

# Talent and Technology

Championing Skills Development for Land Based Industries



NLBC Strategy / **2017-2022**





I am delighted to have been asked to take on the role of Chair of the National Land Based College. I have been concerned about skills and career development within our sector all my life. We need good people within the land based sector with the appropriate skills, more now than ever before with the challenges that we face; climate change, food security, and all the other competing issues, particularly in the light of Brexit.

This is a really interesting role and I'm excited to be involved and very keen to see the National Land Based College make a real difference in this whole area of skills and career progression. We need to compete with other industries and compete strongly in the market place. The establishment of the National Land Based College is a really exciting development. For the first time ever we have a single body, which will act as a catalyst for the colleges and universities to promote nationally recognised standards of achievement linked to careers development within land based professions. This is a massive opportunity to do a much better job of attracting people into these professions, than we have done in the past, because they will be able to see career opportunities in a much more transparent way than ever before.

This will be an employer led body. Courses and qualifications will be designed to make sure they are meeting employer requirements. We will then promote courses across the college and university network, so they can be taken up in large numbers by students that are keen to make these various professions their career of choice. NLBC is an essential development at this critical point in time!

## **Lord Donald Curry of Kirkharle**

NLBC Executive Chair



We live in a rapidly changing world in respect to our environment, food security, public health, increasing pressure on productivity, and now Brexit. Land based industries have an increasingly significant role in meeting these challenges, and there is a pressing need to improve workforce skills.

Our sector has a diverse range of specialisms, each requiring highly specific facilities, resources and teaching approaches. Currently, these can't all be delivered successfully from one point and so the solution was to establish a new National Land Based College (NLBC), operating as an employer led, virtual college, linked to the existing specialist land based colleges and universities.

In our mission of 'Championing Skills Development for Land Based Industries', a key focus will be delivering a world class infrastructure for intermediate and higher-level skills. We will do this by creating the education tools, driving a culture of lifelong learning and encouraging more people into careers in our sector.

As a not-for-profit, registered charity, NLBC operate collaboratively through a hub and spoke model, working closely with employers, specialist land based colleges and universities, their membership organisation Landex, and our awarding body partner City & Guilds.

We will identify skills gaps and, in response, co-create a suite of high quality, occupation-focused qualifications and training programmes, supported by digital technologies and blended learning approaches. Our operating model will balance the delivery of our own materials and services, with supporting existing centres of excellence.

We will align with existing key strategies, organisations and initiatives, and, through our hub & spoke model of working and wide stakeholder engagement, we aim to have a significant positive bearing on the development of skills in the land based sector.

We will achieve this by delivering on our four strategic priorities:

## Champion Land Based as a Professional and Progressive Career

- Attract and guide more talent and advocate the sector as a profession offering STEM careers.
- Create an NLBC careers information portal and registration scheme, linked to existing sector initiatives.
- Collaborate with other bodies to create careers frameworks and joint promotional tools.
- Endorse and showcase high quality training and development across the land based sector.

## Increase Industry Engagement in the Skills Agenda

- Ensure employers are fully engaged through our NLBC Board, Council and Industry Skills Groups.
- Collaborate with employers and others, to define the required skills, knowledge and behaviours required.
- Form strategic partnerships with key organisations around skills agenda.
- Drive improved and more productive links between research and innovation establishments.
- Work with industry sector bodies to ensure that CPD needs are provided nationally.

## Develop Qualifications to Deliver the Skills Employers Need

- Work closely with stakeholders to develop a suite of land based qualifications (entry to level 7), including CPD programmes, to meet employer needs.
- Liaise closely with the Institute of Apprenticeship, to steer our qualifications development.
- Adopt the best examples of education from other technical routes.

## Maximise Digital and Flexible Learning Opportunities

- Develop blended learning solutions for the delivery of higher level skills.
- Establish an NLBC Registration Scheme linked to wider industry initiatives and schemes.
- Provide a web based digital hub, linked to the best existing skills resources.
- Maximise the use of innovative digital technologies, including those of our partner City & Guilds
- Engage with a global audience through our digital and social media channels.

We are asking ever more of our land based industries. There are increasing concerns about food security, water shortages, public health, biodiversity conservation, and a drive for increased productivity (see graph below). In June 2016, our government committed to withdraw the UK's membership of the European Union and there remains a great deal of uncertainty around how the UK economy will respond to the challenges we will face with Brexit and the UK outside the EU. The challenges our sector faces are growing and it is more essential than ever for our sector to build a high level of skills and resilience to meet them as they arise.

These factors all raise the profile and importance of land based industries, which are now regarded as increasingly significant, not only as custodians of the countryside (75% of land in Britain is currently maintained by Farmers and Estate Managers), but also on economic and social grounds. The UK government has identified agriculture as 'one of our major industries', and 'Agriculture, Environmental and Animal care' (i.e. land based) has been identified as one of the 15 specialist vocational routes as part of the delivery of technical skills, through the UK government's new Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education Plan.

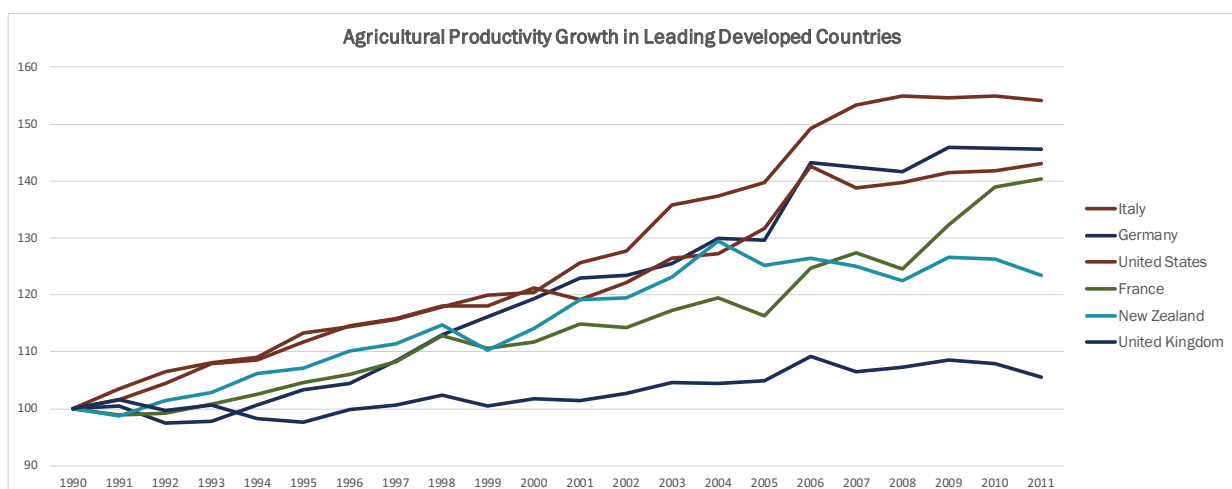
There is a pressing need to attract and guide more talent into our sector. An estimated 600,000 new entrants are required to replace the existing workforce by 2020 (Lantra 2014), with a higher level of skills and competencies required to capitalise on technological advances. The UK Government has committed to recruit 3 million new apprenticeships by 2020, with the push boosted by a new Apprenticeship Levy on businesses with a payroll of over £3 million. It is crucial that the land based sector maximises this opportunity and delivers the centralised information hub for training, careers and jobs, which the AgriSkills Strategy (2013) stated is long overdue for our sector.

The land based sector has a diverse range of industries, each requiring specific facilities, resources, equipment and teaching approaches to deliver the skills required effectively. For example, the interdependence of different parts of the AgriFood sector (from primary production through to processing, storage and distribution) demands an integrated approach, so that workforce skills are developed in a coherent way.

A new employer led National Land Based College (NLBC) has been established to address these challenges, linked intrinsically to the existing specialist land based colleges and universities. NLBC aims to strengthen the sector, building resilience, and supporting associated industries by ensuring we attract the right talent to work in the sector and that the current and future workforce has access to the best possible qualifications and professional development opportunities in a co-ordinated manner. The NLBC will draw on the best regional and sector expertise, enhancing these and adding coherence and consistency, developing collaborations and partnerships across the sector.

Our focus is delivering a world class infrastructure for Continued Professional Development (CPD), intermediate and higher-level skills, linked closely to knowledge exchange activities. We will draw on and enhance the best current expertise, adding coherence and consistency, developing collaborations and partnerships across the sector. This will enable us to achieve our mission of 'Championing Skills Development for Land Based Industries' and our key ambitions to:

- Build world leading land based education;
- Drive an evolution in lifelong learning to drive productivity and growth in our sector;
- Reposition the land based sector as a great place to work and have a dynamic career.





## The Case for Change:

- A rapidly changing world in respect to food security, environmental sustainability and public health.
- Land based industries are increasingly significant in meeting these global and UK challenges.
- There's a pressing need for higher skills to improve our industry's overall quality and productivity.
- The UK is lagging behind many of our competitors in terms of our workforce training and skills.
- Our land based sector has a diverse range of specialisms, training and skills requirements.

## The Solution:

- A new employer led, virtual, National Land Based College.
- Draw on the best current expertise, enhancing and adding coherence and consistency.
- Develop collaborations and partnerships across the sector.
- Maximise the use of learning technologies and blended learning to aid skills development.
- Create a world class infrastructure for CPD, intermediate and higher level skills.

## Core Principles

The following define how NLBC will operate:

- **Networking:** We will communicate and build relationships, inspiring conversations and connections.
- **Collaborating:** We will support, convene, partner and facilitate joint working.
- **Innovating:** We will anticipate trends, 'future proof' skills and fully embrace technology.

## Vision

- UK land based education is world leading and shaped by the needs of employers.
- A stronger life-long learning culture exists across the land based skills continuum, resulting in improvements in workforce, productivity, quality and ultimately profit for the whole sector.
- Land based is an attractive career option, with individuals provided with the required skills, knowledge, development and guidance throughout their professional careers.

*“ I am really passionate about the skills agenda and I'm delighted you have brought NLBC to fruition. This industry suffers from an image problem and a perception problem. We have to change that perception and encourage more people to choose land based as an exciting career choice. I really think it is great that NLBC has been established to take forward this task. I look forward to seeing NLBC going from strength to strength and seeing many more new people entering our vitally important and exciting industry. ”*

**George Eustice,**  
Minister of State for Agriculture, Fisheries & Food



NLBC will be employer led, acting as a focal point for land based industries, and involving employers and business organisations in determining our future strategy, products and services. NLBC will ensure the best possible training and development opportunities are available, by linking with employers, industry bodies, specialist land based colleges and universities, their member organisation Landex, and awarding bodies including our partner City & Guilds. We will work with City & Guilds and our wider stakeholders to create high quality, relevant, qualifications and training. We will identify the gaps which will prompt the development of new training and qualifications, and enable industry to set the standards against which performance will be judged. NLBC will champion and facilitate joint working on important skills initiatives including Trailblazer Apprenticeships, careers promotion and professional recognition schemes.

NLBC has a relatively small central hub in terms of infrastructure and staffing and we will achieve our mission as a virtual college, working with a great many

stakeholders through a hub and spoke, integrated approach. Our central hub will be supported by centres of excellence around the UK, acting as venues for delivering the face-to-face elements. These 'spokes' will provide the geographical coverage that is crucial for ensuring local access to a relevant range of Continued Professional Development (CPD) opportunities. They will be a mix of colleges, universities and industry workplaces, each with its own expert support network to ensure close employer involvement in planning and delivery. This type of model provides the best fit for our widely-distributed industry with a large proportion of smaller enterprises.

Our NLBC qualifications and courses will be developed in partnership with industry bodies using a variety of models, and delivered by either college staff and/or employers as appropriate. Our operating model will strike a balance between the delivery of our own materials, utilising digital technologies and a range of blended learning techniques (i.e. a mix of on-line and face-to-face delivery), to support the face-to-face learning at existing centres of excellence. We aim to be flexible in our approach, adaptable to cope with the varied needs of rural enterprises, and deliver the best of UK training on an international scale. We will not duplicate existing programmes offered by our member colleges and universities, instead, we will seek to increase the overall uptake of training and education in the UK through our hub and spoke approach.

The use of digital technologies is fundamental to our operation model, with on-line and flexible learning methods being one of our unique selling points. Our aim is to drive the digital skills agenda for land based education by co-developing, hosting and linking to the best on-line resources through our website containing:

- Information on NLBC: Our mission, people, governance, strategy, partners and members.
- A portal to information and resources on skills, courses, education and training.
- Links to our social media, on-line learning and NLBC registration Scheme.
- Careers information, guidance, pathways and support materials.

*“ The National Farmers' Union is supportive of the concept of the National Land Based College. We look forward to engaging in the work of the NLBC in championing skills development for land based industries and increasing engagement in the skills agenda. We believe the sector is an exciting career choice offering a huge variety of opportunities for highly skilled and ambitious people, and we support the NLBC in ensuring there are attractive career prospects underpinned by high-quality training opportunities for new entrants. We believe the NLBC can play a significant role in areas which can contribute to a productive, resilient and sustainable agricultural sector. ”*

**Minette Batters**  
Deputy President, National  
Farmers Union (NFU)





# OUR OPERATING MODEL

## Land Based Industries



## Education Providers **Landex**

Land Based Colleges  
Aspiring To Excellence



## NLBC Members



## Priority 1

### Champion land based as a professional and progressive career:

NLBC will champion all of land based as having high-quality professions, acting as a strong advocate for the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths) career opportunities on offer. We will draw together existing careers and skills initiatives to develop careers frameworks and promotional tools, joining up the land based skills continuum to attract and guide sufficient people of the right calibre into the sector. Through our digital channels, we will endorse and showcase professions and *high-quality* delivery across the #LandSkills agenda.



#### The major outcomes by 2022 will be:

- Increased STEM recognition, a higher regard for land based as a profession and more talent attracted and guided to work in our sector.
- The land based sector working far more collaboratively around careers promotion and guidance.
- An established NLBC skills portal and Registration Scheme, linked to existing initiatives, and providing inspiration, careers guidance and tracking,
- An improved 'pipeline' of individuals entering the sector and graduating with higher level skills.
- The enhanced international reputation of UK land based education and training.
- NLBC showcases and endorses high-quality skills development practice by employers, education providers and individuals.



## Priority 2

### Increase industry engagement in the skills agenda:

As an employer led organisation our primary aim is to connect effectively with industry and, by doing so, employers have a far greater opportunity to lead the development of skills for their sector. It is core to our success that we work closely with employers, existing skills initiatives, groups and forums, to ensure that the skills required are provided nationally.



#### The major outcomes by 2022 will be:

- Wider industry and employer engagement via NLBC Board, Council and Industry Skills Groups.
- Clear, agreed view of the skills, knowledge and behaviours required and the skills development priorities for all sectors across land based.
- Increased industry knowledge of the qualifications delivered by colleges and universities, with a far greater understanding of graduates' competencies across the qualification spectrum.
- Closer working with industry bodies, government departments and research and knowledge transfer organisations, to ensure that CPD needs are provided nationally.
- Employers far more involved in agreeing priorities, developing qualifications, delivering best practice and supporting training and flexible learning approaches in the workplace.
- Strategic partnerships formed with key organisations, which drive more productive links between industry and those designing and delivering education and training.

## Priority 3

### Develop qualifications to deliver the skills employers need:

NLBC will co-develop a suite of high quality land based qualifications and industry endorsed training programmes, ensuring that the current and future requirements for a range of skills levels are provided nationally. Our partnerships will enable faster qualifications development and clear progression opportunities for graduates. We will increase engagement with employers and academic staff, liaise closely with the Institute for Apprenticeships, and adopt the best examples of education from other technical routes to help steer the development and delivery of land based qualifications and apprenticeships.



#### The major outcomes by 2022 will be:

- A suite of occupation-focused, NLBC endorsed qualifications developed across land based, including Apprenticeship Standards – all designed to meet employer needs.
- A programme of industry endorsed, UK-wide CPD training programmes for higher level skills.
- Closer alignment between college and work based technical education and training, involving industry specialists in the delivery of training, to complement college/university expertise.
- Increased engagement in qualifications development from academic staff in the specialist land based colleges & universities.
- Graduates are better equipped with the knowledge and skills required for the future.
- High international demand for UK land based qualifications and training.



## Priority 4

### Maximise digital and flexible learning opportunities:

NLBC will be the virtual college for the land based sector, utilising a range of digital tools to raise the overall quality of delivery and accessibility of learning. NLBC will deliver the solution through hub and spoke partnership working and the development of excellent learning tools, maximising the use of innovative digital technologies, including those of our partner City & Guilds. The delivery of flexible and blended learning (a mixture of face-to-face and online), in a way that meets the needs of the employer and the learner, will be core to our success.



### The major outcomes by 2022 will be:

- The NLBC web platform is the go-to place for information on land based skills, with our digital channels maintaining high traffic and stimulating connections and wider engagement.
- Land based technical education is supported by industry endorsed, standardised learning materials and approaches, supported by an NLBC endorsed virtual learning environment.
- Blended learning is highly developed and resourced, maximising best use of digital technologies and facilitating global programme delivery.
- Learners are connected via the NLBC Registration Scheme, linked to colleges & universities, existing industry schemes, and interfaced with online learning and career tracking software.
- Increased international delivery; both through recruitment of overseas students studying land based subjects in the UK, and international students engaging in blended learning.

An estimated  
**60,000**  
new entrants are required in our  
sector to replace the existing  
workers by **2020**.



Over  
**41,000**  
learners



studied an  
Agriculture,  
Horticulture or  
Animal Care  
**FE qualification**  
in 2015/16.

Over  
**15,000**  
**HE students**

participated in  
**Agriculture**  
and related  
subjects  
in 2014/15.



**46% of rural  
businesses**



aim to **increase the skills**  
of **their workforce** over the  
next three years.





**48%**  
**of people**



working in  
**agriculture,**  
**forestry** and  
**fishing** are  
**self-employed** –  
the highest rate of  
all sectors.



**ONLY**

**40%**  
**of employees**



in **land based industries**  
receive training each year –  
the **lowest** of all sectors.



**‘Agriculture, Environmental  
and Animal Care’**

has been identified as one of the  
**15 specialist** vocational routes  
in the Government Skills Plan.



**72%**  
**of horticultural  
businesses**

are unable  
to fill  
**skilled  
vacancies**



NLBC has aligned with key strategies and policies that have a major bearing on the skills agenda for the land based sector, these include, but are not limited to:

- AgriSkills Strategy for Agriculture and Horticulture (February 2010).
- Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing: Sector Skills Assessment 2012 (UKCES).
- Government Agri-Tech Strategy, 2013.
- The UK Land-based and Environmental Sector – Skills Assessment Update (Lantra 2014),
- National (Scotland) Strategy for Land-Based Education and Training (2015).
- State of Rural Services Report (SRSR, 2016).
- Government Post-16 Skills Plan (2016) and Institute For Apprenticeships (IFA).
- AHDB Strategy 2017-20 – Inspiring Success (Nov 2016).

“ Many people, organisations, committees and working groups have identified the need for and benefits of a more skilled agricultural workforce - from junior apprentice right up to proprietor/managing director. With millions now being invested in R&D through AgriTech and the game changing decision to leave the EU, there can never have been a more critical time to gear up the skills of the industry to make best of these opportunities. An employer led National Land Based College will be a critical part of the mix that helps ensure those opportunities are realised. ”

**Richard Longthorp**

Chair - AgriSkills Forum

“ Skills development and inspiring the next generation are two of the greatest challenges and opportunities facing our industry. The AHDB values the vital work of the NLBC and looks forward to supporting Leigh and his team. We see a focus on skills as key to building a world class industry. ”

**Jane King**

Chief Executive, Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB)







**||** The set-up of NLBC is aligned with the Government's new Technical Education Plan and their defined route of 'Agriculture, Environmental and Animal Care' (land based) within it. NLBC aims to have positive impact across all the skills needed by the land based sector, with a particular focus on strengthening links between industry and education, developing the high quality qualifications and training employers need, and providing a digital hub for land based careers and skills. NLBC is ideally situated as an industry led, not-for-profit organisation, working through partnerships and collaborations in a hub & spoke way. This puts us in a unique and exciting position to facilitate joint working and collaboration, enabling NLBC to truly be the 'National College' for our sector and the trusted, go-to place for land based skills information and guidance. Please engage with us and help us achieve our vision. **||**

**Leigh Morris**  
CEO - NLBC

## Ways industry, employers and educators can get involved with NLBC:

- Join our NLBC Board, Council and/or Industry Skills Groups.
- Employ and train apprentices in your workplace.
- Sponsor NLBC and the work we do.
- Engage with specialist land based colleges and universities – provide students with the opportunity to engage with your business through practical experience, visits or talks.
- Connect to NLBC through our website and digital channels.
- Advocate and champion NLBC as the 'National College' for your sector.





NLBC joins industry with education to develop qualifications and training for the land based sector. For us, land based is anything related to animals, plants, farming and our environment. We work digitally to champion careers and education, provide relevant information, and build networks to develop workforce skills.



c/o Rural Innovation Centre • Stoneleigh Park • Kenilworth • CV8 2LG  
T: 02476 996 390 • E: [enquiries@nlbc.uk](mailto:enquiries@nlbc.uk) • [www.nlbc.uk](http://www.nlbc.uk) • @NLBC\_UK  
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