ETC

Education
Training
Collective

DESTINATION 2030

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Introduction

ONE ETC. Thousands of futures. Built in the Tees Valley.

The ETC brings together, education, training and employer partnerships across the Tees Valley and beyond. This reach allows the group to do something powerful: develop the workforce for the region's growing and emerging industries while opening pathways into skilled careers for communities across the Tees Valley. By connecting education, industry and place, the ETC turns regional ambition into thousands of successful futures.

The ETC enters this next phase from a position of strength. The group has achieved an Outstanding Ofsted rating, reflecting consistently high-quality teaching, exceptionally high learner outcomes and a deep commitment to student experience. It has built trusted relationships with employers and partners and is now playing a leading role in national developments, including its designation as a Technical Excellence College for clean energy. These achievements provide a strong foundation for the future.

At the same time, the context in which the ETC operates is becoming more complex and demanding. The Tees Valley is experiencing significant investment and growth in sectors such as clean energy, advanced manufacturing and digital technologies. However, this growth sits alongside persistent challenges, including lower levels of higher qualifications, economic inactivity, and barriers to participation for many communities.

Nationally and globally, the environment is increasingly uncertain. Rapid technological change, the transition to green power, and shifting labour market demands are reshaping education and skills. Economic pressures, workforce shortages and global instability add further complexity. Education reform has accelerated further through the government's commitment to devolve greater responsibility for education and skills to Strategic Authorities. Emerging expectations that schools, colleges, employers and local leaders will jointly shape technical education from

age 14, alongside plans to devolve responsibility for 16–18 education and funding, represents one of the most significant changes to the English skills system for a generation.

For the ETC, this creates both opportunity and risk: the opportunity to play a central role in shaping the future workforce and the risk of not moving at the pace and scale required.

Destination 2030 sets out how the ETC will respond. It focuses on three clear outcomes: building successful futures for learners, opening access to opportunity, and connecting education, skills and industry to support growth. These outcomes are supported by focused priorities, targeted delivery programmes and a clear set of measures to track progress.

This strategy builds on what the ETC already excels in, while recognising that doing more of the same will not be enough. Continued success requires sharper focus, stronger partnerships, greater agility and a clear commitment to impact. Above all, it is about ensuring that as the Tees Valley grows and changes, more people can benefit from that growth and build successful futures of their own.

Our Purpose

Build Futures. Open Doors. Connect.

Our Vision

By 2030, we will create opportunity for everyone — realising potential, improving life chances and, through inclusive, high-quality education, driving prosperity and success.

Changing lives and creating opportunity across communities and employers.

Tone of Voice

We're confident, grounded and there when it counts. We show up and get things done.

We don't overpromise. If we say we'll do something, we do it properly, with care, consistency and integrity.

We take real pride in what people achieve here, our learners, our colleagues and our communities, and we make sure success is recognised and celebrated.

We speak like real people - we are open and easy to understand. No jargon - just a straightforward, supportive voice.

Our Strategic Outcomes

We have three simple strategic outcomes which will guide our work. These focus on impact for the individual (Build Futures), social impact (Open Doors) and economic and system impact (Connect). Set out below is our strategy on one page.

Build Futures

Our learners develop the skills, confidence and behaviours to build successful lives and access good careers

Strategic Priorities

- Strengthen learner outcomes, progression and destinations.
- Deliver an evidence-led, high-quality ETC learning experience.
- Create clear, flexible pathways into successful careers.
- Develop an exceptional and inclusive workforce that enables learner success.

Delivery Programmes

ETC Pedagogy Programme
Embed a distinctive, evidence-led approach to teaching and learning.

Progression & Destinations Programme
Improve progression into higher education, apprenticeships and employment.

Pathways Redesign Programme
Create clear pathways from entry level to higher-level skills and careers.

Future Skills Programme
Develop the skills and mindsets needed for a digital and AI-enabled world.

English & Maths Excellence Programme
Strengthen the core skills that underpin success in learning and work.

Leadership Excellence Programme
Develop confident, capable leaders who drive improvement and performance.

People & Culture Programme
Build an inclusive, high-performing culture and become an employer of choice.

Open Doors

We reach more people so they can access education, overcome barriers, feel a sense of belonging, and move into skilled careers across every community.

Strategic Priorities

- Expand participation from disadvantaged groups.
- Remove barriers to access, retention and success.
- Strengthen community and partner-based delivery.
- Strengthen progression into higher-level learning and careers.

Delivery Programmes

Inclusion Programme
Increase participation, achievement and progression for learners facing barriers.

Youth Futures Programme
Keep young people engaged in learning, progressing to good outcomes.

SEND Excellence Programme
Deliver high-quality, inclusive provision that meets diverse learner needs.

Adult Skills & Community Learning Programme
Expand opportunities for adults to learn, upskill and progress.

Higher Education Programme
Grow higher-level skills provision and progression into Level 4–6 study.

Connect

The ETC brings together education, employers and partners across the Tees Valley and beyond, shaping provision and supporting growth.

Strategic Priorities

- Deepen and strengthen employer partnerships.
- Align provision to regional priority sectors including net zero. imperatives, technology transformation, and future skills demand.
- Lead the development of an integrated regional education and skills system through partnership with schools, employers, and Strategic Authorities.

Delivery Programmes

Employer Partnership Programme
Build long-term partnerships that align skills with workforce needs.

Clean Energy TEC Programme
Lead workforce development for the clean energy sector.

Construction TEC Programme
Address construction skills shortages through specialist training.

Apprenticeship Growth and Reform Programme
Expand high-quality apprenticeships and improve outcomes.

Flexible and Modular Skills Programme
Develop flexible learning that responds to learner and employer demand.

Strategic Partnerships and Devolution Programme
Shape skills planning and investment through strong regional partnerships, and work with schools, employers and Strategic Authorities to create technical pathways from age 14 through to higher education, apprenticeships and employment.

Sustainability Programme
Alongside programmes such as the Clean Energy TEC, develop leadership for Net Zero- in our own business and in our curriculum AI and Technology Transformation Programme.

Technology Transformation Programme
Alongside the Future Skills Programme, develop leadership for technology transformation- in our business and in our curriculum.

Context

The Tees Valley Today

The Tees Valley is changing.

Major investment in clean energy, advanced manufacturing, construction, digital industries and life sciences is creating new opportunities across the region. Developments such as Teesworks, the Teesside Freeport, Net Zero Teesside and wider industrial investment have the potential to create thousands of jobs and support long-term economic growth.

But growth alone does not guarantee opportunity.

Many communities continue to face challenges around employment, health, skills and progression. The Tees Valley has lower levels of higher-level qualifications than the national average, higher levels of economic inactivity and some of the most deprived communities in the country. Young people are more likely to be unemployed than the national average, and employers continue to report skills shortages across both existing and emerging sectors. The challenge for the region is clear: ensuring local people have the skills, confidence and support they need to benefit from future growth.

Skills for a Changing World

The world of work is changing quickly.

Technology, artificial intelligence and automation are reshaping jobs across every sector. Employers need people who can combine technical knowledge with digital skills, adaptability, communication and problem solving.

Demand for higher-level skills is also growing. Across the Tees Valley, the proportion of jobs requiring Level 4 and above qualifications is expected to increase significantly over the coming decade. At the same time, the Tees Valley Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) highlights ongoing challenges around digital skills, workforce shortages, adult skills, progression and access to higher-level learning.

Education and training providers have an important role to play in helping people develop the skills needed not only for today's jobs, but for the jobs of the future.

A Changing Skills System

The skills system is changing too.

Devolution is giving regions a stronger voice in shaping skills and economic priorities. Increasingly, education will be planned around places. Strategic Authorities are expected to play a far greater role in commissioning post-16 provision, while schools and colleges will be expected to collaborate much more closely to deliver coherent technical pathways from age 14. This significant shift places partnership and local accountability at the centre of the education system.

LSIPs, Technical Excellence Colleges, apprenticeship reform, Skills England, qualification reform and the Lifelong Learning Entitlement are all creating new opportunities to design education and training around local needs.

For providers, success will depend on strong partnerships, clear progression pathways and the ability to respond quickly to changing workforce demands. It will also require a renewed

focus on inclusion, ensuring that opportunities created through economic growth are accessible to everyone

Our Role

The ETC is one of the largest providers of education and training in the Tees Valley, serving thousands of learners each year across our colleges, training centres and community locations.

Our group brings together:

- Stockton Riverside College
- Redcar and Cleveland College
- NETA Training
- Bede Sixth Form College
- InnerSummit

Together, we support people at every stage of life. From school leavers taking their first steps into further education, to apprentices developing their careers, to adults returning to learning or retraining for new opportunities, we provide academic, technical and vocational education, apprenticeships, higher education and workforce development.

We are proud of the role we play in our communities. Our campuses and training centres are places where people gain confidence, develop skills, discover opportunities and prepare for their future. Every day, we see the difference that education can make to individuals, families and communities.

Our work also contributes to wider local and national ambitions. We support the priorities set out in the Tees Valley Local Skills Improvement Plan, Local Growth Plan and Industrial Strategy by developing the skills, talent and workforce needed for growth. Through our work with employers, communities and partners, we help ensure that local people can access the opportunities being created across the region.

We are also proud of what we have achieved. Our Outstanding Ofsted judgement, Technical Excellence College status and strong partnerships with employers and stakeholders reflect our commitment to quality and the trust placed in us by learners, businesses and communities.

As part of developing this strategy, we asked learners, staff, employers, partners and stakeholders to share their views and tell us what matters most for the future. We also asked a simple question: what one piece of advice would you give the Board? The response was consistent. Build on what works. Stay close to learners and employers. Continue to deliver high-quality education and training. Be ambitious for the Tees Valley. And play a leading role in shaping the future skills system.

Our journey towards 2030 will build on these strengths to help more people access opportunity, support employers to develop the workforce they need and ensure the benefits of growth are felt across all our communities.

This strategy sets out how we will do that through three connected outcomes:
Build Futures, Open Doors, and Connect

Strategic Outcomes

"By 2030, we want more people to achieve their goals, progress into further study and employment, and leave the ETC with the skills, confidence and qualifications they need to succeed."

Build Futures

Build Futures is about helping people move forward.

It reflects the reason many of us choose to work in education: to help people gain the skills, confidence and opportunities they need to build successful lives.

This outcome has been shaped by the voices of our learners and staff. Throughout the development of this strategy, people spoke about the importance of feeling supported, having opportunities to progress and being part of a community where they belong. Across our campuses, there was a shared pride in what people achieve here and a shared ambition to help even more people succeed.

Learners told us they value the independence that college brings. They spoke about making friends, learning new skills and growing in confidence. They value practical learning, supportive staff and experiences that help them prepare for what comes next. Staff spoke about the difference education can make, not only through qualifications, but through confidence, resilience, personal growth and readiness for work and life.

We know that success looks different for different people. For some, it is progressing to university. For others, it is securing an apprenticeship, gaining employment, developing new skills or overcoming barriers that once felt impossible. Every journey matters.

For that reason, our family of colleges offers a comprehensive range of education and training. We deliver provision aligned to national priorities, the Local Growth Plans and the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), including advanced manufacturing, clean energy, life sciences, construction, digital and the creative industries. Alongside this,

we provide outstanding opportunities in performing arts, specialist King's Trust programmes for young people requiring additional support, and a broad, ambitious academic curriculum that enables learners to fulfil their potential. That is also why we will continue to focus on high-quality teaching and learning, strong outcomes and clear progression routes. We will help all our learners understand the opportunities available to them and support them to take the next step with confidence.

The world our learners are entering is changing quickly. Technology, artificial intelligence and new ways of working are reshaping careers across every sector. At the same time, the post-16 qualifications landscape is changing significantly, with new pathways being introduced to create clearer and more coherent routes into further study, apprenticeships and employment. As a national Qualifications Pioneer we are helping to shape and implement these reforms, ensuring that the learner voice and practical experience of delivery remain at the heart of change.

We also recognise that our learners' journeys begin before they join college. We will work with schools and employers to help design high-quality technical pathways from age 14, ensuring that young people experience specialist technical education, meaningful encounters with employers and clear progression routes into T Levels, V Levels, apprenticeships, higher education and skilled employment. We believe colleges must play a central role in helping young people make informed choices about their future. Alongside strong technical, vocational and academic skills, people will need to be adaptable, digitally confident and ready to keep learning throughout their lives. Our Future Skills Programme will help ensure learners are prepared not just for today's jobs, but for tomorrow's opportunities. In addition, our Clean Energy TEC will help us lead skills development for the energy transition.

We also know that great learner experiences depend on great people. Our staff are the reason learners succeed. Through our Leadership Excellence Programme and People and Culture Programme, we will invest in our colleagues, develop talent, support wellbeing and create an inclusive culture where everyone feels valued and able to thrive.

By 2030, we want more people to achieve their goals, progress into further study and employment, and leave the ETC with the skills, confidence and qualifications they need to succeed. We want every learner to feel that their time with us has helped them build a brighter future.

How We Will Deliver

ETC Pedagogy Programme

We will embed distinctive, evidence-led approaches to teaching and learning, establishing a national reputation for high quality FE pedagogy.

Pathways Redesign Programme

We will design and implement clear, coherent pathways from Key Stage 4 technical pathways through to Level 6 and beyond, creating seamless progression into A levels, T Levels, V Levels, apprenticeships, higher education and employment.

Progression & Destinations Programme

We will track and improve learner journeys end-to-end, strengthening progression into higher education, apprenticeships and employment.

Future Skills Programme

We will equip learners with the knowledge, skills and mindsets needed to thrive in a rapidly changing world, including digital fluency, AI literacy, critical thinking, creativity, communication, adaptability and lifelong learning.

English and Maths Excellence Programme

We will accelerate achievement in English and maths, strengthening the foundational skills that underpin success in further study, employment and everyday life.

Leadership Excellence Programme

We will strengthen leadership capability at all levels through coaching, professional development and data informed improvement, creating a culture of accountability, innovation and high performance.

People and Culture Programme

We will become an employer of choice by attracting, developing and retaining exceptional people. Foster an inclusive culture where colleagues feel valued, supported and empowered to succeed, advancing wellbeing, engagement, equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging.

“Learners value staff who notice when they are struggling, accessible wellbeing support and an environment where they feel welcome and able to succeed.”

Open Doors

Talent is everywhere. Opportunity is not.

Across the Tees Valley, there are people with the talent, ambition and potential to succeed. Yet too often, opportunities are not shared equally.

While our region is seeing significant investment and growth, many people still face barriers to education, training and employment. Young people are more likely to be unemployed than the national average, and too many leave education without progressing into higher-level learning or skilled careers. Around 65% of working-age residents hold qualifications at Level 2 or below, limiting access to many of the opportunities being created in growing sectors such as clean energy, digital and advanced manufacturing.

These challenges are not the same everywhere. Some communities continue to experience higher levels of deprivation, poorer health outcomes and lower qualification levels than the national average. Yet wherever we work across our communities, we see the same thing: people with potential who need the right support, opportunity and encouragement to succeed.

Opening doors has always been part of who we are.

As we developed this strategy, staff, learners and partners spoke about the importance of belonging. They talked about creating opportunities for people who might not otherwise access education, supporting learners to overcome barriers, and making sure that no one is left behind as the region grows and changes. Earlier engagement with schools will allow the ETC to support more young people, reducing the risk of disengagement, becoming NEET and widening participation into technical education.

Learners told us how important it is to feel supported and included. They value staff who notice when they are struggling, accessible wellbeing support and an environment where they feel welcome and able to succeed.

We know we cannot do this alone. Opening doors requires strong partnerships. Schools,

local authorities, employers, community organisations, health services and voluntary groups all have a role to play. Together, we can reach people earlier, remove barriers more effectively and create clearer routes into learning, work and progression.

Through our Inclusion Programme, we will strengthen outreach, participation and learner support. Through our Youth Futures Programme, we will help more young people move into education, training and employment. Through our SEND Development Strategy, we will continue to develop high-quality provision that enables every learner to thrive.

We will expand opportunities for adults to gain new skills, retrain, change career or return to learning. Through stronger community-based delivery and partnership working, we will make learning more accessible and ensure that people can access support at every stage of life. We will also strengthen progression into higher-level learning and skilled careers. By expanding Level 4 to 6 opportunities and creating clearer progression routes, we will help more people take the next step and achieve their ambitions.

By 2030, we want more people from every community to participate, achieve and progress. We want more people to feel that they belong, that opportunity is within reach, and that their future is not defined by where they started.

How We Will Deliver

Inclusion Programme

Deliver targeted outreach, access, retention and success interventions to increase participation and achievement for learners facing barriers.

Youth Futures Programme

Develop excellent wrap around support for students, lead and support initiatives such as Youth Guarantee, expand work placements, re-engagement pathways and employment support to keep young people in education and training and support young people into sustained education and work.

SEND Excellence Programme

Develop responsive and inclusive SEND provision, reflecting the needs of the local community.

Adult Skills & Community Learning Programme

Develop and deliver a clear, scalable adult skills and community learning offer to upskill the workforce and widen participation.

Higher Education Programme

Secure OfS registration and expand Level 4–6 provision in priority sectors, strengthening progression routes from FE to Higher Education and enabling more learners to access and succeed in higher-level study.

"Strong employer partnerships help us create clearer pathways into skilled careers, giving learners the skills, confidence and experience they need to succeed."

Connect

Skills are at the heart of the Tees Valley's future.

As new industries grow and technology reshapes the world of work, strong partnerships will be essential to ensure local people can access new opportunities and employers can access the talent they need to succeed.

As we developed this strategy, a consistent message emerged from employers, partners and stakeholders. They see the ETC as a trusted, high-quality organisation with a strong reputation across academic, technical and vocational education. They value our commitment to learners, our strong employer relationships and our contribution to the region's growth.

They also challenged us to think bigger.

Stakeholders told us they want the ETC to play a stronger role in bringing people together, shaping skills priorities and helping the region respond to future workforce needs. They encouraged us to build on our strengths, stay close to learners and employers, and use our reputation and influence to help shape the future of skills across the Tees Valley.

We believe it is our responsibility not only to respond to change but to help lead it. Our Strategic Partnerships and Devolution Programme will bring partners together to shape the region's skills priorities. Our AI and Technology Transformation Programme will improve the way we work. Our Sustainability Programme will ensure we lead by example, reducing our environmental impact. At the same time, our Clean Energy TEC and Future Skills Programme will embed new skills for net zero and new technologies in our curriculum and teaching and learning.

We believe the future of education is collaborative rather than competitive.

Colleges, schools, employers, universities and Strategic Authorities each have distinct strengths. Working together, they can provide young people with coherent educational journeys rather than disconnected stages. The ETC will become a leading partner in developing technical education from age 14 onwards, supporting curriculum design, teacher development, employer

engagement and progression pathways that reflect the future economy of the Tees Valley. As responsibility for post-16 education becomes increasingly devolved, we will work constructively with the Tees Valley Combined Authority and regional partners to ensure public investment delivers outstanding educational outcomes, economic growth and social mobility. The priorities identified through the Tees Valley LSIP reinforce many of the same themes. Employers have highlighted the need for stronger links between education and industry, more opportunities for learners to gain meaningful experience, greater flexibility in skills provision, and a workforce equipped with the technical, digital and employability skills needed for a changing economy. They have also highlighted growing demand across key sectors including clean energy, construction, advanced manufacturing, digital, life sciences and the process industries.

Through this outcome of 'Connect', we will respond to those priorities. We will deepen our partnerships with employers, working together to shape curriculum, develop talent pipelines and create meaningful industry experiences for learners. We will strengthen our understanding of workforce needs and ensure our provision remains relevant, responsive and aligned to the opportunities being created across the region.

This work connects directly to our ambitions to Build Futures and Open Doors.

Strong employer partnerships help us create clearer pathways into skilled careers, giving learners the skills, confidence and experience they need to succeed. They also help ensure that opportunities are open to more people, including those who may not traditionally have seen higher education, apprenticeships or skilled employment as an option. We want every learner, regardless of their starting point, to be able to see a route forward and understand how education can help them achieve their goals.

By bringing together high-quality teaching, employer engagement, careers education and progression support, we will create a more connected experience for learners. From their first steps into education through to employment, apprenticeships or higher-level study, learners will be able to see where they are going next and how they can get there. This reflects our commitment to building futures, opening doors and partnership.

As a Qualifications Pioneer, we are helping to shape the future of post-16 qualifications. Alongside our Technical Excellence College status, this places the ETC at the forefront of educational reform and innovation. We will use this position to help ensure qualifications, curriculum and progression pathways remain relevant, accessible and aligned to the needs of learners, employers and the wider economy.

Through our status as the Clean Energy TEC and our partner role in the Construction TEC programmes, we will build on our strengths in sectors that are critical to the future of the Tees Valley. Through apprenticeships, flexible learning and modular skills provision, we will create more opportunities for people and employers to access training when and where they need it.

We will also strengthen our role within the wider skills system. Working alongside employers, Tees Valley Combined Authority, Skills England, LSIP partners and education providers, we will help shape skills priorities, influence investment and support regional growth. We will be an active partner in ensuring that local people can access the opportunities created by major developments across the Tees Valley and that employers have access to the skills they need to grow.

Throughout our engagement, one message came through strongly: quality matters. Stakeholders were clear that our reputation for high-quality education, strong teaching and positive learner outcomes is one of our greatest strengths. As we strengthen our influence and partnerships, we will remain focused on what matters most: delivering excellent experiences and outcomes for learners. By 2030, we want more employers choosing to work with the ETC, more learners progressing into skilled careers, and stronger partnerships that create lasting benefits for people, businesses and communities across the Tees Valley and beyond.

How We Will Deliver

Employer Partnership Programme

Build structured, long-term partnerships with employers to co-design curriculum, develop talent pipelines and deliver high-quality industry experience for learners.

Clean Energy TEC Programme

Establish and lead a hub-and-spoke model for clean energy, delivering specialist provision and building national leadership in priority sectors.

Construction TEC Programme

Meet acute skills challenges in the construction sector through high quality, specialist training.

Apprenticeship Growth & Reform Programme

Expand and improve apprenticeship provision at Levels 2–5, responding to levy reform and strengthening achievement and progression outcomes.

Flexible & Modular Skills Offer Programme

Develop and deliver flexible, modular learning including short courses, apprenticeship units and Lifelong Learning Entitlement provision.

Sustainability Programme

Alongside programmes such as the Clean Energy TEC, develop leadership for Net Zero- in our own business and in our curriculum AI and Technology Transformation Programme

Strategic Partnership & Devolution Programme

Lead the development of an integrated regional education system by working with Strategic Authorities, schools, employers, universities and Skills England to shape commissioning, investment, technical pathways and workforce planning across the Tees Valley.

Technology Transformation Programme

Alongside the Future Skills Programme, develop leadership for technology transformation- in our business and in our curriculum

Measuring Success

We want this strategy to make a real difference.

That means being clear about what success looks like and honest about the progress we are making. It means celebrating what is working, learning from what is not, and staying focused on the things that matter most to our learners, employers and communities.

We will measure success through the three outcomes at the heart of this strategy: Build Futures, Open Doors and Connect. For each outcome, we have identified a small number of measures that will help us understand whether we are making the difference we set out to make.

But numbers only tell part of the story. Alongside each priority, we have included an insight question. These questions help us look beyond the data and understand what it is telling us. They encourage us to ask why something is happening, what we can learn from it and where we need to focus our efforts next.

This approach is about learning, not just reporting. It will help us make better decisions, respond to changing needs and keep improving over time.

The detailed measures, targets and delivery plans that sit behind this strategy will be reviewed regularly to make sure we stay on track. What will not change is our commitment to improving lives through education, skills and opportunity.

Build Futures

Outcome: More learners achieving, progressing and succeeding in employment, apprenticeships and higher-level study.

Strategic Priority	Measures of Success	Insight Question
Strengthen learner outcomes, progression and destinations	Achievement, progression and positive destinations.	Are more learners successfully progressing to the next stage of learning, employment or their chosen career?
Deliver an evidence-led, high-quality ETC learning experience	Learner satisfaction, attendance and retention	What does learner feedback and participation tell us about the quality of the learner experience?
Create clear, flexible pathways into successful careers	Progression between levels, pathways and destinations into priority sectors, and numbers of 14-16 aged learners accessing technical education.	Are learners able to see and access clear routes into further study, apprenticeships and employment?
Develop an exceptional and inclusive workforce that enables learner success	Staff engagement, retention and professional development participation	Are we creating a culture where people feel valued, supported and able to do their best work?

Open Doors

Outcome: Improved participation and success of disadvantaged learners.

Strategic Priority	Measures of Success	Insight Question
Expand participation from disadvantaged groups	Participation and recruitment from priority groups and communities	Are we reaching the people and communities who can benefit most from education and training?
Remove barriers to access, retention and success	Retention, achievement and progression of learners facing barriers	What barriers are having the greatest impact on learner success, and how effectively are we addressing them?
Strengthen community and partner-based delivery	Participation through community-based learning, outreach activity and partner referrals	How well are our partnerships helping us connect people to learning and opportunity?
Strengthen progression into higher-level learning and careers	Progression into Level 4+, higher education, apprenticeships and skilled employment	Are more learners progressing into higher-level learning and careers, regardless of their starting point?

Connect

Outcome: More partnerships with benefits for learners and better workforce outcomes.

Strategic Priority	Measures of Success	Insight Question
Deepen and strengthen employer partnerships	Employer satisfaction, employer involvement in curriculum and learning, students and staff industry placements	How are our employer partnerships improving opportunities and outcomes for learners?
Align provision to priority sectors and future skills demand	Participation and achievement in priority sectors, and technical pathways jointly delivered with schools and employers	How well does our provision reflect current and future workforce needs?
Build the ETC's role as a system leader, regionally and nationally	Strategic partnerships; leadership of devolved regional and national initiatives; recognition as a trusted strategic partner within the wider skills system	How are we helping shape the skills system and support economic growth across the region?

Organisational Foundations

Build Futures.
Open Doors.
Connect.

These are the outcomes we want to achieve. To deliver them, we need strong foundations.

The Tees Valley is changing. New industries are growing, technology is reshaping how people learn and work, and expectations of education continue to evolve. At the same time, our communities continue to face challenges around skills, health, employment and opportunity. The Local Skills Improvement Plan highlights the need for more higher-level skills, stronger employer engagement, greater flexibility and a workforce ready for the jobs of the future.

Meeting these challenges requires more than good intentions. It requires the right people, systems, resources and leadership. These foundations are not strategic outcomes in their own right. They are what enable us to deliver excellent experiences and outcomes for learners, employers and communities.

People and Workforce

Every achievement, every qualification, every progression story starts with the dedication, expertise and commitment of our staff. We will continue to invest in leadership, professional development and wellbeing, creating a culture where people feel valued, supported and able to thrive.

As demand grows for specialist skills in areas such as clean energy, engineering, digital and construction, we will strengthen our ability to attract and retain talented colleagues. We want the ETC to be an employer of choice and a place where great people can build rewarding careers while making a difference to others.

Technology and Data

We will invest in digital infrastructure, embrace the opportunities created by AI and develop the confidence and capability of our workforce to use technology effectively. We will make better use of data and insight so that decisions are informed by evidence and focused on improving outcomes.

Most importantly, we will ensure technology

enhances the experience of learners and staff, rather than becoming a barrier to it.

Financial Sustainability and Investment

Strong finances allow us to invest in what matters most.

We will manage our resources carefully, maintain financial resilience and make informed decisions about where we invest. This will help us continue to improve facilities, develop our workforce and respond to emerging opportunities.

In a changing funding environment, we will remain focused on delivering value, protecting quality and investing where we can make the greatest difference.

Estates and Infrastructure

Our campuses are at the heart of the communities we serve. They are places where people learn, gain confidence, develop skills and prepare for their future. We will continue to invest in safe, welcoming and inclusive environments that support high-quality learning and reflect the ambitions of our learners and employers.

We will ensure our campuses and specialist facilities remain fit for the future, supporting growth in priority sectors, aligning with net-zero targets and sustainable development goals, and providing the environments needed for modern technical and professional education.

Governance and Accountability

As the skills system continues to change through devolution, qualification reform and evolving national priorities, strong governance will help us make informed decisions and respond with confidence.

We will continue to work closely with governors, employers, partners and stakeholders to ensure that our decisions reflect the needs of learners, communities and the regional economy. We will be open about our performance, learn from experience and hold ourselves accountable for delivering this strategy.

Together, these foundations will ensure that the ETC remains a trusted, resilient and ambitious organisation, creating opportunity for people, supporting employers and helping our communities thrive.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Keeping learners safe is fundamental to everything we do. We will continue to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive environment where learners can thrive, with safeguarding embedded across our culture, policies and everyday practice. As the risks facing young people and adults continue to evolve, including online safety, mental health and the responsible use of digital technologies, we will ensure our staff are well trained, our processes remain robust and the voices of learners continue to shape our approach. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and will remain at the heart of our commitment to enabling every learner to achieve their potential.

Delivery and Implementation

This strategy sets the direction for the ETC over the next three years. It is designed to be stable, providing a clear focus while allowing us to respond to changes in policy, funding, technology and employer demand. Delivery will happen through three connected layers:

Strategic Outcomes

At the heart of the strategy are our three outcomes:

Build Futures

Our learners develop the skills, confidence and behaviours to build successful lives and access good careers.

Open Doors

We reach more people so they can access education, overcome barriers, feel a sense of belonging, and move into skilled careers across every community.

Connect

Bringing together education, employers and partners to support growth.

These outcomes provide the framework for decision making across the organisation.

Delivery Programmes and Strategies

Each outcome is supported by a number of delivery programmes. These programmes will be delivered through associated sub-strategies, policies and plans in areas including:

- Curriculum
- Teaching and Learning
- Business Development and Marketing
- Technology Transformation
- Estates
- Careers and Student Support
- Sustainability
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Finance and Investment
- Governance Development

These sub-strategies and policies will be reviewed and updated throughout the life of this plan to ensure they remain aligned to changing needs.

Annual Priorities and Improvement

Destination 2030 sets our long-term direction. Each year, the Board and Executive Team will agree a small number of annual priorities that focus effort on the areas where we can make the greatest difference for learners, employers and communities.

These priorities will be supported by clear delivery plans, owners, milestones and measures of success. Progress will be reviewed regularly through a Board Scorecard that brings together organisational health, accountability, people, learner outcomes, inclusion and partnership measures.

Alongside performance data, we will use insight questions to support discussion, challenge and learning. This will help us understand not only whether we are achieving our targets, but why results are improving, where barriers remain and what action is needed next.

This approach reflects our commitment to continuous improvement. We will celebrate success, learn from experience and adapt our plans where needed, ensuring that we remain focused on delivering meaningful impact for learners, employers and communities throughout the life of this strategy.

Looking Ahead (Risks and Assumptions)

The future will not stand still, and neither will we.

The next four years are likely to bring significant change across education, skills and the wider economy. Devolution will lead to greater local accountability, commissioning by Strategic Authorities, and integrated 14-16 technical pathways. New industries will emerge, technology will continue to evolve, and national and local priorities will develop over time. Some changes will create new opportunities. Others will bring challenges that require us to adapt.

This strategy provides a clear direction, but it is not intended to be rigid. We will continue to listen, learn and respond to changing circumstances while remaining focused on our purpose: creating opportunity, developing talent and supporting prosperity across the Tees Valley.

The Forces Shaping Our Future

Area	What We Are Watching	What This Means for the ETC
Skills Policy and Reform	Devolution, Skills England, qualification reform, apprenticeship reform and changes to funding	We will remain agile, ensuring our provision continues to meet the needs of learners, employers and communities.
Economic Growth and Workforce Demand	Growth in clean energy, construction, advanced manufacturing, digital and other priority sectors	We will continue to align curriculum and skills provision to regional workforce needs and future opportunities.
Technology and Artificial Intelligence	Changes in how people learn, work and access services	We will invest in digital capability, future skills and technology-enhanced learning.
Learner and Community Needs	Changing demographics, health inequalities, SEND demand and barriers to participation	We will continue to place inclusion, support and opportunity at the heart of our work.
Workforce and Talent	Competition for skilled staff and changing workforce expectations	We will invest in our people and strengthen our position as an employer of choice.
Climate and Net Zero Targets	Increasing expectations to reduce environmental impact and develop the skills needed for a low carbon economy	We will lead by example by reducing our environmental impact and embedding sustainability and green skills across our curriculum.
Financial Sustainability	Funding pressures, inflation and investment requirements	We will manage resources responsibly and invest where we can make the greatest difference.

Staying Resilient

Throughout the development of this strategy, people told us that one of the ETC's strengths is its ability to respond to change while remaining focused on what matters most.

That will continue to be important.

Our strong partnerships, experienced workforce, financial stewardship, governance and commitment to quality provide a solid foundation for the future. We will continue to review our progress, listen to learners and employers, and adapt our plans where needed.

What will not change is our purpose: creating opportunity, improving life chances and helping people, employers and communities succeed.

Conclusion

Every learner who walks through our doors has their own story, ambitions and potential.

Some will progress to university. Some will start apprenticeships or move directly into employment. Others will return to learning, develop new skills or take the first step towards a brighter future. Success looks different for everyone, but every journey matters. That is why this strategy is ultimately about people.

It is about helping learners build the skills, confidence and qualifications they need to succeed. It is about opening doors to opportunity, particularly for those who face barriers. And it is about connecting education, employers and partners to create stronger pathways into skilled careers and support the future growth of our region.

Over the next three years, we will build on the strengths that have made the ETC a trusted and successful organisation. We will continue to focus on quality, stay close to our communities and employers, and work together to create opportunities that change lives.

There are thousands of futures waiting to be realised across the Tees Valley.

Through education, skills and partnership, we will help more people achieve their potential, create opportunity for all and contribute to a stronger, more prosperous Tees Valley.

That is our ambition for 2030.

Crime and Punishment
Crime and Punishment

Appendix 1

Destination 2030 has been shaped through research, evidence and, most importantly, the voices of the people who know the ETC best.

From the beginning, we wanted this strategy to be something that was developed with people, not for them. We wanted to understand what makes the ETC distinctive, what we do well, where we need to improve and what role we should play in the future of the Tees Valley.

Listening and Learning

The process began with a detailed review of evidence and insight. We looked at national policy, economic forecasts, labour market trends, demographic data, skills priorities and regional strategies. We reviewed our own performance, achievements and areas for development, alongside wider changes affecting education, employers and communities.

This helped us build a clear picture of the opportunities and challenges that will shape the years ahead.

Bringing People Together

Evidence alone does not create a strategy. People do.

We invited learners, staff, governors, employers, partners and stakeholders to help shape Destination 2030 through workshops, interviews, surveys and discussions. We wanted to hear different perspectives and ensure that people from across the organisation and wider community had the opportunity to contribute.

A key part of this process was creating opportunities for open and honest conversations. Rather than relying solely on traditional consultation methods, we used images and visual prompts to encourage reflection and discussion. Participants were asked questions such as:

- Which image best represents the ETC today?
- Which image represents where we need to be by 2030?
- What barriers do our learners face?
- What opportunities do we want to create?

These conversations generated powerful stories and insights about ambition, belonging, opportunity, community and the future of the Tees Valley. They helped us understand not only what people think, but what they feel matters most.

Building the Strategy Together

The evidence, feedback and ideas gathered through the process were brought together to identify the themes that appear throughout this strategy.

Several messages emerged consistently:

- Continue to deliver high-quality education and training.
- Stay close to learners, employers and communities.
- Create clearer pathways into successful futures.
- Open up opportunity for more people.
- Play a leading role in supporting the future skills needs of the Tees Valley.
- Build on the strengths and reputation of the ETC

These themes became the foundation for our three strategic outcomes: Build Futures, Open Doors and Connect.

Thank You

This strategy belongs to everyone who helped shape it.

Thank you to the learners who shared their experiences and aspirations. Thank you to the staff who spoke passionately about the difference education makes every day. Thank you to governors, employers, partners and stakeholders who gave their time, challenged our thinking and helped us look ahead with confidence.

Your ideas, insights and experiences have helped create a strategy that reflects the ambitions of our learners, the strengths of our organisation and the opportunities ahead for the Tees Valley.

Destination 2030 is stronger because it has been built together.

DESTINATION 2030

ETC Education Training Collective

BEDE SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

INNER SUMMIT

NETA TRAINING

REDCAR AND CLEVELAND COLLEGE

STOCKTON RIVERSIDE COLLEGE