

Strategy

2030



South
Lanarkshire
College
East Kilbride



One College. One Community. Focused On You.

Mission

Delivering excellence in skills-based education to the workforce of the future creating social and economic value for individuals, businesses and the communities we serve through first-class teaching, learning and support.

Vision

To inspire and transform lives through inclusive, innovative and sustainable education.



Foreword

We are proud to present South Lanarkshire College’s Strategic Plan for 2025-2030, an ambitious and forward-looking roadmap that sets out how we will deliver on our new vision, to inspire and transform lives through inclusive, innovative and sustainable education.

As Scotland navigates rapid economic, technological and environmental change, colleges are more vital than ever. At South Lanarkshire College, we are rising to meet this moment with purpose and confidence, empowering learners, supporting employers and strengthening our communities through education that is accessible, future-focused and socially just.

This strategy places students at the centre of everything we do, while recognising our wider responsibility to help shape a fairer, greener economy, from leading on the net zero transition and addressing urgent skills gaps, to widening access for those too often left behind by traditional education pathways.

To remain sustainable and responsive, we also recognise the need to adapt our business model. Over the next five years, we will diversify income, strengthen commercial and employer relationships, increase efficiency, and explore new models of delivery. This is not simply about resilience; it is about ensuring the College thrives in a changing landscape and continues to serve learners and communities with creativity, agility and ambition.

Our priorities will focus on deepening regional partnerships, expanding digital and low carbon skills provision, enhancing wellbeing and learner support, and ensuring South Lanarkshire College remains a place where everyone feels welcomed, supported and equipped to thrive.

This plan is the result of genuine collaboration with our students, staff, stakeholders and partners. It represents a shared ambition and a clear direction, one that positions South Lanarkshire College as a catalyst for positive, lasting change in the lives of individuals and the prosperity of our region.

We are grateful to all who contributed to shaping this strategy. Together, we look forward to bringing its vision to life.



Stella McManus, Principal & Chief Executive

Douglas Morrison, Chair of the Board of Management



About South Lanarkshire College

For over 75 years, South Lanarkshire College (SLC) has been a driving force for opportunity and inclusion across the region, delivering not only high-quality education, but also lasting social and economic impact. As the largest education provider in South Lanarkshire, we are committed to making a positive impact beyond teaching and learning, ensuring that we contribute meaningfully to the lives of local residents.

Our distinctive contribution to the communities in South Lanarkshire and the Glasgow City Region is achieved through expert teaching, sector-leading support services, and deep-rooted partnerships with employers. We help individuals of all ages realise their potential, whether they are taking their first steps into work, upskilling for the future, or overcoming significant personal and educational barriers.

At South Lanarkshire College, we do not just deliver qualifications, we build confidence, resilience, and futures. Our mission is clear, to drive inclusive growth and ensure that no one is left behind in Scotland's transition to a more skilled, equitable, and sustainable economy.

Our approach

At the heart of our strategy is an unshakable commitment to inclusive education. We deliver transformative learning experiences that empower every student, regardless of background or circumstance, to achieve meaningful qualifications, develop confidence, and contribute actively to Scotland's economy and society.

By harnessing the existing strengths of our communities and creating clear, supported pathways into new skills and careers, we enable individuals to improve their wellbeing, strengthen their financial independence, and become catalysts for positive change locally and nationally.

Our contribution to the economy and businesses

At SLC, we shape our curriculum around the evolving needs of the local and regional economy, ensuring our students are job-ready and that businesses can access the skilled talent they need to thrive. By aligning education with labour market demand, we help make South Lanarkshire a dynamic and competitive location for business growth and investment.

We actively support entrepreneurship, innovation, inward investment, and sustainable business expansion, creating the conditions for high-quality, future-focused jobs across our communities. Through strategic partnerships with employers, we deliver tailored training and innovation support that drives productivity, strengthens workforce resilience, and fuels inclusive economic development.

Community engagement

At SLC, our commitment to inclusion is reflected in deep and sustained engagement with our communities. We collaborate with local partners on a wide range of initiatives, from supporting charities and hosting community events to opening our facilities for public use and participation.

We play an active role in shaping local investment and regeneration projects, ensuring that our students benefit from real employment opportunities and that economic development is rooted in community need.

Through these partnerships, we deliver more than education, we help build stronger, fairer, and more connected communities across South Lanarkshire and beyond.

The context

SLC has a strong grasp of its core strengths, positioning us to effectively deliver on our mission and vision. Our strategic priorities are supported by a detailed operational plan to ensure we achieve our goals.

However, we recognise that this strategy must be implemented within the broader context of significant changes and opportunities impacting the Scottish College sector, including:

Evolving student expectations

Students increasingly prefer flexible options that allow them to "earn and learn," which drives demand for shorter, more adaptable course offerings.

Policy reforms and fiscal pressures

Government policies on education reform, both UK-wide and in Scotland, continually shape our operational priorities, requiring us to adapt swiftly to meet fiscal challenges and policy shifts.

Financial constraints

SLC must navigate a challenging financial landscape, finding innovative ways to maintain high-quality education while managing costs.

Transition to a green economy

The global move towards sustainability necessitates new behaviours and skills development and lifelong learning opportunities to equip students for emerging green jobs.

Identifying skills gaps

It is critical for SLC to be proactive in identifying skills gaps in the market, ensuring that students are trained with the most current and relevant knowledge for future careers, particularly in priority sectors.



What makes SLC distinctive?

The campus

SLC offers a modern, state-of-the-art learning environment tailored to the needs of students and employers, with a flexible and responsive curriculum and estate that adapts to industry trends.

Understanding our stakeholders

We have strong, trusting relationships with employers, local authorities, and schools across the Glasgow City Region. Our deep understanding of business needs allows us to design targeted training programmes that address local skills shortages.

Talent pool

Our dedicated staff are committed to delivering industry-relevant skills, ensuring high-quality teaching and support that consistently results in outstanding academic achievements. This excellence instils confidence in both prospective students and employers regarding the effectiveness of our training and skills development programmes.

High-quality, engaging delivery

Our programmes are tailored to meet the specific needs of employers and students, with a strong emphasis on innovation, entrepreneurship and enterprise. This ensures relevance, engagement, and practical application, equipping students with the skills to thrive in both employment and business ventures.

Strong student partnerships

SLC fosters a close, collaborative relationship with its Students' Association and student representatives, ensuring that the student voice is actively involved in decision-making processes and shaping the college experience for a dynamic approach to learning and support.

Customer-focused solutions

SLC provides a holistic approach to student services, supporting students from their initial contact with the College, throughout their learning, and progression into the workforce.

Environmental sustainability

As a leader in sustainability, SLC has firmly integrated net zero targets into its curriculum and operations, positioning itself at the forefront of the green agenda. Our commitment to sustainability is reflected in our courses, campus infrastructure, and community engagement.

Priority sectors

SLC has thoroughly assessed the current and likely future needs of the economic needs of the area it serves and identified the following priority sectors.

Health and Social Care

With over a third of jobs in South Lanarkshire in health, social work, and nursing, this sector is positioned for consistent growth and sustained demand for replacement workers. Additionally, the increasing use of technology and an aging population necessitate a coordinated response to address evolving care practices and needs and enhance service delivery.

Business, Law and the Financial Services

The demand for skilled professionals in business and public service is increasing, with an anticipated growth of around 11,000 jobs in South Lanarkshire by 2033.

Construction and Low Carbon Industries

There is significant growth in these sectors across South Lanarkshire and the Glasgow City Region, with 47% of employers reporting skills shortages and approximately 11,000 job openings. A local response is essential to meet the demand for new skills, particularly in retrofitting and sustainable construction practices.

Travel, Tourism and the Hospitality Industry

In 2023, South Lanarkshire saw 7,000 job openings in tourism and 5,000 in food and drink sectors. Both industries face challenges in recruiting and retaining a skilled workforce.

All of these sectors are supported by a strong emphasis on developing digital and meta skills founded on the principles of enterprise and innovation.

We are passionate about fostering strong relationships between businesses, citizens, and communities, believing that effective connections among these groups enable us to provide impactful teaching and learning experiences for our students.



Values

The College's values are vital in our collective ability to achieve continued success, and they define how we work together as Team SLC.



Togetherness

Visionary and transparent leadership, common purposeful goals and build on values.



Connectedness

Meaningful participation in decision-making, a listening organisation and developing collaboration.



Recognition

Culture of values-based recognition, celebration of individual and team contributions and effective, frequent praise.



Enablement

Providing valuable feedback, developing manager effectiveness and individualised training and development.



Motivating work

Autonomous working, learning organisation and meaningful work.



The SLC response and strategic goals

At South Lanarkshire College, we are driven by the belief in the transformative power of education to enrich lives, raise aspirations, and create prosperity for individuals, businesses, and the communities we serve. As the economic landscape evolves, SLC remains committed to providing a confident skilled workforce that meets the present and future needs of employers.

1



The student experience

To provide a responsive, high-quality and entrepreneurial, destination focussed curriculum, embedding holistic support services, and lifelong learning opportunities for the communities the College serves.

2



People and culture development

To recruit, retain, develop and recognise talented staff who will enable students to reach their full potential.

3



Growth and innovation

To provide an estate and digital infrastructure for 21st century learning, and to collaborate on innovative and mutually beneficial partnerships.

4



Sustainability

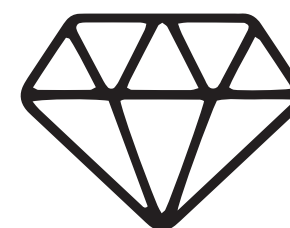
To be a future proofed independent and financially viable organisation able to invest and collaborate for growth and resilience, and to work towards achieving a Net Zero campus community.



The student experience

What success will look like:

- ★ Ensuring all curriculum is shaped by employers and aligned to regional economic needs and future skills demands, leading to meaningful destinations.
- ★ Driving the development of digital literacy across all learning that equips students with the essential skills they need to sustain employment and flourish in their careers.
- ★ Creating a skills-focused learning environment that fosters entrepreneurialism and innovation, empowering students to thrive in a dynamic economy.
- ★ Providing integrated support services that advance equity, safeguard wellbeing, and remove barriers to success.
- ★ Developing a role in the innovation ecosystem leading to enterprise initiatives and establishing a dedicated enterprise hub to drive collaboration, creativity, and real-world impact.



People and culture development

What success will look like:

- ★ Focusing on our people to cultivate a positive culture and staff morale and deliver people engagement and wellbeing activities to ensure an engaged and healthy workforce.
- ★ Developing and retaining a skilled, confident, and future-ready workforce through targeted professional learning, leadership development, and inclusive talent practices.
- ★ Ensuring a diverse and inclusive workforce that reflects the communities we serve.
- ★ Fostering a culture of integrity that empowers staff success, which promotes ethical practices, transparency and accountability, ensuring all actions align with our core values and high standards.





Growth and innovation

What success will look like:

- Investing in the campus to support future educational needs, integrating cutting-edge technology and flexible spaces, while ensuring a safe and accessible environment.
- Investing in an innovative, data-driven digital infrastructure to enhance learning, support, and decision-making, empowering students to succeed and enabling staff to deliver outstanding education and services.
- Working closely with businesses and local authorities to foster economic growth, provide expertise and practical support for innovation and contribute essential skills to meet future industry demands.
- Further creating and augmenting management information tools to improve and strengthen access to information to meet the needs of our business.



Sustainability

What success will look like:

- Strengthen financial sustainability by diversifying income streams and exploring new revenue opportunities that support long-term growth and resilience.
- Fostering a culture of continuous improvement, optimising processes, and delivering greater value across all operations.
- Drive environmental sustainability by reducing the college's carbon footprint and working towards achieving net zero through energy efficiency, low carbon energy adoption, and waste reduction strategies.
- Developing knowledge and skills related to environmental sustainability, social responsibility and global issues across the College.





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