

1. Purpose

Our Vision

We aim to provide excellent learning opportunities to serve the needs of Birmingham and the City Region.

Curriculum Intent

As a regional College, Birmingham Metropolitan College (BMet) is anchored in the communities that it serves. BMet does this by raising aspirations of young people and adults enabling them to develop skills and behaviours empowering them to progress in education and training as well as enter, upskill and reskill into jobs enhancing their life-time earnings. BMet brings value to the economy and local, regional, and national businesses by providing resilient, qualified and trained people into the workforce who make a positive contribution to society.

Our 2030 Strategic Plan was approved in 23/24 and reviewed in 24/25 by the governing body. Our governors have considered the Local Needs Duty as part of this Plan. The long-term priorities are set out below:

- Be a significant contributor to skills development in Birmingham and the city region
- Provide a consistently high quality learning experience
- Equip our students for the future
- Be an inspiring place to work
- Have a strong financial base to invest in a sustainable future for the college

Our cross-cutting themes in our curriculum intent have been prioritised (inclusion, sustainability, digital, and essential skills) embedded into all curriculum areas through our business planning cycles with a entrepreneurship model piloted in 24/25 to embed across BMet.

Collaboration with stakeholders and other key organisations (e.g., colleges, community associations) is central to delivering the growth KPIs against this strategy and BMet taking an 'anchor' role in Birmingham and the West Midlands to deliver against local, regional and national priorities.

2. Context and Place/Communities we serve

Birmingham Metropolitan College Learner Profile

In 2023-24, BMet supported over 11,000 learners and worked in partnership with approximately 1,000 employers. Our learner population is broken down into the following:

16-18	Adults	Apprenticeships	Community	Higher Education
4,927*	4,544**	932	299	279

- *Inc. 178 learners with EHCPs of which 107 have High Needs
- **Inc. 791 learners in subcontracted provision

The BMet learner population is made up of a majority minority, with 60% Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) learners, with 40% White with the majority being White British and Irish. Of the BAME learners, Pakistani learners are consistently the single largest group (13% of overall learner population) followed by African and Black Caribbean learners at 22%. There is a steady representation of BAME apprentices at 29%.

Birmingham's population is estimated at 1,144,900. In the 2021 census the population of the region is recorded to have grown by 6.8pp to 4.3m, with Birmingham remaining the youngest city with 46% of Birmingham residents aged between 0 and 29 and one in three born outside the UK. The predicted population growth for Birmingham is said to be equivalent to adding the population of Oxford to the city by 2031.

At BMet 71% of 16-18-year olds live in postcode areas that are in the top 30% most deprived (based on IMD, this is 4% points (pp) lower than last academic year), and of these 49% live in the most deprived 10% of postcodes nationally (3pp lower than last academic year). For our adults the figure of deprivation has increased by 5% to 66% in the lowest 30% of deprivation with 40% living in the most deprived 10% of postcodes nationally.

Approximately 34% of our full-time 16-18-year olds have GCSE English below a grade 4 when starting at the college and 46% have GCSE Maths below a grade 4. GCSE Maths figures have grown by 4pp.

The 2021 school census reported, in Birmingham, there are 500 state-funded schools with over 66% of those learners from ethnic minority backgrounds and 40.6% having English as a second language (EAL). These numbers are higher than the England averages of 26.5% and 19.3%, respectively. Birmingham also had a higher level of children with special educational needs (SEN) compared to England (17.3% compared to 15.6%).

The percentage of KS4 pupils achieving 9-4 passes in English and Maths in Birmingham (21/22) has dropped by 17.4pp from 67.1% to 49.7% this is slightly lower than the national rate of 51.9%.

Fifteen percent of students disclosed a disability or learning difficulty in 2023/24 compared to 14% in the previous year, reflecting a slight increase. Fifteen percent of apprentices disclosed a disability or difficulty, this is the same as 2022/23.

Qualifications gained 2022/3	Birmingham	National		Unemployment 2022/3	Birmingham	National
Level 4_	32%	37%		Economically active	55.6%	60.9%
Level 3	19%	20%		Claimant unemployment rate	8.6% Out of Work Benefits	3.7%
Level 2	20%	21%		Workless households	51 st out of 204 areas across GB	
Level 1	11%	10%		Economic Inactivity	13.4%	18%
No qualifications	18%	12%		Deprivation – in more than 1 dimension	61.6%	

Where we have known destination data (3213) 83% adults have progressed into paid employment or further or higher education. For apprentices over 76% remain with the same employer or in new employment and 8.2% return to FE/HE. For 16-18 year olds known destinations (3982), 96% have a positive destination.

BMet actively promotes use of public transport for students supported by bursary and discretionary financial support.

Travel to learn patterns

Workforce: Sixty-four percent of our salaried staff live within ten miles of their base campus and 50% of our staff use their cars to travel to work. BMet has incentives to support more sustainable travel, cycle to work scheme, access to National Express WM discount offer to educational institution and enhanced expense payment for use of electric cars. BMet is working with other organisations (HE/FE Sustainability Group) to look at comparison data and as a result potential collective action on sustainable travel.

Students: The average length is 4.7 kilometres for both 16-18 year olds and adults. The furthest campus students travel to is Sutton Coldfield (over 5 kilometres) and the closest are our James Watt campus and Erdington Centre below 4 kilometres.

3. Approach to developing the annual Accountability Statement

BMet's stakeholder strategy focuses on building strong and effective relationships to plan our curriculum offer to meet local, regional and national skills needs.

The strategy focuses on key stakeholder groups, employers (including business representative bodies) Political, Civic, Community, Education Partners (including schools, other FE providers and HEI's) and Alumni.

Our business planning cycle always considers demographic, local and regional labour market intelligence via Lightcast, Vector, Chambers as well as from the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and Birmingham City Council (BCC). Most recently our business planning cycle has also included LMI from the Local Skills Improvement Plan and subsequent research from the activity funded through Local Skills Improvement Fund. Senior Leaders and Directors have specific responsibilities for a sector across BMet. This is a transparent process enabling BMet to consider where provision is best placed to meet local needs.

Our 2030 Strategic Plan benefits from a wide range of engagement with stakeholders and organisations including the WMCA, BCC and employers through the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Chambers, BMet employer boards and our business development activities. BMet revisited the remit of its employer boards this year with clearer alignment across boards. There is a renewed focus on Engineering and Construction more in line with Digital and Professional Services models. Health has developed via the Integrated Care Board and its faculties in particular Health and Social Care and Careers Faculties. BMet is still proposing a Visitor Economy Board.

BMet is an active member of the College West Midlands Group (CWG) through which FE Colleges liaise strategically with the WMCA as well as individually, and engage in activities to develop and share innovation, for example, SWAPs, NEETs, SEND, sector innovation (green skills), sustainability, staff shortages and EDI. Specific examples are the curriculum career progression pathways work in construction and digital sectors and WMCA English Language Acquisition strategy (BMet will be part of the pilots into 25/26). BMet has taken a whole college approach to progression pathways and has invested in updating its website to reflect this with adoption of pathways by all curriculum areas in the next two years.

BMet has continued to lead employer-engagement work born out of the Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) and will continue to lead the Innovate UK projects in Greater Birmingham and Solihull. The Innovation UK work aims to bring the FE sector closer to employers, by providing technology adaption support services to SMEs aligning to the policy priorities of our city's Chamber of Commerce. The employer-engagement work is a systems led approach to improving the relationships between the regional Further Education sector and the business community and follows recommendations set out by regional employers to simplify the training and education landscape and improve business understanding of Further Education. This includes working under a shared brand of "Skills West Midlands and Warwickshire" and through a shared one-stop shop where employers can find providers based on training needs and place. In parallel to this providers are working together to align their business development services with the approach adopted by Skills West Midlands and Warwickshire, for example, agreeing to standard TNA. Stakeholder activity has been a high priority focussing on business advisory groups who provide support services to SMEs –which was recently showcased at the successful 1st anniversary event attended by Minister Smith and the WMCA Mayor. The event celebrated employers we work with to an audience comprising different employer organisations as we want them to promote SWMW to their clients.

Essential to our planning is the opportunity to work closely with BCC and in particular the Children and Families Directorate. The Principal, is the chair of the Post-16 Exec Board. Its remit is for FE and school providers to inform, recommend and collaborate on post-16 matters such as sufficiency, transition arrangements and curriculum reforms. The Board reports into BCC. BMet has led on three projects to enhance IAG to NEETs,

SEND young people and young people in care. The projects reached over 600 young people. BMet continues to sit on SEN groups and continues to support BCC to address barriers to participation (new arrivals programme) and help align provision to local needs.

BMet is a lead member of the North Birmingham Recovery Taskforce which has provided opportunities to widen our adult education offer providing CPD for community organisations as well as working directly with adults on their next steps at community venues. This sits alongside the programmes for the unemployed we deliver. The Taskforce has redeveloped its Strategic Plan with BMet taking a lead on the Skills and Training priority. BMet leads a collaborative approach working with other providers including ITPs, community organisations, DWP to take this forward. One outcome has been to deliver a bootcamp programme for individuals in community organisations and another the development of a place-based approach to break down barriers to engagement in education and skills.

BMet works closely with South and City College Birmingham and Solihull College and University Centre. Our colleges are members of the GBS Chambers and Greater Birmingham and Solihull Institute of Technology alongside local universities and collectively provides a range of programmes for engineering and digital sectors. Where there is an offer that is the same it is because local demographics and employer demand supports this duplication, for example, nursing and associated health professional roles, construction and engineering. Indeed, our three colleges now sit on the Collaborative Group of the Integrated Care Board alongside universities, professionals and NHS Trust representatives, work collaboratively through the IoT and CWM workstream for construction. Local colleges have worked collaboratively to support T level student work placements across a number of NHS Trusts to create a sustainable model.

BMet is also a member of other key stakeholder organisations within Birmingham including the West Midlands Growth Company, this partnership to date has supported BMet increase employer engagement with facilitated introductions to Birmingham businesses. BMet is also a member of the regional CBI network and contributed to its Education and Skills Working Group; in 25/26 this is being further developed at a strategic level to position BMet and Skills West Midlands and Warwickshire as part of the regional USP to support inward investment as the WMGC pivots to focus on economic development.

BMet has recently become a member of the Birmingham Anchor Network, working alongside South and City College and 6 other anchor institutions including HE partners and the NHS to maximise the impact of our civic institutions through employment, spend and physical assets on the Birmingham economy, using a community wealth building framework.

Outside of the IoT collaboration, BMet is either delivering or planning with local universities a range of level 4 and 5 programmes with progression to level 6 or employment. These programmes are designed to meet regional as well as national priorities. For example, in teacher training, law, digital, health sciences and engineering. This work is promoting clearer progression pathways and helping to align provision to local needs. We are developing a strategic partnership with Birmingham City University. The benefits to our students will be to offer them progression pathways and opportunities to access resources.

BMet is not able to plan curriculum with schools and sixth forms, though we take an active interest in the introduction of new post-16 academies and free schools to understand the impact on an annual basis. However, through the work of the Post-16 Executive Board's operations group BMet is actively pursuing collaboration for the benefit of Birmingham e.g., transition arrangements, IAG. The College does have a Schools Liaison Team and its work with local schools does help validate demand for programmes.

4. Contribution to National, Regional, Local Priorities

The **2030 Strategic Plan** was developed in consultation with our stakeholders, and we have ensured that the aims and objectives align with local, regional and national priorities. The longer-term priorities include the financial sustainability of BMet, improving quality and being an inspiring place to work and study/train for our staff, young people and adults through a focus on technical and essential skills development including learning to learn. The Plan recognises the need to collaborate and innovate with partners in areas such as sustainability and digital requiring both investment in the physical infrastructure and specialist equipment as well as developing staff and learner skills. It also acknowledges BMet needs to do more from level 1-3 and above ensuring suitable progression routes for adults leading to higher level skills in line with employer demand and we will do this through our new career progression pathways. BMet is responding to the government's Five Missions, and this can be seen from our draft Missions document (*to be published July 2025*). We will continue to develop our capacity to respond to priority sectors asks with a particular focus on construction next year as well as other priority sectors informed by the Industry Strategy. We have reviewed our impact so far against the KPIs set out in our 2030 Strategic Plan with good progress being made. This year we have introduced a new pillar – entre/intrapreneurship and will develop an offer for young people and adults in 25/26 building on the current good practice and pilot work.

Our strong approach to stakeholder management is operationally captured in our Stakeholder Map, and means that we are able to review our strategic plan in line with other stakeholder plans on an annual basis and pivot operations and focus where necessary: for example, we are committed to our relationship with the regional Chamber of Commerce and aligning our business engagement and innovation activity to the Chamber priorities of People, Innovate and AI. Our strategic relationship with TechWM for example means we are working in partnership to revisit the supply and demand of tech and digital skills and be able to respond accordingly.

BMet is committed to working to the Birmingham Promise as part of the City Vision and WMCA Strategic Priorities aligned to the Devolution Deal. We are also committed to participating in the 'West Midlands Futures' Plan and have responded to the Green Paper consultation launched in April. The West Midlands Futures Green Paper, along with the Birmingham Promise focus on inclusive growth "A more deliberate and socially purposefully model of economic growth, measured not only by how fast or aggressive it is but also by how well it is created and shared across the whole population and place, and by the social and environmental outcomes it realises for our people". BMet's own strategy, vision and culture is underpinned by the principle of inclusion.

Priorities and Actions

Aim/Action	Outcome/Impact
16-19 developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop career progression pathway assessments in collaboration with CWM Support NEETs with effective career path programmes, employment opportunities and work experience Continue to deliver T Levels in key areas incl. the Creative area 80%+ lecturers to undertake Industry updating for new T levels
SEN delivery and progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 new supported internships (10 previous year) Develop accessible apprenticeships Inclusive Sports Centre – Commissioned Philanthropy to conduct an Institutional Feasibility and Opportunity Analysis to decide next steps
Continue to develop and recruit to HE in priority sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrol 50 additional HE learners across priority sectors including HTQs
Implement Lifelong Learning Entitlement LLE Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation plan to be ready for implementation of LLE in Jan 27 Develop flexible learning opportunities for various learning pathways, individual modules, and higher technical qualifications

Social and Economic Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create social and economic value report demonstrating the college's impact on North Birmingham and Birmingham as a whole and where applicable on the region
Construction Skills Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop collaborative skills plan to respond to the increase in construction workers required and tackle skills shortages – (CWM, Birmingham Construction Alliance, to support construction TEC) • Through Skills WMW commission and disseminate new research to employers. • Investigate becoming an assessment centre for CSCS cards.
Develop innovative approaches for adult provision above entry level in priority sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the North Birmingham Action Plan (NBER) • Develop and pilot innovative approaches to deliver level 3 training to adults, that are flexible, modular, stackable to meet employer and adult needs • Launch Bootcamp delivery in 2 specialisms • Develop new partnership with Birmingham Anchor Network to establish a stronger inter-system led approach to adult provision – • Launch an Adult Skills Career Advice and Guidance service: BMet Career Advance – to support outcomes for inclusive growth via skills and jobs aligned to WMCA and BCC objectives. • Collaborate with other FE colleges on priority sectors supporting Birmingham and West Midlands plans.
Implement BMet sustainability plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the LSIF West Midlands Green Skills Roadmap and engagement in all CWM workstreams • Work towards 'Leading' status on the FE Sustainability Roadmap • Delivery against the college Net Zero plan • Align with BCC objectives of developing sustainable neighbourhoods, that are safe, diverse and inclusive
Increase level of digital skills across BMet for staff, learners and employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch the Digital Strategy • Implementation of AI Solutions – Quality assistant, Policy assistant and Manager Coach • Development of AI and VR programme for skills development • Drive BMet Digital Learning Academy - 80% of all students on programmes of study participating. Align with a communication plan to the regional business community • Full usage of the of Immersive classrooms across the 3 sites • Explore commercialising digital assets i.e. Immersive Classrooms hire to the SME Community
Promote and collaborate with employers to support workforce and essential skills development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of LSIF strand 6: "Skills West Midlands and Warwickshire" delivering SME focussed package and solutions. • Pilot of Innovate UK funded Innovation Hub model to support technology adaption in priority sectors, e.g. Healthtech at BMet • Development of employer-demand research piece in partnership with local HEI and BMet student population to support businesses attract and retain young people in work and to support young people explore their relationship with work. • Implementation of Visitor Economy Employer Board and re-development of other sector employer boards to ensure impact and efficiency
5. Local Needs Duty	
Key action outcomes of governor review:	

- To further develop BMet' corporate and social responsibilities including students' 'essential skills' and community engagement.
- To lead and/or support the engagement and collaboration with regional providers to meet WMCA, DfE and Innovate UK outcomes.
- To develop the BMet estate to deliver its digital strategy and respond to statutory changes.
- To continuously measure the impact of our Skills activity on our students' careers and destination delivering on the Ofsted recommendations and embed the new Ofsted framework.

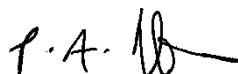
6. Corporate statement

On behalf of the BMet corporation, it is hereby confirmed that the plan as set out above reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the corporation at their meeting on 9th of May 2024.

The plan will be published on the college's website within three months of the start of the new academic year and can be accessed from the following link:



Signed: Afzal Hussain
Chair of Corporation



Pat Carvalho
Principal and CEO

Links

[BMet 2030 Plan](#)

[Stakeholder Plan 25/26](#)

[Birmingham City Council - Shaping Birmingham's Future Together for 2035](#)

[WMCA Employment and Skills Strategy 2024-2027](#)

[West Midlands Futures Green Paper April 2025 consultation – West Midlands Combined Authority](#)

[Skills West Midlands and Warwickshire Employer Skills Report](#)