



# Activate Learning Accountability Statement (2024/25)

# Our Purpose

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Activate Learning is a pioneering education group committed to transforming lives through our learning philosophy and extraordinary mindset. We operate eight Further Education (FE) college campuses across Surrey, Berkshire and Oxfordshire as well as delivering apprenticeships, higher education, and online courses locally, regionally and nationally.

**Vision:** to achieve far-reaching progressive change impact through learning.

**Mission:** Providing Talent for businesses and transforming lives through our Learning Philosophy by empowering every learner to reach their full potential.

Activate Learning believes everyone is capable of improving their lives through learning, with emotional support, motivation, purpose, and the right application. We aim to provide this to everyone who studies with us across different parts of the group.

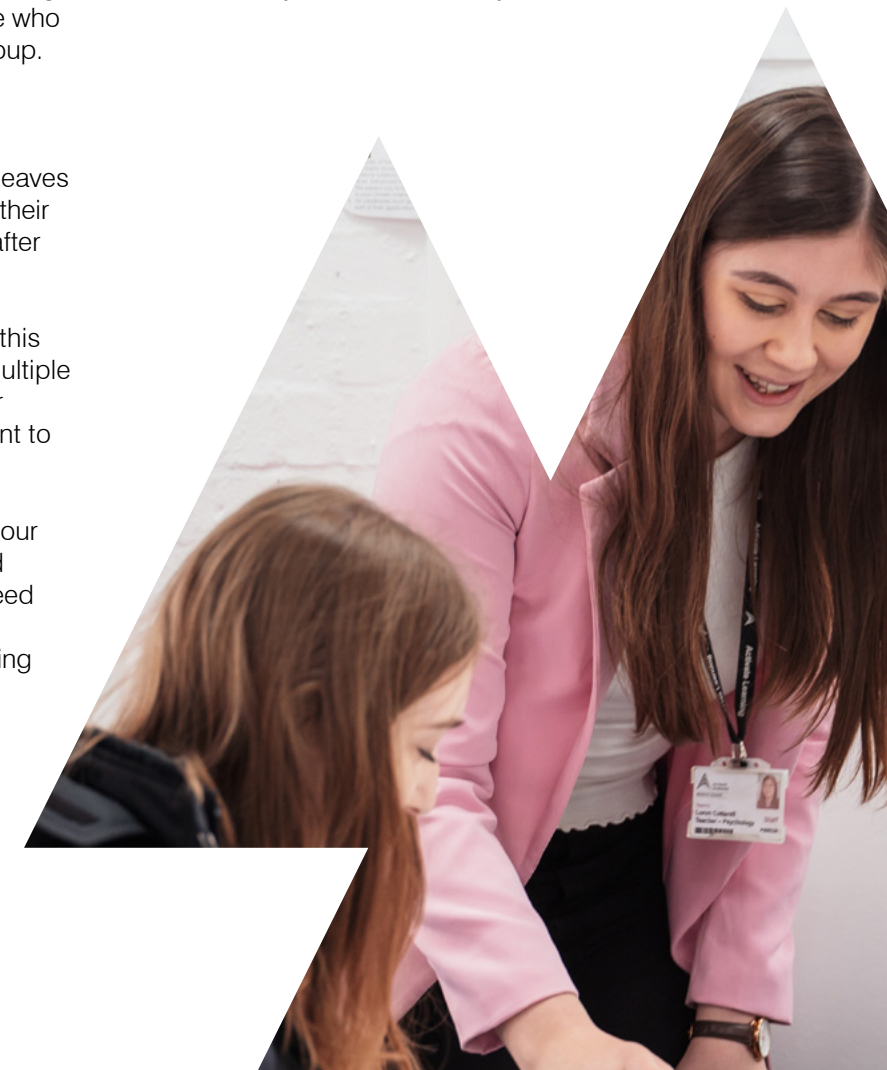
We work to ensure everyone who studies with us doesn't just develop their knowledge and understanding of their subject areas, but also leaves us feeling confident as a learner knowing how their behaviours and attributes make them sought after and highly employable.

We want to be a driver for change, and to do this we engage with different employers across multiple sectors to ensure what we deliver through our various learning programmes is what they want to see in their workplaces.

Our Learning Philosophy continues to provide our culture and the framework from which we build these work-ready learners. It recognises the need to provide opportunities to develop emotional intelligence and resilience. We do this by working with employers to gain real-world skills, which can be put into practice through live projects and industry placements.

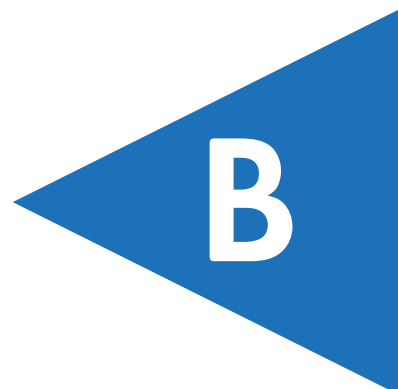
As people's needs change as they advance throughout their careers, we will be there with them at every step of the way should they need us, helping them to maintain a lifelong approach to learning.

Following the publication of the three LSIPs in our region, we have undertaken a detailed evaluation of our impact in addressing skills in priority sectors of the economy. This evaluation was reviewed by our Corporation Board and has informed the objectives for development outlined in this year's Accountability Statement.





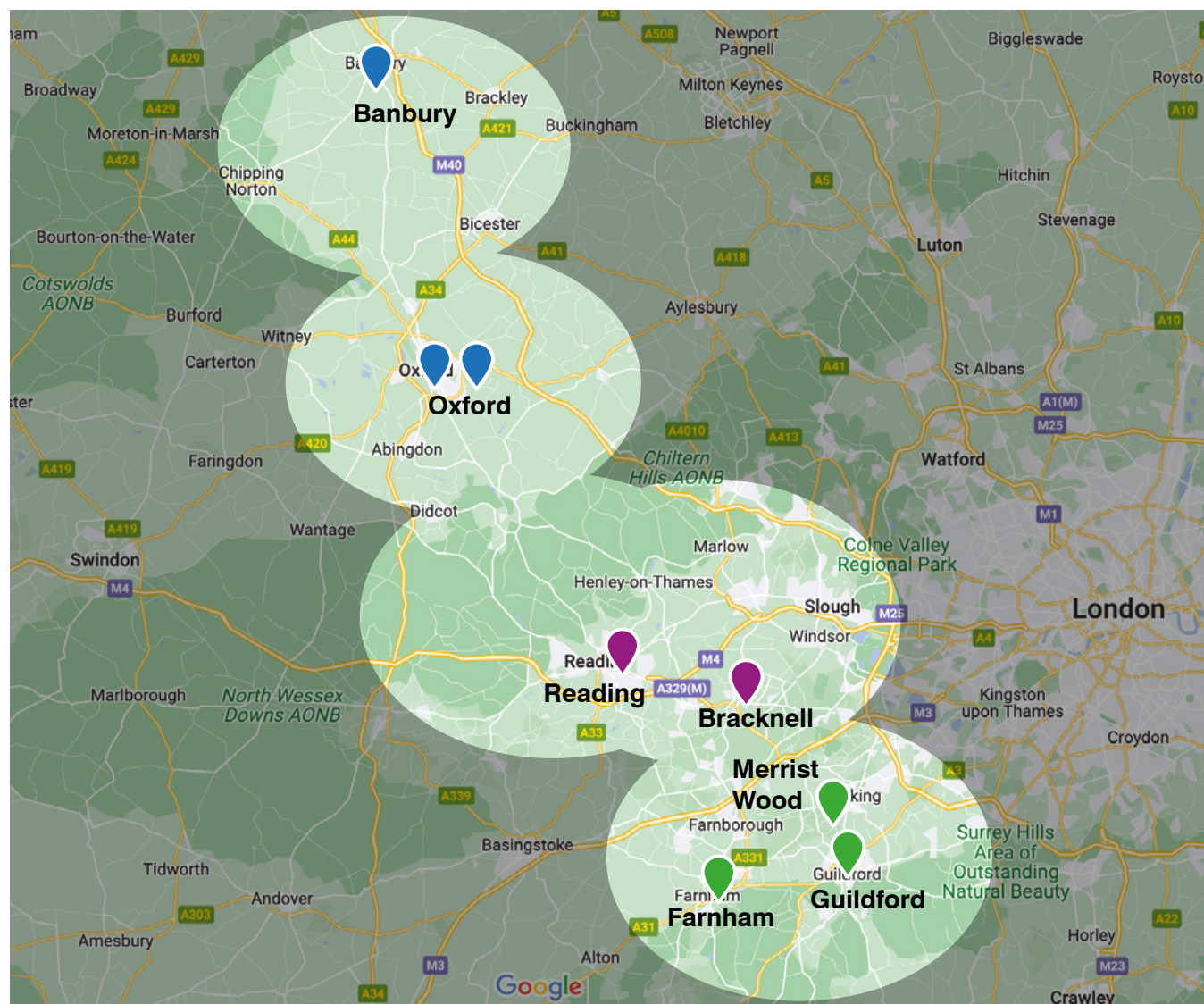
# Context and Place



Activate Learning has college campuses in the counties of Oxfordshire, Berkshire, and Surrey, although an increasing number of our apprentices and adult learners live outside these areas as technology enables them to access our programmes remotely. In particular, we have a significant number of learners from Greater London Authority, with which we have an Adult Education Budget contract.

Our core counties of Oxfordshire, Berkshire, and Surrey share many similarities (and key priority business sectors as defined in the LSIPs) as areas with high-skilled, high wage economies. We have therefore chosen to produce a single Accountability Statement that reflects the similar needs of these three regions, whilst also recognising the differences between them.

The map below identifies the geographical communities we serve within Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Surrey.



**In Oxfordshire** we have three campuses, Banbury and Bicester College, City of Oxford College, and our Technology Campus in Blackbird Leys. Delivery at these sites is supported by civic stakeholders that include Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council, Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OXLEP) and Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce as the Employer Representative Body and creator of the Oxfordshire LSIP.

**In Berkshire** we have two campuses, Reading College and Bracknell and Wokingham College. At these sites, delivery is supported by civic stakeholders that include, Reading Borough Council, Bracknell Forest Council and Wokingham Borough Council, Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (Berkshire LEP) and the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce as the Employer Representative Body and creator of the Berkshire LSIP.

**In Surrey** we have three campuses, Guildford College, Merrist Wood College, and Farnham College. The civic stakeholders supporting delivery from these locations are Surrey County Council, Guildford Borough Council, Waverley Borough Council, and the Surrey Chamber of Commerce as the Employer Representative Body and creator of the Surrey LSIP.

In addition to delivering to learners on a face-to-face basis in our local communities, we have also developed a growing online provision for adults, which includes online GCSE English and Maths, Access to Higher Education and Higher Technical Qualifications. This area of provision is growing rapidly and now supports more than 2,500 learners each year.

In terms of learner population in 2022/23 the following are some key headlines regarding learner enrolment:

**we delivered provision to**  

**18,300**  
 individual learners

**8,364**  
 learners undertook 16-18  
 Study Programmes across  
 all business sectors



**1,967**  
 learners were undertaking  
 apprenticeships



**2,888**  
 learners  
 undertook  
 employability  
 programmes

**2,675** 

learners undertook online courses, which is 50% of our adult funded learners and living in 21 individual English counties. They study from entry level to Level 6, with 80% being female learners, and an average age of 35 years old.

**1,101**  
 learners were undertaking Level 4 to 6 programmes with our partnerships with Kingston University, University of Reading, Oxford Brookes University and Middlesex University.



Strengths and Challenges of the Areas We Serve

Our colleges are situated within the adjacent geographical regions of Oxfordshire, Berkshire, and Surrey, which have great similarities in economic activity and growth potential.

All regions overall enjoy high employment, skills, and prosperity, with steep housing costs due to high property prices and a surplus of local job vacancies. The care, retail, personal services, and hospitality sectors, which are common starting points for young learners, face a severe shortage of workers in the current tight labour market. The populations in these regions are also ageing, impacting on the need for specific services, and imperative of future replacement workers for all sectors.

Despite the relative affluence, all geographical regions have pockets of deprivation based on a range of national measures, including employment, skills attainment, English Language Skills, health and wellbeing and economic standing. Several of these areas are situated near our colleges in Oxford, Banbury, and Reading. Local councils acknowledge that residents in these areas are being left behind and are implementing local social inclusion policies to address this. They plan to utilise funding from UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to implement measures that support the Government’s ‘Levelling up’ policy.

The three regions have a considerable proportion of their working population commuting in or out of the areas. Guildford, Bracknell, and Reading are particularly affected due to their easy access to London.

Stakeholders in the three regions recognise the value of businesses hiring staff with level 4+ skills, which can sometimes be lacking in the FE and apprenticeships sectors. However, upon further analysing the competitive FE provision, it is evident that the reason for this is simply low student enrolment, rather than inadequate provision. While in Oxfordshire schools, there is a high demand

for Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) skills among leavers, which presents an opportunity for businesses to tap into a talented pool of individuals with great potential.

Healthcare, Life sciences and digital are critical areas of the local economies and we have already made great strides in investing in new physical spaces, including care suites, new science laboratories and e-sports facilities on several of our campuses and launching an Institute of Technology in Oxford and Reading. Further new investments and development plans for science in Guildford and Oxford, green construction in Reading and widespread campus improvements at our land-based college in Merrist Wood are already in process.

The aim to achieve national net zero carbon objectives is a consistent theme across each of the Local Skills Improvement Plans, further details of which can be accessed via the links in the Supporting Documentation section below. This includes upskilling current employees in the construction and transportation sectors, as well as ensuring that young learners acquire these skills through vocational qualifications.

The table below summarises the priority sectors and cross-cutting themes highlighted in the three LSIPs in our region alongside national skills priorities:



| Berkshire - Key Priority Sectors     | Oxfordshire - Key Priority Sectors   | Surrey - Key Priority Sectors        | National Skills Priorities |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Construction & the Built Environment | Construction & the Built Environment | Construction                         | Construction               |
| Digital (ICT)                        | Digital (ICT)                        | IT                                   | Digital & Technology       |
| Care                                 | Care                                 | Health & Social Care                 | Health & Social Care       |
| Transport & Logistics                | Transport & Logistics                |                                      | Haulage & Logistics        |
| Health & Life Sciences               | Health & Life Sciences               |                                      | Science & Maths            |
| Creative (Screen Industries)         |                                      | Creative                             |                            |
|                                      | Manufacturing (Science & Innovation) | Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering | Manufacturing              |
|                                      | Hospitality & Visitor Economy        | Hospitality & Tourism                |                            |
|                                      |                                      | Aerospace, Space & Satellite         | Engineering                |
|                                      |                                      | Professional Services                |                            |
|                                      |                                      | Land-Based                           |                            |

| Cross cutting / Cross sector Skills Needs |                               |                      |  |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|--|
| Leadership & Management                   | Leadership & Management       |                      |  |
| Digitalisation                            | Digitalisation                | Digital Skills       |  |
| Skills for a Net Zero Economy             | Skills for a Net Zero Economy |                      |  |
| Business & Professional                   | Business & Professional       | Professional Skills  |  |
|                                           |                               | Employability Skills |  |

Surrey LSIP and its Priority Sectors

This area has strengths, relevant to national and region averages, in specialist knowledge-based sectors such as digital, Technology and Professional Services, Aerospace, Defence and Pharmaceuticals. One in five jobs are in “knowledge intensive services” and there are around 35,000 “green jobs” already in the economy, with this sector expected to grow 6% annually until 2030. Therefore, in summary jobs growth in high skilled roles and professional and technical occupations are forecast to grow the most in the future.

Employers seek specialist and entry-level skills in sectors such as hospitality, health and social care, sales, IT, and space. Personal care is a top requested specialist skill in the region’s job postings and the health and social care sector employs around 120,000 people in the region. This sector encounters difficulties in attracting and keeping experienced care workers, young talent, and gender diversity in the workforce.

There is twice the national proportion of creative arts / design graduates (17%) in this area. With excellent secondary schools, many young learners progress to university rather than undertaking a vocational education or apprenticeships in these subjects.

For the Surrey LSIP area, the Createch sector (i.e., businesses harnessing the interaction of creativity and technology) is of particular importance and Guildford is a global hotspot for the gaming sector and has the most games industry employees in the UK outside London. Further employment is expected in the growing TV and Film production at Shepperton Studios. With around a third of this sector being freelance, training providers need to be able to support with continuous professional development.

Digital and IT industries have a high concentration across the region with the three largest subsectors being wired telecommunications, computer consultancy, and computer programming where cyber security and cloud technology skills are a high priority.

Space South Central is the largest regional space cluster in the UK, which encompasses the Surrey LSIP area (as well as the Solent LSIP area) and whilst currently much of the employment in the Aerospace, Space and Satellite sector is within aviation, it’s clear that engineers and scientists are increasingly needed for future growth in this and the Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering sector.

In support of the UK Government aims to achieve Net Zero by 2050, forecast job growth in the period 2030-2050 will be highest in low emission vehicles, infrastructure, electricity, services, and alternative fuels. The Construction sector plays a substantial part in developing the green economy, with the need to reskill and upskill the existing workforce to make existing and new buildings more energy efficient and low carbon, including retrofitting heat pumps and solar power.

The Land-Based sector is incredibly important to the rural nature of Surrey, and the LSIP includes animal health and welfare into its definition of this priority sector. Many roles are based outdoors, requiring a resilience in the workforce and strong employability and teamwork skills. Surrey has above national average employment rates in forestry and conservation, and despite being a niche industry with a small portion of total jobs, the conservation sector is rapidly growing. Agriculture employs a substantial number of workers, albeit less concentrated than other subsectors in the area. The land-based sector will also play a significant part of the journey to Net Zero, through the introduction of new technologies.

Hospitality and Tourism has been the UK’s fastest growing sector for employment since 2010, but one of the aims of the LSIP for the sector is to improve its productivity which struggles with high labour turnover, low wages and staff retention and difficulties in recruiting.

The care sector is facing significant national and local recruitment issues, resulting from an ageing population, low pay and perception, Brexit, and the overhanging impact of Covid and lengthy NHS waiting lists. Staff turnover is around 29% meaning organisations are constantly recruiting and facing staff shortages.

Professional services are also important to the Surrey LSIP economy with a high concentration of workers. This sector is dominated by management consultancy, and job roles tend to require more advanced skills and knowledge especially linked to technology such as fintech.

Oxfordshire LSIP and its Priority Sectors

This region’s economic strategy priorities high-tech industries, including quantum computing, zero carbon, digital health, autonomous vehicles, space, and fusion technology. These industries, many of which are being developed at a range of cluster areas including

Harwell Campus, Milton Park, and through Oxford University “spinouts,” are seen as key drivers of the local economy and skills development. Employment growth in recent years has been driven by Professional / Associate Professional jobs, and this trend is forecast to grow through to 2035. It also demonstrates Education as crucial to the local economy through the involvement of two universities and thriving schools’ sector, including international education.

Oxfordshire ranks third in the country for research and development workers and demonstrates the importance of the Health and Life Sciences and Manufacturing (Science and Innovation) as two of its key priority sectors. The design and manufacture of medical equipment and instruments, alongside established manufacturing companies across the county, including automotive, reinforce the need to train the next generation of engineers and scientists. Life Science company numbers increased by 22% in the five years to 2022, and bio-tech companies doubled. Human health job roles also increased over the period. Hence the need for scientists and at entry level for lab technicians is particularly acute.

Closely, aligned is the Care sector, where the ageing population is driving demand. Many vacancies are being fulfilled through overseas recruitment, with this in turn driving associated skills needs in the English language and cultural awareness, and the shortage of leadership and management skills to support job progression.

Construction and the Built Environment will require an additional 18,100 new and replacement workers across Oxfordshire by 2035, with most being replacement and reflecting the age of the existing workforce. There is a current significant level of residential and non-residential work county wide, with many other projects in planning. The LSIP reflects that building contractors are supplementing local labour shortages with staff to work on projects, especially electricians where the qualified pool of workers is described as “very low” within the LSIP. Crucially, this sector also needs to be upskilled to support new technologies linked to Net Zero commitments. For the period to 2035, there is a forecast need for up to 30,000 workers, 90% of which will be to replace those leaving the sector.

The Oxfordshire region, particularly Oxford itself, is a world-famous tourism hotspot, and the skills within the hospitality and tourism sector are crucial to its performance. Experience Oxford in its annual survey cites a return to growth following the Covid pandemic, but many businesses have shortened opening hours due to rising operational costs and problems with

staff recruitment and retention. The LSIP research suggests nearly 22,000 workers will need to be trained and/or upskilled over the period to 2035.

The Digital / IT sector has continued to grow in recent years, specifically in graphic and web design, computer programming and software development roles. The sector is expected to need 10,000 new and replacement workers by 2035, especially with improvements in technology, including AI. Being adjacent to Berkshire, with good transport links where IT is one of its largest sectors, means continual struggles to recruit staff with the required skills.

The remaining priority sector is Haulage and Logistics, where skills requirements are increasingly influenced by changing technology and automation. Most recent jobs growth has seen the greatest impact in postal and courier activities, largely driven by changing buying behaviours accelerated by the impact of the pandemic. The LSIP forecasts that whilst new jobs growth is likely to be static to 2035, there will be a need for 6,600 replacement workers.

Berkshire LSIP and its Priority Sectors

Berkshire is geographically adjacent to Oxfordshire and its economy has many similarities. The majority of the priority sectors in the Berkshire LSIP are the same as for the Oxfordshire LSIP, although the relative size and importance of sectors may be different. For example, in health and life sciences the manufacturing of drugs plays a greater role in Berkshire compared to Oxfordshire, whereas Oxfordshire is larger in the number of companies developing new drugs and treatments. In Berkshire, the Information and Communication sector has 14.4% of all jobs, compared to a national average for the sector of 4.7%. This sector will require a significant 48,000 new and replacement workers by 2035.

The choice of Screen Industries as a key priority sector for Berkshire reflects significant increase in investment in TV, video, and films production in the county, including a new cluster at Shinfield Studios in Reading, Stage Fifty in Winnersh Triangle and Bray Studios in Maidenhead. Many of the skills needs are linked to technical professions such as engineers and electricians working with film set equipment, and those able to use animation or virtual software. Importantly, there are increasingly a range of entry level roles suitable for young people including production co-ordination or runners.



# Approach to developing the annual Accountability Statement and meeting our Local Needs Duty

Activate Learning has conducted a detailed evaluation of how well we meet local skills needs as articulated in the three LSIPs in our region.

The purpose of this exercise was to understand the strength of our overall contribution, identify how well we meet each individual LSIP priority and propose ways in which we could improve our impact over the next few years. It was reviewed by Governors in May 2024 as part of our Local Needs Duty.

The evaluation included an assessment of how well we address each of the individual priorities outlined in the three LSIPs. It considered this against four evaluation criteria:

1. To what extent employers are involved in the design and delivery of curriculum in each subject;
2. The total volume of learners we support each year in each sector;
3. The quality of our provision as assessed in our latest Self-Assessment Review;
4. The breadth of our offer in each sector and the level of innovation in delivery.

These judgements were based on a range of sources of evidence including:

- Employer involvement in design and/or delivery of curriculum
- The latest comparative learner enrolment data (2022/23) across all funding streams (e.g., 16-19, Apprenticeships, Adults, and HE) generated by the independent company RCU and its Vector tool. This enabled us to identify local market share and enrolment trends over a two-year period.
- Breadth of offer across all funding streams - our own learner enrolment information for 2023/24, concentrating only on those learners who have completed their courses, or still retained.
- 2022/23 learner achievement data by sector subject area and by geographic region, compared with the latest national benchmarks.
- Activate Learning faculty review of delivery quality

- 2022/23 provision Self-Assessment (SAR) judgements by subject and geographical region.
- Latest LSIP research
- Input from employer and stakeholder engagement activities
- Discussions with other local providers

The following summarises five main judgements from completing this Local Needs Duty review:

- 1) Overall, we are making a significant contribution towards meeting local skills needs, having improved further since our Ofsted inspection of November 2022 which cited the organisation as making a "strong" contribution. Our contribution is most significant in Berkshire, and the area of greatest opportunity for further improvement is in Surrey. We determined that our contribution had improved since inspection as both the volume of learners we support has increased and we have expanded our curriculum offer in priority sectors.
- 2) The greatest potential for improving our impact is by further improving our offer to adult learners. In most of the key priority sectors we already have a strong offer for 16–19-year-old learners through Study Programmes which supports a talent pipeline into these sectors. However, we need to develop additional offers to support the upskilling or reskilling of those already in the workforce, utilising the full range of funding streams. Our significant expansion of online learning demonstrates the ability to achieve this aim.
- 3) Digital skills are a priority across most key priority sectors and as a cross-cutting skills need. Whilst we have a strong existing portfolio of provision at most qualification levels, with more being developed through ongoing LSIF projects, we need to encourage a greater number of learners to enrol on digital courses. In particular we have had difficulty in attracting learners for key priority Apprenticeships and Higher technical Qualifications in key disciplines such as Cyber Security and Data Analytics.
- 4) Whilst overall we have a very strong history of employer engagement in curriculum design and delivery, further work is required in some sectors, especially life sciences and haulage and logistics. These sectors are ones which businesses have not traditionally engaged with FE colleges. We also need to better understand how an FE skills offer complements those from universities and Independent Training Providers, where those

providers traditionally have high market share in some business sectors.

5) Our scale and online capability provide significant advantages, due to the close similarity of skills needs across the three regions in which we operate. Offering programmes on-line enables us to achieve the critical mass of learner numbers required to design, develop and deliver new courses. This in turn enables us to provide a wider curriculum offer that better meets local and national skills needs. On-line learning also enables us to reach people in our communities who would otherwise be unable to engage in learning due to work and family commitments.

These findings are reflected in the objectives in this accountability statement and will inform our priorities in future years.

In addition to conducting the Local Needs Duty, our accountability statement is further informed by our ongoing engagement with local stakeholders. In particular we have worked closely with the LSIP Employer Representative Bodies (ERBs) and the other Further Education Colleges in our region. In each county, senior leaders from the ERBs and colleges have met approximately once per month to oversee the management of the Local Skills Improvement Fund, identify opportunities to collaborate on curriculum development, address any areas of potential overlap, and ensure that in combination we address local priority skills needs.

Other examples of our engagement with local stakeholders include:

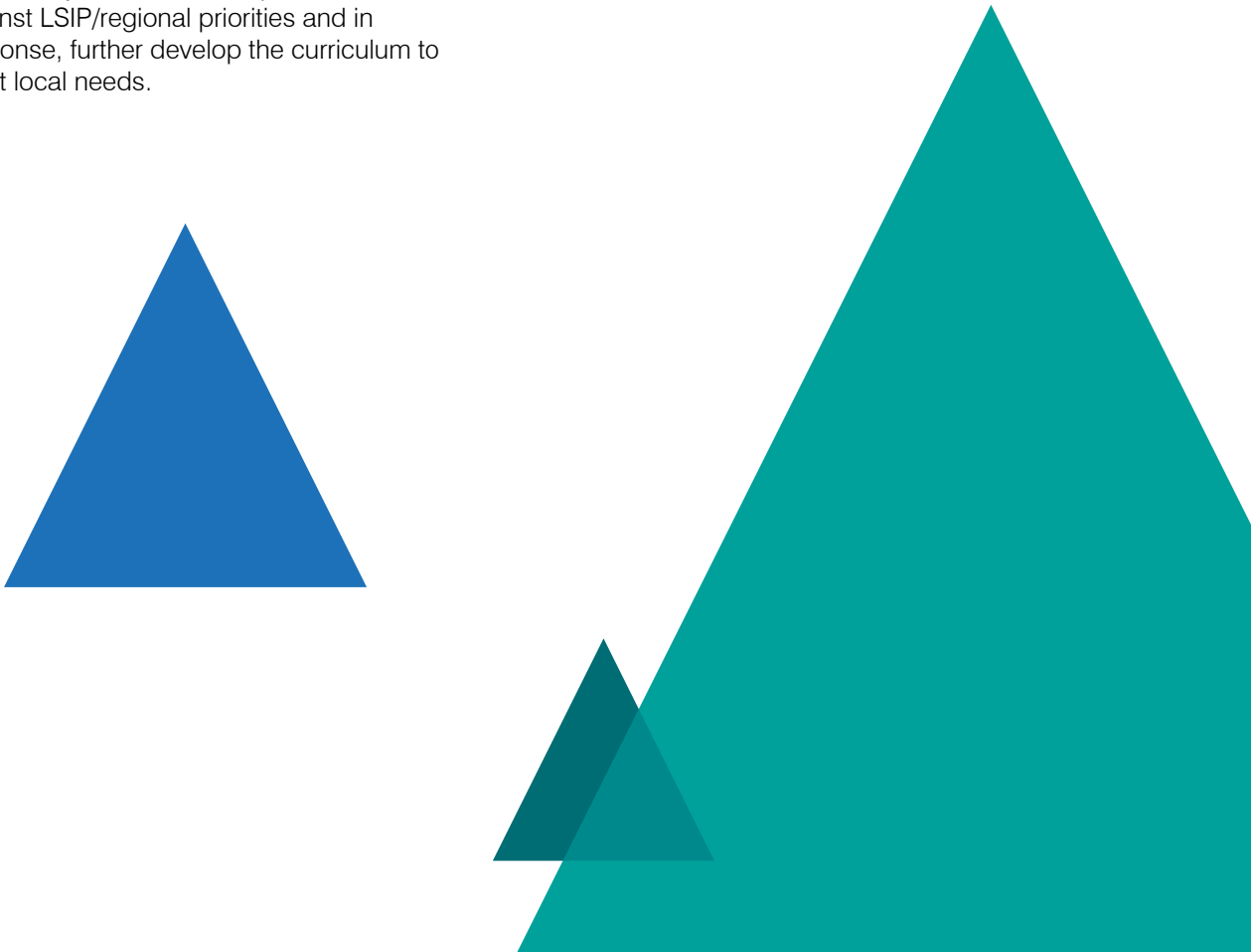
- Our Schools Liaison Team works with over one hundred local schools to help their pupils understand skills and training opportunities available at college.
- Working with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Job Centre Plus on employability programmes, we are assisting hundreds of long-term unemployed, economically inactive, or disabled individuals in finding employment each year.
- Engaging with local employers on Faculty Advisory Panels to identify skills needs and design curriculum.
- Attending Workforce Development Panels organised by ERBs to address priority skills sectors.
- Working with local authorities to help them design and commission skills provision under Skills Bootcamp and Multiply numeracy programmes for adults.

In Surrey we have worked with Brooklands College, North-East Surrey College of Technology and East Surrey College to establish Surrey FE which will address local skills needs through collaborative working. We have identified the following next steps:

1. To launch the FE Surrey website/portal and related branding to support recruitment and progression across Surrey colleges
2. To work with Surrey County Council on collectively addressing barriers to participation e.g. participating in Bootcamps, programmes with Job Centre Plus and the voluntary & community sector
3. To develop proposals for further project-based collaboration and continuation of competitions, CPD and the annual Teaching & Learning conference
4. To work collectively with large employers to address skills needs e.g. NHS, Ringway and airports
5. To work collectively with Surrey County Council on the planned devolution of Adult Skills in 2026/7 and their desire/request to Government to align the LSIP/LSIF area with the County Deal from 2025
6. Collectively, continue to map curriculum against LSIP/regional priorities and in response, further develop the curriculum to meet local needs.

In Berkshire and Oxfordshire we work with Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce (the ERB for the two LSIPs), Abingdon and Witney College, The Henley College, Ruskin College, Windsor Forest Colleges Group, Newbury College and New Directions College.

We have a long-established Project Board Meeting at which we review collaboration and provision with other partners including the ERB. This meeting allows key representatives to discuss their goals and objectives for skills growth in Berkshire and Oxfordshire, identifying areas in which greater collaboration would help. The agenda has included a review of the success of collaborative projects funded through the Strategic Development Funds and Local Skills Improvement Fund. The LSIP has concluded that there are gaps in provision for some priority sectors requiring further development and engagement with employers. We are working collaboratively with the ERB through the Workforce Development Partnerships (WDP) to do this.



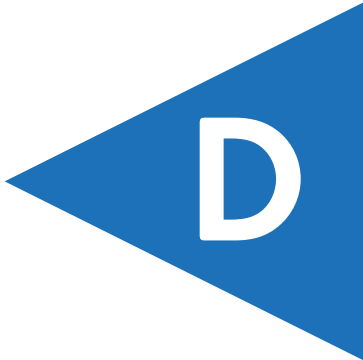


Progress Since our 2023/24 Accountability Statement

Within our first Accountability Statement in May 2023, we set out twelve targets for the year ahead which would enable us to better address national, regional, and local skills needs. The following sets out these targets and our performance at a high level against each.

| Objectives                                                                                      |                                                                                       | Performance Status                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Increase the breadth depth of our offer in the digital sector:                                  |                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 1                                                                                               | Introduce digital Skills Bootcamps                                                    | Achieved                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 2                                                                                               | Introduce Access to HE Diploma in Computing                                           | Achieved                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 3                                                                                               | Introduce Level 4 Cyber Security apprenticeship                                       | Achieved                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 4                                                                                               | Roll out Level 3 short courses in cyber security and software development             | Achieved                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 5                                                                                               | Commence delivery of HTQ in Digital Technologies                                      | Partially met - Due to launch September 2024.                                                                                                                                             |
| Continue the expansion of our T Level offer in Oxfordshire, Berkshire, and Surrey:              |                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 6                                                                                               | Recruit 250 T Level students in Business, Engineering, ICT, Health, and Childcare.    | Partially met. T Levels launched, but with fewer enrolments than anticipated. We will expand our T Level offer in 24/25 alongside an updated marketing plan to secure accelerated growth. |
| Broaden our offer to the regionally important Life Sciences sector:                             |                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 7                                                                                               | Introduce Access to HE Diploma in Science                                             | Achieved                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 8                                                                                               | Introduce Life Sciences Skills Bootcamp                                               | Achieved                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Develop new solutions to meet emerging skills needs in net zero and green technologies:         |                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 9                                                                                               | Introduce green technologies (e-bikes and electric vehicle charging) Skills Bootcamps | Achieved                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 10                                                                                              | Commence delivery of heat pump training courses                                       | This course is currently in development and will launch in 24/25.                                                                                                                         |
| Continue the expansion of our on-line learning offer to enable us to reach more adult learners: |                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 11                                                                                              | Introduce a range of new on-line courses for Professional Services                    | Achieved                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 12                                                                                              | Continue the growth of on-line GCSEs, Access to HE and short vocational courses       | Achieved                                                                                                                                                                                  |

# Contribution to National, Regional and Local Priorities



Having completed the statutory Local Needs Duty in spring 2024 and having consulted with our faculty leaders and governing body, we have committed to working on the following SMART targets for the 2024/25 academic year. These will be tracked by our governing body through its Quality and Relevance Committee in the same way in which actions and progress towards them are included in our corporate Improvement Plan.

All Regions

| Priority                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Objective<br>(Completion by end of 24/25 academic year)                                                                                                                                  | Rationale                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Priority 1 – Digital/ICT sector                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| We will significantly expand the breadth and depth of our offer in the digital/ICT sector. This will be driven through our South Central Institute of Technology campus in Reading and Oxford and our brand-new Digital Skills Centre of Excellence at Guildford College. New provision launched                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>150 starts on new short courses in Artificial Intelligence and Data Analytics.</li><li>25 starts on the new HTQ in Digital Technologies.</li></ol> | <p>The ICT/digital sector is a priority in all three of our LSIP regions and is a national priority sector.</p> <p>We have worked with employers to identify their specific skills needs. This has highlighted that very few businesses have yet invested in training staff in the use of Artificial Intelligence.</p> <p>Our growth in the digital sector will be facilitated by establishing a brand-new Digital Skills Centre of Excellence at Guildford College and our ongoing work from the South Central Institute of technology campuses in Reading and Oxford.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>T Level in Digital Production, Design and Development at Guildford College.</li><li>Short courses for businesses in Artificial Intelligence for Business Transformation.</li><li>A suite of courses for businesses in data analytics.</li><li>Growth of Apprenticeship Standards for: ICT Technician, Cyber Security Analyst, Software Developer and Data Analyst.</li><li>The launch of our new On-line/blended Higher Technical Qualification in Digital Technologies.</li></ul> |                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |



| Priority                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Objective<br><i>(Completion by end of 24/25 academic year)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Rationale                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Priority 2 – Green Economy and Sustainability                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <p>We will launch a suite of courses designed to help businesses develop the knowledge, skills, and resources to embed sustainable practices in their organisations.</p> <p>This priority reflects feedback from employers highlighting that many need support in developing their net zero strategies at senior and middle management levels.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <p>3. 150 starts on our new short courses in Sustainability</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <p>Skills for a Net Zero economy is a cross-cutting theme in Berkshire and Oxfordshire and the green economy is a priority sector in the Surrey LSIP.</p> <p>Our engagement with local businesses indicates that, although this only translates to a limited number of specific roles, there is a much wider need for businesses to develop strategies for Net Zero.</p> |
| Priority 3 – Growth of Government Priority Programmes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <p>The growth of our offer at our Surrey Colleges will be focused on Government priority programmes, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Launching two new Higher Technical Qualifications in Digital Technologies and Leadership and Management.</li><li>• Expanding our T Level offer to include Design, Surveying and Planning, and Science.</li><li>• Launch Skills Bootcamps in Sustainability and Retrofit</li><li>• Grow our apprenticeship numbers, with a particular emphasis on digital and construction roles.</li></ul> | <p>4. 4.Grow the number of T Level starts from 182 in 23/24, to 368 (across 7 subject areas) in 24/25.</p> <p>5. Grow the number of starts on HTQs from 13 in 23/24 to more than 50 in 24/25</p> <p>6. Grow the number of Apprenticeships from 647 in 23/24 to 750 in 24/25</p> <p>7. Grow the number of Skills Bootcamp starts from 52 in 23/24 to 120 in 24/25</p> | <p>Activate Learning is committed to the successful implementation of the Government's priority skills programmes to promote technical and vocational educational routes and to support improvements in the productivity of the UK workforce.</p>                                                                                                                        |

Berkshire

| Priority                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Objective<br><i>(Completion by end of 24/25 academic year)</i> | Rationale                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Priority 4 – Screen Industries                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <p>We will deliver a range of short courses to promote the screen industries sector and to provide training on some of the sector-specific skills that are required. This offer will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Set building</li><li>• Hair and make-up</li><li>• Costuming for the film industry</li><li>• Electrical installation for the film industry</li></ul> | <p>8. 80 starts on our short courses for screen industries</p> | <p>There is a significant current and forecast growth in this sector, reflected by major international investment in motion pictures and TV production across Berkshire and especially around the University of Reading. There is a forecast of 3,000 new roles by the end of 2024 in Shinfield Studios alone with inward investment of c. £600 Million p.a.</p> <p>Many of the skills needs highlighted in the LSIP focus on support functions. Our courses are designed to support people who already have some of the skills required but not to be trained in how to adapt them for the screen industries.</p> |

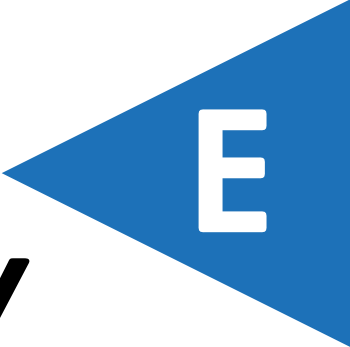
Oxfordshire

| Priority                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Objective<br><i>(Completion by end of 24/25 academic year)</i>                     | Rationale                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Priority 5 – Life Sciences                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <p>We will create a new science hub with laboratory facilities at City of Oxford College. We will establish an Advisory Board of employers from the life sciences sector who will support our roll-out of a new curriculum in 2025 that will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• T Level Science</li><li>• Skills Bootcamps</li></ul> | <p>9. 250 learners to use the new facilities in 24/25 (available end Oct 2024)</p> | <p>Oxfordshire is the location of a world-renowned global cluster for health and life sciences, with a range of science parks across the county. Moderna Inc. is also building a new Innovation and Technology Centre at Harwell.</p> <p>The life sciences sector has historically taken a traditional academic route to recruitment and staff development. We will help employers to broaden their potential talent pool by co-creating technical and vocational routes into employment.</p> |

| Priority                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Objective<br><i>(Completion by end of 24/25 academic year)</i>                                                            | Rationale                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Priority 6 – Construction                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| We will prioritise the growth of higher-level industry training in the construction sector to complement our extensive construction trades provision. We will launch new courses in 2024/25 including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>T Level in Design, Surveying and Planning for Construction</li><li>Access to HE Diploma in Construction</li><li>Skills Bootcamps in Retrofit</li></ul> | 10. 16 starts on the T Level in Design, Surveying and Planning (launching 24/25), and 20 Retrofit Skills Bootcamp starts. | As of 2022, there were c. 56,000 jobs in this sector within the Surrey LSIP geographical area, a 6% growth compared to 2019 and demonstrating comparative growth in jobs compared to other national regions (+2%) over the same period. The sector employs 17% above the national average in the LSIP area, with nearly all employees working for SMEs.<br><br>We prioritised the development of higher- level skills and those that support the movement to green technologies. |



# Corporation / Governing Body Statement



On behalf of the Activate Learning Corporation, it is hereby confirmed that the plan as set out above reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the Corporation and fulfils the statutory Local Needs Duty.

The plan has now been published on the college's website as per the Department of Education's guidelines and can be accessed [here](#)

Chair of Governors Signature:

*S Sturgeon*  
Sue Sturgeon

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer Signature:

*G Headland*  
Gary Headland

Dated: 24 June 2024



# Supporting Documentation

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The hyperlink to the following supporting documentation provides background economic and social demographic data which has influenced the choice of key priority business sectors within the Local Skills Improvement Plans for Oxfordshire, Berkshire, and Surrey. This in turn has supported our own review of the statutory Local Needs Duty, in the creation of this Accountability Statement, and in our choice of SMART targets for 2024/25 to better meet local skills needs.

[Oxfordshire Local Skills Improvement Plan \(LSIP\)](#)

[Berkshire LSIP](#)

[Surrey LSIP](#)

Details of our November 2022 Ofsted Inspection Report which describes how we make a strong contribution to meeting skills needs, the highest grading available, can be read [here](#).

## **Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce Business 2024 Manifesto**

<https://www.thamesvalleychamber.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Business-Manifesto-2024.pdf>

## **Surrey Chamber of Commerce**

<https://www.surrey-chambers.co.uk>

## **Activate Learning Financial Statement for the period ending 31 July 2023**

<https://www.activatelearning.ac.uk/app/uploads/sites/2/2024/01/Activate-Learning-Financial-Statements-July-23.pdf>

## **Activate Learning Strategic Plan**

<https://www.activatelearning.ac.uk/who-we-are/empowering-learning/>



