

ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

2026 to 2027



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OUR MISSION

**Empowering
futures,
transforming
lives**

OUR VISION

**To be an
exceptional
college**

OUR VISION AND VALUES

Barking & Dagenham College is a unique, diverse and inclusive environment in which everyone is supported to grow, develop and really flourish.

We treat each student as an individual because we know that everyone is different. Every individual has their own unique talents, circumstances, challenges and aspirations. Every student brings something special and it is this diversity and richness of ideas that makes College life interesting, fun and vibrant. Our culture is such that all students, staff and visitors should feel welcome, safe and valued. Guided by our principles of honesty, integrity and transparency, we treat each other respectfully and seek to establish trust. By building resilience and confidence, we encourage students and staff to rise above challenges with determination and a positive mindset.

Whilst we are rightly proud of our unique internal culture, Barking & Dagenham College is an outward facing organisation that recognises the critical importance of working through networks and collaboration to lead change and influence local agendas. By partnering with industry-leading employers and embracing innovation, digital technologies and new ways of thinking, we strive to push the boundaries of learning and ensure that our students are ahead of the curve. Our many stakeholder partnerships mean that we have established our place at the heart of our community and as a key partner in the regeneration of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.

At Barking & Dagenham College, we are dedicated to inspiring students and staff to embrace challenges and pursue their dreams with confidence. Most of all, we are ambitious and we expect excellence - from ourselves and from our students.

INSPIRE

These are the values that guide all of our activities:

Inclusion

Valuing diversity and ensuring equal opportunities for all

Networks and Collaboration

Working together and through partnerships to achieve common goals

Safety and Wellbeing

Creating an environment where everyone feels safe, supported, respected and valued

Principles

Acting with honesty, integrity and transparency at all times

Innovation

Embracing creative thinking and new technologies

Resilience

Overcoming challenges with perseverance and determination

Excellence

Striving for the highest possible standards in everything we do

People

Barking & Dagenham College must be a brilliant place for everyone to work or study.

- Embed equity, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our work.
- Engage students, staff, employers, and stakeholders in development.
- Become an exceptional employer through recruitment, retention, development and wellbeing.

Pedagogy+

Excellent standards of teaching, assessment, and student support.

- Develop a culture of “excellence as standard.”
- Invest in inclusive, research-led pedagogy.
- Support wellbeing and personal development through enrichment and guidance.

Prudence

Maintain a thriving, efficient, and environmentally conscious business.

- Grow income and drive operational efficiency.
- Invest in staff, facilities, and IT.
- Reduce carbon footprint through sustainable practices.

Portfolio of Provision

Courses that promote individual prosperity and local economic growth.

- Develop productive partnerships.
- Deliver inclusive, skills-focused curriculum.
- Expand technical excellence and higher education.
- Establish new provision to meet regional/national needs.

Performance

Exceptional student outcomes.

- Aim for top-quartile achievement and progression.
- Improve English and maths outcomes.
- Prepare students for positive destinations and careers.

Barking & Dagenham College exists to empower futures and transform lives through inclusive, career-focused education that supports social mobility, economic participation and inclusive growth across East London.

This Accountability Statement sets out how the College will deliver its curriculum in 2026–27 in response to local, regional and national skills priorities, in line with its statutory responsibilities under the Local Needs Duty and Local Skills Improvement Plan priorities. BDC is one of the largest providers of further education and skills within the Local London sub-region, delivering education and training to around 6,000 learners annually across technical, vocational, adult, SEND, apprenticeship and higher-level pathways.

The College operates in a context of high demand for accessible Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2 provision within a diverse and growing community, including learners who may be at risk of disengagement or becoming NEET.

Its strategic focus is to strengthen progression from learners' starting points into Level 3, apprenticeships, employment, higher technical learning and positive destinations.

Curriculum planning is designed to respond to high levels of local need and deliver on the ambition to increase access to priority sectors, employer-informed learning, good work and sustainable employment. This includes strengthening pathways in construction and green skills, health and care, digital and creative industries, applied science, business and professional services, SEND, ESOL and adult learning. During 2026–27, the College will also prepare for post-16 qualification reform and the transition from some legacy qualifications to reformed pathways from 2027/28 onwards. This will include reviewing affected Level 2 and Level 3 provision, mapping progression routes, assessing learner demand, staffing, specialist facilities, industry placement capacity and employer need, and ensuring that learners receive clear information, advice and guidance about future pathways.

This statement is aligned to the College's strategic priorities of People, Portfolio, Pedagogy+, Performance and Prudence, and supports the College's ambition of "Learning to create tomorrow: technical and professional excellence at the heart of Barking and Dagenham."

Barking & Dagenham College operates within the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, part of East London and the Local London sub-regional area. The College serves a multi-campus catchment centred on Rush Green and Barking, with travel-to-learn patterns extending into neighbouring boroughs including Newham, Redbridge and Havering.

The borough has one of the youngest population profiles in England and Wales. The latest available official mid-year population estimates show that Barking and Dagenham had 58,929 children aged 0–15 in 2024, around 25% of the borough's population and the highest proportion of children aged 0–15 of all local authorities in England and Wales. (ONS mid-year population estimates, 2024). This places sustained demand on education, training and progression pathways for young people and adults.

Alongside this demographic demand, the borough continues to experience wider labour-market and participation challenges, including economic inactivity, health-related barriers to work and the need to support young people and adults who are unemployed, economically inactive or at risk of becoming NEET into sustained education, training and good employment (LBBD labour market intelligence; Local London LSIP).

The English Indices of Deprivation 2025 show that Barking and Dagenham remains one of the most deprived local authority areas in England. It is ranked 9th nationally on the average rank measure and 5th nationally for income deprivation, with 38.4% of residents living in income-deprived households (English Indices of Deprivation 2025, MHCLG). This reinforces the importance of the College's role in widening participation, improving essential skills, supporting progression and creating routes into employment and higher-level learning.

This contributes to continued need for inclusive provision, particularly at Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2, alongside targeted support to enable progression into further learning and employment.

At the same time, Barking and Dagenham is positioned by the Council as one of London's major growth opportunities. The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham states that, together with partners, it plans to build more than 50,000 new homes and create 20,000 new jobs over the next 20 years (LBBD Growth Hubs). This growth is focused across key growth hubs and is expected to increase demand for technical, vocational and higher-level skills linked to construction and green skills, health and social care, digital, hospitality and creative industries, distribution/logistics and wider local services.

The Local London LSIP priorities for the sub-region include construction, digital and creative, health and social care, manufacturing and distribution. The LSIP also identifies cross-cutting themes relating to green skills, digital skills, support including ESOL, cooperation and engagement, funding, and tackling inequality (Local London LSIP).

Alongside these sub-regional priorities, emerging London-wide skills priorities and LSIP refresh activity point to the growing importance of hospitality and the visitor economy, business and professional services, and frontier innovation, including applied sciences, AI-aware learning and emerging technologies (BusinessLDN London LSIP; London Growth Plan; Skills England).

BDC's established and developing portfolio of provision includes:

- Construction and built environment;
- Engineering and manufacturing;
- Green skills, retrofit, EV and hybrid technologies;
- Computing, cyber security and AI-

aware digital learning;

- Digital arts, including film, games, animation, and virtual production;
- Creative industries, including fashion, art and design, 3D and emerging architecture pathways;
- Health and social care;
- Applied sciences;
- Business, finance and professional services;
- Counselling;
- ESOL, adult and community learning;
- SEND and high needs provision, with strong supported internship pathways into independence, employment-related activity and wider participation.

These areas reflect both the borough's immediate learner needs and the wider economic opportunities emerging across East London and the Local London sub-region.



This Accountability Statement has been developed through a structured review of local, regional and national skills priorities, alongside analysis of the College's curriculum offer, learner outcomes, progression information, stakeholder engagement, employer feedback and labour market intelligence. It also takes account of wider national and London policy developments, including Skills England priorities, the London Growth Plan, the London Inclusive Talent Strategy, post-16 qualification reform, SEND reform, the Inclusive Mainstream Fund and current LSIP refresh activity (Skills England; London Growth Plan; London Inclusive Talent Strategy; DfE post-16 qualification reform guidance; DfE SEND reform guidance).

The College has engaged with a range of stakeholders to inform its understanding of local and regional skills need, including the Local London sub-regional partnership, BusinessLDN as the London Employer Representative Body, the Greater London Authority as the Mayoral Strategic Authority, the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, employers, Jobcentre

Plus / Department for Work and Pensions, university partners and education and training providers (Local Needs Duty review; stakeholder engagement records).

This includes partnership working with organisations including NHS partners, Transport for London, Ford MS-RT, Coventry University, Ravensbourne University London, WorldSkills UK, BusinessLDN, LSIF-supported networks and employers across construction, health, digital, creative, hospitality and business-related sectors. BDC also collaborates with around 250 employers annually, alongside civic, community and education partners, to inform curriculum development, progression pathways and employer-responsive provision.

The College has continued to engage with providers and stakeholders across the Local London sub-region to support coherent provision planning, reduce unnecessary duplication where appropriate and strengthen opportunities across the wider skills system.

In preparing this statement, the College has considered its Local Needs Duty responsibilities alongside curriculum planning, learner demand, stakeholder engagement, employer feedback, LSIP priorities and labour market intelligence. This has reinforced the need to:

- Strengthen progression between levels;
- Increase participation in Level 3 and advanced technical pathways;
- Continue to further align provision closely to priority sectors and labour market need;
- Strengthen routes into employment, further study, higher-level learning and good jobs;
- Support learners to overcome barriers to participation and progression, including health-related, SEND, confidence, English, maths and digital skills barriers;
- Respond to changing patterns of learner, employer and stakeholder demand.
- Prepare for post-16 qualification reform by reviewing affected legacy qualifications and planning transition to T Levels, V Levels, reformed Level 2 Foundation and Occupational Certificates, apprenticeships or other approved pathways where appropriate.

Through the Thames Freeport Skills Framework tender, BDC is leading a consortium that includes London Borough of Barking & Dagenham Adult College, Thurrock Adult Community College, Havering Adult College, The STC Group and Coventry University/CU Group (Thames Freeport Skills Framework outcome and consortium evidence). This strengthens cross-borough collaboration and supports a more coherent skills response across Barking and Dagenham, Havering, Thurrock and the wider Thames Freeport area.



PROGRESS AGAINST 2025–26 OBJECTIVES

Objective	SMART Target 2025–2026	Baseline (2024–25)	Growth Plan	Progress / status during 2025–26
Workforce Stability	Maintain an average staff vacancy rate of $\leq 5\%$ across the academic year; achieve (desirable) staff retention of $\geq 88\%$.	Internal HR data	Continuation of talent mapping, inclusive recruitment campaigns, and local EDI partnerships.	Met: The staff vacancy rate is 5.4%, broadly in line with the 5% target. Based on staff retention (desirable) the 88% target has been met.
16–19 Recruitment	Achieve 20% market share for 16–19 funded learners in LBBD; increase 16–19 enrolment by at least 100 learners.	19%	Strengthened transition links with schools; increase in T Level and Level 3 offers, particularly in subject areas not deliverable within school sixth forms.	Target reviewed due to inaccurate baseline data. Refreshed marketing and progression strategies are being implemented to work towards the revised 15% target.
Work Placement	Ensure 97% of students on study programmes complete a purposeful work placement of at least 36 hours.	Annual ILR/MAP	Strengthen employer partnerships and increase engagement at BDC Skills Show.	Met: Performance data shows that the target of 97% completion of purposeful work placements of at least 36 hours has been met. The year also saw a significant improvement in work placement processes and outcomes.
Vocational Achievement	Achieve top quartile national rates estimated at: 16–18 = 85%, 19+ = 90%; student retention $\geq 90\%$ across all ages.	National average	Targeted interventions in English/maths; enhanced pastoral and SEND support; review leadership & management structure to drive quality and performance.	Pending: 16–18: based on current projections it is plausible that the 85% target will be met .

PROGRESS AGAINST 2025–26 OBJECTIVES

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Objective	SMART Target 2025–2026	Baseline (2024–25)	Growth Plan	Progress / status during 2025–26
Turnover Target	Achieve College turnover of £38m in 2024/25 and grow to £38.5m in 2025/26.	£38m (forecast)	Maximise growth across HE and Level 4 course provision, optimise funding through effective deployment of Study Programmes, and reintroduce apprenticeship programmes where sustained demand exists and provision can be delivered independently.	Met: Income is forecast to significantly exceed the £38.5m target for 2025-26.
Digital and Green Curriculum	Deliver 5 new courses in digital (e.g., cybersecurity, AI) and green technologies (e.g., retrofit, renewable energy) with at least 150 enrolments combined.	5 new courses in 2024/25	Respond to LSIP priority sectors; invest in specialist training for staff and marketing of new programmes.	Met: The College met the target to deliver new digital and green curriculum activity with at least 150 enrolments/participations. During 2025–26, BDC strengthened provision through EV and hybrid vehicle activity with Ford MS-RT, green skills delivery through the NOCN Level 2 Certificate in Sustainable Energy and Renewable Technologies, virtual production micro-credentials, digital and AI-aware curriculum development, and engineering micro-credentials in automation, renewable energy, hydraulics and hydrogen safety. The activity supported over 200 learners through EV and hybrid provision, 58 learners achieving the NOCN green skills qualification, 288 enrolments in Festo engineering micro-credentials, 192 enrichment participations in renewable energy and hydraulics, and 40 learners completing Hydrogen Safety programmes. This exceeded the original target and strengthened the College's response to digital, green and emerging technology skills priorities.

During 2025–26, BDC continued to develop its curriculum and partnerships in response to local, regional and national skills priorities. The College strengthened its focus on progression, employer engagement, inclusive pathways and priority sector provision.

Key areas of progress include:

- Achieved WorldSkills UK gold medal recognition in Additive Manufacturing through a T Level Engineering learner, demonstrating the strength of technical skills development, advanced manufacturing pathways and competition-based excellence;
- BDC achieved gold in the Greater London Skills Competition in March 2026, demonstrating high levels of learner ambition, technical skill and competition-based excellence. Gold medals were achieved in Engineering CAD, Digital Media and Hair, with further medal outcomes including Silver in Level 1 Brickwork, Bronze in Level 2 Brickwork, Bronze in Cyber Security and Silver in Science Chemistry;
- Hosted the College's WorldSkills UK-endorsed Skills Show, engaging over 1,690 learners in competitions, masterclasses and employer-led activities across the campus. The event strengthened employer partnerships, showcased learner achievement and provided valuable opportunities for students to develop professional networks and explore future career pathways;
- Launched the College's EV and hybrid vehicle workshop, strengthening access to emerging technical skills linked to low-carbon transport and future automotive technologies;
- Launched a new Green Skills Hub / Low Carbon and Retrofit Centre, linked to the Mayor's Green Skills Academy, to support skills development in retrofit, sustainable construction and low-carbon technologies;
- Delivered the NOCN Level 2 Certificate in Sustainable Energy and Renewable Technologies through the Green Skills Hub / Low Carbon and Retrofit Centre. Delivery focused on adult Level 2 and Level 3 plumbing and electrical learners, with 58 learners achieving the main qualification to date and completing required project milestones, alongside progression activity through the NOCN Level 1 Health and Safety qualification;
- Strengthened health and care sector engagement through partnership working with NHS partners, Care Providers Voice, Healthwatch and wider health and social care organisations, supporting work experience, industry placement activity, adult reskilling and employer-informed curriculum development;

- Secured a successful outcome in the Thames Freeport Skills Framework tender, strengthening its role in leading a regional consortium response across construction, green energy and sustainability, hydrogen, advanced manufacturing, mechatronics, digital and smart technologies. The framework supports progression from basic skills through to higher-level technical provision and strengthens BDC's contribution to Freeport-related skills priorities across Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Thurrock;
 - Invested in new science laboratory facilities to strengthen Applied Science and T Level Science pathways, supporting practical scientific skills, employer-led projects, industry placements, skills competitions and progression into higher education, higher apprenticeships, health, environmental, pharmaceutical and science-related employment;
 - Strengthened digital arts, film, games, animation and virtual production pathways through industry-linked activity, including first place in Film at the Greater London Colleges Skills Competition, work experience with Film Barking and Dagenham / Eastbrook Studios, a new partnership with Lumiere Cinema, learner work with Havering Daily, and development of a Level 4 virtual production micro-credential supported through London Screen Leaders Network funding;
 - Continued development of inclusive pathways for ESOL, SEND, foundation and adult learners, including partnership activity with the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham to support adult skills, SEND provision and inclusion;
 - Continued development of supported internship pathways and progression-focused provision for learners with SEND and high needs, strengthening routes into employment-related activity, independence and wider participation;
 - Progressed plans to recruit a dedicated Advanced Practitioner with SEND specialism to strengthen staff professional development, support inclusive pedagogy and improve the use of adaptive teaching strategies for learners with SEND and high needs;
- Detailed performance, progression and learner outcome information is reviewed through the College's internal governance, provision planning and quality assurance processes.**

Case Study 1: Green Skills and Retrofit

BDC developed green skills delivery through the Green Skills Hub / Low Carbon and Retrofit Centre, linked to the Mayor's Green Skills Academy and supported through partnership activity with CEME, Thames Gateway and Avencera. The project target is to deliver the NOCN Level 2 Certificate in Sustainable Energy and Renewable Technologies to six cohorts of 15 beneficiaries, supporting up to 90 learners.

Delivery has focused on adult learners studying Level 2 and Level 3 plumbing and electrical programmes, enabling them to develop knowledge and skills linked to sustainable energy, renewable technologies and low-carbon practice. Learners completed workbook and practical activities over a three-week delivery model, using the College's Quantum facilities and supported by lecturers trained specifically for the programme.

To support progression and meet project requirements, learners were also enrolled on the NOCN Level 1 Health and Safety qualification. To date, 58 learners have passed the main qualification and completed the required project milestones, with evidence submitted for the claim. This strengthens local access to green skills pathways linked to retrofit, sustainable construction, low-carbon technologies and future employer demand.



Case Study 2: Creative and Digital Skills

BDC has strengthened its digital arts and creative industries pathways through industry-linked activity in film, games, animation and virtual production. A Creative Industries learner won a gold medal for Film at the Greater London Colleges Skills Competition, demonstrating creative, technical and production skills in a competitive regional setting.

BDC is also a member of the London Screen Leaders Network, hosted by the British Film Institute (BFI), which brings together London colleges to support strategic reform of film education in line with industry needs. Through this network, BDC secured funding to support a Level 4 micro-credential in virtual production, providing a proof of concept for a scalable suite of micro-credentials from 2026–27. Development of a Level 4 virtual production micro-credential, supported through London Screen Leaders Network funding, has contributed to professional development activity for staff across more than 15 colleges in London.

The College is also developing a new Level 3 Games Development course, co-written with Safe in Our World, to support progression into games, animation and wider digital creative pathways.

A 3D learner also won the local round of the POPAI Student Design Awards 2026 through stakeholder engagement activity and progressed to the London final. The competition provides learners with experience of developing and presenting a commercial design concept to industry judges in a real agency-style pitch environment, supporting portfolio development, professional confidence and progression into 3D design, spatial design, architecture-related and wider creative industry pathways.

The creative Industries department has also become a member of RIBA and is developing a new architecture qualification in partnership with Ravensbourne University London. This will support positive progression into

higher-level learning and help ensure that new provision is aligned to professional standards, employer expectations and progression routes within architecture, design and the built environment.



Case Study 3: Applied Science and T Level Science

BDC's science curriculum provides a clear pathway from Level 2 Applied Science into Level 3 Applied Science and T Level Science, supporting progression into higher education, higher-level apprenticeships and science-related employment. T Level Science provides a technical route into the science sector, with learners specialising in Laboratory Sciences and completing a substantial industry placement with an employer.

Learners develop practical scientific, technical, digital and employability skills through applied learning, employer-led projects, industry placements, skills competitions and engagement with universities and STEM employers. The curriculum is strengthened through links with pharmaceutical, environmental, university and STEM partners, including Ethypharm, Thames21, university partnerships, WorldSkills UK, the BDC Skills Show and the Greater London Skills Competition.

Progression is strong: 90% of Level 3 science learners progress to university, including routes such as biomedical science, biological sciences, pharmaceutical science, forensic science, environmental science, healthcare science, nursing, radiography and paramedic science.



Case Study 4: Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing

BDC has strengthened Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing through a combination of technical excellence, employer-led provision and skills competition activity.

A T Level Engineering learner achieved Gold in Additive Manufacturing at the WorldSkills UK Competition, earning the title of UK Champion in Additive Manufacturing. The learner had previously achieved Gold at the BDC Skills Show and Silver at the London Inter-College Skills Competition, demonstrating technical ability, creativity and commitment to excellence across multiple competitive settings. This success illustrates how high-quality technical education, employer engagement and competition-based stretch can support progression into higher education, engineering apprenticeships and modern advanced manufacturing careers.

The department has also strengthened employer-led provision through collaboration with Ford MS-RT, co-designing a bespoke Level 2 micro-credential in the Fundamentals of Electric and Hybrid Vehicles to respond to regional skills shortages. Delivery takes place both on site at Ford MS-RT and within the College, giving learners access to hands-on experience, emerging technologies and industry-standard equipment. The partnership has also created a direct employment pipeline, with Ford MS-RT interviewing more than 15 BDC learners during the academic year for current and future employment opportunities.

Engineering provision has been further enhanced through collaboration with industry partners including Festo, Niclce, Hydrogen Safe and South Essex College. These partnerships have supported a suite of employer-led Level 3 and Level 4 micro-credentials in pneumatics, electro-pneumatics, automation control,

hydraulics, renewable energy and hydrogen safety. These programmes supported 328 enrolments and achieved 100% retention and achievement, helping Level 3 Engineering learners develop work readiness, practical technical skills and progression routes into higher education, apprenticeships and employment.

20 CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL PRIORITIES

BDC's 2026–27 priorities have been developed to align with national skills priorities, the London Local Skills Improvement Plan, Local London priorities, GLA Adult Skills Fund priorities, employer demand and the College's Local Needs Duty responsibilities. The table below brings together the key skills needs, current strengths, planned development activity and intended impact for 2026–27.

Priority area	Skills need / local priority	Current strength / evidence	2026–27 development focus	Intended impact
Progression and higher-level skills	High local demand at Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2, with a need to strengthen progression into Level 3, apprenticeships, higher technical learning and employment.	Established foundation, intermediate, vocational, adult, SEND and apprenticeship pathways across the College.	Strengthen progression routes from foundation and intermediate learning into Level 3, apprenticeships, employment, higher technical study and positive destinations.	More learners progress into next-level study, apprenticeships, employment or higher-level learning.
Construction, built environment and green skills	Local regeneration, housing growth, retrofit and net zero priorities create demand for sustainable construction, EV/hybrid and low-carbon skills.	Green Skills Hub / Low Carbon and Retrofit Centre; NOCN Level 2 Sustainable Energy and Renewable Technologies delivery; plumbing and electrical pathways; EV and hybrid vehicle workshop. Successful Thames Freeport Skills Framework tender outcome, supporting regional collaboration in construction, green skills, sustainability and smart technologies.	Strengthen low-carbon, retrofit, sustainable construction, EV/hybrid and employer-informed delivery, linked to housing growth, regeneration and green skills demand.	Learners develop practical technical skills linked to retrofit, sustainable construction, low-carbon technologies and future employment opportunities.
Engineering, manufacturing and advanced technologies	Construction, engineering, infrastructure, manufacturing and advanced technologies create demand for skilled technical workers.	T Level Engineering learner achieved WorldSkills UK Gold in Additive Manufacturing; existing engineering and manufacturing pathways; EV/hybrid workshop development.	Strengthen advanced manufacturing, additive manufacturing, technical excellence, competition-based stretch and progression into apprenticeships, higher technical study and employment.	Learners are better prepared for engineering, manufacturing, advanced technical pathways and emerging industry requirements.

Priority area	Skills need / local priority	Current strength / evidence	2026–27 development focus	Intended impact
Applied science, T Level Science and frontier innovation	Local and regional priorities increasingly require applied science, digital, AI-aware, data and technical problem-solving skills.	Level 2 Applied Science to Level 3 Applied Science / T Level Science pathway; new science facilities; employer-led projects; industry placements; strong university progression.	Strengthen practical science, T Level Science, STEM employer engagement, skills competitions, industry placements and progression links with universities and higher apprenticeships.	Learners progress into health, science, environmental, pharmaceutical, higher education and apprenticeship pathways.
Digital, computing, cyber security and AI-aware learning	London and Local London priorities include digital and technology skills, with increasing demand for digital capability, cyber security, AI awareness and digital problem-solving.	Computing and digital pathways, including cyber security and digital skills; links to creative technologies, virtual production and emerging AI-aware curriculum development; Thames Freeport framework activity includes BIM, smart homes, digital tools in construction, AI as a cross-cutting theme and smart cities concepts.	Strengthen digital skills from essential to specialist levels, including cyber security, AI-aware learning, digital problem-solving and progression into higher-level digital pathways.	Learners develop digital capability needed for employment, further study and participation in a changing labour market.
Creative industries and digital arts	Creative industries, film, games, animation, virtual production and spatial design are growing areas of regional opportunity.	Film, games, animation, virtual production, 3D, fashion, art and design; first place in Film at the Greater London Colleges Skills Competition; POPAI Student Design Awards success; partnerships with Eastbrook Studios / Film Barking and Dagenham, Lumiere Cinema, Havering Daily and London Screen Leaders Network.	Develop industry-linked creative pathways, including Level 4 virtual production micro-credentials, games development, 3D/spatial design, portfolio development and employer-led projects.	Learners build creative, digital, technical and professional skills linked to progression into creative industries, digital arts, higher study and employment.

22 CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL PRIORITIES

Priority area	Skills need / local priority	Current strength / evidence	2026–27 development focus	Intended impact
Health, care and community wellbeing	Health and social care remains a London and local priority, with demand for skilled workers across NHS, care and community settings.	Health and care provision supported through partnership working with NHS partners, Care Providers Voice, Healthwatch and wider health and social care organisations.	Strengthen work experience, industry placement, adult reskilling, employer-informed curriculum and progression routes into health, care and community wellbeing roles.	Learners are better prepared for health, care, community-based employment, further study and progression into priority workforce areas.
Business, finance, professional services, hospitality and visitor economy	London priorities include hospitality, visitor economy, business and professional services, with demand for employability, enterprise and professional skills.	Business, finance and professional services provision; hospitality and wider service-sector pathways linked to learner demand and local employment opportunities.	Maintain and develop provision where learner demand, employer need and progression opportunities support sustainable delivery.	Learners access broader routes into employment, enterprise, service sectors, professional pathways and further learning.
Labour market inclusion, SEND, ESOL and adult learning	Local deprivation, economic inactivity and barriers to employment require inclusive routes into learning and work.	Strong SEND and high needs provision; supported internship pathways; ESOL, adult and community learning; foundation and progression-focused pathways.	Strengthen inclusive practice, adaptive teaching, transition planning, supported internships, ESOL progression and adult pathways, supported by staff development and the Advanced Practitioner with SEND specialism.	Learners from different starting points are supported to access learning, overcome barriers, build confidence and progress into further learning, independence, employment-related activity or wider participation.
Essential, transferable and employability skills	Employers continue to require English, maths, digital, communication, confidence, resilience and workplace behaviours.	English, maths, digital, tutorial, careers, employability and work-related learning are embedded across curriculum pathways.	Strengthen English, maths, digital, employability, tutorial, careers and work-related learning as progression enablers.	Learners are better prepared for progression, employment and higher-level study.

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Progress against these objectives will be monitored through internal performance, progression, destination, learner participation, employer engagement and governance reporting during 2026-27.

Objective	SMART Target 2026-2027	Baseline (2025-26)	Growth Plan
Achievement, Retention, Attendance, Progression and Destinations	Improve: • Achievement to 86% 16-18 • Achievement 90% for adults • Retention 95% • Internal progression 45%	2025-26 baseline: predicted: • Achievement around 85%; • Retention 95%; • Attendance 81.6%. • Internal progression 45%	Work towards top-quartile achievement, retention, attendance, progression and destination outcomes, aligned to internal governance KPI targets and quality improvement priorities.
Priority Sector Curriculum Growth	Work towards 100% of agreed recruitment targets in priority sector curriculum areas during 2026-27, including construction, green skills, engineering, health and care, digital and creative industries, applied science, business, professional services, hospitality and other areas where learner demand, employer need and progression opportunities support sustainable delivery. Growth will be monitored through applications, conversion, enrolments, retention and contribution to agreed curriculum and income targets.	2025-26 baseline includes 16-19 recruitment at 94.1% of target, Adult Skills Fund delivery on track, high needs income at 99.3% of budget, and apprenticeship income at 82.5% of budget.	Align curriculum planning to local, regional and national skills priorities, including Local London LSIP priorities, GLA Adult Skills Fund priorities, Thames Freeport opportunities, employer demand and learner progression needs. Curriculum growth will be prioritised where there is evidence of learner demand, employer need, progression opportunity and sustainable delivery.
Employer Engagement, Business Development and Partnerships	Establish a coordinated Business Development Unit during 2026-27 and use it to strengthen employer engagement, employer co-design, funded project activity and progression pipelines. By the end of 2026-27, maintain purposeful work placement completion at 97% or above, sustain engagement with over 250 employers , operate sector-based advisory activity in priority curriculum areas, and increase employer-led projects, funded opportunities, apprenticeships or progression pipelines against the 2025-26 baseline.	2025-26 baseline: work placement target met, with over 97% of students completing purposeful work placements of at least 36 hours. BDC works with over 250 employers annually and already undertakes employer co-design and partnership activity across priority sectors, including sector projects, advisory activity, employer-led curriculum development and the Thames Freeport Skills Framework.	Build on existing employer co-design and partnership activity in line with LSIP and London Inclusive Talent Strategy priorities by establishing a coordinated Business Development Unit, strengthening sector advisory boards, expanding employer-informed curriculum activity, improving access to high-quality placements and industry projects, increasing apprenticeship and funded project opportunities, and developing clearer progression routes into priority sectors and good employment.

ACCOUNTABILITY OBJECTIVES FOR 2026-27

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Objective	SMART Target 2026-2027	Baseline (2025-26)	Growth Plan
Frontier Innovation: Digital, AI-Aware Learning and Emerging Technologies	Increase learner participation in computing and cyber security from 174 to 200 enrolments, and increase learner participation in film, games, animation, VFX, virtual production, AI and emerging technologies from 150 to 200 enrolments.	2025-26 baseline: 174 enrolments in computing-related courses, including Computing and Cyber Security; and 150 enrolments in film, games, animation, VFX, virtual production, AI and emerging technology-related provision.	Strengthen digital skills from essential to specialist levels, including cyber security, AI-aware learning, digital problem-solving, creative technologies, smart technologies and progression into higher-level digital, creative and emerging technology pathways.
Inclusive Practice, SEND, ESOL and Adult Pathways	Deliver a college-wide programme of inclusive practice, SEND and adaptive teaching development during 2026-27; appoint a SEND Advanced Practitioner to support staff training and development; work towards all relevant teaching staff completing adaptive teaching and inclusive practice training; and develop clearer progression routes from ESOL and Adult Core Skills into employability, vocational learning, further study and work. The College will also consider how the Inclusive Mainstream Fund can support earlier identification of need, adaptive teaching, transition planning and more inclusive mainstream provision during 2026-27.	2025-26 baseline includes high needs income at 99.3% of budget, Adult Skills Fund delivery on track, learner satisfaction with safeguarding, wellbeing and support at 92% , and existing ESOL, adult learning and learner support activity reviewed through curriculum planning and performance monitoring.	Strengthen inclusive practice across mainstream and specialist provision through adaptive teaching, early identification of need, reasonable adjustments, transition planning, supported internship pathways, ESOL progression, adult pathways and staff development led by the Advanced Practitioner with SEND specialism. Progress will be monitored through staff development records, learner support activity and ESOL/adult progression outcomes.

Objective	SMART Target 2026–2027	Baseline (2025–26)	Growth Plan
Frontier Innovation: Applied Science and T Level Science	Increase learner participation in science programmes from 85 to 100 enrolments and introduce a new Level 1 Science pathway during 2026–27.	2025–26 Applied Science and T Level Science baseline: 85 learners / enrolments. Level 3 science progression to university is 90% .	Introduce a new Level 1 Science pathway and strengthen Applied Science and T Level Science provision, supported by new science facilities, STEM employer engagement, industry placements, skills competitions and progression links with universities, higher apprenticeships and science-related employment.
Cross-Cutting Skills and Learner Readiness	Strengthen the cross-cutting skills that support learner readiness across all curriculum areas, including English, maths, digital skills, green skills, employability, transferable skills, information, advice and guidance, labour market inclusion, AI awareness and sustainability. During 2026–27, all tutorial programmes will include planned coverage of AI awareness, sustainability, employability, digital confidence, careers education and preparation for good work. Improvement will be monitored through tutorial planning, learner participation, attendance, achievement and progression-related activity against the 2025–26 baseline.	2025–26 baseline: overall attendance below the college target of 87% teaching and learning satisfaction 93% ; safeguarding, wellbeing and support satisfaction 92% .	Embed cross-cutting LSIP and Local London themes across curriculum planning, tutorial, careers, employer engagement and learner support, with a focus on digital skills, green skills, transferable skills, ESOL support, information and advice, cooperation and engagement, tackling inequality, AI awareness, sustainability and preparation for good work.
Post-16 Qualification Reform and Curriculum Transition	Complete an internal curriculum transition review during 2026–27, identifying affected legacy qualifications, potential T Level, V Level and reformed Level 2 replacement pathways, key delivery risks and priority actions for 2027/28 curriculum planning.	Existing Level 2 and Level 3 technical, vocational and applied provision, including areas potentially affected by qualification reform.	Review affected provision in areas including Engineering, Applied Science, Business, Creative Media, Digital and Accounting/ Finance. Map progression routes, learner demand, staffing, specialist facilities, industry placement capacity and employer need to inform future curriculum planning and learner guidance.



BDC will deliver these objectives through progression-focused curriculum planning, employer-informed learning, inclusive support and stronger alignment to local, regional and national skills priorities.

Curriculum teams will strengthen pathways from foundation and intermediate learning into Level 3, apprenticeships, employment and higher-level technical study. This will be supported by clearer progression advice, structured tutorial support and the embedding of English, maths, digital and employability skills. Curriculum teams will also review the impact of post-16 qualification reform on current and planned provision. This will include mapping affected legacy qualifications against available or emerging T Level, V Level and reformed Level 2 pathways, identifying any gaps in provision, and assessing the implications for staffing, specialist facilities, employer engagement, industry placement capacity, learner recruitment and progression. This work will support clear transition planning during 2026–27 and inform future curriculum decisions for 2027/2028 and beyond.

The College will increase and strengthen tutorial time to provide more focused academic support, careers education, employability development and progression planning. This will support learners to understand their starting points, set meaningful targets, track progress, develop confidence and make stronger progress from their individual starting points through sustained academic and pastoral support.

The College will prioritise curriculum development in construction and green skills, health and care, digital and creative industries, applied science, business, finance and professional services, and other areas where learner demand, employer need and progression opportunities are evident.

BDC will establish a coordinated Business Development Unit to strengthen employer engagement, improve responsiveness to funded opportunities and tenders, support apprenticeship and employer-responsive growth, and create clearer links between curriculum planning, employer need and progression into good employment.

The College will continue to build strategic partnerships with employers, local authorities, universities, sector bodies and other stakeholders to ensure that curriculum planning remains current, ambitious and aligned to emerging industry practice.

BDC will also continue to strengthen its sector-based advisory boards, using employer and stakeholder insight to inform curriculum design, specialist facilities, work-related learning, progression routes and future growth opportunities.

Employer engagement, work placements, industry projects, skills competitions, careers activity and partnership development will support learners to develop the technical, professional and transferable skills needed for progression.

Inclusive practice will be strengthened through improved transition planning, adaptive teaching, supported internship pathways and staff development led by the Advanced Practitioner with SEND specialism.

BDC completed its most recent Local Needs Duty review in 2024. The review considered how effectively the College's curriculum, partnerships and progression routes meet skills needs across Barking and Dagenham, East London and the wider Local London sub-region.

The review confirmed BDC's important role in providing broad and inclusive pathways from foundation, ESOL and Entry Level through to Level 2, Level 3, T Levels, apprenticeships, adult learning and higher-level technical progression. This breadth of provision remains important in a borough with high demand for accessible entry routes, significant barriers to participation and increasing need for clear progression into priority sectors and good employment.

The review concluded that BDC should continue to strengthen progression between levels, increase access to Level 3 and higher technical pathways, align curriculum more closely to LSIP and labour market priorities, and maintain inclusive routes for adults, ESOL learners, SEND learners, foundation learners and those requiring additional support to access and remain in learning.

In response, BDC will prioritise progression-focused curriculum planning, stronger employer alignment, inclusive learner support, green skills development, adult reskilling and clearer routes into employment, apprenticeships, further study and higher-level learning. This includes responding to wider sub-regional opportunities linked to the Thames Freeport economic corridor, where BDC's inclusion within the Thames Freeport Skills Framework strengthens its ability to contribute to employer-responsive training.

This also aligns with BDC's wider contribution to technical excellence, including sector-based collaboration, employer-informed curriculum development, specialist facilities, advisory boards and participation in relevant Centres of Technical Excellence activity across priority sectors.

BDC will continue to work collaboratively with employers, local authorities, universities, education providers and employer-facing partners to support coherent local planning, reduce unnecessary duplication where appropriate and strengthen opportunities across the wider skills system. Through these actions, BDC will continue to fulfil its statutory Local Needs Duty and contribute to inclusive economic growth across Barking and Dagenham, East London and the Local London sub-region.

During 2026–27, Barking & Dagenham College will focus on strengthening progression pathways, improving learner outcomes, aligning provision to priority skills needs, developing inclusive practice and expanding employer-informed learning. Through these actions, the College will support learners from different starting points to progress into further learning, employment, higher-level technical study and wider economic participation across Barking and Dagenham, East London and the Local London sub-region.

Governing Body Statement

This Accountability Statement has been approved by the Corporation of Barking & Dagenham College and fulfils the College's statutory responsibilities in relation to the Local Needs Duty.

Approved by Corporation: 6 July 2026

Chair of Corporation: Andy Forbes

Principal / Chief Executive and Accounting Officer: Natalie Davison

Date: 6 July 2026

Where to find: bdc.ac.uk/college-info/policies



Document / policy reference	Live link(s)	Purpose in the Accountability Statement
Accountability statements and the Local Needs Duty: 2026 to 2027	• GOV.UK guidance page • PDF guidance	Core statutory guidance for the accountability statement and Local Needs Duty.
The London Local Skills Improvement Plan	• BusinessLDN London LSIP	Primary London LSIP source for employer-led skills priorities.
Local London LSIP priorities	• Local London LSIP page	Sub-regional Local London priorities relevant to Barking and Dagenham.
Barking and Dagenham College Strategic Plan 2024-27	• BDC Strategic Plan PDF	Confirms BDC mission, vision, INSPIRE values, strategic priorities, curriculum intent and targets.
Labour market intelligence and demographic data	• LBBD population and demographics • ONS mid-2024 population estimates • LBBD deprivation data • London Datastore IMD May 2025 analysis	Supports local context: young population, deprivation, economic inactivity and learner demand.
Ofsted reports and FE Provider Dashboard data	• Ofsted: Barking and Dagenham College • Latest Ofsted report PDF • DfE FE Provider Dashboard pilot update	Ofsted is public. FE Provider Dashboard may require DfE/internal access.
GLA Adult Skills Fund funding and performance management rules 2026 to 2027	• GLA Adult Skills Fund provider information • GLA ASF 2026-27 funding and performance rules	Supports adult learning, progression, good work and skills funding references.
Skills England: Driving growth and widening opportunities	• Skills England report: Driving growth and widening opportunities • Skills England organisation page	Useful for national skills priorities, AI, growth and opportunity context.
London Growth Plan	• London Growth Plan - London.gov • London Growth Plan website	Supports references to inclusive growth, productivity and good jobs in London.

Document / policy reference	Live link(s)	Purpose in the Accountability Statement
Inclusive Talent Strategy	Inclusive Talent Strategy - London.gov London Councils launch announcement	Supports employability, sector talent boards, good jobs and removing barriers.
BusinessLDN / London LSIP provider consultation and emerging LSIP refresh activity	BusinessLDN LSIP provider consultation London Datastore LSIP refresh materials	Supports references to emerging LSIP refresh and future priority sectors.
Inclusive Mainstream Fund and SEND reform guidance	Inclusive Mainstream Fund 2026-27 Inclusive Mainstream Fund for 16 to 19 providers SEND reform: putting children and young people first	Supports SEND, adaptive teaching, inclusion and transition references.
London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Corporate Plan 2023 to 2026	LBBD Corporate Plan page Corporate Plan 2023-26 PDF	Supports borough priorities, skills pathways and local civic context.
London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Inclusive Growth Strategy	LBBD Inclusive Growth Strategy consultation page LBBD Inclusive Growth strategies page	Supports inclusive growth, regeneration, employment barriers and economic opportunity references.
Thames Freeport Skills Framework outcome and consortium evidence	Thames Freeport Skills Program	Supports references to BDC's successful framework outcome, consortium leadership and regional collaboration across Freeport-related skills priorities.



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