

Health Education Initiative- Bolton College

HIGHLY COMMENDED - PARTNERSHIP PROJECT OF THE YEAR



Bolton College leads an innovative Health Education Initiative funded by the Local Skills Improvement Fund, bringing together nine FE colleges, NHS trusts, NHS England, and local partners to address healthcare workforce shortages in Greater Manchester.

The project features employer-led training, digital skills assessment tools for NHS staff, and cutting-edge Anatomage virtual dissection tables that revolutionise anatomy education. Flexible micro-credential courses support learners balancing work and study, enhancing skills across the healthcare sector.

Bolton College also drives regional collaboration with training frameworks and knowledge-sharing across colleges, ensuring sustainable impact.



This holistic approach strengthens career pathways and benefits learners, employers, and the community, setting a new benchmark for partnership-led healthcare training.

How has the Local Skills Improvement Fund investment transformed your facilities and learning technologies?

The LSIF investment enabled the installation of state-of-the-art Anatomage Tables, giving students access to immersive, hands-on virtual dissection technology. This innovation bridges the gap between theory and practice, improving technical understanding and clinical confidence.

It has also supported the development of micro-credential courses in anatomy and physiology and advanced simulation-based teaching methods, creating modernised learning environments across the Greater Manchester Colleges Group.

In what ways has upskilling teaching staff impacted the quality of education and training provided?

Bolton College introduced a Bronze, Silver, and Gold training framework that has upskilled 18 staff across the Greater Manchester Colleges Group. This structured professional development ensures that teaching staff are equipped with the latest clinical and digital knowledge, which enhances classroom delivery, builds long-term capacity for high-quality education, and guarantees that students benefit from advanced, industry-relevant learning experiences.

How do you ensure your training remains fully aligned with the latest industry advancements?

Training provision is co-designed with NHS Trusts, local government, and employers, ensuring it meets sector-specific demands. The digital skills assessment tool developed by Bolton College directly evaluates NHS staff competencies, allowing training to be tailored to evolving industry needs.

Regular collaboration with partners such as Bolton NHS Foundation Trust and The Christie NHS Foundation Trust ensures curricula stay current with the latest healthcare technologies and practices.

What positive outcomes have learners and apprentices experienced through this partnership?

Learners now benefit from immersive digital learning via Anatomage tables, improving their employability and confidence. Apprentices and students have clearer career pathways from entry-level training through to higher education, apprenticeships, and employment in the NHS.

Flexible micro-credentials support both school leavers and career changers, while job readiness and technical proficiency have improved significantly. This has strengthened learners' progression routes and overall employability.

Can you share how the project has supported upskilling for existing NHS staff?

The digital skills assessment tool provides a structured way to measure and address gaps in digital literacy among NHS staff. Tailored training supports professionals in adapting to modern medical technologies, improving both efficiency and patient care.

In addition, micro-credential courses and flexible upskilling opportunities have helped staff progress in their careers while meeting the sector's demand for digital and clinical competencies.

What long-term benefits do you foresee this initiative bringing to Greater Manchester's healthcare sector and community?

This initiative will create a sustainable healthcare training model that reduces reliance on external recruitment, strengthens workforce retention, and builds a resilient local talent pipeline. By equipping learners and NHS staff with high-demand skills, the programme improves healthcare services, boosts community access to training, and supports economic growth in the region. It positions Greater Manchester as a leader in innovative, partnership-driven healthcare education.

"We are delighted that our Health Education Initiative has been recognised with a Highly Commended award at the GM Skills Awards. This achievement reflects the strength of our partnerships with NHS Trusts, local authorities, employers, and our fellow Greater Manchester colleges. Together, we have created innovative training solutions that address critical workforce shortages and transform the way healthcare education is delivered."

"At Bolton College, we are committed to ensuring that learners, apprentices, and NHS staff gain the skills and confidence they need to succeed in a rapidly changing sector. This recognition is a testament to the dedication of our people and partners, and to the shared vision of building a highly skilled healthcare workforce that will benefit Greater Manchester for years to come."

CATHERINE LANGSTRETH
Executive Director of Strategy
& Growth at Bolton College