

Public Consultation Feedback



Proposed Transfer of the Leek campus of Buxton & Leek College to NSCG.

NSCG | NEWCASTLE AND STAFFORD COLLEGES GROUP

 UNIVERSITY OF DERBY

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Introduction

Firstly, we would like to thank everyone who contributed directly to the public consultation regarding the future of the Leek campus of Buxton & Leek College.

The public consultation took place between Monday 7 April to Monday 28 April 2025.

The consultation period provided an opportunity for key stakeholders of both institutions to share their views on the proposed transfer of ownership of the Leek campus of Buxton & Leek College, part of the University of Derby to NSCG with effect from 01 August 2025.

We are pleased to report that the majority of respondents were in favour of the proposal, and the exercise has reaffirmed joint ambitions to complete the transfer in time for the start of the next academic year. This report sets out and summarises the responses received during the consultation period. We have taken note of the positive comments, concerns and questions raised, and all of the comments will inform our ongoing planning and discussions.

We recognise that the consultation is just the starting point, and that there is much work to do to ensure the transfer is successful. However, NSCG is committed to maintaining a further education presence in Leek, with long-term plans to bring an enhanced curriculum that focuses on the needs of the community and the regional economy, building upon provision already in place and securing a stable and well-founded future for further education in Leek.

We thank you for your support and contribution.



Craig Hodgson
Principal & Chief Executive, NSCG



Professor Kathryn Mitchell CBE DL
Vice-Chancellor & Chief Executive,
University of Derby

Responses to the Public Consultation

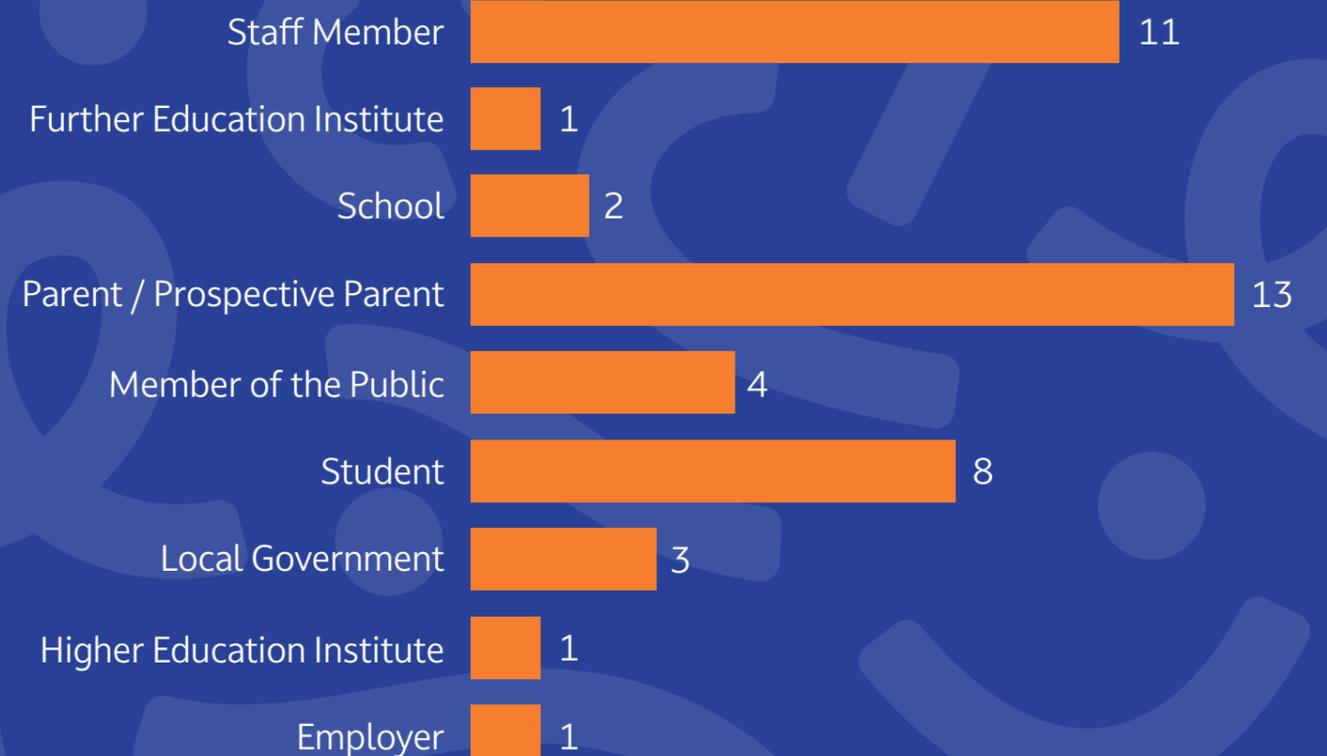


44 responses received

38 responses via online form

5 responses via email

1 letter of support





“Colleges play a vital role in **building brighter futures** for their students, for their staff, and for their local communities.”

Do you support the proposed transfer of the Leek campus, part of Buxton & Leek College, to NSCG?

In summary:

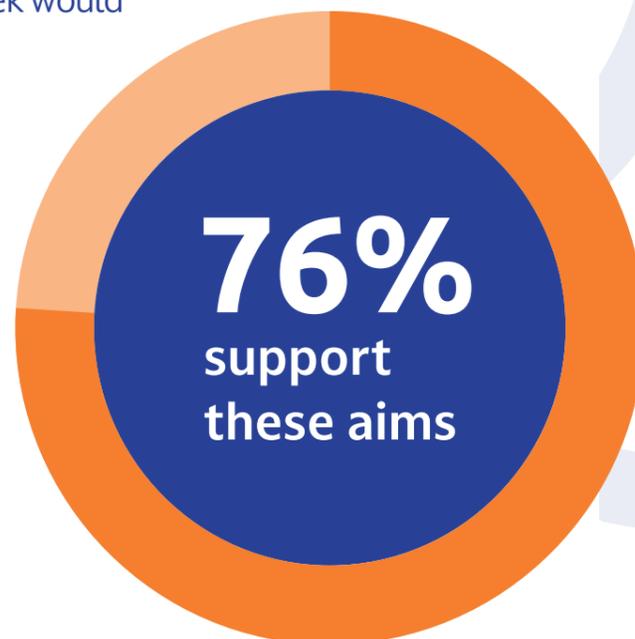
- The majority of respondents supported the transfer.
- 9 out of the 38 website responses came from staff, all of whom supported the transfer, making them the largest group in support of the proposal.
- 13 of the 38 website responses came from parents, carers or prospective parents, 7 of whom expressed concerns linked to course continuity and transport between sites.



NSCG, including Leek College, plans to share good practice across campuses in order to further enhance the quality of learner and stakeholder experiences. Do you support these aims?

In summary:

- The vast majority of respondents supported the aim of sharing good practice in order to further enhance the quality of learner and stakeholder experiences.
- 24% of respondents did not support this aim, and the majority of this group came from the view point that courses would be transferred to Newcastle, that there would be an expectation to travel between campuses, or that the campus in Leek would close. This is not the case, NSCG is committed to maintaining, enhancing and indeed growing provision in Leek, and there are no plans to close courses that have viable class sizes, or transport learners between sites. All courses advertised to run from Leek in September 2025 will be delivered as planned, subject to numbers.



Comments included:

“As an employer we have worked positively with NSCG and would welcome the knowledge and skills investment in Leek.”

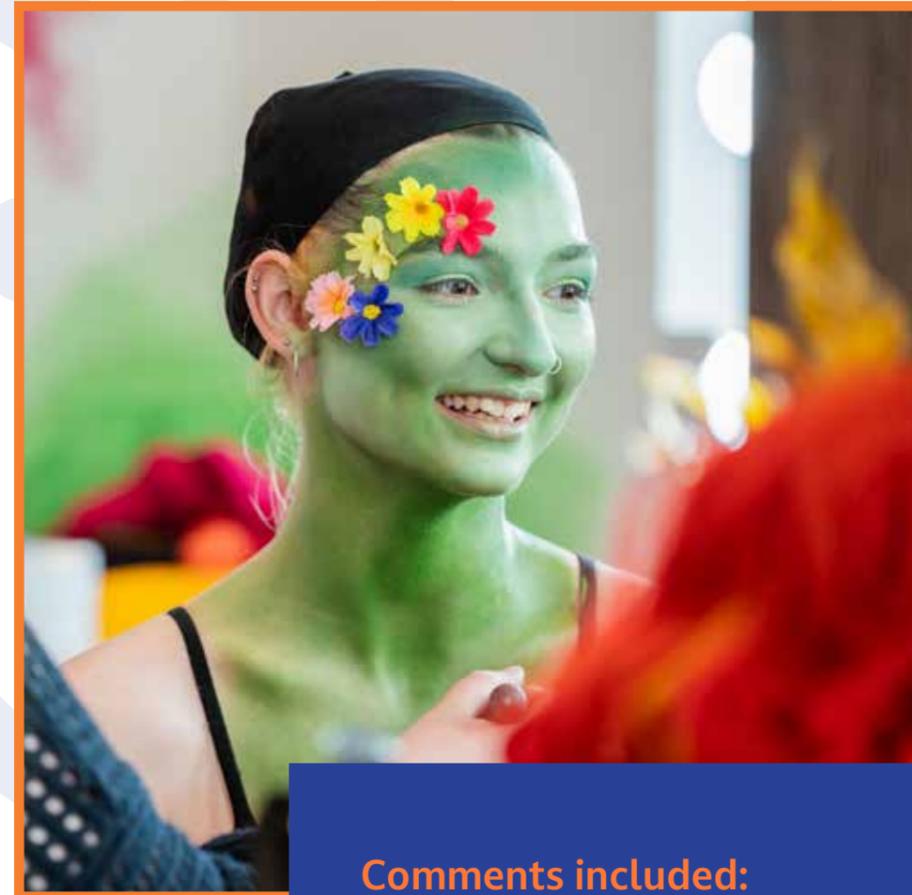
“I am a parent of twins, one already at Newcastle College, one who is at Buxton & Leek College. It is my opinion that Leek campus can only benefit from a merger with an already outstanding college.”

“As a retired staff member from Leek, I feel everyone has something to gain from this, ensuring that the young people of Staffordshire and Staffordshire Moorlands have great learning opportunities for their future.”

“Yes I fully support this merger, I feel this would be a huge benefit to young people and the town of Leek.”



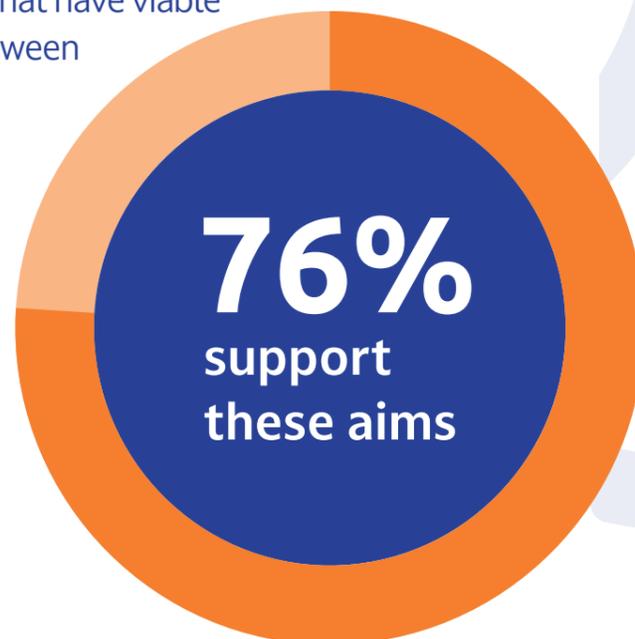
NSCG, including Leek College, will focus on innovation, access to quality learning and being a source of pride for our local communities. Do you support these aims?



In summary:

- The vast majority of respondents supported this aim.
- The majority of those not supporting the aim came the view point that courses would be transferred to Newcastle or cancelled, that there would be an expectation to travel between campuses, or that the campus in Leek would close. This is not the case, NSCG is committed to maintaining, enhancing and indeed growing provision in Leek, and there are no plans to close courses that have viable class sizes, or transport learners between any of the College campuses.

All courses advertised to run from Leek in September 2025 will be delivered as planned, subject to numbers.



Comments included:

“Leek College will highly benefit from quality education from an outstanding college! As an ex-employee at Leek College, I think this is the best move for the College, as a parent I would send my child to Leek following the merger.”

“Leek is a very proud town; please give us a college to be proud of.”

“I think as long as students can continue to work from the Leek campus and not have to travel to Newcastle or Stafford then this will be beneficial to the students and our local area”

“Please remember Leek and Buxton are rural communities and therefore have a different culture to large urban areas.”

63%

felt they could be affected



Do you think anybody, including students or staff will be adversely affected by the proposal?

In summary:

- 63% of respondents felt that learners or staff may be adversely affected by the proposal, and the majority of comments linked to uncertainty about jobs, uncertainty around the course offering at Leek, the need for more information and better communication.

Comments included:

“If this is handled sensitively, staff will retain their pride in Leek College with both students and staff benefitting from enhanced opportunities and financial stability.”

“This will affect my ability to complete my degree.”

“I don’t think so. I think a college bus would be even more useful in the future so people in Leek can choose to go to Newcastle College should they wish to travel between campuses”.

“I feel there will be course amalgamations, meaning staff cuts and pupils being forced to travel into Newcastle. We choose to live rurally and do not wish to enter the metropolis”.

“Have answered yes as I can’t really see into the future! I’m confident that disruption will be kept to a minimum”.

“There has been no information provided about the impact of this proposal on the courses that have been advertised at Buxton & Leek College. It’s likely that the benefits associated with the Leek and Buxton partnership will be affected - such as the transport links - but no detail has been disclosed.”

“Change always brings about a period of ‘storming and norming’ and I think NSCG should expect that, but in the longer term I think the merger is of huge benefit to both institutions.”

“While it is inevitable that some staff members will be impacted by this merger, and I may be among those adversely affected, the overarching priority must be the welfare of the students and the long-term sustainability of the College, which are crucial for the future development of the region.”



Student focused questions / concerns.

I am a progressing student based at Leek, will my course continue as planned?

We would expect that continuing students, who are progressing on to their next year of study on courses delivered from the Leek campus will be able to do so as planned, subject to viable class sizes.

I'm concerned that the campus in Leek will close and course provision will move to Newcastle

There are no plans to close the Leek campus, in fact quite the opposite. The intention is to honour all programmes advertised to run from Leek in September 2025 (subject to numbers) and then review and look for opportunities to expand the curriculum offering for September 2026 onwards.

I am a new student, will courses be running in Leek as advertised, starting in September?

Learners in the Moorlands have a range of options from which to choose for their post-16 education, and we are specifically committed to growing and developing provision in Leek.

Courses advertised to run from September 2025 will do so, subject to numbers. We want to give local students an outstanding choice to consider, offering a broad, inclusive post 16 education.

My child is starting college in September, and I need more information on their course and what is happening.

If the consultation summary has not answered your queries, we would advise you to come along to the next Leek campus open event on 21 June for further advice and guidance.

Will there be a direct college bus running from Leek to the Newcastle campus?

There are no plans to offer college funded transport between the Leek and Newcastle campus.

Will there be transport in place between the Buxton and Leek campuses?

There are no plans to offer college funded transport between the Leek and Buxton campus.

I'm concerned that my course will be transferred to Newcastle and I will be asked to travel.

There are no plans to transfer any courses to Newcastle. Students based at Leek will be taught at Leek and not be made to travel to Newcastle, or any other campus.

How will the reduction from a dual site to single site be addressed (for learners who attend both Buxton and Leek campuses)?

Discussions are ongoing between both parties to ensure that there will be smooth transition arrangements in place to minimise disruption for learners.



Staff focused questions / concerns.

I am an apprentice and interested in understanding how TUPE will affect my position?

Will there be support for those currently undertaking apprenticeships or working towards teaching qualifications?

Staff are worried about the uncertainty facing their jobs.

Subject to a formal agreement being reached, we will ensure that all staff, including apprentices are consulted regarding the transfer, and this will include an opportunity to discuss and address individual concerns.

We will continue to support staff and apprentices who are part way through their qualifications.

Summary and Next Steps



Both NSCG and the University of Derby are grateful for the responses received during the consultation process, including emails and letters of support from key stakeholders.

All information received will be fed in to the ongoing planning and due diligence process.

We have taken in to account the views of learners, parents, carers, staff, employers, local government representatives and other key stakeholders, and are hopeful that discussions regarding the transfer of the Leek campus, part of the University of Derby, will continue to progress positively.

Both parties will keep key stakeholder groups updated on the progress of discussions.

Please direct any further queries to:
leek@nscg.ac.uk