Accountability Statement

Luminate Education Group

2026/2027 Update

[Link to Luminate's main Accountability Agreement document with three-year targets (under the Skills section)]

Luminate Education Group has been making progress on the targets that were set out in our Accountability Agreement (under the Skills section) in 2025.

The targets set out in the agreement apply to all member organisations across Luminate Education Group and reflect subject sector areas that correlate to national, regional and local priorities. Eight priority areas were selected that would help us address national, regional and local needs. Those areas are as follows:

- Advanced manufacturing
- Creative industries
- Digital technologies
- Financial services
- Professional and business services
- Clean energy industries
- Health
- Embedding sustainability and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

These priorities reflect areas of significant curriculum innovation and resource development, and, as such, are part of a three-year strategic approach from 2025 through to 2028.

This statement is intended to provide an update on how we are performing against our three-year targets, any changes we have made since we published our latest Accountability Agreement in 2025/26 and what actions we are taking to meet or exceed any of the targets.

The table below shows the progress we have made against the target numbers we set for the 2025/26 academic year.

Group target	Contribution to national, regional and local priorities	Baseline number from 2024/25	Target number for 2025/26	2025/26 number and progress update
Target 1: Grow our learner numbers in **advanced manufacturing** through the delivery of T Levels, study programmes, apprenticeships and HTQs	National priority West Yorkshire LSIP priority York & North Yorkshire LSIP priority	724 learners across Luminate	750 learners across Luminate	**631** learners across Luminate. Whilst we are seeing more engagement through the opening of Keighley College's Engineering Hub and a consistent interest in this sector from employers, it is recognised that apprenticeships are four years in length so we are likely to see increases over the three-year target cycle. We are working closely with Leeds Manufacturing Festival and Bradford Manufacturing Festival to continue to focus on this priority area. South Yorkshire has the majority of major employers in this sector and, as such, Leeds, Keighley and

				Harrogate don't see the same level of demand in West and North Yorkshire.
Target 2: Grow our learner numbers in **creative industries** through the delivery of T Levels, study programmes, apprenticeships and HTQs	National priority West Yorkshire LSIP priority	1,885 learners across Luminate	1,900 learners across Luminate	**1,977** learners across Luminate. Creative remains a positive industry for Luminate to be working with and we can see a positive progress around learner numbers in this priority sector. We continue to see high demand for future learners in creative industries.
Target 3: Grow our learner numbers in **digital technologies** through the delivery of T Levels, study programmes, apprenticeships and HTQs	National priority West Yorkshire LSIP priority York & North Yorkshire LSIP priority	361 learners across Luminate	370 learners across Luminate	**460** learners across Luminate. Whilst we see the need to continue to drive more learners into this priority sector, we acknowledge that this is also a market with significant independent training providers operating and, as such, market share in this space is saturated. However, we see continued improvements across our provision in digital and will continue to evolve this.
Target 4: Grow our learner numbers in **financial services** through the delivery of T Levels, study programmes, apprenticeships and HTQs	National priority West Yorkshire LSIP priority	37 learners across Luminate	60 learners across Luminate	**41** learners across Luminate. Financial and Professional Services is working closely with all members of the group. Our work with the Financial Services Skills Commission around needs for employers in this

				space is vital as well as attending Chamber of Commerce roundtables. Skills Bootcamps are no longer available to be offered and, as such, will have impacted learner numbers in 2025/26. However, a degree in FinTech is launching at University Centre Leeds in September 2026, with a recruitment target of six students for the first year.
Target 5: Grow our learner numbers in **professional and business services** through the delivery of T Levels, study programmes, apprenticeships and HTQs	National priority West Yorkshire LSIP priority	1,009 learners across Luminate	1,150 learners across Luminate	**1,073** learners across Luminate. This figure is around where we anticipated to be in-year.
Target 6: Grow our learner numbers in **clean energy industries** through the delivery of T Levels, study programmes, apprenticeships and HTQs	National priority West Yorkshire LSIP priority York & North Yorkshire LSIP priority	608 learners across Luminate	620 learners across Luminate	**712** learners across Luminate. Target surpassed through the introduction of a new curriculum, including the bootcamps implementation at our Printworks campus.

Target 7: Maintain our learner numbers in **health** through the delivery of T Levels, study programmes, apprenticeships and HTQs whilst there is a freeze on NHS recruitment, and align with the neighbourhood health plans so that we can respond when recruitment and NHS capacity to support upskilling resumes	National priority West Yorkshire LSIP priority York & North Yorkshire LSIP priority	1,766 learners across Luminate	1,700 learners across Luminate	**1,972** learners across Luminate. We continue to see Health as a significant sector of importance across all provision types. Despite some employers not being able to recruit due to national priority changes, we have seen in-year targets achieved.
Target 8: Embed the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** into the tutorial programme for all students and embed sustainability into appropriate vocational delivery and enrichment activities	National priority West Yorkshire LSIP priority York & North Yorkshire LSIP priority	15,517 learners across Luminate	16,000 learners across Luminate	**18,855** learners on tutorial registers with SDGs embedded across all tutorial sessions received.

Updates for 2026/27

Redevelopment of the Luminate Group Strategy: Planning is underway to redevelop our Group Strategy to include a more direct thread to our strategic priorities, which will align to the Accountability Statement objectives.

Second cycles of LSIPs for West Yorkshire and York and North Yorkshire: We have been actively engaged with the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) process for West Yorkshire and York and North Yorkshire, including providing input on the drafting of the second cycles of both documents. The targets in our Accountability Agreement reflect the priorities outlined in the LSIPS for our region and the governance of this will be monitored by our Skills Stakeholder Board.

Use of the Inclusive Mainstream Fund: In line with DfE guidance on SEND reform, Luminate Education Group is using the Inclusive Mainstream Fund (IMF) to strengthen our universal and targeted offer, ensuring our learning environments are inclusive by design.

To build sustainable, whole-college capacity, funding is being prioritised on workforce upskilling through a comprehensive training and development programme. Dedicated SEND and Inclusive Learning Specialist Teachers are supporting classroom staff to embed adaptive teaching and a robust graduated approach. At the same time, we are expanding assistive technology assessment and training and developing resources to improve accessibility and scaffold smooth transitions for learners.

To ensure early identification and tailored support, we are driving local area outreach with feeder schools to strengthen partnership working and transition pathways. Recognising distinct campus demographics across our group, we are delivering bespoke strategies alongside increased support staff capacity in high-need provisions.

Through this targeted investment, we are focused on breaking down barriers to learning, improving retention and progression for young people with SEND, and preparing our provisions for the implementation of national inclusion standards and other reforms.

Skills Bootcamps: We have removed Skills Bootcamps from our targets as they are no longer delivered in our region.

Sector intelligence: There is continued strong alignment between curriculum planning and regional labour market intelligence, particularly around Advanced Manufacturing, automation, digitalisation and higher-level technical skills. Employer intelligence across West Yorkshire continues to show sustained demand at Levels 3 to 5, with apprenticeships remaining the strongest growth area, particularly in maintenance, fabrication, machining, electrical engineering and emerging automation-related roles.

A major theme across the sector groups has been strengthening collaboration across Luminate to improve responsiveness and reduce duplication. This includes increased sharing of specialist engineering resources, employer networks and curriculum intelligence across campuses, alongside collaborative approaches to skills competitions, placements and progression pathways.

Employer engagement remains a significant strength. Around 90 employers are actively engaged within Engineering and Manufacturing provision, with strong involvement in curriculum development, apprenticeship pipelines, work placements, careers events and outreach activity. Bradford Manufacturing Weeks and associated employer-led activity have

also strengthened school engagement and awareness of technical careers across the district.

There is also increasing emphasis across the Curriculum Pathway Groups on ensuring provision responds directly to regional and national priorities, particularly around clean energy, digital skills, manufacturing productivity and workforce participation. The groups are increasingly acting as a mechanism for sharing sector intelligence, informing accountability priorities and strengthening employer-informed curriculum design across the group.

Apprenticeships: Over recent years, Luminate Education Group identified a decline in apprenticeship starts in line with external market demand and patterns.

In response, the group initiated a comprehensive reform programme designed to:

- Strengthen quality.
- Deliver a more coherent operating model.
- Position apprenticeships as a central driver of skills development locally, regionally and nationally.

These reforms span across curriculum, leadership structures, quality assurance, digital systems and employer engagement - all of which have already begun reversing the downward trend. However, the impact of declining starts over the past three years has had an impact on carry-in funding which will take several years to rebuild, slowing down the rate of income growth despite apprenticeship starts increasing.

Key priorities for the next phase include:

- Embedding the regional employer-engagement model.
- Continuing to centralise apprenticeship oversight across all colleges.
- Responding to emerging national policy changes.
- Strengthening sector-specific provision where demand is highest.
- Sustaining improvements in achievement, progress and retention.

Luminate remains firmly committed to delivering high-quality apprenticeships that meet local, regional and national skills needs and supporting employers to build a future-ready workforce.

Adults: We are working with West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) and York & North Yorkshire Combined Authority (YNYCA) to align with their priorities through West Yorkshire's Adult Skills Plan 2026 and Yorkshire and North Yorkshire's Adult Skills Fund Strategic Skills Plan 2025-28. In both areas they aim to:

- Support and embed basic and transferable skills through foundation skills and, in community provision, reduce the number of residents with no or low skills.
- Provide routes through skills delivery to better work and pay.
- Raise the level of adults with higher level skills.

Our focus is on providing progression pathways that engage the most disadvantaged adults and raise the volume of those with higher level skills with provision that is responsive to local employer and resident needs. As an anchor institution, we will support the mayoral combined authorities to embed integrated settlement arrangements, contributing to and influencing the shape of deeper devolution in West Yorkshire, and fully embedding devolution approach and expectations in York and North Yorkshire.

Target 1 (Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering): Over the next 12 to 24 months, priorities for the sector include:

- Consolidating quality and outcomes at current learner volumes.
- Scaling apprenticeships as the primary growth lever.
- Strengthening progression routes into higher technical provision.
- Deepening employer engagement around automation, digital and net-zero skills.
- Aligning curriculum planning with regional manufacturing intelligence and infrastructure investment.

Overall, Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering remains a strong and strategically aligned sector for Luminate. Current activity demonstrates clear progress against accountability expectations, with a robust evidence base supporting future growth to 800 learners by 2027/28.

Target 2 (Creative Industries): Over the next 12 to 24 months, priorities for the sector include:

- Growth in provision in this sector to meet increasing demand.
- The development of a new arts pathway into Architecture.
- Responding to learner demand and progression opportunities in higher education, including landscape and urban architecture, as well as related employment opportunities.

Target 3 (Digital Technologies): Current learner numbers indicate that digital provision remains significantly smaller than other curriculum pathways. Achieving the targets set out in the Accountability Agreement will require a step-change in employer engagement, apprenticeship development and cross-college coordination. Actions include:

- Developing a clearly articulated digital growth plan linked to priority sectors (digital, clean energy, fintech and business services).
- Strengthening employer engagement through curriculum co-design, work placements, guest delivery and apprenticeship pipelines.
- Using stakeholder mapping to prioritise high-impact employers capable of generating sustained learner demand.
- Increasing employer involvement in curriculum design, assessment briefs, enrichment and industry exposure.
- Aligning employer engagement activity to improve learner employability, work readiness and progression.
- Using learner voice and employer feedback to inform curriculum improvement and enrichment planning.

Target 4 (Financial Services): Over the next 12 to 24 months, we will continue to build on the following actions for the sector:

- Luminate became a member of the Yorkshire and Humber Financial Commission in 2025. The purpose of the Commission is to gather employer insight on current and future skills needs within Financial and Professional Services to inform the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) and wider regional growth and skills priorities.

- Luminate is a strategic skills partner of FinTech North. Along with Leeds Beckett University, the partnership of the organisations aim to enhance the skills landscape within the FinTech sector.
- A FinTech Bootcamp was delivered to 14 students in 2025. The bootcamp provided a foundational understanding of the UK FinTech landscape and received positive feedback from learners. Employers have welcomed the short, flexible format as a tool for reskilling staff in customer facing digital finance roles. The bootcamp has also opened opportunities for students to transition into careers within the FinTech sector, equipping them with the skills and confidence needed to pursue new roles.
- In addition, a 'FinTech' hub has been created at the University Centre campus and is currently available for use across both employers and learners.
- A degree in FinTech will be launched at University Centre Leeds in September 2026, with a recruitment target of six students for the first year.

Target 5 (Professional and Business Services): Over the next 12 to 24 months, priorities for the sector include:

- Legal Services commencing as a new T Level in September 2026. In the local region there is a 45% skills shortage in roles for solicitors.
- Apprenticeship numbers have dwindled in the last two years. However, Skills England signing off on the Business Administrator Level 2 Apprenticeship should rejuvenate the numbers to levels which were much higher pre-COVID.
- We are working with Lloyds Bank, which is a large employer in our region, and they are working with our T Level students to develop their skills in the financial sector.
- There are several SMEs involved with our curriculum to support student projects, CV writing, job applications and soft skills.

Target 6 (Clean Energy Industries): Over the next 12 to 24 months, priorities for the sector include:

- A continued focus on mapping existing provision and identifying gaps for the 2026-27 academic year. Mapping for Motor Vehicle and Electrical Installation (Level 1 to Level 3 and Apprenticeships) has been completed across Printworks, Keighley College and Harrogate College.
- Plans for 2026-27 include new curriculum in Lean Manufacturing, Retrofit and Site Joinery.
- The group is progressing with Air Source Heat Pump curriculum development at Harrogate College and Keighley College.
- To improve stakeholder involvement, the group has shifted from a joint employer event to a model of shared employer contacts to facilitate more targeted curriculum co-design.

Target 7 (Health): Over the next 12 to 24 months, priorities for the sector include:

- To ensure the curriculum offer remains responsive to regional and national priorities, there will be a focus on completing a comprehensive curriculum pathway mapping exercise, incorporating Higher Education, Adult and Apprenticeship provision. This work will strengthen oversight of progression routes and ensure alignment with local community and employer needs.
- Capacity for growth is currently constrained by available teaching space. However, securing the Livingstone House campus as a dedicated centre for Health & Care provision will significantly increase capacity. When fully operational, this will enable growth of up to an additional 700 learners, with space for a further 200–250 learners

available from September 2026. This expansion will directly support delivery of growth targets set out in the Accountability Agreement.

Target 8 (Sustainable Development Goals): Work has been taking place to develop Zero Carbon Curriculum Plan Statements for each subject sector area across Luminate. The statements will seek to:

- Embed green skills, climate literacy, and sector-relevant sustainability practices.
- Show relevance of how this supports all learners to contribute to net zero through a 'green curriculum.'
- Reflect the future skill needs of industry.

Future actions include:

- Establishing a cross-cutting SDG group with colleagues representing SDG activity within Estates, CSR, Green Skills, Tutorial Development and Sustainability, with a remit of ensuring a more integrated approach across the other Curriculum Pathways Groups to ensure sustainability and inclusion are embedded across all curriculum pathways.
- Developing a practical set of metrics that Luminate can use to measure SDG impact that ensures curriculum intent, learner outcomes, employer relevance and regional impact.
- Creating a dashboard to report on set KPIs.
- Developing and delivering staff workshops on upskilling knowledge of SDG, its purpose, impact on FE, the group and reporting.
- Widening out the SDG representatives to establish a wider SDG Champions Group with a nominated lead in each department to ensure SDG innovation within the curriculum.
- Identification of opportunities from collaborative West Yorkshire SDG work to define future direction with Luminate with a view to scoping appropriate funding to build capacity both for pay and non pay.

To read more about how Luminate Education Group is contributing to national, regional and local priorities, please find our main Accountability Agreement with our three-year targets under the Skills section of the Luminate website.

Corporation statement

On behalf of Luminate Education Group, it is hereby confirmed that the group conducts reviews in line with the Local Needs Duty, as such resulting in this document. The annual accountability agreement sets out an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the Luminate Group Board at their meeting on 27 July 2026.

The statement will be published on the group's website within three months of the start of the new academic year and can be accessed from the following link:
luminate.ac.uk/statutory-information

John Toon,

Chair of Governors

Dated: 27/07/2026