

South Yorkshire Collaborative Annual Accountability Statement

March 2024

Introduction

Collaborative working is a core feature of the way South Yorkshire Further Education Colleges operate across South Yorkshire. The desire for closer partnership working was clearly evidenced by the launch of a formal South Yorkshire College Partnership (SYCP) in 2022 and this now forms the basis for considering the way Colleges access and implement new curriculum and funding opportunities and how we secure the right offer for businesses and residents in the SY community.

Collaboration partners

FE Colleges in the Partnership include Barnsley College, Doncaster College (part of DN Colleges Group), Northern College, RNN Group (Rotherham College) and The Sheffield College.



DN COLLEGES GROUP



The Sheffield College

The Partnership also includes The University of Sheffield AMRC Training Centre, Doncaster Deaf Trust and Chesterfield College (as an institution on the South Yorkshire boundary). This Partnership forms the basis for wider collaboration and strategic dialogue with stakeholders across the region including Sheffield Hallam University and the South Yorkshire Provider Network on behalf of Independent Training Providers. Individual members also bring to the partnership experience of their own collaboration – eg DNCG with Universities of Lincoln and Hull.



The Chesterfield College Group



Collaborative projects

Specific examples of how the collaboration has worked together to review skills needs across the region and develop approaches include:

Institute of Technology:

Led by Doncaster College, SYCP has continued to work collaboratively with Sheffield Hallam University and leading employers on development of the South Yorkshire Institute of Technology (IoT). This includes reviewing the region's skills needs and the curriculum offer required.

Higher Technical Qualifications

Development of Higher Technical Qualifications in South Yorkshire is underpinned by a formal Partnership Agreement between the SYCP and Sheffield Hallam University. The Agreement recognises the skills and expertise of respective members of the partnership and that alignment of activity is critically important in shaping the region's curriculum offer and ensuring it supports the IoT. Two rounds of HTQ delivery funding have been secured under the terms of the Agreement.

T levels

As a Wave 1 adopter of T levels, Barnsley College used early adopter funding and support from the Education and Training Foundation to create a programme of support for other Colleges across South Yorkshire as their programmes came on stream.

Apprenticeship Hub

SYCP has supported SYMCA in launching South Yorkshire's first Apprenticeship Hub. Led by The Sheffield College, Colleges have secured funding and approval for the Hub that will address as a priority the significant drop in take up of apprenticeships by younger people, as well as taking steps to address barriers to successful completion.

Devolved Adult Education Budget (AEB)

SYC Partners receive devolved AEB grant funding through the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA). SYCP Principals have worked collaboratively and with SYMCA to help shape the way in which more innovative funding methodologies can support the curriculum offer across the region in response to emerging skills priorities, such as the need for low carbon skills and welding.

Local Skills Improvement Fund

Led by Barnsley College, the Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) has been a key opportunity for collaborative activity between SYCP, the South Yorkshire Provider Network and Sheffield Hallam University responding to the Local Skills Improvement Plan. Having reviewed recommendations, prioritisation and responsibilities, the LSIF Partner Board has focused on opportunities to engage with employers, including further development of the South Yorkshire Skills website (initially funded through SDF2) a single-entry point for businesses to access information on skills.

In response to the LSIP, LSIF partners have focused on digital / technical skills, including investment in a network of immersive classrooms, establishment of a digital curriculum group, exploration of digital badge accreditation and investment in digital spaces and mobile learning kit.

Future work / SMART objectives

We expect future collaborative work to include:

- How to build on LSIF progress to make most effective use of innovation and new technology to transform the curriculum;
- How networked technology could help SYCP with shared teaching and curriculum development in the light of staffing challenges;
- SYCP Principals' Group to agree by 30th June the sustainability arrangements for future maintenance and development of the South Yorkshire Skills website and collaborative Employer Hub activity;
- By 31st July 2024 SYCP will put in place a collaborative LMI group to meet twice a year to consider data regarding new and trending skills and make curriculum recommendations to SC College Principals.