

Employer Engagement Strategy **2024-2026**

Together we
transform lives.



Foreword

The 2024-26 Luminate Education Group Employer Engagement Strategy builds on the success of the first version produced in 2019. It clearly states our ambition and purpose for the next stage of the journey towards becoming an outstanding group of education institutions. We will continue to make a strong contribution to meeting skills needs, supporting our members' students, apprentices, communities and the economy.

This strategy links to Luminate Education Group's priorities and strategic plan, ensuring there is an institutional approach to employer engagement. The objective throughout is to foster and develop effective employer engagement at both local and national levels, informing curricula across our further and higher education offer.

Introduction

The strategic plan sets out our vision to transform the lives of our members' students and apprentices through inspirational learning and teaching, along with offering dynamic and high-quality curricula with direct input from employers.

It involves our members:

- Designing their offer with employers in mind, promoting innovation and investment which will contribute to business growth and increased productivity.
- Enhancing and maximising strong collaboration with businesses, local and regional stakeholders and national agencies.
- Working with West and North Yorkshire further education (FE) partners (for instance through West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges), to share best practice and knowledge, facilitating a broad offer, reducing costs where possible and avoiding duplication.

This approach will ensure that our members offer the skills and qualifications required to achieve and sustain positive outcomes in innovative and technologically-advancing industries.

Critical to achieving this vision is our collective relationships with industry and employers. To support this, we will work collaboratively across Luminate Education Group to maintain and develop strong employer relationships and industry links, ensuring that our portfolio is aligned with the priorities of the local, regional and national economy, and that the needs of employers are considered throughout all aspects of our members' curricula.

It's important that our strategy also aligns with the West and North Yorkshire skills plans; supporting inclusive growth, encouraging investment in business infrastructure, fostering a culture of innovation and enterprise, and improving business growth.

The Employer Engagement Strategy assesses current baseline information and sets out clear outcomes, supported by a robust framework for monitoring, self evaluation and action planning. It aims to increase employability for students in a rapidly-evolving environment and effectively responds to, anticipates and engages with employers to shape curricula that meet current and future industry needs.

The government has identified its future policy for skills provision in the recently published Skills for Jobs White Paper, which aims to strengthen links between employers and FE providers. In addition, Ofsted has added a separate judgement to its inspection framework based on how well colleges meet the local and regional skill needs implemented from September 2022.

At Luminate Education Group, we have always sought to ensure our members' provisions for young people and adults are tailored to the needs of employers and key stakeholders. Building on our employer-led curriculum will ensure that employers continue to be placed at the heart of defining local skills needs and our response to them.

Purpose

In this strategy we:

- Outline our priorities and activities to support workforce development.
- Outline how Luminate Education Group will understand and strive to meet current and future skills needs.
- Develop and enhance our members' well-established ways of engaging with and gaining feedback from industry stakeholders, as well as encouraging and posing new ideas to employers such as knowledge transfer initiatives.

One of education's primary purposes is to ensure young people are well prepared for employment in their chosen sector, and that adults have the opportunity to improve their skills and change or advance their careers through varied modes of study. This relies on:

- Understanding how skills needs are changing across all sectors.
- Understanding how practices are changing in all sectors due to technological advancement and innovation.

Students are best prepared for employment when they have opportunities for skills development in industry-standard facilities, work experience or placements, assignments based on real life scenarios, employer visits, trade show events, visiting speakers and employer mentoring. Staff with current industry experience and qualifications are vital to this, but it is easy for knowledge to become out of date due to the pace of change in industry.

We recognise the importance of engagement with employers, building effective working relationships, minimising duplication of time and effort, developing relevant curriculum and delivery models and providing opportunities for employees to access training.

Our Ambition and Aims

Our ambition is to become the training partner of choice for employers - locally, regionally and nationally.

To achieve this, we aim to expand our members' partnership work with employers, industry/sectoral bodies, other education providers, local/regional community partners and key government stakeholders to:

- Enhance Luminate Education Group's role as a key contributor to the economic development of the region and nation.
- Provide responsive, accessible high quality learning opportunities aligned to industry, informed by employers.
- Ensure the future workforce has the relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours, qualifications and experience to support business growth, competitiveness and sustainability.
- Establish strong relationships and collaborative partnership working models at local, regional and national levels to maximise future opportunities for economic growth, inward investment and new innovative training and working practices.
- Deliver employability and skills programmes which support inclusive growth.

Objectives

To deliver our members will:

- Ensure their portfolio offer is relevant and aligned to current and future employer needs.
- Work with industry sectors and use high quality skills assessment tools to gather market intelligence for portfolio planning and development.
- Raise awareness of their offering through employer engagement with sector forums, networking events and knowledge transfer activities.
- Work with local, regional, national and sector partners to remain key leaders of and contributors to partnership networks.
- Work with industry stakeholders to ensure staff resources and skills are relevant and up-to-date for current and future practices.
- Support employers and partners to challenge and reduce stereotypes in career choices and occupational development.
- Involve employers in the design, delivery and review of their courses to enhance curriculum planning and align skills to meet employer needs.
- Enhance and expand their business relationships.
- Review, develop and increase their training portfolio for employers across key sectors.
- Build on their apprenticeship offer and achievements of apprentices.
- Continue to align their offer to the Local Skills Improvement Plans for West and North Yorkshire.



Objectives

The following documents explore how this strategy can be achieved:

- Facilitating strong understanding of labour market intelligence
- Building effective and lasting relationships with employers
- Oversight internally by the Employer Oversight Group and externally by the Luminate Employer Board
- Development of a broad curriculum offer
- Clear marketing through a business to business marketing strategy
- Business Development activities
- Careers, Work Experience & Progression (CWP) activities
- Delivering Supported Internships



Leeds City College

Mabgate Campus
74-76 Mabgate,
Leeds LS9 7EA

Park Lane Campus
Park Lane
Leeds LS3 1AA

Printworks Campus
Education Quarter
Hunslet Road
Leeds LS10 1JY

Quarry Hill Campus
Cultural Quarter
Playhouse Square
Leeds LS2 7UP

Harrogate College
Hornbeam Park
Harrogate HG2 8QT

Keighley College

Bradford Road
Keighley BD21 4HQ

Leeds Conservatoire

3 Quarry Hill
Leeds LS2 7PD

Leeds Sixth Form College

Park Lane
Leeds LS3 1AA

University Centre Leeds

Park Lane
Leeds LS3 1AA

HARROGATE
COLLEGE

 **Keighley**
College


LEEDS CITY
COLLEGE


LEEDS
CONSERVATOIRE

 **Leeds**
Sixth Form
College

 **Pudsey**
Sixth Form
College

 **University**
Centre Leeds