



Annual Report and Financial  
Statements for the Year Ended  
31 July 2025



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## Reference and Administrative Details

### Board of Governors

A full list of Governors is given on page 14-15 of these financial statements:

### Director of Governance

Sarah Horeesorun

### Key Management Personnel

Key management personnel are defined as Senior Post Holders and members of the College Executive Team and were represented by the following in 2024/25:

- Dr Fazal Dad CBE, Principal and Chief Executive; Accounting Officer
- Jennifer Eastham, Vice Principal - Finance and Corporate Services
- Rachel Tarplee, Vice Principal – Curriculum and Quality
- Nicola Clayton, Executive Director of Business Development and External Engagement
- Matthew Robinson, Executive Director of Student Support and Experience (DSL)
- Laine Morris, Executive Director of People and Culture (from 7<sup>th</sup> July 2025)
- Sarah Horeesorun, Director of Governance

**Principal and Registered Office:** Feilden Street, Blackburn, BB2 1LH.

<b>Professional advisers:</b>	<b>External Auditors:</b>	Menzies LLP
	<b>Internal Auditors:</b>	RSM UK Consulting LLP
	<b>Bankers:</b>	Santander UK Plc, Barclays Bank Plc
	<b>Solicitors:</b>	Forbes Solicitors



## Strategic Report

### Nature, Objectives and Strategies

The members present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2025.

### Legal Status

The Corporation was established under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 for the purpose of conducting Blackburn College. The College is an exempt charity for the purposes of Part 3 of the Charities Act 2011.

### Mission Statement

Transforming students' lives and our community, through exceptional education, training and support.

### Vision Statement

Aspiring, innovating and achieving through excellence.

### Value Statements

- **Excellence** - we strive for excellence to realise the potential of all students and staff;
- **Knowledge** - we promote the value of learning in fostering curious minds supporting the acquisition of knowledge and skills;
- **Inclusion** - We promote equity, diversity and inclusion in our teaching, training, support and customer services;
- **Empowerment** - we empower and support our students and staff to develop their lives through education and training;
- **Commitment** - we are committed to exceptional education, training and support of our students and staff;
- **Respect** - we treat everyone as individuals and with respect.

### Strategic Plan

A new Strategic Plan approved by the Corporation Board has been launched for the period 2025-2028. This Strategic Plan has been developed following consultation with Governors, Staff, Students, local stakeholders and employers. The plan has a range of key strategic objectives, covering all aspects of the College including the student experience:

- **Be Exceptional** - To embrace a culture of continuous improvement, innovation and excellence in all aspects of what we do.
- **Be Future Focused** - To prepare students for the future by adopting cutting-edge technologies, innovative teaching methods, and forward thinking practices into the educational experience.
- **Be Work Ready** - To equip students with the essential skills, knowledge and behaviours required to thrive in the world of work and to foster lifelong career development.

Each of these pillars are underpinned by cross-cutting themes. The cross-cutting themes run through everything that the College does and will be at the forefront of our minds:

- **Student Focused**
- **Quality**
- **Innovation**
- **Digital Transformation**
- **Finance and Resources**
- **Sustainability**



## Strategic Report (Continued)

### Financial Objectives

As part of the College's Strategic Plan, Finance and Resources is a cross cutting theme and is supported by a financial ambition statement to 'ensure financial stability and effective use of resources in order to invest in our students and our staff'. The performance indicators, which were reviewed and approved by Governors in November 2024, are as follows:

Objective 1	
To deliver an adjusted operating ratio of at least 1% of income plus a net cash inflow from operating activities in each year of the plan submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) (Current year and next two years).	
Performance	These accounts and the financial plan submitted delivers at least 1% surpluses in all years.
Achieved	

Objective 2	
To ensure that the College continues to achieve at least grade "Good" financial health in both the DfE Financial Plan for all reported years, with a current ratio of no less than 1.2:1.	
Performance	The financial plan submitted to the DfE, had a financial health grade of 'Outstanding' for all years under the current and proposed methodology and a current ratio of 2.3 for 2024/25 2.49 for 2025/26 and 2.46 for 2026/27.
Achieved	

Objective 3	
To undertake capital projects to ensure that the campus remains fit for purpose with continued investment in industry standard facilities.	
Performance	The College invested £5.75m in the year, £2.8m on Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment, £2.95m on adaptations and improvements to the campus. Capital investments during the year include IT Infrastructure, additions and enhancements to the construction centre and the College contribution towards the Victoria building refurbishment.
Achieved	

Objective 4	
To ensure that risk management plans are in place and fit for purpose.	
Performance	A Risk Register is maintained, scoring all risks and reporting to Audit Committee and Corporation.
Achieved	



## Strategic Report (Continued)

Objective 5	
To generate a cash inflow from operating activities of at least £3.5m.	
<b>Performance</b>	The net cash flow from operating activities for 2024/25 was £3.73m.
<b>Achieved</b>	

Objective 6	
To ensure that staffing cost to income ratio remains below 65%, as measured by the FE Commissioner.	
<b>Performance</b>	For 2024/25 the staffing cost ratio was 65.03%, excluding LGPS pension charge and Restructuring costs.
<b>Achieved</b>	

## Resources

The College has various resources that it can deploy in pursuit of its strategic objectives; this includes our staff, campus and net assets.

As at 31 July 2025 the College employed 537 full time equivalent staff, of whom 315 are teaching staff. Staff have a range of qualifications to suit the level at which they teach and the College has a rolling Continuous Professional Development (CPD) program to support the development of staff across all areas of the College.

The College has seen an increase in its net assets from £38.6m in 2023/24 to £39.6m in 2024/25. The College currently has £5.2m of outstanding loans, which were used to invest in the College campus. The campus is made up of various buildings, the Victoria Building, Elizabeth Building, Construction Centre, Harrison Centre, Sixth Form Centre, University Centre, Beacon Centre, Futures Centre, Regional Automotive Technology Hub, Launchpad – Ready to Learn Centre, Temporary classrooms whilst the Victoria Building is being refurbished and Blackburn Sports and Leisure Centre (a joint venture with Blackburn with Darwen Council) and forms part of the tangible assets.

The College enrolled approximately 7,466 students. The College's student population includes 2,897 16-to-18-year-old students and 19-24 year-olds with an Education and Health Care Plan, 89 T-Level students, 626 Apprentices, 651 Higher Education students of which 56 are HE apprenticeship students, 1,715 adult learners and 1,488 commercial learners

## Stakeholder Relationships

Blackburn College has many stakeholders, these include:

- Students;
- Education sector funding bodies;
- FE Commissioner;
- Ofsted and OfS as regulators;
- Staff;
- Local employers (with specific links);
- Local Authorities;
- Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs);
- The local community;
- College Bankers;
- Other FE and HE institutions;
- Trade unions; and
- Professional bodies.

The College recognises the importance of these relationships and engages in regular communication with them.



## Strategic Report (Continued)

### Public Benefit

Blackburn College is an exempt charity under the Part 3 of the Charities Act 2011 and is regulated by the Secretary of State for Education. The members of the Governing Body, who are Trustees of the charity, are disclosed on pages 14-15. In setting and reviewing the College's strategic objectives, the Governing Body has had due regard for the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and particularly upon its supplementary guidance on the advancement of education.

In delivering its mission, the College provides identifiable public benefits through the advancement of education to approximately 7,466 students. The College provides courses without charge to young people, to those who are unemployed and adults taking English and maths courses. The College adjusts its courses to meet the needs of local employers and provides training to 626 Apprentices. The College is committed to providing information, advice and guidance to the students it enrolls and to finding suitable courses for as many students as possible regardless of their educational background.

### Development and Performance

#### Financial results

The College generated an operating surplus in the year of £1,254k (2023/24 – £1,385k surplus). The College faced a number of income challenges in respect of Higher Education, Commercial courses and Apprenticeships, however, through direct management action, savings and other income streams were secured to minimise the impact.

There is an overall increase in the total comprehensive income reserve of £1m after Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) adjustments, note 24 provides detail on the Local Government Pension Scheme valuation and accounting adjustments.

#### Cash flows and liquidity

At £14.3m (2023/24 £16.2m), cash and cash equivalents are strong. The bank balance at 31 July 2025 includes a grant received from the DfE Condition Fund 2025/26 for £1,503k, to be used for capital expenditure to maintain, improve and ensure suitability of the College estate. A capital investment plan has been developed to re-invest in the College Campus and Curriculum equipment to support the development of the College, in line with its Strategy. The reduction is due to grants being received in advance.

The College loan facility is subject to financial covenants and during the year to 31 July 2025 there were no concerns with the College's operating within the financial covenants. The size of the College's total borrowing and its approach to interest rates is modelled to ensure a comfortable cushion between the total cost of servicing debt and operating cashflow. During the year this margin was exceeded.

### Developments

Student Experience has been a key focus for the College and has made some significant progress in improving the campus. This has been achieved through capital investments in IT Infrastructure, refurbishment of Hair Salons, Beauty Salons, Laboratories, T-Level suites, Hospitality and ESports rooms, Business and Digital Classrooms and Construction Centre. The College has contributed towards the Victoria building refurbishment and general on-site equipment and facilities. These investments will continue as part of the development of the College, with a clear focus on student experience and creating a more sustainable campus.

### Reserves

The College has accumulated Income and Expenditure reserves of £39.6m (after FRS102 Pension adjustments) and cash and short-term investment balances of £14.3m. The College currently wishes to continue to accumulate reserves and cash balances for investment in the estate in line with its strategic objectives.



## Strategic Report (Continued)

Tangible fixed asset additions during the year amounted to £5.75m, of which £2.95m was invested in Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment. Expenditure will continue in future years as the College continues to develop its facilities to suit the changing landscape of Education within the sector.

### Sources of Income

The College has a reliance on the education sector funding bodies for its principal funding source, largely from recurrent grants. In 2024/25 the DfE provided 66.3% of total income.

### Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting

The College is committed to reducing its carbon emissions and has taken the following measures to improve energy efficiency:

- Progressed the FE climate change road map
- Full review by external consultants
- Promoted efficiencies across campus through focussed campaigns and sustainability newsletters to staff
- Continued the roll out of replacement LED lighting
- Carbon and energy saving embedded in all new capital projects

The College has published on its website the Carbon Emissions report, in line with the Government's streamlined energy and carbon reporting requirements: <https://blackburn.ac.uk/about-us/corporate-information/sustainability> .

### Future Prospects

#### Future Developments

The College performs an annual review of all areas as part of the Business Planning cycle, which includes a review of the appropriateness of the Curriculum offer for our local community and employers. Resources are allocated for both the development of the Curriculum and investment in appropriate technology for 2025/26 and beyond.

The annual review also includes a review of the Campus. Further investment is planned across campus with the continuation of the refurbishment of the Victoria Building as part of the Department for Education (DfE) Further Education Capital Transformation Fund, the focus for the new year will be extending the facilities for Construction and Engineering, plus the continuation of the refurbishments in Hospitality.

### Financial Plan

The College Governors approved a financial plan in July 2025 which sets the financial objectives for 2025/26 and 2026/27.

#### Treasury Policies and Objectives

Treasury management is the monitoring and control of the College's cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.

All new borrowing requires the authorisation of the Department of Education and shall comply with the requirements of the Financial Memorandum.

#### Reserves Policy

The College recognises the importance of reserves in the financial stability of any organisation and ensures that there are adequate reserves to support the College's core activities. The College reserves include £61k held as restricted reserves. As at the Statement of Financial Position date, the Income and Expenditure reserve stands at a surplus of £37.6m after £0.179m non-cash pension credit adjustment (2023/24: surplus of £36.6m). It is the Corporation's intention for reserves to be maintained in line with the Strategic Objectives.



## Strategic Report (Continued)

### Going Concern

The financial position of the College as at 31 July 2025, its cashflow, liquidity and borrowings are described in the financial statements and accompanying notes, with mitigating action taken to manage the financial risk in terms of cost control and appropriate use of grants available.

To ensure financial stability the College operates an ongoing cost reduction and efficiency review as part of Business Planning (planning for the year) and Performance Monitoring (during the year). These reviews allow the College to be responsive to the changing economic environment in respect of student recruitment and changes in Government policy and associated grant funding.

The College has strong year-end cash balances of £14.3m and £5.2m borrowings outstanding on a 25-year term loan running until July 2034. Future forecasts show net cash inflow from operating activities with sufficient headroom to manage the financial risks.

A detailed report on Going Concern has been prepared and after making appropriate enquiries, the Corporation considers that the College has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, it continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements.

### Principal Risks and Uncertainties

#### Risk Management

The College has developed and embedded a system of internal control, including financial, operational and risk management which is designed to protect the College's assets and reputation.

Based on the Strategic Plan, the Vice Principal – Finance and Corporate Services undertakes a comprehensive review of the risks to which the College is exposed. The post holder identifies systems and procedures, including specific preventable actions which should mitigate any potential impact on the College. The internal controls are then implemented, and the subsequent year's appraisal will review their effectiveness and progress against risk mitigation actions. In addition to the annual review, the Vice Principal – Finance and Corporate Services will also consider any risks which may arise as a result of a new area of work being undertaken by the College.

A Risk Register is maintained at the College level which is reviewed by the Corporation Board and Audit Committee at each meeting. The Risk Register identifies the key risks, the likelihood of those risks occurring, their potential impact on the College and the actions being taken to reduce and mitigate the risks. Risks are prioritised using a consistent scoring system.

Outlined below is a description of the principal risk factors that may affect the College. Not all the factors are within the College's control. Other factors besides those listed below may also adversely affect the College.

#### 1. Government Funding

The College has considerable reliance on continued government funding through the Further and Higher Education funding bodies. In 2024/25, 68.9% of the College's revenue was ultimately public funded and this level of requirement is expected to continue. There can be no assurance that government policy or practice will remain the same or that public funding will continue at the same levels or on the same terms.

The College is aware of several issues which may impact on future funding:

- Curriculum reforms;
- Apprenticeship reforms;
- Devolution of Adult Skills Fund to Combined County Authority;
- New Labour Government;
- Local Authority funding cuts impacting on College services and the wider economy;
- Reduction in staffing levels at funding bodies and Government offices to service the College;
- Closure of ESFA in March 2025 with key functions integrated in to the Department for Education (DfE)
- Reductions or changes to the Office for Students allocations.



## Strategic Report (Continued)

### 1. Government Funding (continued)

The College, in conjunction with its key stakeholders, develops strategies in response to the factors affecting the local area and its funding factor to mitigate the risk. These risks are mitigated in a number of ways:

- Funding is derived through a number of direct and indirect contractual arrangements;
- Ensuring the College is rigorous in delivering high quality education and training;
- Ensuring that the student experience and ability to find a positive destination is supported;
- Considerable focus and investment is placed on maintaining and managing key relationships with the various funding bodies as far as possible;
- Ensuring the College is focused on those priority sectors which will continue to benefit from public funding;
- Relevant Curriculum, leading to positive destinations;
- Regular dialogue with the funding bodies and with partner universities;
- Growth in other income streams, value for money and efficiency reviews.

### 2. Failure to maintain the financial viability of the College

The College's DfE financial health grade for 2024/25 is autoscored as 'Outstanding'. Notwithstanding that, the continuing challenge to the College's financial position remains with balancing expenditure on the student experience with grant and tuition fee funding not linked to inflation and variations in student recruitment.

This risk is mitigated in a number of ways:

- By rigorous budget setting procedures and sensitivity analysis;
- Regular in year budget monitoring;
- Robust financial controls;
- Exploring ongoing procurement efficiencies;
- Relentless focus on costs and efficient deployment of resources.

### 3. Cybersecurity

Blackburn College continues to invest in Information Technology infrastructure, training and internal awareness raising. Many external factors present a risk to Blackburn College and mitigations are in place to address these risks. During the year, the College was subject to a cyber incident which temporarily disrupted operations. Associated costs were borne by the insurer, which settled them directly with third-party service providers. The College incurred minimal financial impact.

### 4. Ofsted and Inspection

In November 2024, the Further Education and Apprenticeship provision at Blackburn College was inspected by Ofsted and was given the grade 'Good' overall effectiveness with 'Outstanding' in Behaviour and Attitudes, Personal Development, Education Programmes for Young People and Adult Learning Programmes. The College continues to focus on the quality of teaching and learning and the impact of the Curriculum for our stakeholders. Student outcome measures for 2023/24 and 2024/25 showed good progress on the journey to further improve.

### Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

The College has a number of internal KPI's that it monitors at both Governing Body and Executive Management levels. These include measures such as enrolments against target, retention, attendance progress, staff utilisation, financial health (as measured by the DfE), Surplus ratio (as measured by the FE Commissioner), Assessment against a number of these measures are included within this Strategic Report, with regular updates discussed at Board, Committee and operational management meetings.

The College's financial health for 2024/25, as measured, using the DfE scoring formulae, is 'Outstanding'. This is in line with the College's financial objectives.



## Strategic Report (Continued)

### Student Achievements

Further Education Achievement rates were 91.1% overall, the comparative figure for 2023/24 was 91.8%.

### Payment Performance

The Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 came into force on 1 November 1998, which requires colleges, in the absence of agreement to the contrary, to make payments to suppliers within 30 days of either the provision of goods or services or the date on which the invoice was received. The target set by the Treasury for payment to suppliers within 30 days is 95%. During the accounting year 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2025, the College paid 85.87% of its invoices within 30 days, with delays in the receipt of valid invoices the major contributor to this (by valid invoice, it means, with approved purchase order, sent to the Finance team). Average credit days taken were 22. The College incurred no interest charges in respect of late payment for this year (£nil 2023/24).

### Equality and Diversity

#### Equality

Individuals from different cultures, perspectives and experiences are at the heart of Blackburn College. The College is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all who learn and work here. We are guided by our values in everything we do and recognise that being a diverse and inclusive College helps us fulfil our responsibility to make a difference in transforming the lives of our students through education.

We respect and value all protected characteristics including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. We strive vigorously to remove conditions which place people at a disadvantage, and we will actively combat intolerance. This policy is resourced, implemented and monitored on a planned basis. The College's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy is published on the College's Intranet and website.

The College publishes a Single Equality Committee Report and Equality Objectives every year to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010. The College undertakes equality impact assessments on all new policies and procedures to ensure the infrastructure within which we operate is free from any discrimination. Equality impact assessments are also undertaken for existing policies and procedures on a prioritised basis.

The College is a 'Positive about Disabled' employer and has committed to the principles and objectives of the 'Positive about Disabled standard'. The College considers all employment applications from disabled persons, bearing in mind the aptitudes of the individuals concerned, and guarantees an interview to any disabled applicant who meets the essential criteria for the post. Where an existing employee becomes disabled, every effort is made to ensure that employment with the College continues. The College's policy is to provide training, career development and opportunities for promotion which, as far as possible, provide identical opportunities to those of non-disabled employees.

The College has committed to the 'Mindful Employer' initiative to assist the mental health wellbeing of staff. The College has achieved accreditation to the Committed to Equality (C2E) standard at the gold (highest) level. The College has also implemented an updated Equality and Diversity training programme which all staff have attended. Refresher training and training for new starters is carried out on an ongoing basis.



## Strategic Report (Continued)

### Disability Equality

The College seeks to achieve the objectives set down in the Equality Act 2010:

As part of its accommodation strategy the College updated its access audit. An access audit was undertaken and the results of this form part of our Estates strategy.

The Additional Learning Support Team liaise with the Estates Team and Curriculum Teams in terms of any accessibility issues identified as part of our anticipatory duty or by students on the programme to ensure full accessibility. This includes Personal Emergency Evacuation Procedures and any other aspects which may be buildings or equipment related to secure appropriate resolutions.

There is a range of specialist equipment, managed by the Learning Technology Service which the College makes available for use by students, which is in addition to a range of assistive technology solutions available.

Students at the College benefit from specialist advisory teachers, including a Teacher of the Deaf and Teacher for Visual Impairment. The Additional Learning Support Team employ specialists to provide in class support to promote access to education. There are a number of Academic Learning Support Assistants who can provide a variety of support for learning.

There is a continuing programme of staff development to ensure the provision of a high level of appropriate support for students who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities which ensures that the College meets the requirements in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice as well as our Equality Duty. Inclusive learning programmes are described in College prospectuses. Achievements and destinations are recorded and published in the standard College format.

Counselling and welfare services are described in the College Student Guide, which is shared with students via Moodle, together with the Compliments and Complaints and Student Behaviour Policy and Procedures.

In addition, the College has a Single Equality statement that encompasses all protected groups and pledges zero tolerance to discrimination of any kind. Full details can be obtained from the College website, by emailing [thehub@blackburn.ac.uk](mailto:thehub@blackburn.ac.uk) or writing to The Hub Services, Blackburn College, Beacon Centre, Blackburn, BB2 1LH.

The College also has a Single Equality Committee to monitor key metrics, identify any gaps in progress / metrics and to work across College in supporting learners and staff.



## Strategic Report (Continued)

### Trade Union Facility Time

The Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017 require the College to publish information on facility time arrangements for trade union officials at the College. The information below covers the published period of 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025;

Numbers of employees who were relevant	FTE employee number
14	9.7
Percentage of time	Number of employees
0%	0
1-50%	14
51-99%	0
100%	0
Total cost of facility time	£16.8k
Total pay bill	£25.2m
Percentage of total bill spent on facility time	0.07%
Time spent on paid trade union duties as a percentage of total paid facility time	100%
Time spent on paid trade union activities as a percentage of total paid facility time	0%

### Disclosure of information to auditors

The members who held office at the date of approval of this report confirm that, so far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the College's auditors are unaware; and each member has taken all the steps that he or she ought to have taken to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the College's auditors are aware of that information.

Approved by order of the members of the Corporation on 5 December 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Allanson".

**Mark Allanson**  
Chair of the Corporation Board



## Corporate Governance and Internal Control

The following statement is provided to enable readers of the Annual Report and Financial Statements of the College to obtain a better understanding of its governance and legal structure. This statement covers the period from 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2025 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

### GOVERNANCE CODE

The College endeavours to conduct its business:

- i. in accordance with the seven principles identified by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership);
- ii. in full accordance with the guidance to Colleges from the Association of Colleges in The Further Education Code of Good Governance adopted from 1 August 2024 ("The Code").

In the opinion of the Governors, the College continues to comply with all the provisions of "The Code", and it has complied throughout the year ended 31 July 2025. This opinion is based on an internal review of compliance with "The Code" reported to the Corporation Board in July 2025, whereby the Board reviewed its performance and was assured that it was fully embracing the Principles of the new Code.

An Internal Audit of the College's Governance Framework was completed in Spring 2024. The assessment of governance was tested against best practice from the sector and compliance with the AoC Code of Governance for English Colleges. The audit returned the highest opinion of substantial assurance.

An External Review of Governance was completed in Spring 2023. This was completed by an independent provider and the scope of the review met the requirements of the Department for Education Guide on External Governance Reviews in Further Education and the Post 16 Education and Skills Act. Many strengths were identified during the review and there were no areas of concern. Financial oversight was a strength, the Governors understood their role well, and the Corporation Board complies with all statutory and regulatory duties, supported by robust processes ably managed by the Director of Governance. The findings of the External Governance Review were presented to the Corporation Board at its meeting on 7 July 2023. The Executive Summary supplied and agreed by the independent External Governance Reviewer is available on the College website.

The Governing Body recognises that, as a body entrusted with both public and private funds, it has a particular duty to observe the highest standards of corporate governance at all times. In carrying out its responsibilities, it takes full account of "The Code" issued by the Association of Colleges in September 2023, which it formally adopted from 1 August 2024.



## Governance Statement

### The Corporation

The members who served on the Corporation during the year and up to the date of signature of this report are listed in the table below;

Name	Date of Appointment	Term of Office	Date of Resignation	Status of Appointment	Committees Served	Attendance in 2024/25
Dr Fazal Dad CBE	1 Jan 2019	Ex-officio		Principal and Chief Executive	Policy and Resources Learning and Quality Governance Panel	18/19 95%
Massoud Akbari	16 Oct 2024	10 Jul 2025		Student	Audit Committee	4/6 66%
Asif Ali	6 Dec 2024	31 Mar 2027		External	Policy and Resources, Student Voice	4/5 80%
Mark Allanson	11 Dec 2015	31 Mar 2027		External	Chair of Board, Learning and Quality, Governance Panel, Student Voice, Remuneration	17/19 89%
Ian Brown	6 Dec 2019	31 Mar 2028		Co-opted	Governance Panel	5/5 100%
Fran Crossland	15 Oct 2022	31 Mar 2025	18 Oct 2024	External	Policy and Resources	0/2 0%
Ram Gupta BEM	12 Mar 2021	31 Mar 2027		External	Learning and Quality	9/9 100%
Catherine Hill OBE	18 Oct 2019	31 Mar 2028		External	Vice-Chair of Board Chair of Learning and Quality from July 2024, Student Voice Governance Panel, Chair of Remuneration	15/18 83%
Michael Lee	16 Mar 2018	31 Mar 2027		Staff	Policy and Resources	8/10 80%
Andrea Machell	2 Jul 2022	31 Mar 2025	15 Mar 2025	External	Learning and Quality	1/4 25%
Corinne McMillan	8 Dec 2023	31 Mar 2026		Co-opted	Policy and Resources	4/5 80%
Nadeem Memon	8 Dec 2023	31 Mar 2026	1 Jan 2025	External	Policy and Resources	3/4 75%
Paul Morris	1 Apr 2020	31 Mar 2026		External	Policy and Resources Remuneration	11/12 91%



## Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Control (continued)

Name	Date of Appointment	Term of Office	Date of Resignation	Status of Appointment	Committees Served	Attendance in 2024/25
Ridwaan Omar	17 Mar 2023	31 Mar 2026		External	Policy and Resources	10/10 100%
Arif Patel	1 Apr 2020	31 Mar 2026		External	Policy and Resources Governance Panel Student Voice	17/17 100%
Chelston Phillip	16 Oct 2024	10 Jul 2025		Student	Learning and Quality	4/7 57%
Darren Ratcliffe	8 Dec 2023	31 Mar 2026		External	Learning and Quality	9/9 100%
Nathan Rogan	4 Jul 2025	31 Mar 2028		Board Member	Learning and Quality	7/9 77%
Ojan Rohani	6 Dec 2024	31 Mar 2027		External	Audit	5/5 100%
Sharjeel Salahuddin	15 Oct 2021	31 Mar 2027		Co-opted	Audit	3/4 75%
Clare Shaw	8 Dec 2023	31 Mar 2026		Staff	Learning and Quality	6/9 66%
Taiyab Sufi	2 Jul 2021	31 Mar 2026		External	Chair of Audit Committee from Sept. 2024	9/9 100%
David Swift	5 Jul 2024	31 Mar 2027		External	Audit	8/9 88%
Steve Waggett	9 Nov 2018	31 Mar 2026	23 Jun 2025	External	Policy and Resources	3/9 33%
Bryan Welch	5 Jul 2024	31 Mar 2027		External	Policy and Resources	8/10 80%

### The Governance Framework

It is the Corporation's responsibility to bring independent judgement to bear on issues of strategy, performance, resources and standards of conduct.

The Corporation is provided with regular and timely information on the overall financial performance of the College together with other information such as performance against recruitment targets, proposed capital expenditure, quality matters and personnel-related matters such as health and safety and environmental issues. The Corporation normally meets four times per year.



## **Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Control (continued)**

The Corporation conducts its business through a number of Committees. Each Committee has terms of reference which have been approved by the Corporation. These Committees are Learning and Quality, Policy and Resources, Audit, Remuneration, Governance Panel (Search) and Student Voice. Full minutes of all meetings, except those deemed to be confidential by the Corporation, are available on the College's website: [www.blackburn.ac.uk](http://www.blackburn.ac.uk) or from the Director of Governance at the College's registered address: Blackburn College, Feilden Street, Blackburn, BB2 1LH.

The Director of Governance maintains a register of financial and personal interests of the Governors. The register is available for inspection at the above address.

All Governors are able to take independent professional advice in furtherance of their duties at the College's expense and have access to the Director of Governance, who is responsible to the Board for ensuring that all applicable procedures and regulations are complied with. The appointment, evaluation and removal of the Director of Governance are matters for the Corporation as a whole.

Formal agendas, papers and reports are supplied to Governors in a timely manner, prior to Board meetings. Briefings are provided on an ad hoc basis.

The Corporation has a strong and independent non-executive element and no individual or group dominates its decision-making process. The Corporation considers that each of its non-executive members is independent of management and free from any business or other relationship which could materially interfere with the exercise of their independent judgement. There is a clear division of responsibility in that the roles of the Chair and Accounting Officer are separate.

### **Appointments to the Corporation**

Any new appointments to the Corporation are a matter for the consideration of the Corporation as a whole. The Corporation has a Governance Panel, which comprises four Corporation members and one co-opted member, which is responsible for the selection and nomination of any new member for the Corporation's consideration. The Corporation is responsible for ensuring that appropriate training is provided as required. In 2024/25, five vacancies were filled on the Board and Committees and the position as at 31 July 2025 was that there were two Board vacancies.

Members of the Corporation are appointed for a term of office not exceeding three years. The number of consecutive terms of office is set at three, but this can be waived where an appointment is made mid-term or where it is in the best interests of the Corporation to make an appointment for a further term(s), for example where a member takes on a more senior role, such as Chair or Vice-Chair.

### **Corporation Performance**

Governors have been appointed to at least one Committee and appointments to Committees have been made in accordance with the skills mix of Governors, to make best use of skills, knowledge and experience to enhance the decision making processes. Committee membership is considered when new appointments to the Board are made to make best use of Governors' areas of interest and skills, knowledge and experience.

Annually, each Governor is invited to participate in a Self-Assessment Review as a survey. The survey questions are agreed by the Governance Panel and feedback provided to the Board. The survey for 2024/25 was issued to Governors in August 2025.

In order to further enhance Corporation performance and as part of Governor Development, a number of presentations have been made at the Board and Committees. Governor development/training opportunities are actively promoted by the Director of Governance.



## **Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Control (continued)**

Training and development activities for members of the Corporation Board have been completed during the year. This includes presentations at Audit Committee on a number of risk themed topics including External Regulation, Delivering Internal Audit Effectively, Emerging Risks, Fraud, Internal Audit Plan and Strategy Development 2024/25, and introducing the new Financial Handbook for Colleges to this Committee and to the Board. The Corporation Board also had presentations on Safeguarding and Prevent, Capital Projects, and the revised Accountability Agreement and Local Needs Duty. Governors have also completed individual training delivered through the Association of Colleges (AoC) and Education and Training Foundation (ETF) Governance Development Programme. The Chair of the Corporation Board participated in local, regional and national Chair's network events and meetings.

The Director of Governance has the relevant experience and is accredited with the Award for Further Education Governance Professionals and holds the qualification (Award FEGP).

During 2024/25 the Director of Governance has completed substantial CPD, including completion of and participation in The Director of Governance and Trustees legal responsibilities; Charity Law and Trustees; Fraud awareness; National, AoC Governance Professionals two day conference; Effective Settling of Disputes; Managing Sexual Harassment compliance in FE & HE; Legal Refresher for institutions on governance, company administration and subsidiary companies; Managing Fraud and AI; Social Mobility Impact on Governance, and Exploring the Governance Triumvirate.

The Director of Governance is a member and contributor to the local, regional, and national Governance Professionals networks and attends regular update sessions provided by the AoC, RSM and Eversheds to ensure their skills remain current and to be informed of changes to best advise the College and Corporation Board. The Director of Governance graduated from the FE Commissioners 'Just One Thing' initiative in June 2025 and is affiliated with the National Association of School and College Clerks; Chartered Governance Institute UK & Ireland.

### **Governance Review**

The Corporation Board reviews its performance and compliance annually, most recently in July 2025, and agreed governance at the College as being fully compliant against the current AoC Further Education Code of Good Governance.

In June 2025 the Audit Committee considered the progress and enhancements following the External Governance Review, the Colleges' Governance arrangements, and performance with the AoC Further Education Code of Good Governance or 'Code'. Progress was shared with the Corporation Board at its meeting 4 July 2025 who took assurance from the Report.

The work of the Board and its Committees has been in accordance with the relevant calendars of business and has also included ad hoc reports as required.

### **Remuneration Committee**

Throughout the year ended 31 July 2025, the Corporation's Remuneration Committee comprised three members of the Corporation. In taking account of the best practice identified in the AoC Further Education Code of Good Governance, the Vice-Chair of the Corporation Board Chairs this Committee. The Committee's responsibilities are to make recommendations to the Policy and Resources Committee acting on behalf of, and reporting to the Corporation on the remuneration and benefits of the Accounting Officer and other Senior Post-Holders, including the Director of Governance.

Details of remuneration for these posts for the year ended 31 July 2025 are set out in note 7 to the financial statements.



## Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Control (continued)

### Audit Committee

The Audit Committee comprises four members of the Corporation (excluding the Accounting Officer) and two co-opted members, four of whom are finance/audit specialists. The Committee operates in accordance with written terms of reference approved by the Corporation. At 31 July 2025 there was one vacancy for an independent member and one vacancy for a co-opted member.

The Audit Committee meets four times a year and provides a forum for reporting by the College's Internal and External Auditors, who have access to the Committee for independent discussion, without the presence of College management.

The College's Internal Auditors review the systems of internal control, risk management controls and governance processes in accordance with an agreed plan of input and report their findings to management and the Audit Committee.

Management is responsible for the implementation of agreed audit recommendations, and Internal Audit undertake periodic follow-up reviews to ensure such recommendations have been implemented.

The Audit Committee also advises the Corporation on the appointment of Internal and External Auditors and their remuneration for both audit and non-audit work as well as reporting annually to the Corporation.

The Audit Committee met four times in the year to 31 July 2025. The members of the Committee and their attendance records are shown below:

Committee member	Meetings attended
Taiyab Sufi (Chair)	4
Massoud Akbari	1
Ojan Rohani	2
David Swift (previously co-opted member, full member from July 2024)	4
Sharjeel Salahuddin (co-opted member)	3

### Internal Control

#### Scope of responsibility

The Corporation is ultimately responsible for the College's system of internal control and for reviewing its effectiveness. However, such a system is designed to manage rather than eliminate the risk of failure to achieve College objectives and can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance against material misstatement or loss.

The Corporation has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the Principal and Chief Executive, as Accounting Officer, for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of the College's policies, aims and objectives, whilst safeguarding the public funds and assets for which he is personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to him in the Funding Agreement between Blackburn College and the funding bodies. The Principal and Chief Executive is also responsible for reporting to the Corporation any material weaknesses or breakdowns in internal control.

#### The purpose of the system of internal control

The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process to identify and prioritise risks to the achievement of College policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control has been in place at Blackburn College for the year ending 31 July 2025 and up to the date of approval of the Annual Report and Financial Statements.



## Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Control (continued)

### Capacity to handle risk

The Corporation has reviewed the key risks to which the College is exposed, together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. The Corporation is of the view that there is a formal ongoing process for identifying, evaluating and managing the College's significant risks that has been in place for the year ended 31 July 2025 and up to the date of approval of the Annual Reports and Financial Statements. This process is regularly reviewed by the Audit Committee and by the Corporation.

### The risk and control framework

The system of internal control is based on a framework of regular management information, administrative procedures including the segregation of duties, a system of delegation and accountability. In particular, it includes:

- comprehensive annual budgeting system with an annual budget which is reviewed and agreed by the Governing body;
- regular reviews by the Policy and Resources Committee and the Corporation of periodic and annual financial reports, which indicate performance against forecasts (including reforecasts during the year);
- setting targets to measure financial and other operational performance;
- clearly defined capital investment control guidelines and delegated authorities to spend;
- the adoption of formal project management disciplines, where appropriate.

Blackburn College engages RSM UK Risk Assurance Services LLP to provide an Internal Audit service in accordance with the Colleges Financial Handbook. The work of the Internal Auditors service is informed by an analysis of the risks to which the College is exposed, and annual internal audit plans are based on this analysis. The analysis of risks and the internal audit plans are endorsed by the Corporation on the recommendation of the Audit Committee. The Internal Auditors provides the Governing body with an annual report on Internal Audit activity in the College. The report includes the Internal Auditor's independent opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the College's system of risk management, controls and governance processes.

### Risks faced by the Corporation

The College has a Risk Management Policy that has been approved by the Corporation and is available for all staff on the College intranet. The Risk Management Plan is discussed by the Executive Team on a regular basis and is submitted to each meeting of the Audit Committee, with highlights presented to Corporation. The Vice-Principal - Finance and Corporate Services is the appointed Risk Champion for the College. The Risk Management plan is reviewed annually by the Executive Team, this is to ensure that they have a good understanding of the risks facing College, reiterate the process for identifying risks and to give the opportunity to highlight any new risks. The College Risk Register is shared with the Executive Team ahead of each Audit Committee meeting.

The principle risks on the College's Risk Register, are around income targets and government funding, failure of the College's Servers and IT systems including Cyber attacks and ensuring compliance with OfS conditions.

### Control weaknesses identified

A total of five Internal Audits plus a follow-up audit were undertaken during the year. All reports were considered by the Audit Committee. No significant areas of weaknesses or failures were identified.

### Responsibilities under accountability agreements

The Corporation has met its contractual responsibilities under its funding agreements and contracts with the DfE. Each year a Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire, which tests compliance, is undertaken by management, reviewed by the Audit Committee, reported to the Corporation and then audited by the External Auditors.

The Department for Education (DfE) (formerly the ESFA) introduced new controls for the College on 29 November 2022 on the day that the Office for National Statistics reclassified colleges as public sector organisations in the



## Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Control (continued)

national accounts. A new Colleges Financial Handbook was published; this provides an overarching framework for effective financial controls and is consistent with the Governments 'Managing Public Money' framework. Compliance with the handbook is a condition of the Colleges Accountability Agreement. The College has reviewed its policies, procedures and approval processes in line with these new requirements to ensure there are systems in place to identify and handle any transactions for which DfE approval is required.

### Statement from the Audit Committee

The Audit Committee has advised the Board of Governors that the Corporation has an effective framework for Governance and Risk Management in place. The Audit Committee believes the Corporation has effective internal controls in place.

The specific areas of work undertaken by the Audit Committee in 2024/25 and up to the date of the approval of the financial statements were:

- Assessed the performance of the External and Internal Audit function;
- Received External Audit report from the External Auditors and considered the audit outcomes for onward recommendations to the Board;
- Considered a scope of work for the Internal Auditors for recommendation to the Board. The agreed areas being HR - Recruitment and Selection; Key Financial Controls – Income and Debtors; Data Quality – Individualised Learner Records Framework; Individualised Learner Records Action Plan - follow up, Student Journey;
- Focus on Cyber Security and OfS HE ILR Data Audit;
- Received Internal Audit reports on the agreed scope of work, considered the outcomes and monitored management actions against those outcomes and recommendations.

### Review of Effectiveness

As Accounting Officer, the Principal and Chief Executive has responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. His review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by:

- the work of the Internal Auditors;
- the work of the Executive Team within the College who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework; and
- comments made by the College's External Auditors and the reporting accountant for regularity assurance in their management letters and other reports.

The Accounting Officer has been advised on the implications of the result of the review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control by the Audit Committee which oversees the work of the Internal Auditors and other sources of assurance, and a plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

The Executive Team receives reports on key performance and risk indicators and considers possible control issues brought to their attention by early warning mechanisms, which are embedded within the departments and reinforced by risk awareness training. The Executive Team and the Audit Committee also receive regular reports from Internal Audit and other sources of assurance, which include recommendations for improvement.

The Audit Committee's role in this area is confined to a high-level review of the arrangements for internal control. The Corporation's agenda includes a regular item for consideration of risk and control and receives reports thereon from the senior management and Executive Teams and the Audit Committee. The emphasis is on obtaining the relevant degree of assurance and not merely reporting by exception.



At its meeting on 17 October 2025, the Corporation carried out the annual assessment for the year ended 31 July 2025 by considering documentation from the Executive Team and Internal Audit and taking account of events since 31 July 2025.

Based on the advice of the Audit Committee and the Accounting Officer, the Corporation is of the opinion that the College has an adequate and effective framework for governance, risk management and control, and has fulfilled its statutory responsibility for "the effective and efficient use of resources, the solvency of the institution and the body and the safeguarding of their assets".

**Approved by the members of the Corporation on 5 December 2025 and signed on its behalf by:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Allanson".

**Mark Allanson**  
Chair of the Corporation

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fazal Dad".

**Dr Fazal Dad CBE**  
Principal and Chief Executive  
(Accounting Officer)



## Statement on Regularity, Propriety and Compliance

As Accounting Officer of the Corporation of Blackburn College, I confirm that I have had due regard to the framework of authorities governing regularity, priority and compliance, including the College's accountability agreement with DfE, and the requirements of the College Financial Handbook. I have also considered my responsibility to notify the Corporation's Board of Governors and DfE of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with terms and conditions of all funding.

I confirm that I, and the Board of Governors, are able to identify any material or improper use of all funds by the Corporation, or material non-compliance with the framework of authorities.

I confirm that no instances of material irregularity, impropriety or non-compliance, or non-compliance have been discovered to date. If any instances are identified after the date of this statement, these will be notified to the board of Governors and DfE.

  
05/12/2025.

[signed by and date]

Dr Fazal Dad CBE  
Principal and Chief Executive  
(Accounting Officer)



## **Statement of responsibilities of the members of the Corporation**

The members of the Corporation, as charity trustees, are required to present audited financial statements for each financial year.

Within the terms and conditions of the College's accountability agreement, funding agreements and contracts with ESFA and DfE and any other relevant funding bodies, the Corporation is required to prepare financial statements which give a true and fair view of the financial performance and position of the Corporation for the relevant period. Corporations must also prepare a strategic report which includes an operating and financial review for the year. The bases for the preparation of the financial statements and strategic report are the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting for Further and Higher Education, DfE's College Accounts Direction and the UK's Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

In preparing the financial statements, the Corporation is required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- assess whether the Corporation is a going concern, noting the key supporting assumptions qualifications or mitigating actions as appropriate; and
- prepare financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the College will continue in operation.

The Corporation is also required to prepare a strategic report, in accordance with paragraphs 3.23 to 3.27 of the FE and HE SORP, that describes what it is trying to do and how it is going about it, including information about the legal and administrative status of the Corporation.

The Corporation is responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose, with reasonable accuracy at any time, the financial position of the Corporation and which enable it to ensure that the financial statements are prepared in accordance with relevant legislation including the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 and Charities Act 2011, and relevant accounting standards. It is responsible for taking steps that are reasonably open to it to safeguard its assets and to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities. The Corporation is responsible for the maintenance and integrity of its website(s); the work carried out by auditors does not involve consideration of these matters and, accordingly, auditors accept no responsibility for any changes that may have occurred to the financial statements since they were initially presented on the website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Members of the Corporation are responsible for ensuring that expenditure and income are applied for the purposes intended and that the financial transactions conform to the authorities that govern them. In addition, they are responsible for ensuring that funds from ESFA, DfE, and any other public funds, are used only in accordance with the accountability agreement, funding agreements and contracts and any other conditions, that may be prescribed from time to time by DfE, or any other public funder, including that any transactions entered into by the Corporation are within the delegated authorities set out in the College Financial Handbook. On behalf of the Corporation, the Chair of the Board of governors is responsible for discussing the accounting officer's statement of regularity, propriety and compliance with the accounting officer.

Members of the Corporation must ensure that there are appropriate financial and management controls in place to safeguard public and other funds and ensure they are used properly. In addition, members of the Corporation are responsible for securing economic, efficient and effective management of the Corporation's resources and expenditure so that the benefits that should be derived from the application of public funds from DfE, ESFA and other public bodies are not put at risk.

Approved by order of the members of the Corporation on 5 December 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

**Mark Allanson**  
**Chair of the Corporation**

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Allanson".



## Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of the Corporation of Blackburn College

### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Blackburn College (the "College") for the year ended 31 July 2025 which comprise the College statement of comprehensive income, the College balance sheet, the College statement of changes in reserves, the statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the College's affairs as at 31 July 2025 and of the College's income and expenditure, gains and losses, and changes in reserves and cash flows, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with 2019 Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting for Further and Higher Education and the Accounts Direction 2024 to 2025 issued by the Department for Education.

### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the College in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Members of the Corporation use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the College's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue. Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Members of the Corporation with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

### Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Report and Financial Statements other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The Members of the Corporation is responsible for the other information contained within the Report and Financial Statements. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.



### **Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Office for Students' Accounts Direction**

We are required to report on the following matters by the Office for Students' Accounts Direction. In our opinion, in all material respects:

- funds from whatever source administered by the College for specific purposes have been properly applied to those purposes and managed in accordance with relevant legislation;
- funds provided by the Office for Students, UK Research and Innovation (including Research England), the Education and Skills Funding Agency and Department for Education have been applied in accordance with the relevant terms and conditions; and
- the requirements of the Office for Students' accounts direction for the relevant year's financial statements have been met.

### **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Framework for auditors and reporting accountants of colleges issued by the Department of Education requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept;
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations required for our audit.

Further, we are required by the Office for Students' Accounts Direction to report to you if the results of our audit work indicate that the College's expenditure on access and participation activities for the financial year disclosed in Note 10 has been materially misstated.

- We are also required by the Office for Students' Accounts Direction to report to you where the results of our audit work indicate that the College's grant and fee income, as disclosed in Note 2 to the financial statements has been materially misstated.

We have nothing to report in these respects.

### **Responsibilities of the Members of the Corporation of Blackburn College**

As explained more fully in the Statement of the Members of the Corporation Responsibilities set out on page 23, the Members of the Corporation is responsible for the preparation of financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Members of the Corporation determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Members of the Corporation is responsible for assessing the College's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Members of the Corporation either intend to liquidate the College or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

### **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.



### **The extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud**

Irregularities are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. The objectives of our audit are to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding compliance with laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, to perform audit procedures to help identify instances of non-compliance with other laws and regulations that may have a material effect on the financial statements, and to respond appropriately to identified or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations identified during the audit.

In relation to fraud, the objectives of our audit are to identify and assess the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud, to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud through designing and implementing appropriate responses and to respond appropriately to fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit.

However, it is the primary responsibility of management, with the oversight of those charged with governance, to ensure that the entity's operations are conducted in accordance with the provisions of laws and regulations and for the prevention and detection of fraud.

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud, the audit engagement team:

- obtained an understanding of the nature of the sector, including the legal and regulatory frameworks that the College operate in and how the College is complying with the legal and regulatory frameworks;
- inquired of management, and those charged with governance, about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities, including any known actual, suspected or alleged instances of fraud; and
- discussed matters about non-compliance with laws and regulations and how fraud might occur including assessment of how and where the financial statements may be susceptible to fraud.

As a result of these procedures we consider the most significant laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the financial statements are FRS 102, Further and Higher Education SORP, the College Accounts Direction published by the Department for Education, and Regulatory Advice 9: Accounts Direction published by the Office for Students'. We performed audit procedures to detect non-compliances which may have a material impact on the financial statements which included reviewing financial statement disclosures.

The College is also subject to many other laws and regulations where the consequences of non-compliance could have a material impact on amounts or disclosures in the financial statements, including Further and Higher Education Act 1992, Charities Act 2011, taxation legislation, data protection, anti-bribery, employment, environmental and health and safety legislation. We performed audit procedures to inquire of management and those charged with governance whether the College is in compliance with these law and regulations and inspected correspondence and inspected correspondence with licensing or regulatory authorities.

The audit engagement team identified the risk of management override of controls and revenue recognition as the areas where the financial statements were most susceptible to material misstatement due to fraud. Audit procedures performed included but were not limited to testing manual journal entries and other adjustments and evaluating the business rationale in relation to significant, unusual transactions and transactions entered into outside the normal course of business, challenging judgments and estimates and inspecting funding agreements and allocations.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at <http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

### **Use of our report**

This report is made solely to the Corporation, as a body, in accordance with the Funding Agreement published by the Department for Education and our engagement letter dated 3 December 2025. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Members of the Corporation, as a body, those matters we are engaged



to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Members of the Corporation, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Signed by:

*Menzies LLP*

D233C18725DD4EE...

For and on behalf of  
Menzies LLP  
Suite 16b  
The Beehive  
Lions Drive  
Shadsworth Business Park  
Blackburn  
BB1 2QS

Date: 12-Dec-2025



## Reporting accountant's assurance report on regularity

### To: The Corporation of Blackburn College and Secretary of State for Education

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 3 December 2025 and further to the requirements of the Department for Education (DfE), as include in the extant framework and guide for external auditors and reporting accountants of Colleges, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether anything has come to our attention that would suggest, in all material respects, the expenditure disbursed and income received by Blackburn College during the period 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2025 have not been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

The framework that has been applied is set out in the College Auditor Framework issued by DfE and in any relevant conditions of funding concerning adult education notified by a relevant funder.

This report is made solely to the Corporation of Blackburn College and Secretary of State for Education in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Corporation of Blackburn College and the Secretary of State for Education those matters we are required to state in a report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept, or assume, responsibility to anyone other than the Corporation of Blackburn College and the Secretary of State for Education for our work, for this report, or for the conclusion we have formed.

### Respective responsibilities of the accounting officer of Blackburn College and the reporting accountant

The Corporation of Blackburn College is responsible, under the requirements of the corporation's accountability agreement with the Secretary of State for Education and the College Finance Handbook for ensuring that expenditure disbursed and income received is applied for the purposes intended by Parliament and that the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

Our responsibilities for this engagement are established in the United Kingdom by our profession's ethical guidance and are to obtain limited assurance and report in accordance with our engagement letter and the requirements of the extant framework and guide for external auditors and reporting accountants of Colleges. We report to you whether anything has come to our attention in carrying out our work which suggests that in all material respects, expenditure disbursed and income received during the period 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2025 have not been applied for the purposes intended by Parliament or that the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

### Approach

We conducted our engagement in accordance with the extant framework and guide for external auditors and reporting accountants of Colleges. We performed a limited assurance engagement as defined in our engagement letter.

The objective of a limited assurance engagement is to perform such procedures as to obtain information and explanations in order to provide us with sufficient appropriate evidence to express a negative conclusion on regularity.

A limited assurance engagement is more limited in scope than a reasonable assurance engagement and consequently does not enable us to obtain assurance that we would become aware of all significant matters that might be identified in a reasonable assurance engagement. Accordingly, we do not express a positive opinion.

Our engagement includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the regularity and propriety of the College's income and expenditure.

The work undertaken to draw to our conclusion includes:

- Documenting the framework of authorities which govern the activities of the Members of Corporation;
- Undertaking a risk assessment based on our understanding of the general control environment and any weaknesses in internal controls identified by our audit of the financial statements;



- Reviewing the self-assessment questionnaire which supports the representations included in the Chair of Governors and Accounting Officer's statement on regularity, propriety and compliance with the framework of authorities;
- Testing a sample of transactions with related parties;
- Confirming through enquiry and sample testing that the Members of Corporation has complied with its procurement policies and that these policies comply with delegated authorities; and
- Reviewing any evidence of impropriety resulting from our work and determining whether it was significant enough to be referred to in our regularity report.

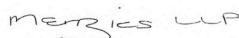
This work was integrated with our audit of the financial statements and evidence was also derived from the conduct of that audit to the extent it supports the regularity conclusion.

### **Conclusion**

In the course of our work nothing has come to our attention which suggests that in all material respects the expenditure disbursed and income received during the period 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2025 has not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

### **Signed:**

Signed by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Menzies LLP".

D233C18725DD4EE  
For and on behalf of

Menzies LLP  
Suite 16b  
The Beehive  
Lions Drive  
Shadsworth Business Park  
Blackburn  
BB1 2QS

Date: 12-Dec-2025



## Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure

For the year ended 31 July 2025

	Notes	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
<b>Income</b>			
Funding body grants	2	29,195	26,167
Tuition fees and education contracts	3	7,444	7,629
Other grants and contracts	4	1,039	571
Other income	5	2,870	2,475
Investment income	6	775	847
Net return on pension scheme assets (non cash)	6	1,010	975
<b>Total income</b>		<b>42,333</b>	<b>38,664</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Staff costs	7	25,827	24,042
Other operating expenses	8	9,757	8,754
Depreciation and impairment	13	5,114	4,062
Interest and other finance costs	9	381	421
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>41,079</b>	<b>37,279</b>
<b>Surplus before other gains and losses</b>		<b>1,254</b>	<b>1,385</b>
(Loss)/Surplus on disposal of assets		(67)	2
<b>Surplus before tax</b>		<b>1,187</b>	<b>1,387</b>
Taxation	11	-	-
<b>Surplus for the year</b>		<b>1,187</b>	<b>1,387</b>
<b>Re-measurement of net defined benefit pension scheme</b>	24	(179)	(975)
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>		<b>1,008</b>	<b>412</b>

All items of income and expenditure relate to continuing activities.

*The notes on pages 34 to 57 form part of these financial statements*



## Statement of Changes in Reserves

	Income and expenditure reserve £'000	Revaluation reserve £'000	Restricted reserve £'000	Total £'000
<b>Balance at 1 August 2023</b>	<b>36,120</b>	<b>1,964</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>38,144</b>
Surplus from the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	1,387	-	-	1,387
Other comprehensive income (Pension defined benefit adjustment, as per note 24)	(975)	-	-	(975)
Transfers between revaluation and income and expenditure reserves	52	(52)	-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>	<b>464</b>	<b>(52)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>412</b>
<b>Balance at 31 July 2024</b>	<b>36,584</b>	<b>1,912</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>38,556</b>
Surplus from the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	1,187	-	1	1,188
Other comprehensive income (Pension defined benefit adjustment, as per note 24)	(179)	-	-	(179)
Transfers between revaluation and income and expenditure reserves	51	(51)	-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>	<b>1,059</b>	<b>(51)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1,008</b>
<b>Balance at 31 July 2025</b>	<b>37,643</b>	<b>1,861</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>39,565</b>

*The notes on pages 34 to 57 form part of these financial statements*



## Statement of Financial Position as at 31 July 2025

	Notes	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>			
Tangible fixed assets	13	49,277	48,922
Endowment assets	15	61	60
Pensions asset	24	501	-
		<b>49,839</b>	<b>48,982</b>
<b>Current assets</b>			
Trade debtors and other receivables	16	3,144	3,231
Cash and cash equivalents	21	14,262	16,180
		<b>17,406</b>	<b>19,411</b>
<b>Less: Creditors - amounts falling due within one year</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>(8,453)</b>	<b>(10,209)</b>
<b>Net Current assets</b>		<b>8,953</b>	<b>9,202</b>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		<b>58,792</b>	<b>58,184</b>
Creditors - amounts falling due after more than one year	18	(18,013)	(18,570)
<b>Provisions</b>			
Defined benefit obligations	24	-	-
Other provisions	20	(1,214)	(1,058)
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>39,565</b>	<b>38,556</b>
<b>Restricted reserves</b>			
Income and expenditure account – Endowment reserve		61	60
<b>Unrestricted reserves</b>			
Income and expenditure account - unrestricted		37,643	36,584
Revaluation reserve		1,861	1,912
<b>Total unrestricted reserves</b>		<b>39,504</b>	<b>38,496</b>
<b>Total reserves</b>		<b>39,565</b>	<b>38,556</b>

The financial statements on pages 30 to 57 were approved and authorised for issue by the Corporation on 5 December 2025 and were signed on its behalf on that date by:

Mark Allanson  
Chair to the Corporation

Dr Fazal Dad CBE  
Principal and Chief Executive  
(Accounting Officer)

*The notes on pages 34 to 57 form part of these financial statements*



## Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended 31 July 2025

	Notes	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
<b>Cash flow from operating activities</b>			
Surplus for the year		1,187	1,387
<b>Adjustment for non-cash items</b>			
Depreciation and impairment	13	5,114	4,062
Decrease/(Increase) in debtors	16	87	(511)
(Decrease)/Increase in creditors due within one year	17	(1,756)	2,597
(Decrease)/Increase in creditors due after one year	18	(1)	598
Increase in provisions	20	156	44
Pensions costs less contributions payable	24	(680)	(975)
<b>Adjustment for investing or financing activities</b>			
Investment income	6	(775)	(847)
Interest payable	9	330	370
Loss/(Profit) on sale/disposal of fixed assets		67	(2)
<b>Net cash inflow from operating activities</b>		<b>3,729</b>	<b>6,723</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Proceeds on sale/disposal of fixed assets		211	2
Investment income	6	775	847
Payments made to acquire fixed assets	13	(5,747)	(4,349)
		<b>(4,761)</b>	<b>(3,500)</b>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>			
Interest paid	9	(330)	(370)
Repayments of amounts borrowed	21	(556)	(556)
		<b>(886)</b>	<b>(926)</b>
<b>(Decrease)/Increase in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>		<b>(1,918)</b>	<b>2,297</b>
 Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the year	21	16,180	13,883
 Cash and cash equivalents at end of the year	21	14,262	16,180



## Notes to the Financial Statements

### 1. Statement of accounting policies

The following accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the financial statements.

#### Basis of Preparation

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting for Further and Higher Education 2019* (the 2019 FE HE SORP), the *DfE College Accounts Direction for 2024-25* and in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 102 – “*The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland*” (FRS 102). The College is a public benefit entity and has therefore applied the relevant public benefit requirements of FRS 102.

The preparation of financial statements in compliance with FRS 102 requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise judgement in applying the College's accounting policies.

#### Basis of Accounting

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention.

#### Going Concern

The activities of the College, together with the factors likely to affect its future development and performance are set out in the Strategic Report. The financial position of the College, its cashflow, liquidity and borrowings are described in the financial statements and accompanying notes.

The College has strong year-end cash balances of £14.3m and has £5.2m borrowings with bankers, a 25-year term loan running until July 2034.

To ensure financial stability the College operates an ongoing cost reduction and efficiency review as part of Business Planning (planning for the year) and Performance Monitoring (during the year). These reviews allow the College to be responsive to the changing economic environment in respect of recruitment and changes in Government policy and associated grant funding.

The College's forecasts and financial projections indicate that it will be able to operate within this existing facility and covenants for the foreseeable future.

Accordingly, the College has a reasonable expectation that it has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, and for this reason has continued to adopt the going concern basis in the preparation of its financial statements.

#### Recognition of income

##### *Revenue grant funding*

Government revenue grants include funding body recurrent grants and other grants and are accounted for under the accruals model as permitted by FRS 102. Funding body recurrent grants are measured in line with best estimates for the period of what is receivable and depend on the particular income stream involved. Any under achievement for the Adult Skills Fund is adjusted for and reflected in the level of recurrent grant recognised in the income and expenditure account. The final grant income is normally determined with the conclusion of the year end reconciliation process with the funding body following the accounting period end, and the results of any funding audits. 16-19 learner funding is not normally subject to reconciliation and is therefore not subject to contract adjustments.

The recurrent grant from Office for Students represents the funding allocations attributable to the current financial year and is credited to the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.

Grants (including research grants) from non-government sources are recognised in income when the College is entitled to the income and performance related conditions have been met. Income received in advance of



## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### 1. Statement of accounting policies (continued)

performance related conditions being met is recognised as deferred income within creditors on the Statement of Financial Position and released to income as the conditions are met.

#### *Capital grant funding*

Government capital grants are capitalised, held as deferred income and recognised in income over the expected useful life of the asset, under the accruals model as permitted by FRS 102. Other capital grants are recognised in income when the College is entitled to the funds subject to any performance related conditions being met. Income received in advance of performance related conditions being met is recognised as deferred income within creditors on the Statement of Financial Position and released to income as conditions are met.

#### *Fee income*

Income from tuition fees is stated gross of any expenditure which is not a discount and is recognised in the period for which it is received and includes all fees payable by students or their sponsors. Rebates and discounts are offered in exceptional circumstances, as approved by the Executive Team.

#### *Investment income*

All income from short-term deposits is credited to the income and expenditure account in the period in which it is earned on a receivable basis. Income from restricted endowment funds that is not expended in accordance with the restrictions of the endowment in the period, is transferred from the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure to accumulated income within endowments funds.

#### *Agency arrangements*

The College acts as an agent in the collection and payment of certain discretionary support funds. Related payments received from the funding bodies and subsequent disbursements to students are excluded from the income and expenditure of the College where the College is exposed to minimal risk or enjoys minimal economic benefit related to the transaction.

### Accounting for post-employment benefits

Post-employment benefits to employees of the College are principally provided by the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) and the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS).

#### *Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS)*

The TPS is an unfunded scheme. Contributions to the TPS are calculated so as to spread the cost of pensions over employees' working lives with the College in such a way that the pension cost is a substantially level percentage of current and future pensionable payroll. The contributions are determined by qualified actuaries on the basis of valuations using a prospective benefit method.

The TPS is a multi-employer scheme and there is insufficient information available to use defined benefit accounting. The TPS is therefore treated as a defined contribution plan and the contributions recognised as an expense in the income statement in the periods during which services are rendered by employees.

#### *Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)*

The LGPS is a funded scheme. The assets of the LGPS are measured using closing fair values. LGPS liabilities are measured using the projected unit credit method and discounted at the current rate of return on a high-quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance sheet date. The carrying value of any resulting pension scheme asset is restricted to the extent that the College is able to recover the surplus either through reduced contributions in the future or through refunds from the scheme. For the year ended July 2025 a reduction in contributions has been received, and was effective from November 2024. Net interest on the net defined benefit asset is also recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure and comprises the interest cost on the defined benefit obligation and interest income on the scheme assets, calculated by multiplying the fair value of the scheme assets at the beginning of the period by the rate used to discount the benefit obligations. The difference between the interest income on the scheme assets and the actual return on the scheme assets is recognised in interest and other finance costs. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised immediately in actuarial gains and losses.



## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### 1. Statement of accounting policies (continued)

#### Short term employment benefits

Short term employment benefits such as salaries and compensated absences (holiday pay) are recognised as an expense in the year in which the employees render service to the College. Any unused benefits are accrued and measured as the additional amount the College expects to pay as a result of the unused entitlement.

#### Enhanced pensions

The actual cost of any enhanced ongoing pension to a former member of staff is paid by the College annually. An estimate of the expected future cost of any enhancement to the ongoing pension of a former member of staff is charged in full to the College's income in the year that the member of staff retires. In subsequent years a charge is made to provisions in the Statement of Financial Position using the enhanced pension spreadsheet provided by the funding bodies.

#### Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are stated at deemed cost less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Certain items of fixed assets that had been revalued to fair value on or prior to the date of transition to the FE HE SORP, are measured on the basis of deemed cost, being the revalued amount at the date of that revaluation.

The cost of tangible fixed assets includes the original purchase price of the asset and the costs attributable to bringing the asset to its working condition for its intended purpose.

#### *Land and buildings*

Freehold buildings are depreciated on a straight-line basis over their expected useful lives as follows:

- Harrison Centre – 40 years
- Beacon Centre – 40 years
- Construction Centre – 50 years
- Elizabeth Building – 50 years
- University Centre – 40 years
- Regional Automotive Technology Hub – 40 years
- Sixth Form Centre – 40 years
- Blackburn Sports and Leisure Centre – 40 years
- Futures Centre – 40 years
- Victoria Building – 40 years

Freehold land is not depreciated as it is considered to have an infinite useful life. Within each building there are elements which are charged at a range of rates of depreciation to represent their expected useful life.

Freehold buildings are depreciated over their expected useful economic life to the College of between 5 and 50 years. The College has a policy of depreciating major adaptations to buildings over the period of their useful economic life of between 5 and 50 years.



## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### 1. Statement of accounting policies (continued)

Where land and buildings are acquired with the aid of specific grants, they are capitalised and depreciated as above. The related grants are credited to a deferred income account within creditors and are released to the income and expenditure account over the expected useful economic life of the related asset on a systematic basis consistent with the depreciation policy. The deferred income is allocated between creditors due within one year and those due after more than one year. Where freehold land is acquired with the aid of specific grants, the value of the grant received is deducted from the cost of the land.

A review for impairment of a fixed asset is carried out if events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying amount of any fixed asset may not be recoverable. No concerns identified.

Any plant and machinery relating to buildings is shown separately from land and buildings in note 13 and is depreciated over its expected useful economic life to the College of between 10 and 40 years.

On adoption of FRS 102, the College followed the transitional provision to retain the book value of land and buildings, which were revalued as at 1 August 2014, as deemed cost but not to adopt a policy of revaluations of these properties in the future.

#### *Assets under construction*

Assets under construction are accounted for at cost, based on the value of architects' certificates and other direct costs, incurred to 31 July 2025. They are not depreciated until they are brought into use.

#### *Victoria Building Refurbishment Project*

In 2022/23 the DfE approved plans to fund the refurbishment of the Victoria Building for Blackburn College. The project is expected to be completed in Winter 2027. The College contribution to the refurbishment is a fixed amount of £3.3m, £1.1m per year payable over 3 years in advance by 31 July of that year, ending July 2025. Each year the payment in advance is recorded as a prepayment and then released and recorded as an asset under construction in the following year, no depreciation will be recorded until the project is completed.

The cost of the acquired asset is measured at fair value unless the exchange transaction lacks commercial substance or the fair value of neither the asset received, nor the asset given up is reliably measurable. In that case, the asset's cost is measured at the carrying amount of the asset given up.

It is our initial assessment at this stage that the exchange transaction lacks commercial substance, as the fair value of the asset will be far lower than the planned total project cost. Therefore, it is the management's judgement that the recognised increase in value of the Victoria Building would be determined as the cost of the additional spend by the College (representing the College's contribution of £3.3m). Upon completion of the project, the asset under construction will be moved to Land and Buildings and depreciation will begin thereafter in accordance with the accounting policy and revised useful economic life.

#### *Subsequent expenditure on existing fixed assets*

Where significant expenditure is incurred on tangible fixed assets it is charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure in the period it is incurred, unless it increases the future benefits to the College, in which case it is capitalised and depreciated on the relevant basis.

#### *Equipment*

Equipment items costing less than £1,000 are recognised as expenditure in the period of acquisition. All other equipment is capitalised at cost.



## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### 1. Statement of accounting policies (continued)

Capitalised equipment and building works are depreciated over their useful economic life (UEL) as follows:

- Plant and Machinery - Up to 40 years on a straight-line basis, dependent upon UEL
- Building adaptations - Up to 10 years on a straight-line basis, dependent upon UEL
- Building components - Up to 25 years on a straight-line basis, dependent upon UEL
- Motor vehicles - 5 years on a straight-line basis
- General equipment - 5 years on a straight-line basis
- Computer equipment - 4 years or 7 years on a straight-line basis, dependent upon UEL

Where equipment is acquired with the aid of specific grants, they are capitalised and depreciated as above. The related grants are credited to a deferred income account within creditors and are released to the income and expenditure account over the expected useful economic life of the related asset on a systematic basis consistent with the depreciation policy. The deferred income is allocated between creditors due within one year and those due after more than one year.

A review for impairment of a fixed asset is carried out if events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying value of any fixed asset may not be recoverable. Shortfalls between the carrying value of fixed assets and their recoverable amounts are recognised as impairments. Impairment losses are recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.

#### Heritage assets

Inherited equipment has been depreciated on a straight-line basis over its useful economic life and is now fully depreciated.

#### Borrowing costs

Borrowing costs, including when they are directly attributable to the construction of land and buildings, are recognised as expenditure in the period in which they are incurred.

#### Leased assets

Costs in respect of operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the lease term to the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure. Any lease premiums or incentives relating to leases signed after 1 August 2014 are spread over the minimum lease term.

A review for impairment of a fixed asset is carried out if events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying value of any fixed asset may not be recoverable. Shortfalls between the carrying value of fixed assets and their recoverable amounts are recognised as impairments. Impairment losses are recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.

Leasing agreements which transfer to the College substantially all the benefits and risks of ownership of an asset are treated as finance leases.

Assets held under finance leases are recognised initially at the fair value of the leased asset (or, if lower, the present value of minimum lease payments) at the inception of the lease. The corresponding liability to the lessor is included in the Statement of Financial Position as a finance lease obligation. Assets held under finance leases are included in tangible fixed assets and depreciated and assessed for impairment losses in the same way as owned assets.

Minimum lease payments are apportioned between the finance charge and the reduction of the outstanding liability. The finance charges are allocated over the period of the lease in proportion to the capital element outstanding.



## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### 1. Statement of accounting policies (continued)

#### Investments and endowment assets

Investments are carried at historical cost plus incidental expenses less any provision for impairment in their value. Current asset investments are included in the Statement of Financial Position at the lower of their original cost and net realisable value. Investments that form part of endowment assets are included in the Statement of Financial Position at market value.

#### Inventories

Inventories are written off to the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure in the year of purchase.

#### Cash and cash equivalents

Cash includes cash in hand, deposits repayable on demand and overdrafts. Deposits are repayable on demand if they are in practice available within 24 hours without penalty.

Cash equivalents are short term, highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash with insignificant risk of change in value. An investment qualifies as a cash equivalent when it has maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition. None were held at the balance sheet date.

#### Financial liabilities and equity

Financial liabilities and equity are classified according to the substance of the financial instrument's contractual obligations, rather than the financial instrument's legal form.

All loans, investments and short term deposits held are classified as basic financial instruments in accordance with FRS 102. These instruments are initially recorded at the transaction price less any costs (historical cost). FRS 102 requires that basic financial instruments are subsequently measured at amortised cost, however the College has calculated that the difference between the historical cost and amortised cost basis is not material and so these financial instruments are stated on the Statement of Financial Position at historical cost. Loans and investments that are payable or receivable within one year are not discounted.

#### Foreign currency translation

Transactions denominated in foreign currencies are recorded using the rate of exchange ruling at the date of transaction. Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are translated at the rates of exchange ruling at the end of the financial year with all resulting exchange differences being taken to the income and expenditure account in the period in which they arise.

#### Taxation

The College is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the College is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by sections 478-488 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

The College is partially exempt in respect of Value Added Tax, so that it can only recover around 2% of the VAT charged on its inputs. Irrecoverable VAT on inputs is included in the costs of such inputs and added to the cost of tangible fixed assets as appropriate, where the inputs themselves are tangible fixed assets by nature.



## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### 1. Statement of accounting policies (continued)

#### Provisions and contingent liabilities

Provisions are recognised when:

- the College has a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of a past event(s);
- it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required to settle the obligation, and
- a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the amount expected to be required to settle the obligation is recognised at present value using a pre-tax discount rate. The unwinding of the discount is recognised as a finance cost in the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure in the period it arises.

A contingent liability arises from a past event that gives the College a possible obligation whose existence will only be confirmed by the occurrence or otherwise of uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the College. Contingent liabilities also arise in circumstances where a provision would otherwise be made but either it is not probable that an outflow of resources will be required or the amount of the obligation cannot be measured reliably.

Contingent liabilities are not recognised in the Statement of Financial Position but are disclosed in the notes to the financial statements.

#### Debtors

Debtors with no stated interest rate and receivable within one year are recorded at the transaction price. Where there is a risk of not fully recovering a debt, a bad debt provision is provided for. The provision is calculated dependant on whether the debtor is an existing student, the age, the type and then the value of the debt and is recognised as an expense in the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.

#### Creditors

Creditors with no stated interest rate and payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. A liability is recognised to the extent of any unused holiday pay entitlement which has accrued at the balance sheet date and carried forward to future periods. This is measured at the salary cost of future holiday entitlement so accrued at the balance sheet date.

#### Liquid resources

Investments in short term deposits include sums on short-term deposits with recognised banks and building societies and government securities.

#### Agency arrangements

Related payments received from the funding bodies and subsequent disbursements to students are excluded from the income and expenditure of the College where the College is exposed to minimal risk or enjoys minimal economic benefit related to the transaction.

#### Judgements in applying accounting policies

In preparing these financial statements, management have made the following judgements:

- Determine whether leases entered into by the College either as a lessor or a lessee are operating or finance leases. These decisions depend on an assessment of whether the risks and rewards of ownership have been transferred from the lessor to the lessee on a lease by lease basis.



## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### 1. Statement of accounting policies (continued)

- Determine whether there are indicators of impairment of tangible assets, including goodwill. Factors taken into consideration in reaching such a decision include the economic viability and expected future financial performance of the asset and where it is a component of a larger cash-generating unit, the viability and expected future performance of that unit.

#### *Other key sources of estimation uncertainty*

- *Tangible fixed assets*  
Tangible fixed assets, other than investment properties, are depreciated over their useful lives taking into account residual values, where appropriate. The actual lives of the assets and residual values are assessed annually and may vary depending on a number of factors. In re-assessing asset lives, factors such as technological innovation and maintenance programmes are taken into account. Residual value assessments consider issues such as future market conditions, the remaining life of the asset and projected disposal values.
- *Local Government Pension Scheme*  
The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit asset or liability depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a variety of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost (income) for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 24, will impact the carrying amount of the pension asset/liability. Furthermore, a roll forward approach which projects results from the latest full actuarial valuation performed at 31 March 2022 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 July 2025. Any differences between the figures derived from the roll forward approach and a full actuarial valuation would impact on the carrying amount of the pension asset or liability as applicable.



## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### 2. Funding body grants

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
<b>Recurrent grants</b>		
DfE – 16-19	21,520	19,949
DfE – Adult	3,541	2,991
Grant income from the Office for Students (OfS)	329	358
<b>Specific grants</b>		
DfE – Teachers' Pension Scheme Grant	1,344	1,018
DfE – NI Grant	136	-
DfE Reclassification Condition Fund Grant	86	60
Releases of government capital grants: DfE	1,427	1,119
Releases of capital grants: Office for Students (OfS)	812	672
<b>Total funding body grants</b>	<b>29,195</b>	<b>26,167</b>

As an OfS registered College a single table is required to show grant and fee income for courses at Level 4 and above. The table below summarises this information, which forms part of the disclosures in note 2 and 3;

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
<b>Recurrent grants</b>		
Grant income from the Office for Students (OfS)	329	358
Releases of capital grants: Office for Students (OfS)	812	672
Fees for HE loan supported courses	5,122	5,493
<b>Total recurrent OfS grants</b>	<b>6,263</b>	<b>6,523</b>

### 3. Tuition fees and education contracts

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Adult Skills fees	12	5
Education contract – schools	185	129
Apprenticeship fees and contracts	2,011	1,841
Fees for FE loan supported courses	114	161
Fees for HE loan supported courses	5,122	5,493
<b>Total tuition fees and education contracts</b>	<b>7,444</b>	<b>7,629</b>

### 4. Other grants and contracts

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
European Commission grants	-	2
Other grants and contracts	1,039	569
<b>Total other grants and contracts</b>	<b>1,039</b>	<b>571</b>



## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### 5. Other income

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Catering	927	893
Other income generating activities: full cost provision	609	663
Teaching related activities	12	14
Exam and registration cost recovery	25	30
Premises income	79	86
Support and admin activities	640	596
Miscellaneous income	578	193
<b>Total Other income</b>	<b>2,870</b>	<b>2,475</b>

### 6. Investment income

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Interest receivable	775	847
Net return on Pension Scheme (Note 24)	1,010	975
<b>Total Investment income</b>	<b>1,785</b>	<b>1,822</b>

### 7. Staff costs

The average number of persons (including Key Management Personnel) employed by the College during the year, described as head counts, was:

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
Teaching staff	405	416
Non-teaching staff	287	286
<b>Total</b>	<b>692</b>	<b>702</b>
	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Wages and salaries	19,320	18,146
Social security costs	2,000	1,652
Other pension costs:		
Employer contributions	3,537	3,417
Pension defined benefit charge	330	-
Enhanced Pension	(55)	112
	25,132	23,327
Contracted out staffing services	493	454
	25,625	23,781
Restructuring costs – contractual	202	261
<b>Total staff costs</b>	<b>25,827</b>	<b>24,042</b>



## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### 7. Staff costs (continued)

#### Key Management Personnel

Key Management Personnel are those persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the College and are represented by the Senior Post Holders and College Executive Team which comprises the Principal and Chief Executive, Vice Principal - Finance and Corporate Services, Vice Principal - Curriculum and Quality, Executive Director of Business Development External Engagement, Executive Director of Student Support and Experience, Executive Director of People and Culture and the Director of Governance

#### Emoluments of Key Management Personnel, Accounting Officer and other higher paid staff

	2025	2024		
The number of Key Management Personnel including the Accounting Officer was:	7	6		
	2025	2024	2025	2024
	No.	No.	No.	No.
£0 to £5,000 p.a.	1	-	-	-
£20,001 to £25,000 p.a.	-	-	-	1*
£25,001 to £30,000 p.a.	-	-	1*	-
£40,001 to £45,001 p.a.	-	-	-	1*
£45,001 to £50,000 p.a.	-	1	-	-
£50,001 to £55,000 p.a.	1	-	-	-
£55,001 to £60,000 p.a.	-	-	1*	-
£60,001 to £65,000 p.a.	-	-	-	3
£65,001 to £70,000 p.a.	-	1	3	-
£75,001 to £80,000 p.a.	1	-	-	-
£80,001 to £85,000 p.a.	1	1	-	-
£85,001 to £90,000 p.a.	-	-	-	-
£100,001 to £105,000 p.a.	-	1	-	-
£105,001 to £110,000 p.a.	1	-	-	-
£110,001 to £115,000 p.a.	-	-	-	-
£115,001 to £120,000 p.a.	-	1	-	-
£125,001 to £130,000 p.a.	1	-	-	-
£170,001 to £175,000 p.a.	-	1	-	-
£185,001 to £190,000 p.a.	-	-	-	-
£180,001 to £185,000 p.a.	1	-	-	-
	7	6	5	5

The disclosure above is based upon headcount during the year as set out on page two. The total positions in Key Management Personnel was seven.

\*Refers to staff who have been employed at the College for part of the year and who would normally fall within ranges above £60k.



## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### 7. Staff costs (continued)

**Key Management Personnel (KMP) emoluments are made up as follows:**

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Salaries – gross of salary sacrifice and waived emoluments	633	589
Payment in lieu of pension	46	39
Pension contributions	102	91
<b>Total KMP emoluments</b>	<b>781</b>	<b>719</b>

There were no amounts due to key management personnel that were waived in the year, nor any salary sacrifice arrangements in place that are not HMRC approved.

The above emoluments include the amounts paid to the Principal and Chief Executive, Dr Fazal Dad CBE, who is the Accounting Officer throughout the academic year (and who is also the highest paid officer) of:

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Salaries	183	173
Payment in lieu of pension	46	39
Total	<u>229</u>	<u>212</u>
Pension contributions	-	-
<b>Total emoluments</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>212</b>

The Corporation has adopted AoC's Senior Staff Remuneration Code in July 2019 and will assess pay in line with its principles in future. The remuneration package of those staff designated as Senior Post Holders, including the Principal and Chief Executive, is subject to annual review by the Remuneration Committee of the Governing Body who use benchmarking information to provide objective guidance. The Principal and Chief Executive reports to the Chair of Corporation who undertakes an annual review of their performance against the College's overall objectives using both qualitative and quantitative measures of performance.

Relationship of Principal and CEO's pay and remuneration expressed as a multiple;

	2025	2024
Principal and CEO's basic salary as a multiple of the median of all staff	5.65	5.50
Principal and CEO's total remuneration as a multiple of the median of all staff	5.94	5.67

There was no compensation for loss of office paid to former key management personnel.

The members of the Corporation other than the Accounting Officer and the staff members did not receive any payment from the College other than the reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses and costs for any specific courses incurred in the course of their duties.

### Severance payments for all staff

The College paid 10 severance payments during the year, disclosed in the following bands:

£0 - £25,000	6
£25,001 - £50,000	4
£50,001 - £100,000	-



## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### 8. Other operating expenses

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Teaching direct costs	1,422	1,052
Payments for HE course validation	571	628
Bursary support for learners	233	222
Teaching support costs	1,370	1,419
Administration and central services	2,034	1,683
Utilities, rent and insurance	1,745	1,858
Premises maintenance	1,119	720
Examination fees	1,106	976
Fees for subcontracted income	157	196
<b>Total other operating expenses</b>	<b>9,757</b>	<b>8,754</b>

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Other operating expenses include:		
Auditors' remuneration		
- financial statements audit	40	39
- other audit services provided by external auditor	2	6
- internal audit	32	28
- other audit services provided by internal auditor	-	-

### 9. Interest and other finance costs

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
On bank loans and other loans	330	370
Enhanced pension costs	51	51
<b>Total Interest and other finance costs</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>421</b>

### 10. Access and participation spending

The total of the approved expenditure in our Access and Participation Plan for the year ended 31 July 2025 was £1.76m, this amount was based on projected Higher Fee Income of £3.5m, HE Higher Fee Income for the year ended 31 July 2025 was £1.33m, the actual spend was £1.29 and a breakdown is shown below. Details of the approved plan can be found at:

[https://apis.officeforstudents.org.uk/accessplansdownloads/2024/BlackburnCollege\\_APP\\_2020-21\\_V1\\_10000747.pdf](https://apis.officeforstudents.org.uk/accessplansdownloads/2024/BlackburnCollege_APP_2020-21_V1_10000747.pdf)

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Access Investment	985	1,027
Financial support provided to students	183	199
Support for disabled students	119	148
Research and evaluation expenditure	-	-
<b>Total Access and Participation spending</b>	<b>1,287</b>	<b>1,374</b>



## **Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)**

### **11. Taxation**

The members do not believe that the College was liable for any Corporation Tax arising out of its activities during either year.

### **12. Write offs, Guarantees, Letters of Comfort and Indemnities**

The College wrote off £62.6k of debt during the year after all efforts had been exhausted.

The College did not provide any guarantees, letters of comfort or indemnities throughout the year.



## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### 13. Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold Land and Buildings Freehold £'000	Plant and Machinery £'000	Assets under Construction £'000	Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment £'000	Total £'000
Cost or valuation					
At 1 August 2024	77,636	6,712	2,072	10,598	97,018
Transfer from Assets under construction	957	-	(972)	15	-
Additions	1,504	-	1,294	2,949	5,747
Disposals	(605)	-	-	(117)	(722)
<b>At 31 July 2025</b>	<b>79,492</b>	<b>6,712</b>	<b>2,394</b>	<b>13,445</b>	<b>102,043</b>
Depreciation and Impairment					
At 1 August 2024	37,332	3,468	-	7,296	48,096
Depreciation charge for the year	2,544	193	-	1,780	4,517
Impairment charge for the year	-	-	-	597	597
Eliminated in respect of disposals	(327)	-	-	(117)	(444)
<b>At 31 July 2025</b>	<b>39,549</b>	<b>3,661</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9,556</b>	<b>52,766</b>
<b>Net book value at 31 July 2025</b>	<b>39,943</b>	<b>3,051</b>	<b>2,394</b>	<b>3,889</b>	<b>49,277</b>
Net book value at 31 July 2024	40,304	3,244	2,072	3,302	48,922

Land and buildings were valued in 1993 at depreciated replacement cost by the District Valuer. Other tangible assets inherited from the local education authority at incorporation were valued by the Corporation on a depreciated replacement cost basis with the assistance of independent professional advice.

Included within Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment are laptops that the DfE gifted to the College to support disadvantaged learners to access remote learning. The College has applied Section 34 of FRS102, which required that donated assets are measured at fair value to the College.

### 14. Investments

	2025 £	2024 £
Investment in joint venture company at cost	1	1
<b>Total Investments</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

At 31 July 2025 the College held a 7% share of the issued share capital of The Lancashire Colleges Limited. This is a company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The principle business activity of the company is to advise and assist educational institutions in respect of funds and grants that may be available to them.

The Corporation believes that the carrying value for the investments is supported by the underlying net assets.



## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### 15. Endowment assets

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Balance at 1 August 2024	60	60
Movement in the year	1	-
Balance at 31 July 2025	61	60
Represented by cash balances	61	60

### 16. Debtors

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade receivables	677	948
Prepayments and accrued income	2,467	2,283
<b>Total Debtors</b>	<b>3,144</b>	<b>3,231</b>

### 17. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Bank loans	556	556
Trade payables	1,365	1,748
Other taxation and social security	630	428
Pension creditor	401	426
Accruals and deferred income	2,794	4,744
Accrual for untaken annual leave	510	485
Deferred income - Government capital grants	2,197	1,767
Amounts owed to the DfE	-	55
<b>Total Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	<b>8,453</b>	<b>10,209</b>

### 18. Creditors: amounts falling due after one year

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Bank loans	4,672	5,228
Deferred income - Government capital grants	13,341	13,342
<b>Total Creditors: amounts falling due after one year</b>	<b>18,013</b>	<b>18,570</b>



## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### 19. Maturity of debt

Bank loans and overdrafts are repayable as follows:

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
In one year or less	556	556
Between one and two years	556	556
Between two and five years	1,668	1,668
In five years or more	2,448	3,004
<b>Total Debt</b>	<b>5,228</b>	<b>5,784</b>

A secured loan (security held against the 'Beacon Centre') of £13.9m commenced in 2013 of which £12.1m is at 5.92%, £1.8m is subject to SONIA plus margin and repayable by instalments falling due between 24 July 2013 and 23 July 2034. Amount outstanding at 31 July 2025 was £5.2m (2024 £5.8m).

### 20. Provisions

	Defined benefit obligations £'000	Enhanced Pension £'000	Other £'000	Total £'000
At 1 August 2024	-	1,058	-	1,058
Expenditure in the period	(680)	(119)	275	(524)
Transferred from Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	680	-	-	680
<b>At 31 July 2025</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>1,214</b>

Defined benefit obligations relate to the liabilities under the College's membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme. Further details are given in Note 24.

The enhanced pension provision includes £21k (2024 - £28k) in respect of former Senior Post Holders.

The enhanced pension provision relates to the cost of staff who have already left the College's employment. This provision has been recalculated in accordance with guidance issued by the funding bodies.

The principal assumptions for this calculation are:

	2025	2024
Discount Rate	5.5%	4.8%
Price Inflation	2.7%	2.8%

A provision of £275k has been recognised in respect of the College's obligation to restore leased premises, to their original condition at the end of the lease term. The provision will be reassessed annually in light of changes in condition and cost estimates.



## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### 21. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 August 2024 £'000	Cash flows £'000	Other changes £'000	At 31 July 2025 £'000
Cash and cash equivalents	16,180	(1,918)	-	14,262
Debt due within one year	(556)	556	(556)	(556)
Debt due after one year	(5,228)		556	(4,672)
Borrowings	(5,784)	556	-	(5,228)
<b>Total changes in net debt</b>	<b>10,396</b>	<b>(1,362)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9,034</b>

### 22. Capital commitments

The College had £753k of capital commitments at year end and £2,394k as assets under construction as at 31 July 2025 (31 July 2024: capital commitments of £1,206k and assets under construction of £2,072k).

### 23. Lease obligations

At 31 July 2025, the College has entered into an operating lease for premises commencing in the 2025/26 financial year. The lease includes a reduced rent period in the first year. Future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

	£'000
<b>Land and Buildings</b>	
Within one year	96
Within two to three years	312
<b>Total lease payments due</b>	<b>408</b>

The lease runs for three years from 2025/26 to 2027/28. Rent is £120k per annum, with a 50% reduction in the first year. Service charges of £36k per annum are payable throughout the lease term.

### 24. Defined benefit obligations

The College's employees belong to one of two post-employment benefit plans; the Teachers' Pension Scheme, England and Wales (TPS) for academic and related staff and the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) for non-teaching staff, which is managed by Lancashire County Council. Both are defined benefit schemes.

The pension costs are assessed in accordance with the advice of independent qualified actuaries. The latest formal actuarial valuation of the TPS was 31 March 2020 and of the LGPS 31 March 2022.

Total Pension Cost for the Year Ended	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Teachers' Pension Scheme: contributions paid	2,705	2,284
Local Government Pension Scheme:		
Contributions paid	833	1,133
FRS 102 charge	330	-
Charge to the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	1,163	1,133
Enhanced pension charge to Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	(55)	112
<b>Total pension cost for year within staff costs</b>	<b>3,813</b>	<b>3,529</b>



## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### 24. Defined benefit obligations (continued)

#### Teachers' Pension Scheme

The Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) is a statutory, contributory, defined benefit scheme, governed by the Teachers' Pension Scheme Regulations 2014. These regulations apply to teachers in schools, colleges and other educational establishments. Membership is automatic for teachers and lecturers at eligible institutions. Teachers and lecturers are able to opt out of the TPS.

The TPS is an unfunded scheme, and members contribute on a 'pay as you go basis' – these contributions, along with those made by employers, are credited to the Exchequer under arrangements governed by the above Act. Retirement and other pension benefits are paid by public funds provided by Parliament.

Under the definitions set out in FRS 102 (28.11), the TPS is a multi-employer pension plan. The College is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities of the plan.

Accordingly, the College has taken advantage of the exemption in FRS 102 and has accounted for its contributions to the scheme as if it were a defined-contribution plan. The College has set out above the information available on the plan and the implications for the College in terms of the anticipated contribution rates.

The valuation of the TPS is carried out in line with regulations made under the Public Service Pension Act 2013. Valuations credit the teachers' pension account with a real rate of return assuming funds are invested in notional investments that produce that real rate of return.

The latest actuarial review of the TPS was carried out as at 31 March 2020. The valuation report was published by the Department for Education (the Department) in October 2023. The valuation reported total scheme liabilities (pensions currently in payment and the estimated cost of future benefits) for service at the effective date of £262 billion, and notional assets (estimated future contributions together with the notional investments held at the valuation date) of £222 billion giving a notional past service deficit of £40 billion (compared to £22 billion in the 2016 valuation)

As a result of the valuation, new employer contribution rates rose from 23.68% to 28.68% from April 2024.

DfE has agreed to pay a Teachers' Pension Scheme Grant to cover the additional costs again during the 2024/25 academic year.

A full copy of the valuation report and supporting documentation can be found on the Teachers' Pension Scheme website.

The employer pension contribution paid to TPS in the year amounted to £2.705m (2024: £2.284m)

#### Local Government Pension Scheme

The LGPS is a funded defined-benefit plan, with the assets held in separate funds administered by Lancashire County Council. The total contributions made for the year ended 31 July 2025 were £1.267m, of which employer's contributions totalled £0.833m and employees' contributions totalled £0.434m. The agreed contribution rates for future years are reduced from 16.9% to 10.4% for employers from November 2024 and range from 5.5% to 10.5% for employees, depending on salary.

#### Principal Actuarial Assumptions

The following information is based upon a full actuarial valuation of the fund at 31 March 2022 updated to 31 July 2025 by a qualified independent actuary.

	At 31 July 2025	At 31 July 2024
Rate of increase in salaries	4.0%	4.1%
Future pensions increases	2.6%	2.7%
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	5.9%	4.9%
Inflation assumption (Consumer Price Index)	2.5%	2.6%



## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### 24. Defined benefit obligations (continued)

The current mortality assumptions include sufficient allowance for future improvements in mortality rates. The assumed life expectations on retirement at age 65 are:

	31 July 2025	31 July 2024
<i>Retiring today:</i>		
Males	20.9	21.0
Females	23.5	23.5
<i>Retiring in 20 years:</i>		
Males	22.0	22.2
Females	25.0	25.3
<b>Sensitivity analysis of Pension Fund Balance</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Discount rate +0.5%	(3,543)	(4,480)
Inflation rate +0.25%	1,872	2,381
Pay growth - +0.25%	292	335
Mortality assumption – 1 year increase	956	1,305

The College's share of the assets in the scheme and the expected rates of return were:

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Equities instruments	36,964	36,918
Government Bonds	82	77
Other Bonds	164	77
Property	6,803	6,578
Cash	2,459	1,084
Other	35,489	32,660
<b>Total fair value of plan assets</b>	<b>81,961</b>	<b>77,394</b>
<b>Actual return on plan assets</b>	<b>5,786</b>	<b>4,913</b>

The amount included in the Statement of Financial Position in respect of the defined benefit pension plan is as follows:

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Fair value of plan assets	81,961	77,394
Present value of plan liabilities	(49,806)	(57,185)
Present value of unfunded liabilities	(21)	(25)
<b>Net pensions asset*</b>	<b>32,134</b>	<b>20,184</b>

\*FRS 102 section 28.22 inhibits the recognition of the net defined asset only to the extent that we are able to recover the surplus through reduced contributions in the future. The surplus cannot be recovered, the balance of the net defined asset has been written off through the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure. The College has met the conditions of the requirements to recognise an asset in 2024/25. The net asset is therefore £501k.



## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### 24. Defined benefit obligations (continued)

Amounts recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure in respect of the plan are as follows:

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
<b>Amounts included in staff costs</b>		
Current service cost	1,140	1,093
Past service cost	-	-
Curtailments	-	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,140</b>	<b>1,118</b>
 <b>Amounts included in interest and other finance costs</b>		
Net interest return	1,010	975
 <b>Amount recognised in other comprehensive income</b>		
Return on pension plan assets	5,786	4,913
Changes in assumptions underlying the present value of plan liabilities	5,484	(4,235)
<b>Effect of Asset Ceiling</b>	<b>11,270</b>	<b>678</b>
<b>Amount recognised in other comprehensive income*</b>	<b>(11,449)</b>	<b>(1,653)</b>
 <b>Movement in net defined benefit asset during year</b>		
Net defined asset at 1 August	20,184	18,531
Movement in year:		
Current service cost	(1,140)	(1,093)
Employer contributions	852	1,159
Past service costs	-	-
Curtailments	-	(25)
Administration expenses	(42)	(41)
Net interest on the defined asset	1,010	975
Actuarial gain	11,270	678
	<b>32,134</b>	<b>20,184</b>
Effect of 'asset ceiling' – prior year	(20,184)	(18,531)
Effect of 'asset ceiling' – current year	(11,449)	(1,653)
<b>Net defined asset at 31 July*</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>-</b>

\*FRS 102 section 28.22 inhibits the recognition of the net defined asset only to the extent that we are able to recover the surplus through reduced contributions in the future. The surplus cannot be recovered, the balance of the net defined asset has been written off through the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure. The College has met the conditions of the requirements to recognise an asset in 2024/25. The net asset is therefore £501k.



## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### 24. Defined benefit obligations (continued)

#### Asset and Liability Reconciliation

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
<b>Changes in the present value of defined benefit obligations</b>		
<b>Defined benefit obligations at start of year</b>	57,210	54,257
Current service cost	1,140	1,093
Interest cost	2,753	2,730
Past service costs	-	-
Contributions by scheme participants	434	429
Changes in financial assumptions	(9,247)	530
Estimated benefits paid	(2,463)	(1,854)
Curtailments	-	25
<b>Defined benefit obligations at end of year</b>	<b>49,827</b>	<b>57,210</b>
<b>Changes in fair value of plan assets</b>		
<b>Fair value of plan assets at start of year</b>	77,394	72,788
Interest on plan assets	3,763	3,705
Return / (loss) on plan assets	2,023	1,208
Administration expenses	(42)	(41)
Employer contributions	852	1,159
Contributions by scheme participants	434	429
Estimated benefits paid	(2,463)	(1,854)
<b>Fair value of plan assets at end of year</b>	<b>81,961</b>	<b>77,394</b>

The College is aware of the 2023 ruling in the Virgin Media vs NTL Pension Trustee case and subsequent court of appeal ruling published in July 2024. These ruled that certain amendments made to the NTL Pension Plan were invalid because they were not accompanied by the correct actuarial confirmation. There remains significant uncertainty as to whether the judgments will result in additional liabilities for UK pension schemes, and it is possible that the Department of Work & Pensions will introduce legislation to allow changes to be certified retrospectively. A detailed review of historic documentation will be needed to determine whether the changes made by the Scheme were valid (assuming retrospective certification does not become an option), and such a review will take some time to complete. As a result, the College cannot be certain of the potential implications (if any) and therefore a sufficiently reliable estimate of any effect on the obligation cannot be made.



## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### 25. Related party transactions

Due to the nature of the College's operations and the composition of the Board of Governors being drawn from local public and private sector organisations it is inevitable that transactions will take place with organisations in which a member of the Board of Governors may have an interest. All transactions involving such organisations are conducted at arm's length and in accordance with the College's financial regulations and normal procurement procedures.

The total expenses paid to or on behalf of the Governors, including the Director of Governance, during the year was £1,952; 3 individuals (2024: £1,222). This represents travel and subsistence expenses, training and other out of pocket expenses incurred in attending Governor meetings and charity and other events in their official capacity.

No Governor has received any remuneration or waived payments from the College during the year (2024: None).

Transactions are detailed below:

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council is an organisation in which a Governor has declared influence as Key Management Personnel: the College incurred expenditure of £236k (2024 – £226k) and earned income of £856k (2024 – £654k).

Blackburn Rovers Ltd and Blackburn Rovers Community Trust are organisations in which a Governor has declared influence as Key Management Personnel, with Joint Control: the College incurred expenditure of £169k (2024 - £181k), and earned income of £1k (2024 - £nil).

East Lancashire NHS Trust is an organisation in which a Governor has declared influence as Key Management Personnel: the College incurred expenditure of £29k (2024 - £50k) and earned income of £6k (2024 - £nil).

Lancaster University is an organisation in which a Governor has declared influence as Key Management Personnel: the College incurred expenditure of £407k (2024 - £468k) (Degree validation) and earned income of £3k (2024 - £1k). The Governor is not involved in these arrangements.

Manchester College is an organisation in which a Governor has declared influence as Joint Control: the College incurred expenditure of £nil (2024 - £nil) and earned income of £nil (2024 - £4.5k).

The Lancashire Colleges Limited is an organisation in which a Governor has declared influence as Key Management Personnel: the College incurred expenditure of £5k (2024 - £5k).

Forbes Solicitors is an organisation in which a Governor has declared influence as Joint Control the College incurred expenditure of £14k (2024 - £5k) and earned income of £2k (2024 - £0.1k).

Nybble Interactive is an organisation in which a Governor has declared influence as Full Control: the College incurred expenditure of £10k (2024 - £4.5k).

Edgehill University is an organisation in which a Governor has declared influence as Key Management Personnel: the College received income of £nil (2024 - £2k).

The Lancashire Training Colleges is an organisation in which a Governor has declared influence as Director: the College earned income of £1k (2024 - £nil).

QAA is an organisation which a Governor has declared influence as Key Management Personnel: the College incurred expenditure of £4k (2024 - £10k).

Panaz is an organisation which a Governor has declared influence as Key Management Personnel: the College earned income of £nil (2024 - £0.6k).

Walton-le-Dale High School is an organisation which a Governor has declared influence as Key Management Personnel: the College earned income of £nil (2024 - £5k).



## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

Transactions with the DfE and Office for Students are detailed in notes 2, and 17.

### 26. Amounts Disbursed as agent

Learner Support Funds	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Funding body grants – bursary support (FEFM)	160	107
Funding body grants – discretionary learner support	1,076	1,172
	1,236	1,279
Disbursed to Students	(981)	(965)
Administration costs	(43)	(41)
	212	273

The college distributes 16-19 discretionary and vulnerable bursaries and Free Meals in Further Education (FEFM) funds to students as an agent for DfE.

In the accounting period ended 31 July 2025, the college received a total of £963k and disbursed £981k from DfE 16-19 discretionary and vulnerable bursaries and FEFM funding after charging £43k for administration costs.

As at 31 July 2025, the cumulative unspent 16-19 discretionary and vulnerable bursary funds and FEFM funding is £212k.

Comparatives for the accounting period ended 31 July 2024 are £947k received from DfE, £965k disbursed to learners after charging £41k for administration costs, and total cumulative unspent funds of £273k.