher Education (HE), Further Education (FE), local government and employer organisations, specifically refers to Agri-Tech and the bioeconomy as key priorities for the region.

An additional feature of the York and North Yorkshire LSIP is “to enable people from all backgrounds to access skills provision to support progression in work, transition to new career opportunities, gain employability and technical skills required by employers, and fulfil their potential at work.” Askham Bryan College prides itself on our ability to offer all students access to land-based education and skills, from pre-entry qualifications, right through to Level 7, as well as delivering a combination of Apprenticeships, adult funding learning, HE and 16-19 study programmes. This enables us to offer second chances and alternative progression routes to individuals who may not have been able to achieve or fully develop their skills at school, or those individuals who are seeking to re-engage with education and have a passion for land-based skills.

Askham Bryan College will respond, develop and grow to meet the current and future needs of our industries, and address the profound challenges the world faces. Being a specialist land-based college, we have a unique ability to provide technical and professional training to meet these specific needs.

The importance of developing educated and creative people, with a fundamental understanding of science technology and the natural environment, is at the core of our four strategic themes:

- • • • • • • •
- **Strategic Theme 1:**
- Technical and professional land-based curriculum which is high quality,
- industry-relevant and enhances our students’ employability.
- **Vision 2030:** We will be a leading college nationally for animal science and
- conservation, and sustainable food production.
-

- **Strategic Theme 2:**
- Outstanding resources that deliver an exceptional and inclusive student experience.
- **Vision 2030:** We will re-purpose our campuses to be environments combining natural beauty with ground-breaking practices and digital technologies.

- **Strategic Theme 3:**
- Engagement bringing people and place together, to build mutually beneficial relationships and celebrate successes.
- **Vision 2030:** We will be a national hub for skills, training and knowledge exchange for our core specialisms, with a focus on bio-economy, including incubation of related start-up businesses.

- **Strategic Theme 4:**
- Sustainability and wider contribution to the circular economy is embedded into college life.
- **Vision 2030:** We will be financially vibrant, enabling us to invest in exemplar sector practices and innovations, informed by our commitment to our natural capital.
- • • • • • • •



Context and Place

The College: Askham Bryan College is one of the few remaining independent specialist land-based further education (FE) colleges in England. The College offers programmes ranging from entry level up to degree and has a turnover of c.£28 million. In total 3110 students are enrolled at the College, with 1472 undertaking 16-19, 360 adult, 661 Apprenticeships and 449 higher education.

The College offers a range of full and part-time specialist land-based and land-related programmes across 13 out of 14 occupational areas from entry (foundation) level to degree, together with a wide range of Apprenticeships, including higher-level apprenticeships. The most popular curriculum areas are land-based or land-related, which account for over 75% of total enrolments.

The College is a genuine centre of expertise, containing high value facilities and resources that are of regional and national significance for industry specific skills training.

Our students make substantial progress (90% positive destinations) into further work and training, with a clear focus on specialist land-based careers:

Agriculture – Students progress into careers in livestock, crop production or farm mechanisation, with a focus on Agri-skills and Agri-Tech developments, environmental impacts in farming and improvements to farming techniques. These roles directly address sustainability and food security issues faced by the UK, as well as contributing significantly to rural jobs and economy for North Yorkshire.

Horticulture – Arboriculture and forestry courses are designed for anyone with an interest in the production and management of trees and shrubs within rural and urban landscapes. Careers in arboriculture are varied and there are significant opportunities for work, both in the UK and internationally. A career in horticulture offers real diversity spanning the disciplines of art and design; botanical careers in this sector could be anything from a garden designer to a horticultural scientist.



Equine – This is a £4bn year industry in the UK, employing 250,000 people which can essentially be divided into two parts: activities based on the use, possession or ownership of horses (core activities) and suppliers of horse related goods and services for those core activities (providers to the core). The activities geared toward professional riders include commercial breeders, affiliated sports such as dressage and show jumping, training and racing. The leisure-oriented activities include the provision of riding lessons, trekking and tourist attractions. The other part of the industry is made up of providers of goods and services to the core. Examples include farriery, feed supply and veterinary services, livery yards etc. Each of these components offer employment to significant numbers of people often in a rural community where other opportunities are reducing.

Animal Management – Jobs in this sector range from an animal care worker to countryside ranger, `ookeeper to RSPCA inspector, environmental specialist to marine biologist. Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) data suggests all related trades show an increase of available roles between now and 2027. In the curriculum there is a strong focus on the biology, health, welfare and husbandry of animals and emphasis on wildlife and conservation. Students learn to care for a variety of domestic and exotic species, leading to a huge range of transferable skills.

Veterinary Nursing – There is a significant skills shortage in the veterinary nursing industry both regionally and nationally. The veterinary nursing provision has a clear pathway to employment in the role of a veterinary nurse across a variety of setting types.



Geographic Impact:

The College's main campus is located to the southwest of York with over 85% of total students; the College's other campuses are located at Middlesbrough's Stewart Park in the Tees Valley, Shipley, Wakefield and Gateshead.

Economic Impact:

The College will ensure that its curricula is aligned with regional economic needs and priorities, and the development of an appropriately trained and professionally skilled workforce.

These priorities are articulated through a variety of organisations and statutory bodies in varying forms both locally, regionally and nationally, including, but not limited to; the York and North Yorkshire Local Skills Improvement Plan, the York 10-year skills strategy, the York and North Yorkshire LEP strategic economic plan, and, the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) and Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) strategic economic plans.

In summary the College will align its curricula and business with the following broad priorities, that capture local, regional and national need;

- High productivity, high welfare and environmentally sustainable food production.
- Maintaining and protecting sustainable spaces and landscapes, enabling the continued development and enhancement of the natural environment.
- Innovative and sustainable workforce - focusing on the retention and development of talent delivering appropriately to local, regional and national need.
- Supporting the retraining and appropriate reskilling of individuals.
- Overcoming barriers related to rurality and accessing quality specialist education.
- Enhance digital skills within society generally, and the workforce specifically.

Curriculum Development:

Our curriculum is developed, informed and provided on the basis of skills need, future industry requirements, delivery capacity and labour market intelligence. All curriculum provision is subject to ongoing review and assessment through our embedded quality assurance and curriculum planning processes.

New provision is subject to rigorous 'testing' and assessment before any decisions are taken as to whether to proceed and/or invest within the proposed curriculum area, once again this is a feature of curriculum planning. The process for this may vary dependant on the type of provision (HE, Apprenticeships, FE, Adult, Commercial). We will continue to review and improve these quality assurance processes and our approach to curriculum development, ensuring we maintain the highest standards and deliver innovative teaching and learning.

The following criteria are considered within any proposals for new curriculum development:

- Use of appropriate LMI to correctly assess demand.
- Assurance that the delivery of high-quality provision can be achieved.
- Accurate assessment and an appropriate level of financial contribution rate.
- Appropriate consideration and mapping of progression and 'place' within the overall educational portfolio of the College.

The College curriculum is an evolving process and is continually updated and developed in line with the changing needs of our stakeholders. In addition, it is influenced by Government including the Post-16 Skills Plan, Education Inspection Framework, T Level action plan as well as the College's own Foundation Degree Awarding Powers (FDAP).

Our curriculum will:

- Focus on a technical and professional land-based curriculum that goes beyond course specifications to deliver the knowledge, skills and behaviour our students need to flourish in their respective futures and careers.
- Continue the delivery of additional areas of curriculum that recognise our role as an educational institution within our local and regional communities, for example, our Prince's Trust provision.
- Develop areas of provision based on empirical evidence, supported through our planning processes and aligned with national, regional and local skills priorities where appropriate.
- Encourage the development of individual programmes of learning, that recognise starting points and are ambitious in providing progression opportunities to further education, training and employment.

Our curriculum plan is underpinned by the following principles:

- Inclusivity - we will construct a curriculum that is designed to give all learners the skills, knowledge and behaviours required to be successful in life.
- Sustainability – we recognise our role in developing curricula that support sustainable practices in all that we do.
- Evidence based – we will use data and evidence to inform our curriculum planning processes.

Our digital learning focus:

The College believes and values the increasingly important role of digital learning in our curriculum. Our digital learning will emphasise:

- Inclusivity - ensuring all learners have access to technology to support their learning and engagement to digital learning.
- Teaching and Learning – continuously upskilling staff and developing innovative teaching practices.
- Digital fluency – increasing our digital skills offer and investment in appropriate digital technologies to support learning across all College sites.
- Innovation – developing ways to support sound pedagogy through digital learning, including virtual, mixed and augmented reality.

Furthermore, the College has outlined the following five key digital principles to guide future development and investment, aligned to regional priorities, emerging technology and most importantly continuing improvement of student experience and outcomes:

1. We will move towards a future of 'Bring Your Own Device'
2. We will continue to improve the application of mixed reality in education
3. We will embrace the adoption of AI and the automation of support
4. We will infuse all curriculum areas with relevant technologies
5. We will provide appropriate and accessible systems and applications



Approach to Developing Annual Accountability Statement

The College operates extensive and collaborative partnerships on many different levels. The main driver for all partnership work is to add to, and ensure that, an outstanding student environment, learning experience and outcomes is both created and delivered.

The College engages effectively with employers and other relevant stakeholders to understand the skills needs of the local, regional and national economy. The Principal/CEO sits on a number of key strategic groups including Yorkshire Agricultural Society Council as an ex-officio member (industry representative body for the region), Higher York (partnership with the York universities and colleges as a board member), BioYorkshire Industrial Advisory Group (tripartite innovation skills and knowledge partnership between the College, University of York and FERA Science), SDF Partnership Board (delivery board for skills development with industry partners), York Employability and Skills Board (employability and skills partnership between educational providers, industry and City of York Council), York Partnership (City Leaders, York City Leaders Group), UK Shared Prosperity Fund Board (industry, education providers and City of York Council partnership board to advise on the approach for the delivery of UK Prosperity Fund), Yorkshire and Humber Institute of Technology Board (skills and higher technical education partnership board) and as a member of the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Principals' Group (collaborative partnership group of FE providers across North Yorkshire).

BioYorkshire is a joint initiative between Askham Bryan College, University of York and Fera Science that aims to secure capital and revenue funding from the Government to facilitate the creation and delivery of a strategic and co-ordinated programme that will establish York and North Yorkshire as the UK's global centre of excellence for bio-economy solutions. BioYorkshire will contribute to York and North Yorkshire's ambition to become the Nation's first carbon negative region through innovations such as low carbon farming to produce food and feed and also utilising by products in biorefining technologies that not only produce energy (such as through anaerobic digestion) but also high value products such as chemicals or fuels.

The solutions will focus on two key areas of the bioeconomy; profitable bio-based production of fuel, chemicals and materials, and productive, net-zero food, feed, farming and wider land use practices. Through smart investment in infrastructure, it is hoped that BioYorkshire can accelerate the next generation of world class businesses which will deliver the resilient, productive, low carbon economy of the future.

The College effectively engages with employers and other relevant stakeholders in the design and implementation of the curriculum to prepare students for future education, employment or work. For example, in veterinary nursing the curriculum team host a yearly educational congress, where current and contemporary practice is shared with students and wider professionals. The impact of this improves teaching and learning practises, ensuring curriculum meets the needs of industry. In animal science, the curriculum was amended following meetings with Universities and the RCVS to include an 'inheritance and genetics' module. This has improved progression opportunities onto science related degrees (including veterinary medicine, something that has not previously been accessible).

The College contributes well to local, regional and national skills needs. It is influential in the land-based sectors, the Principal and CEO is on the board of Landex, and the Vice Principal on the board of Land Based Assessment Ltd, a company involved in the delivery of Apprenticeship End Point Assessments (EPA). This representation has fostered opportunities for college apprenticeship staff to contribute to writing several EPA's and the College has been and continues to be actively involved in the development of several apprenticeship standards.

The College operates across various LEP areas, including Leeds City Region (LCR), York & North Yorkshire (Y&NY) and Tees Valley (a combination of Tees Valley Combined Authority and Tees Valley LEP). Within each of these, the College contributes to, and/or aligns its curriculum with the LEP strategic priorities. Additionally, the College was a key partner in the development of the City of York Council's recently produced 10 year skills plan.

The College's vision, curriculum focus, and strategic investment are reflective of our commitment to meeting the LEP's priorities, particularly those that relate to the rurality of much of the College catchment area. The Y&NY Growth Plan provides a framework to achieve a Greener, Fairer, Stronger Economy and is supported by relevant sub-strategies. For example, the 'People and Skills' supporting strategy focuses on creating opportunities for everyone in York and North Yorkshire to thrive and be empowered to realise their full potential, contributing towards economic growth in our region. In response to this, the College's Curriculum Plan highlights the key areas for development against these priorities, such as placing an emphasis on the 'Bio-Economy'.

The College has very successfully delivered skills and training in industries that support the development of sustainable environments. This is a key feature of the Leeds City Region LEP, although the greater emphasis for that region is in the digital skills arena. The College also contributes to this by developing student's wider digital fluency, for example introducing an eLearning coordinator to support students in the use of Microsoft 365 products and preparing the use of virtual and mixed reality learning spaces.

The College provides important opportunities for students in the Tees Valley. At our Stewart Park campus, we have developed an offer which allows for significant numbers of students studying below level 2, to re-engage with education. This is important as the Tees Valley reports high numbers of NEETs and has a low qualification rate in adults, consequently the TVCA strategic economic plan places justifiable emphasis on the ongoing development of education, employment and skills, something that is central to developing a skilled workforce, whilst increasing lifetime opportunities for young people. The circular economy is increasingly becoming a focus of the region's plans and the College's overall strategy reflects this changing priority.

The College has successfully completed several very exciting projects to digitally enable the York campus college farm and greatly enhance the student experience, thus ensuring our livestock is cared for in a high welfare, modern environment, using precision agricultural technology and enabling our students to have access to state of the art facilities and a wealth of livestock derived data. The College's robotic milking system and associated classrooms, part funded by the LEP, continues to provide skills training and experience to our students. Built as part of the Government funded Institute of Technology Programme in Spring 2022, the College opened its £1.7 million high-welfare, precision beef rearing facility and teaching resource. The high welfare beef rearing facility, associated classroom and seminar space are being used by students studying higher level qualifications, analysing data derived from numerous devices built into and around the facility. The project has enabled farm staff to make informed decisions based on real time data and provides opportunity for students to retrieve and review this data to inform their learning and contribute to research projects.

Students are benefitting from significant investment in technology. In May 2022 the College opened its brand-new Digital Skills Academy. The College received a 100% grant of £1 million from the Y&NY LEP as part of the Government's Getting Back Building scheme; the facility is specifically designed for digital teaching and learning to provide facilities to upskill and reskill our students and the current work force in emerging digital technologies, such as the use of Virtual Reality and 360 cameras. Furthermore, it will allow for the creation of a Centre of Excellence for Mixed Reality in partnership with a specialist provider.

Timeline of Accountability Agreement Development

29 March 2023

York & North Yorkshire LSIP Board – early draft findings for approval of the LSIP.

14 April 2023

Initial consultations with providers and businesses complete.

12 May 2023

First draft of LSIP complete.

16 May 2023

Draft accountability agreement v1. to SLT

22 May 2023

Draft accountability agreement v2. to Corporation

31 May 2023

Draft accountability agreement v3. Submitted to ESFA. LSIP also submitted.

June 2023

Accountability agreement updated based on governance meeting feedback and final version of LSIP

4 July 2023

Accountability agreement final to SLT

13 July 2023

Accountability agreement final to corporation

Before 31 July 2023

Final submission



Contribution to national, regional and local priorities

ABC Strategic Theme:

Technical and professional land-based curriculum, which is high quality, industry relevant and enhances our students' employability

Strategic Objective A:

Providing quality: Recognised for high quality teaching, training and assessment leading to successful outcomes for students.

Contribution to national, regional, local priorities:

- A Y&NY LSIP business priority focus is Apprenticeship and T Level delivery that is sufficient to meet skills gaps, with a college focus in Agri-Skills.
- High quality IAG and careers activity ensures advice is tailored to each sector specialism in addition to broad careers events (i.e., job fairs, HE conference, apprenticeship week). Students access the right course for their chosen careers.
- Rigorous quality assurance and extensive, evidence based teacher development provides industry leading teaching, improving qualification attainment rates.
- As a result, we will achieve an increase in the progression of leavers into jobs or apprenticeships that are relevant to their subject areas.

Strategic Objective B:

Delivering expertise: A responsive curriculum which is focussed on land-based and STEM subjects (including Bioeconomy) and meeting national priorities.

Contribution to national, regional, local priorities:

- Y&NY LSIP prioritises Agri-Skills, Low Carbon and green skills, embedded throughout our specialist, land-based curriculum.
- We will continue to plan and prepare for the introduction of T Levels in Animal Care and Management as and when that pathway becomes available.
- Work with the appropriate regulatory and awarding bodies to engage in development of appropriate qualifications, including Higher Technical Qualifications and new apprenticeship standards, responding to sector demands and ensuring their voice is heard.
- Significant work experience strengthens our partnerships with current and new employers and provides opportunity for increased student progression and employer-led curriculum development.
- We will ensure robust and regular review of the curriculum offer through a clear and timely curriculum and business planning process.
- We have developed clear vocational routes, closely aligned to identified local and regional skills priorities, with strong external stakeholder input to develop a curriculum that extends far beyond qualification specifications.

Strategic Objective C:

Investing in technical and professional education: Further developing our highly skilled staff.

Contribution to national, regional, local priorities:

- Proactive engagement with emerging funding opportunities, to continue to improve both the quality and range of professional development opportunities and teaching resources.
- Embedding our quality first teaching framework and Askham Bryan Educator programmes, providing robust and consistent teacher development.
- Continued and enhanced engagement with Employer Advisory Boards increasing the opportunities for industry upskilling.

ABC Strategic Theme:

Outstanding resources that deliver an exceptional and inclusive student experience

Strategic Objective D:

Prioritised investment: Strategically investing in our land-based resources and finances in priority curriculum areas.w

Contribution to national, regional, local priorities:

- The College will continue to seek opportunities that will maintain the region's strength in world class assets, with full engagement in progressive partnerships in Agri-skills e.g., BioYorkshire which aims to create 4000 green jobs in Yorkshire.
- Financial sustainability is robustly monitored and achieved through rigorous reviews of performance with budget holders at cost centre and college level, maximising opportunities for growth and efficiency. As a result, generated surplus enables further investment in resources.

Strategic Objective E:

Digital platforms: Enhancing our digital and mixed reality learning as part of our future curriculum development.

Contribution to national, regional, local priorities:

- Y&NY LSIP highlights 'future skills' in digital technology as a priority area, as well as identifying cross-cutting themes of innovation and emerging technology.
- We will continue to engage in key partnerships across the region including the Yorkshire and Humber IoT and the 'Metaverse for Education and Training Open Standards Forum' to embed the use of this technology across the region.
- We will implement and embed our five 'digital principles' to shape and inform decision making aligned to this strategic objective.
- Continued embedding of immersive technologies in curriculum areas through deployment of training and resources, creating additional immersive technology assessment practises in addition to those already established.
- We will engage with awarding body organisations to promote the use of digital technology in assessment and throughout each of our curriculum areas.

Strategic Objective F:

Student experience: Developing and enriching our wider student experience, particularly focusing on students’ environment, wellbeing and employability.

Contribution to national, regional, local priorities:

- Relevant college committees and sub-groups ensure college processes consider impact on student’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC).
- We will continue to develop and implement a ‘trauma-informed’ approach to learner support and positive behaviour, providing, advice, guidance and training to all colleagues in the Autumn term (Sept-Dec 2023).
- We will revise our student experience and enrichment models, delivering a new programme for all provision types from September 2023. This will meet local and regional priorities providing key employability and transferable skills, such as resilience and communication skills. This will be accessible for all students in funded provision (3000+ enrolments per year).

Strategic Objective G:

Inclusive environment: Embedding equality, diversity and inclusion for the College community, to enhance social mobility, widening participation and access to education.

Contribution to national, regional, local priorities:

- The College will continue to provide relevant training, qualifications and education opportunities for those individuals with disadvantages in accessing the labour market or progression, meeting a key priority within local and regional skills plans.
- We will review our adult education offer by Dec 2023, to ensure that it meets the needs of local and regional priorities, making recommendations for change where required.
- The College will continue to develop its widening participation strategy, with ongoing improvements being implemented throughout the 2023-24 academic year.
- The College EDI committee and associated task and finish groups will robustly monitor and review quality improvement actions, informed by key performance data and stakeholder feedback.

Corporation Statement:

We are committed to complying with our duty under a new section 52B of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, to review provision in relation to local needs, as proposed in the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill 2022. We will look to hold a review at least every three years to identify how well we are meeting local needs associated with securing suitable employment. We will publish our report on our main website following this review.

On behalf of the Askham Bryan College 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 on 22 May 2023.

The College website is available [here](#).

