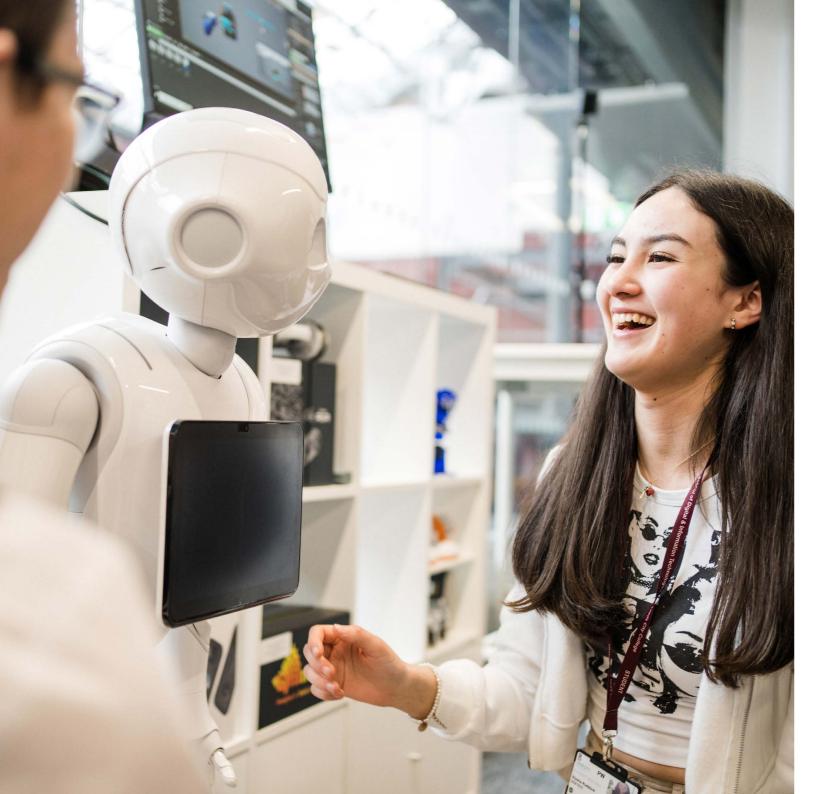# Response to national, regional and local digital strategies
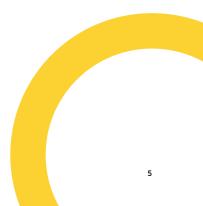
2024-2027

The continued digitisation and automation of workforces across all sectors is increasing the demand for skilled workers to tackle skills shortages across the region and country.

Currently, 52% of the population lack the essential digital skills required for the workplace. Below outlines what we will do across our further education colleges and University Centre Leeds to support national, regional and local digital strategy goals:

Deliver digital skills for everyone:

○ We will expand the range of digital taster sessions and activities in schools across West and North Yorkshire, in our member colleges, and the community to champion and promote inclusion.

○ We will harness the power of digital technology to enhance accessibility.

○ To support older workers and those not in education, employment or training to get back into work, we will develop courses in digital with various start dates throughout the year in accessible community locations.

○ Our curriculum will be reviewed, ensuring it embeds foundation/essential digital skills, while all students will be assessed on their level of digital skills needs during induction. Where students do not have their own access to devices and connectivity, this will be addressed.

○ To reflect increasing automation and digitisation across all sectors, we will embed artificial intelligence (AI) awareness and other emerging digital technologies, such as VR, metaverse and blockchain, into our curriculum, and deliver coding courses that will be offered to students as an additional qualification.

○ With our strong commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, we will create and deliver a programme of digital technology summer schools in community venues, as well as initiatives to engage more young people, females and underrepresented groups in digital skills development.

○ We will work closely with employers across West and North Yorkshire to develop AI and other emerging technology digital course packages for businesses to support growth.

○ We will develop and deliver innovative curriculum in collaboration with digital organisations to train future digital, information technology, data analysts and computing talent.

○ We will work with community organisations, schools, and diverse stakeholders to engage a wider range of individuals in the digital sector, including those who are more digitally excluded and targeting schools in locations of low index of multiple deprivation.

Improve our digital infrastructure and become digital adopters

○ With investment from Keighley and Morley towns funds, we will develop dedicated technology centres at Keighley College and in Morley.

○ We will further improve our online learning/on-demand systems for our students to access, including the development of a science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) app.

○ We will develop our teaching and learning strategies to ensure emerging technology including AI is embedded. We will work with digital organisations to identify and address future talent needs.

○ In order to give students real-world learning experiences, we will implement a sandbox environment for students to work on and test out systems used across Luminate Education Group.

○ We will develop our IT infrastructure to enable digital and computing students to train using industry standard tools and best practice.
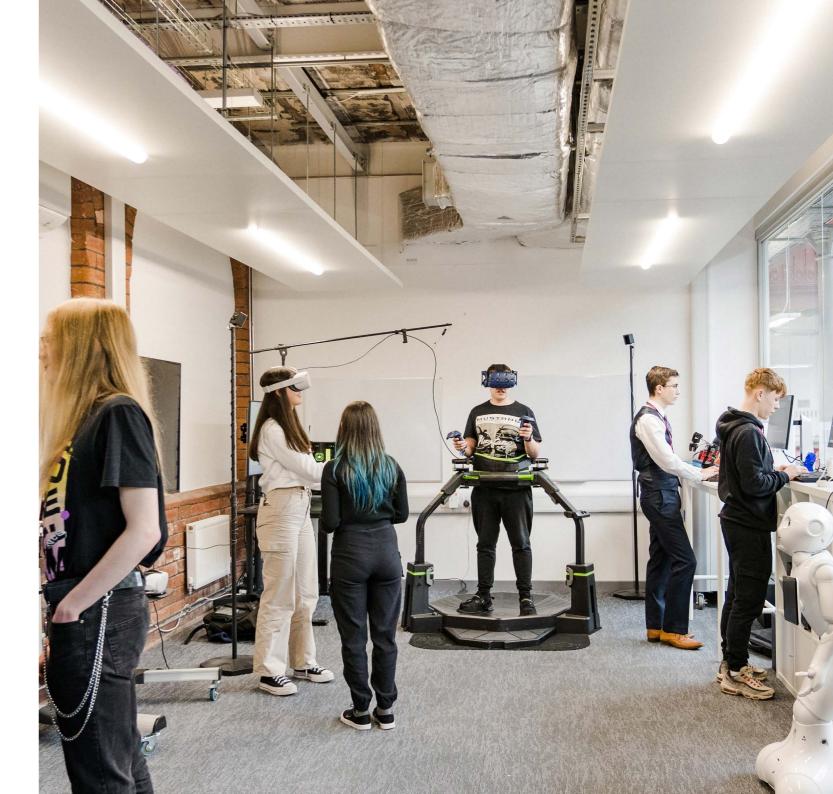
Upskill our and the region's workforce

○ To keep our staff up-to-date with digital innovation and shared best practice, we will provide access to continuing professional development (CPD) courses and internal apprenticeship opportunities.

○ We will support small enterprises and business start-ups by introducing digital/creative enterprise programmes.

○ We will develop a graduate recruitment scheme to attract the best talent in digital.

○ We will build best practice in teaching digital skills and industry digitisation in our teacher training offer.

○ We will develop programmes to train the specialists required to deliver high quality computing education.

○ We will work with employers and stakeholders to develop and deliver relevant courses to upskill the workforce and use their expertise to inform wider curriculum content.
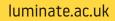
Related strategies that have informed our approach

- Leeds City Council's Digital Strategy: **Click here**

- Bradford Council's Digital Strategy: **Click here**

- Leeds City Region Digital Framework: **Click here**

- UK Innovation Strategy: **Click here**

- National AI Strategy: **Click here**

- The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) digital occupational map: **Click here**

HARROGATE COLLEGE

IC Keighley College

LEEDS CITY COLLEGE

LEEDS CONSERVATOIRE

Leeds Sixth Form College

Pudsey Sixth Form College

University Centre Leeds

YORKSHIRE CENTRE FOR TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT