

Zoom meeting at 4.30pm

**AGENDA**

		Type	Lead
1	Apologies and Declarations of interest	Discussion	Ross Martin
2	Minutes and Matters Arising of Meeting of 22 October 2020	Approval	Ross Martin

(Elements of paper 2 are withheld from publication on the Forth Valley College website under Section 33 Commercial Interests and the Economy of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.)

3	Minutes of Committee Meetings: HR Committee – 5 November 2020 Finance Committee – 17 November 2020 Audit Committee – 17 November 2020	Noting Noting Noting	Davie Flynn Ken Richardson Lorna Dougall
4	Principal's Report	Discussion	Ken Thomson

(Elements of paper 4 are withheld from publication on the Forth Valley College website under Section 33 Commercial Interests and the Economy of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.)

5	Chairs Update (Verbal)	Discussion	Ross Martin
6	Student Association Report	Discussion	Andrew Smirthwaite

(Elements of paper 6 are withheld from publication on the Forth Valley College website under Section 38 Personal Information of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.)

**STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

7	Food Hub	Presentation	Craig Anderson/Ype Vanderschaaf
8	Tackling Racism	Discussion	Anna Vogt/Monica Medina
9	Strategic Partnership with SERC	Discussion	Helen Young

(Elements of paper 9 are withheld from publication on the Forth Valley College website under Section 36 Confidentiality of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.)

**GOVERNANCE**

10 Annual Report and Financial Statements 2019/20 Approval Alison Stewart

(Elements of paper 10 are withheld from publication on the Forth Valley College website under Section 27 Information Intended for Future Publication of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.)

11 External Auditor Annual Report and Letter of Representation Approval Alison Stewart

(Paper 11 is withheld from publication on the Forth Valley College website under Section 27 Information Intended for Future Publication of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.)

12 Audit Committee Chair's Report to the Board of Management Approval Lorna Dougall

13 Board Committees Membership Approval Alison Stewart

14 External Governance Effectiveness Review (verbal) Discussion David Archibald  
HLA Henderson Loggie

15 Review of Risk

16 Any other competent Business

**FOR NOTING**

Sector Response to SFC Review Noting All  
College of the Future Noting All

**Zoom Meeting, (Commencing at 4.30pm)**

Present: Ross Martin (Chair)  
Dr Ken Thomson  
Hazel Burt  
Andrew Caldwell  
Andrew Carver  
Lorna Dougall  
Davie Flynn (Vice Chair)  
Katherine Graham  
Jennifer Hogarth  
Liam McCabe  
Alistair McKean  
Ken Richardson  
Aleksandrs Petrovskis, Forth Valley Student Association Vice President (FVSAVP)  
Andrew Smirthwaite, Forth Valley Student Association President (FVSAP)

Apologies: Naila Akram  
Trudi Craggs (Vice Chair)  
Beth Hamilton

In Attendance: Andrew Lawson, Depute Principal and Chief Operating Officer (DPCOO)  
David Allison, Vice Principal, Information Services and Communications (VPISC)  
Alison Stewart, Vice Principal Finance and Corporate Affairs (VPFCA)  
Stephen Jarvie, Corporate Governance and Planning Officer and Deputy Board Secretary (CGPO)  
Senga McKerr, Head of Finance (HOF) for item B/20/007  
Jennifer Tempny, Director of Strategic Partnerships and Business Development (DSPBD) for item B/20/008  
James Aston, Head of Business Transformation (HBT) for item B/20/009

**B/20/001 Apologies and Declarations of interest**

As noted above

**B/20/002 Minutes and Matters Arising of Meeting of 6 August 2020**

The minutes of 6 August 2020 were approved.

**B/19/102 SMT Update**

The VPISC noted members had requested a review of whether home location had impacted on attainment levels. He reported that overall, there had not been a correlation between areas of higher deprivation and lower results. He also confirmed that this had been compared to the previous year's data and no trends had been identified.

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**B/20/003 Minutes of Committee Meetings**

**Finance Committee 22 September 2020**

The Chair of the Finance committee reported it had been a good meeting and that the substantive item discussed is included in the agenda for this meeting.

**Audit Committee 5 October 2020**

The Chair of the Audit Committee outlined discussions on the addendum to the external auditor's audit plan which has been submitted for consideration. She reported there were queries on the assessment of the estate and the Committee recommended keeping a watch on any additional costs arising from this work.

She also highlighted the private meeting between members and the auditors, as per usual practice.

**Learning & Student Experience 8 October 2020**

The Chair of the Learning and Student Experience Committee reported on another positive meeting.

He highlighted a report the Committee received on the College's new Digital Skills project and noted that this was both going to be a standing agenda item for the Committee as well as a topic for discussion at the February 2021 Board strategic Session.

He informed members that there had been a reported increase in both retention and achievement in 2019-20, a notable success in the increasingly testing operational environment. He noted early concerns regarding student numbers for 2020/21 had not materialised and thanked the staff and students for their work over a challenging period. He outlined some of the ways in which the College has reached this positive position and also outlined the developments for the PIPT system going forward to support future decision making.

He also discussed the College's virtual graduation activity and the materials that had been sent to graduating students. He noted that both staff members of the Board as well as the CGPO were graduates this year.

**B/20/004 Principal's Report**

The Principal noted earlier comments regarding staff workload as we adapt to and deliver in a new environment and confirmed a report on how SMT are managing this would be brought to the upcoming meeting of the HR Committee.

The Principal presented a report on his activity since the last meeting of the Board of Management.

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He reported on the national level work being undertaken by himself, the DPCOO and other senior staff to support sector ambitions and liaising with Scottish Government and other key stakeholders.

He outlined work the College was commencing to support the national track and trace effort, with a training course being developed for those going to work in that field and also to support new laboratory capacity.

He discussed the work being done as part of the East of Scotland Four College collaboration (4C). He noted that the Scottish Government were showing considerable interest in at least 2 of the suggested products from 4C and welcomed the closer collaborative working.

He highlighted the disappointing result of the ballot from EIS-FELA on the action short of strike which had been received that day, although he also noted the relatively low turnout and percentage in favour of action – around 42% of the eligible membership. He noted that the College will continue to meet with our local EIS-FELA reps and outlined the legal advice the College had received in relation to this issue.

Members noted that the Board had had lengthy and fruitful discussions on the Futures Programme and reaffirmed their support for the College on this matter. Members suggested that a report on this should be taken to the HR Committee for consideration of this latest development and what further actions may be taken to further embed the changes which have already been undertaken

The Principal summarised the key points coming from the recent SFC Phase One review of Colleges and Universities and it was agreed the CGPO would circulate a copy of this report to members.

He informed members that the next meeting of the Board of Management of 3 December 2020 would be the DPCOO's last meeting as he is retiring at the end of the year.

a) Members noted the content of the report

**B/20/005**

**Chair's Report (Verbal)**

The Chair updated members on his work with the College's Employers Association, noting that a key highlight was the recent agreement from teaching unions to accept the proposed annual pay award. He also noted that negotiations with the 'support staff' unions were also making progress and that they were still ongoing.

He discussed his work with the College Chairs Group, noting he had been tasked to undertake 'clinics' with all colleges to assess their current views on the role of their college in their regional economy, something for which Forth Valley is gaining a very positive reputation across the sector. The results of these consultations, and the

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sectoral picture which they will create, will be fed into the next phase of the SFC review.

He also outlined discussions with the Principal and VPFACA on how best to utilise the new campuses to make the most out of our magnificent asset base. He noted that further information would be brought to the February Board of Management session.

a) Members noted the content of the update

**B/20/006 Student Association Report**

The FVSAP presented members with an overview of the work of the Student Association since the last meeting of the Board of Management.

He reported on the student MS Teams group which now had more than 400 members.

He noted with satisfaction that the budget for 2020/21 had been confirmed and that he and the FVSAP continued to work on the student partnership and mental health agreements respectively.

He confirmed that the elections were currently underway for the FVSA Executive Team.

He outlined some feedback from students who had found learning online a challenge.

The Principal noted that he continues to meet monthly with the FVSA and that students who feel they are having difficulty coping should be raised with the staff so they can provide additional help.

a) Members noted the content of the report

**B/20/007 Budget 20/21 & Forecasts 2021/23**

The HOF presented members with the budget for 20/21 and the forecasts for 21/23.

She reported that the College had an underlying operating surplus for 2019/20 which would enable funding aspects of the new Falkirk Campus. The VPFACA confirmed that this meant the funding required from the ALF would be less than anticipated.

The HOF outlined the key risks applicable to the budget and also noted that the outcome of the pension triennial valuation which sets contribution rates is not due to be announced until the end of 2020 or early 2021.

She also outlined a possible change to how Foundation Apprenticeships are funded and the potential impact of this.

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The Chair of the Finance Committee welcomed the content of the paper, noting that in June the College had been in a deficit position and highlighting that there had been a significant amount of work to get to this place, and that the Finance team should be recognised for this. This was welcomed by the Board.

He also cautioned that this position was reliant upon realising income streams.

Members queried the reduction in teaching and learning teaching support. The HOF did not recall but agreed to feedback directly to the member with the detail.

The VPFACA discussed campus maintenance and provided an update on the position with the receipt from the sale of the old Falkirk campus which would result in a reduction of funding required from the ALF. Members agreed to keep up the pressure on government to ensure appropriate levels of funding were made available to maintain our campuses in top quality condition and prevent them from becoming future liabilities, as had happened in the past.

a) Members approved the Budget 20/21 and Forecasts 2021/23

B/20/008

**FVC Strategic Opportunities**

[Redacted text block]

- [Redacted list item]

[Redacted text block]

[REDACTED]

**B/20/009 Business transformation - Student Funding**

The VPFACA and HBT gave members a presentation on the recent business transformation project designed to improve the student funding process.

They outlined the developments that had been made by College staff to improve the systems in place and highlighted the benefits to students as the project made student funding a lot more accessible, which was particularly helpful to meet funding applications during lockdown and to ensure that funding is in place for students at the start of the year.

The FVSAP noted that he has not had any students approach him in the current academic year with financial related matters.

Members noted that this was a very useful development and queried whether there was an opportunity for the College to franchise this system to other Colleges.

The VPFACA and HBT noted that, while it would be good to be able to do so, the underlying systems for each College could be significantly different.

a) Members noted the content of the presentation and thanked the team for the execution of another excellent development.

**B/20/010 Board Self Evaluation Feedback**

The VPFACA presented members with the outcome of the annual self-evaluation exercise which included meetings between individual members and the Chair.

She discussed the overview of the feedback provided by members and highlighted that the scores for each category had generally improved from previous years. Three themes were apparent throughout these reviews:

- 1 Commercialisation
- 2 Board Workshops within meetings to discuss hot topics
- 3 Board member engagement with staff, students & external stakeholders

She noted members wanted to be able to interact both with the College and each other out with the meeting cycle and confirmed the Chair and College would look to identify opportunities for this to happen.

She also highlighted to members that the Board is due an external effectiveness review and that this would likely happen in late November/Early December.

Members noted having a matrix of Board skills would be useful to support future discussions on this topic.

a) Members welcomed the content of the report and expressed a desire to be more visible and active within the College

**B/20/011 Board Development Plan**

The VPFACA outlined progress against last year's plan and presented member with a draft development plan which was based on the feedback from the recent evaluation exercise and meetings – attached at the foot of this note.

a) Members approved the Board Development Plan

**B/20/012 Board Secretary Arrangements**

The VPFACA presented members with a paper covering the provision of the Board Secretary and Deputy Secretary arrangements. She noted that, as the College arrangement is not in line with the Code of Good Governance, this matter was brought annually for member's consideration and approval.

a) Members considered and approved the content of the paper, congratulating both the Sec and Dep Sec on the work done this year, and the support provided to Board members, both individually and collectively.

**B/20/013 Review of Risk**

Risks were identified in the relevant papers

**B/20/014 AOCB**

The Chair noted that he would be utilising the Board WhatsApp group to engage further with members, particularly during this period of not being able to meet in person.

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APPENDIX 2 - FORTH VALLEY COLLEGE – 2020/21 BOARD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

No	Recommendation	Action	Responsibility	Date
<b>Leadership</b>				
1	Ensure the Board regularly reviews performance against strategic aims	Board Agendas to dedicate sufficient time for discussion on strategic plan implementation.	Board Chair / Board Secretary	June 2021
<b>Quality of Student Experience</b>				
2	Ensure all members aware of student success targets set through Outcome Agreement	More detailed updates from LSE committee to Board regarding targets.	Chair LSE	June 2021
	*19/20 effectiveness review reflects changes in OA process due to Covid 19 and new members not being aware of the normal process.	Outcome Agreement and performance against targets reported to Board	VP Information Systems & Communications	June 2021
<b>Effectiveness</b>				
3	Develop roles for Board members in relation to staff, student and stakeholder engagement.	Develop and assign roles to each Board member.	Chair	August 2021
	Develop working relationships with Board members.	Informal pre-meeting get together, Board buddies for new members, away day	Chair	August 2021
4	D21 Committee members have committee specific training	CDN - Audit Committee Training	Committee Members	June 2021
		CDN - Remuneration Committee Training	Committee Members	As required

**Skype (commencing at 4.30pm)**

Present: Davie Flynn (Chair)  
Trudi Craggs  
Katherine Graham

Apologies: Beth Hamilton

In Attendance: Andrew Lawson, Depute Principal and Chief Operating Officer (DPCOO)  
Alison Stewart, Vice Principal Finance and Corporate Affairs (VPFACA)  
Ralph Burns, Head of Human Resources (HHR)  
Stephen Jarvie, Corporate Governance and Planning Officer (CGPO)  
Marc McCusker, Head of Facilities Management and Health and Safety (HFM)  
for item H/20/004 only

**H/20/001 Declarations of Interest**

None

**H/20/002 Minutes of Meeting of 19 May 2020**

The minutes of the meeting of 19 May 2020 were approved.

**H/20/003 Matters arising**

a) H/19/006 People Strategy Progress Dashboard

The Chair noted that this would be covered later in the meeting.

**H/20/004 College Health and Safety Update**

The HFM presented members with the regular update report on Health and Safety within the College.

He highlighted a number of areas, including the number of risk assessments conducted to support reopening during the pandemic. He provided members with an overview of the measures in place such as daily enhanced cleaning and fogging across all campuses.

He discussed the KPI's to date, noting that the lockdown and reduced campus occupancy levels mean that these are not comparable to previous years.

He informed members that there had been one RIDDOR on campus and that this had been investigated and lessons learned applied as new control measures.

He informed members that, as part of the College's ongoing sustainability work, an additional electric vehicle had been purchased.

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Members enquired about the enhanced cleaning in place and whether there were risks to cleaning staff from using stronger chemicals.

The HFM assured members that the cleaning agents in use were ones which has been used in specific areas in the past which were now being used campus wide and that the cleaning staff had all been trained and were issued with appropriate PPE.

Members noted the high level of PPE use and queried whether this was impacting on the College's sustainability targets and whether there were sustainable alternatives available?

The HFM agreed that there had been significant use of disposable ppe and that his team continued to work to identify sustainable alternatives. He provided an example of a current review of face coverings for the hospitality staff within the College that can be reused.

Members noted the update that no fire drills were planned at this time owing to the pandemic and asked for clarity that the system itself was regularly tested. The HFM confirmed that the system underwent a bell test every Wednesday and a full test at the weekend which includes ensuring automatic closure of fire doors.

Members noted that the contract for the College FM provider had been extended and welcomed that this was cost neutral for the College.

Members also queried whether the new Falkirk campus, owing to its lower occupancy since opening owing to the pandemic, may have snagging issues that would only become apparent after a period of significant use.

The HFM confirmed that this was being taken into consideration as much as possible and outlined the snagging process for members.

a) Members noted the content of the report

H/20/005

#### Health & Wellbeing

The DPCOO informed members that the Audit Committee had raised the issue of support for SMT whilst managing during the pandemic and the he thought it would be useful for members to include additional detail on the range of resources available to all staff members.

He noted that the paper outlined a range of policies, procedures and guidance that have been adapted or created to support staff.

He acknowledged, in terms of SMT, that it had been a challenging period of time with both internal and external demands upon them. He noted, as with all staff, it was important to try and ensure individuals are not being overloaded.

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Members welcomed the report and the fact that it combined the range of support measures in place.

Members queried whether the College was aware of the level of update across the range of support measures. The DPCOO noted that, for training aspects, the College does record this and that this information would be brought back to the Committee.

The DPCOO noted that the College Unions are keen for staff to work from home as much as possible but also noted some individual staff members prefer to come into campus for their own mental health.

The HHR noted that one of the appendices to the report was a survey which the College undertook in June 2020. He noted the challenges that staff had identified at that point and that, if the survey were to be re-run, the College may see different issues being identified.

a) Members noted the content of the paper

H/20/006

**Progress with new PRD system (Verbal)**

The HHR provided members with an overview of the College PRD system. He noted that it had been acknowledged that the previous system which had been in place for a number of years was not working. He confirmed that the College had looked at what was being done across the sector and that the decision had been taken to use a reflective practice model. The new model was launched in November 2019.

He highlighted that the aim of the new model is to encourage individual staff members to determine their own needs and to take the lead on these.

He noted that the reflective practice model was also an appropriate methodology as it would assist lecturing staff members when they apply for General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) registration.

Members queried how the new approach was being received by staff. The HHR noted that the change appears to have been welcomed by staff and acknowledged that ongoing development and support would be needed to ensure staff and managers are maximising the new approach.

a) Members noted the content of the updated and asked for an update on progress in six months' time

H/20/007

**Staffing Establishment and HR Update**

The HHR presented members with the latest staffing establishment information. He noted variances and explained the reason behind these.

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He also confirmed that a number of staff continued to utilise flexible working practices given the current situation.

Member queried the exit information for staff, noting that more context would be useful to give a chance to see the reasons for staff exit and asked if there was a way to compare our exit information with that of other Colleges.

The HHR informed members that this had been raised at a sector level previously but that there had been no real enthusiasm from other College's to provide this information.

Members discussed the information that had been available from previous staff surveys and noted that the questions could be updated to help in this area.

Members also noted the age profile of the College staff and raised concerns regarding succession planning based on this.

The HHR acknowledged that this was an ongoing issue for the College as, when roles are advertised, the College does attract a high degree of applications from older candidates who have considerable experience. He did confirm this ties into staff CPD and initiatives such as the Leadership and Management programme.

a) Members noted the content of the report and requested a further staff survey be completed by the College in spring 2021 to enable members to gauge whether the outlined initiatives are helping staff

**H/20/008      Action Short of Strike - 2020-2021**

The DPCOO presented a paper providing the context to, and implications of, the decision of EIS-FELA to move to action short of strike (ASOS).

He noted that the College continued to engage proactively with the Union and that this had had some positive effects such as the Union providing him with sight of comms to their members before they were issued.

He outlined the responses available to the College in response to ASOS and discussed the proposed methodology to minimise disruption to the College and students in particular.

Members noted that this issue had been discussed at the full Board of Management and that they remained clear that they supported the College position.

Members noted that the comms from the College had been quite strongly worded. The DPCOO confirmed that the College wanted to be very clear in relation to its stance on this matter.

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Members noted that the DPCOO was approaching retirement and that he had been a key part of College negotiations with both local unions and at a national level.

The DPCOO confirmed that the VPLSE would be taking over this part of the role and that he had been shadowing the role and also that specific handover meetings were taking place regarding Union relations.

a) Members noted the content of the paper and expressed their continued support for the College SMT on this matter.

**H/20/009 Covid-19 Implications**

The DPCOO provided an update on the number of cases within the College noting that this was low considering the population size of the College and that, so far, there have been no identified cases of transmission within the campuses.

He informed members that the CGPO was acting as the liaison with NHS on this topic, with daily meetings taking place with NHS and other partners and weekly reporting on cases to Scottish Government.

a) Members noted the content of the report and welcomed the College's proactive stance on this matter.

**H/20/010 Review of Risk**

Following discussion, no new risks were identified.

**H/20/011 Any Other Competent Business**

The Chair thanked the DPCOO for his expertise, counsel and dedication to the College and noted that there would be a chance for members to thank the DPCOO at the December 2020 Board of Management meeting.

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**Zoom (commencing at 4.00pm)**

Present: Ken Richardson (Chair)  
Andrew Caldwell  
Andrew Carver  
Trudi Craggs (Joined at F/20/017)

Apologies: Liam McCabe

In Attendance: Ken Thomson, Principal  
Alison Stewart, Vice Principal Finance and Corporate Affairs (VPFACA)  
Kenny MacInnes, Vice Principal Learning and Student Experience (VPLSE)  
Senga McKerr, Head of Finance (HOF)  
Ester Vasallo, Supply Chain Manager (SCM) for F/20/014  
Pauline Barnaby, Development and Fundraising Manager (DFM) for F/20/015

**F/20/011      Declarations of Interest**

None

**F/20/012      Minute of Meeting of 22 September 2020**

The minutes of the meeting of 22 September 2020.

**F/20/013      Matters Arising**

None raised.

**F/20/014      Annual Procurement Report**

The SCM presented a paper covering procurement activity to July 2020, intended future activity, action plan and KPI's.

In terms of the action plan, she highlighted that there was areas where increases had not occurred regarding satisfaction and noted that more surveying was needed.

She highlighted some contracts that were intended to be reviewed in the coming period.

The VPFACA noted that the procurement report was required to be published on the College website by the end of the year.

She highlighted that when the targets for 2019/20 were set the previous year's data had not been available and therefore the targets set did not reflect the starting position and, while progress was being made, the gap was too large at this time.

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Members queried whether there was activity in the report relating to the new build. The SCM noted that this was the case and had inflated the figures in the report.

a) Members noted the content of the report and appendices and approved the annual procurement report

**F/20/015 Fundraising update**

The DFM presented a paper which provided an overview of the activity in 2019/20 and anticipated 20/21 fundraising activity.

She outlined some projects which had benefitted from recurring funding such as the Time for Me mentoring programme and the Centre Forward programme with Falkirk Football club.

She highlighted that not all donations were financial and discussed equipment donations which had been made for the new Falkirk campus.

She noted that over £400,000 of activity had occurred the previous year making it the most successful one to date.

She highlighted to members that, with a range of traditional fundraising measures not available to other parties owing to Covid, it was likely that there would be greater competition for funding going forward. She did note that the fundraising strategy for the College was quite broad and was flexible to allow the continued pursuit of new opportunities.

Members noted the challenges of the current situation and highlighted that the work that had taken place in previous years had provided a good base to build from.

a) Members noted the content of the report

**F/20/016 Student Funding Outturn 2019/20 & Forecast 2020/21**

The HOF presented a paper outlining the outturn for last year and the current projections for the current academic year.

She informed members that this was the normal point in the year when the College could apply for 'in-year redistribution' of additional student funding but that, based on current projections, the College was not going to apply for additional funding.

She noted that there had been a request made last year and, as a result of the impact of Covid closures on claims for funding in relation to travel and childcare, a large portion of this funding was paid back to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC).

a) Members noted the content of the report

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**F/20/017      Annual Report and Financial Statements 2019/20**

The HOF presented the annual report and financial statements for 2019/20. She discussed the content of the statements noting that, owing to technical accounting treatments, the true picture for the College was somewhat obscured.

She referred members to page 14 of the statements which showed, after removal of non-cash elements, that the College had reached an adjusted operating surplus for the year.

She highlighted to members that the external auditors had requested a formal assessment of the College as a going concern which was included in the papers issued to members. She confirmed that the College, external auditors and the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) all agreed there were no going concern issues for the College.

Members noted the impact of the revised pension position and capital grants on the net liability position of the College and that, when these were removed and with confirmation that the College still generates cash, noted that the College was in a positive position.

a) Members commended the Annual Report and Financial Statements 2019/20 to the Board of Management for approval

**F/20/018      Draft External Audit Annual Report to the Board of Management**

Steven Reid, Ernst and Young, presented the draft report to members. He recognised the amount of work from the Finance team under unusual circumstances to support this and have the accounts in place in line with normal timescales.

He confirmed that the report will be submitted to Audit Scotland in due course giving an unqualified opinion on the financial statements.

He discussed the four wider scope areas they were required to review as part of the external audit, highlighting that there were no material matters to draw to the Committee's attention. He noted the impact of the current external environment presents additional risks to the College's financial sustainability and that this has been categorised as an amber risk.

Members expressed concern about the tone of some areas of the report. Steven Reid agreed to look at the issues highlighted.

The VPFACA highlighted the amount of additional work undertaken and expressed her concerns on this matter. Members queried whether this level of work would be required next year. Steven Reid noted that the additional work required related to a new auditing standard on the assessment of going concern and the uncertainty created by Covid 19. He stated that he would expect this to be the new norm depending upon any additional guidance from Audit Scotland.

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Members queried the impact of the additional work on the fee for the College. Steven Reid confirmed he was in discussions with the College on this.

a) Members noted the content of the report and Steven Reid will review the language in the report

**F/20/019      Review of Risk**

Risks were covered in their papers.

**F/20/020      Any Other Competent Business**

None.

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**Zoom (commencing at 5.00pm)**

Present: Lorna Dougall (Chair)  
Hazel Burt  
Steven Torrie (Co-opted Member)  
Mandy Wright (Co-opted Member)

In Attendance: Ken Thomson, Principal  
Alison Stewart, Vice Principal Finance and Corporate Affairs (VPFACA)  
Senga McKerr, Head of Finance (HOF)  
Olga Potapova, Ernst and Young  
Steven Reid, Ernst and Young  
David Archibald, MHA Henderson Loggie  
Stuart Inglis, MHA Henderson Loggie

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a) Members noted the content of the report and Steven Reid will review the language in the report

**A/20/018      Declarations of Interest**

None

**A/20/019      Apologies for Absence**

Beth Hamilton

**A/20/020      Minutes of meeting of 5 October 2020**

The minutes of the meeting of 5 October 2020 were approved.

**Ratification of Governance Statement Approval**

The Chair noted that the statement had been issued in advance for comment and that there had been some discussion on the wording although no changes had been made.

The VPFACA noted that the audit had resulted in an additional paragraph at the request of the external auditors to refer to the move to virtual Board and Committee meetings.

a) Members ratified the prior electronic acceptance of governance statement

**A/20/021 Matters Arising**

**a) A/20/006 Annual Audit Plan Addendum Year ended 31 July 2020**

As noted earlier, this matter is still ongoing between the College and Ernst and Young.

**b) A/20/012 Audit Scotland – Guide for Audit and Risk Committees**

The Chair noted that the document appeared to be quite comprehensive.

The VPFACA noted that the document had been included with the papers for information.

**A/20/022 Chairs Report to the Board**

The Chair presented her standard annual report to the Board from the Committee.

a) Members approved the Chairs report for submission to the Board of Management

**A/20/023 Response to Ernst & Young Letter to those charged with Governance**

The Chair presented the draft response to the annual letter from Ernst and Young. She highlighted the changes to the letter exploring the management of Covid by the College and the range of actions the College highlighted in the response.

a) Members approved the response

**A/20/024 Internal Audit Progress Report**

Stuart Inglis, MHA Henderson Loggie, presented the progress report in relation to the 20/21 internal audit plan.

He noted the proposed timings for the audits in the plan which had been agreed by management.

He highlighted in relation to the Credits audit that, while the fieldwork had been completed a while ago, they had made a request to SFC in relation to some distance learning classes as the current guidance did not cover this under Covid related circumstances. He noted that he had expected to receive a response and, despite chasing this up with SFC, this had not been received at this point. As such, the report cannot be issued until a response is received. It is not expected that there will be any material difference to the final report.

a) Members noted the content of the report

**A/20/025 Presentation of Internal Audit Reports**

Stuart Inglis, MHA Henderson Loggie, presented two internal audit reports to the Committee.

**Credits**

Please see text in A/20/024

**Student Support Funds**

He reported on the audit, noting that this is a statutory annual report. He stated that they were able to certify all fund statements for the year and submit these to the appropriate bodies, without reservation.

The VPFACA discussed the error highlighted in the report and outlined the improvements already made to the system to mitigate against this.

**A/20/026 Progress Report on Audit Recommendations**

The VPFACA presented the report on progress against audit recommendations.

She highlighted that there were two recommendations, one of which was complete and the other which is not due until February next year. She confirmed this recommendation would be completed at the February Board Strategic session.

a) Members noted the content of the report

**A/20/027 Risk Management**

The VPFACA presented the strategic and Covid-19 risk registers.

In relation to the strategic register, she highlighted the addition of the estates risk. She also highlighted the request to remove the succession planning risk and outlined the reasons for this.

She noted that a full review of the risk register would occur in December with the Senior Management team to bring to the Board in February for discussion.

For the Covid-19 register, the College is proposing to remove three risks and outlined the reasons for these.

Members queried whether the action short of strike item should be added as a risk.

The Principal agreed that this would be reviewed and added to the register.

a) Members noted the content of the reports

**A/20/028      Audit Committee Self-Assessment**

The VPFAA presented the updated self-assessment to members for comment, noting that a number of comments were the same as the previous year.

The Chair noted it was important that the Committee agree the content.

a) Members noted the content of the report

**A/20/029      Review of Risk**

No new risks identified

**A/20/030      Any Other Competent Business**

None

**A/20/031      Private Discussion between members and auditors**

The Committee members, Internal and External Auditors had held a private meeting after the October Committee meeting and so the November private meeting was short. Discussion confirmed that Committee members were pleased to receive an unqualified external audit report and did not raise any further areas of interest which had not previously been discussed.

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**1. Purpose**

To present to the Board of Management the twenty eighth Principal's report on key and strategic activity undertaken since the Board meeting in October 2020.

**2. Recommendation**

The Board should note and comment on the activity undertaken by the Principal since the 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2020.

**3. Key Highlights**

Whilst it has only been 6 weeks since the last Board meeting, as you can imagine, a lot has happened.

3.1 Last week, Forth Valley College celebrated a cause close to its heart, with the passing of a new Bill making Scotland the world's first country to provide free period products. On Tuesday in the Scottish Parliament, a bill introduced by MSP Monica Lennon called the [Period Products \(Free Provision\) \(Scotland\) Bill](#), was unanimously voted into law. The MSP – Scottish Labour's Health Spokesperson - has been campaigning on this issue since 2016 and visited Forth Valley College in August 2018 to back the free sanitary product distribution service available at FVC's three campuses. Local authorities across Scotland are now legally obliged to ensure that free sanitary products are made available to anyone who needs them. Forth Valley College's free female sanitary product initiative – which began in 2018 and led by Pauline Donaldson, received support from Monica and there was more good news when the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) announced that FVC would receive £51,368 to help fund this initiative.

3.2 We were delighted to be part of an Energy Skills Partnership (ESP) to establish nine Renewable & Energy Efficiency Training Centres in colleges across central and southern Scotland following a £500,000 funding boost from SP Energy Networks' Green Economy Fund. ESP is a collaboration of Scotland's colleges and industry partners established to increase Scotland's capability and capacity to deliver the right skills for the energy, engineering and construction sectors to meet industry demand. The nine training centres in Scottish colleges include: Ayrshire, Borders, Edinburgh, Fife, Forth Valley, Glasgow Kelvin, South Lanarkshire, West Lothian and West College Scotland who have been working together as members of the Energy Efficiency Training Network. The project provides significant capital investment in renewable and energy efficiency, staff training and continuing professional development in current and emerging technologies.

3.3 The four College East and Central Scotland collaboration of Fife, Edinburgh, West Lothian and Forth Valley Colleges (4C) was launched in early November. On Friday 27<sup>th</sup> November, Scottish Government will have formally launched a £650k Transition Fund for the project. This will be in addition to the Flexible Workforce Funding announced for SME's.

3.4 The EIS FELA formally announced their action short of strike action which began with a work to rule on November 10<sup>th</sup> 2020. We noted very little disruption and we continue to discuss

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options for our local branch to remove the dispute. I have provided updated detailed narrative to Richard Lochhead MSP, Minister for Further and Higher Education and Science and to Michael Matheson MSP. Our next meeting with EIS FELA will be on 2 December 2020. We will update the Board on progress at the meeting.

- 3.5 Following Jen Tempany's paper in October on Strategic Projects we are now proposing taking a bid to the ALF for the next stage of the FuelChange Project. The business case for the bid is currently being produced and, with agreement, will be circulated to Board members in advance and by email as it needs your approval to take to the ALF. This project will be one of two projects, the other being the SERC proposal led by Helen Young, Head of Learning and Quality and discussed later in the meeting.
- 3.6 There is only one week to go until the annual CDN awards and the College has been shortlisted for one of the awards in the 'Health Promoting College' category - fingers crossed. The awards will follow after the Board meeting and we have a large number of staff attending, many in virtual bubbles.
- 3.7 This is the last Board meeting for Andy Lawson, Depute Principal and Chief Operating Officer, who retires at the end of the year. He is technically now on leave with the 2<sup>nd</sup> December his last working day. Andy has been with the college since 1998 and on the senior team since 2003. As a consequence of not replacing his role, we have expanded LMT to include the Head of HR, Head of Finance, Head of Marketing and Communication and the Head of Learning and Quality. I have also realigned line management responsibilities and tasks against the four remaining SMT and I will be taking responsibility for the four Directors of Curriculum. The new LMT will provide an executive approach to a whole system approach to leadership. The College is well placed to deliver on its Vision 2030, its Strategic Plan 2017-22 and the Future's Programme as approved by the Board in June. The structures now in place will offer a great opportunity for succession planning for the college future leaders.
- 3.8 I will be launching and chairing "SpringBack" after Christmas which will mirror our successful Resumption model for planning the next stage in the College's recovery from Covid-19. This group will involve focus groups for staff and students and ensure a positive and seamless transition from blended learning to a new approach to learning and how we work as a consequence of feedback from all parties. I would welcome Board involvement on this group.

#### **4 Networking**

- 4.1 Over the last two weeks I have completed my six year stints as a Board Member and Trustee of Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and Jisc. Both have been great learning but I have to single out my work with Jisc which has been a great experience and has provided early intelligence to the College and the sector on the Janet Network and high level thinking on Education 4.0 which helped to formulate the Scottish Colleges Digital Ambition. This document will underpin the digital strategy for Colleges for the foreseeable future. It has also allowed us to develop an excellent relationship with the JISC Regional Director for Scotland and Northern Ireland and we have taken good advice from the Jisc team.
- 4.2 My role on the Board of SQA continues and we have had a busy few months particularly in my role as Chair of the Qualifications Committee which I have worked with SQA to expand to
-

include industry, University and College representation as well as the usual school involvement.

- 4.3 I attended a meeting of the Clackmannanshire Commission to look at the distribution of funding and partner engagement.

**5. Presentations**

- 5.1 As a member of the Scottish Government's Curriculum and Assessment Board (CAB) I presented a paper on the School College Partnership with recommendations to ensure learners from this group are not lost in the ongoing guidance on assessment to schools and colleges showing there were over 75,000 school pupils attending Scottish colleges in 2018/19.

**6. Key Meetings**

I undertook the following key meetings in the period 22 October 2020 to 27 November 2020:

- 6.1 Ross Martin and I continue to meet regularly including one workshop on Forth Valley College's regional economic partnerships and as part of a national economic review on Colleges. I also met with Davie Flynn, Board Vice Chair, to look at opportunities for project engagement for Board members in the future. In addition, I will have met twice virtually with the Student Association and Kenny MacInnes, VP Learning and Student Experience, have attended all three meetings of the Student Council. These have been excellent discussions hosted by the FVSA and have allowed myself and Kenny to talk about the current position for learning but also to hear back how well classes are going. In the main students are being patient, working hard and value the efforts of all our staff. There are pockets of inconsistency which Kenny has noted and will act. I introduced the concept of our "Springback" group and indicated we would be taking feedback from focus groups in the New Year. One excellent comment was from an HNC Applied Sciences student who noted that learning virtually has been a learning experience in its own right and the college needs to be careful not to assume all students can transition to a more mixed blend straight away. Really valuable point.

- 6.2 Over the last five weeks I've had a number of high level meetings with key partners to discuss opportunities in digital and the future for workplace qualifications and school college partnerships. These include Ross Tuffee, Chair of SDS's Digital Skills Partnership, Jonathan Clare, Director of Strategic Affairs and Victoria Bradley from Napier University to discuss opportunities for the Four College Collaboration and their Freelance Academy. The latter was as a result of a contact made through Kat Graham, Board member.

■ [REDACTED]

■ [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**7. Colleges Scotland (CS)**

7.1 Colleges Scotland CPG went to fortnightly meetings from the start of September and we continue to have strong representation with Scottish Government and SFC. Most recently we have been meeting regularly with Linda Pooley, Deputy Director, Colleges, SFC and Young Workforce on Scottish Government's response to Covid-19, the ongoing local authority tiering and the impact on Colleges. Finally, I have attended one virtual meeting of the Funding and Finance Group.

**8. Community Planning Partnership**

8.1 There have been one meeting of the Falkirk Community Partnership where emphasis continues to be on partner action to Covid-19 and sharing intelligence as well as an update on the Falkirk Investment Zone's response to the recent announcement of City Deal funding for £90m – welcomed but far short of the £250m original bid. There has also been one meeting of the Stirling CPP which was attended by Kenny MacInnes, VPLSE.

**9. Financial Implications**

None

**10. Equalities**

Assessment in Place? – Yes  No

If No, please explain why – This paper is an overview report only, there are no changes to College policy or practice involved.

**11. Risk**

Please indicate on the matrix below the risk score. Risk is scored against Impact and Likelihood as Very Low through to Very High.

	Likelihood	Impact
Very High		
High		
Medium		
Low		

Very Low	X	X
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Please describe any risks associated with this paper and associated mitigating actions –  
None

Risk Owner – Ken Thomson

Action Owner – Ken Thomson

12. Other Implications –

Please indicate whether there are implications for the areas below.

Communications – Yes  No

Health and Safety – Yes  No

Paper Author – Ken Thomson

SMT Owner – Ken Thomson

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**1. Purpose**

To provide members with an update on the recent activities of the Forth Valley Student Association (FVSA)

**2. Recommendation**

That members note the content of the report.

**3. Key Considerations**

Since the last Board of Management on the 8<sup>th</sup> of October FVSA have conducted several activities.

**Voluntary Elections**

The FVSA Voluntary elections ran smoothly with the full five executive officers being elected, and two liberation officers.

Executive officers:

1. Shannon Eason
2. Amber Little

■ [REDACTED]  
■ [REDACTED]

5. Lindsay Graham

Liberation officers:

LGBT+ Students Officer: Anna McIvor

Disabled Students Officer: Sophie Boyce

**Feedback Fridays**

This is a new event within FVSA, every Friday we ask a singular question that will run until the Thursday of the following week. This is to get a regular feedback cycle going with the students. There is also some learning going on for what is the best type of question to ask and when. (See Appendix 1 for questions and responses so far.)

**Student Council**

Student Council happened over the 24<sup>th</sup> to the 26<sup>th</sup>. Ken and Kenny were both in attendance to chat with the students. Issues were brought forward such as courses not starting yet in hair and beauty. However, on the positive side some are finding their lecturers are doing very well.

**Walkathon (Name Pending)**

The Vice President and Student Activities and Volunteer Co-ordinator met with the Leisure Facilities Co-ordinator to work on a New Year's walking incentive. This would involve people walking 8k steps every day for a month, where they would then be entered into a raffle prize draw with 1 winner per campus. Seeing if we can tie this in with a theme of healthy and sustainable eating.

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### International Men's Day

FVSA put out social media posts and teams post about the importance of Men's mental health

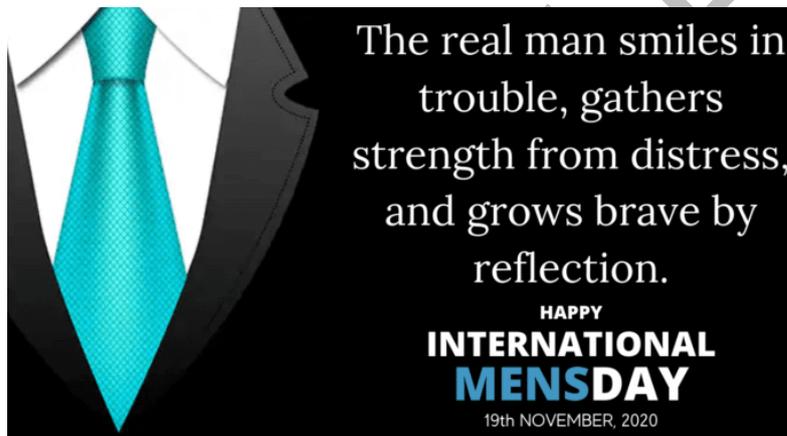
"As we observe International Men's Day today - our Student President wrote the following message:

"In our society men are pictured as being emotionally dead. This leads to a crisis where men will suffer in silence about their mental health. This can lead to bad coping mechanisms such as alcoholism or drug abuse. We need to change as a society to allow men to talk about their issues.

Going by reported statistics three times as many men as women die by suicide, in 2017 nearly 6000 suicides were reported in Britain that's 4500 men. We need to talk to each other, we need to support each other. We cannot let this continue!

Take the time today to talk to someone, break down those walls it's even more important now more than ever.

We can save lives even with a chat." "



### CDN & British E-sports Association Rocket League tournament

The Student President working with Kenji Lamb secured FVC a location in the Scottish College Cup. Working with Pete Kelly a Lecturer in Computing and FVSAs Forth Valley Gaming Society a set of heats was run to get the best team FVC could muster. The team has been playing very well against other teams in a set of friendlies with the Finals taking place on the 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>.

(Rocket League is a Video game where players play football with rocket powered cars that has World championships)

### Healthy Eating Collaboration

The Vice President has been working with the Hospitality department on a healthy eating initiative which was spun off World Vegan Day. They will aim to bring weekly recipes (up until Christmas) from the FVC Vegan Nights class to students so that they can try out some new healthy food. This also gives people a chance to work on something new and take their minds off the things happening around the world.

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### **Trans Day of Remembrance**

FVSA put out awareness raising posts for Trans day of Remembrance, Last year FVSA attended a vigil outside of Scottish Government which unfortunately could not happen this year.

The post

“Today marks **Transgender Day of Remembrance** - here’s a message from Andrew, our Student President:

Today is a day where we take the time to remember our fallen Trans siblings. Trans people face physical and mental violence against them in their day to day lives.

We take the time today to remember their names and cherish the memories we hold.

We in the Students Association believe Trans rights are Human rights.

Resources:

<https://www.forthvalley.ac.uk/media/4786/cm145-transgender-guide-2018.pdf>

<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/lgbt-britain-trans-report>

“



### **Class Representatives**

Class rep training took place over 8 sessions with students who signed up for the live sessions.

The total amount of class reps is lower than last year, sitting at 158 compared to last years total of 215. However due to not capturing their registration date last this is an unfair comparison due to January starts. Some Lecturers are only just now talking to their classes now which is something that was not considered. Kenny MacInnes has also been assisting with the recruitment push from the top which has been very helpful.

Out of the class reps:

60 attended the live sessions.

73 did online training.

2 withdrew.

23 have not yet completed training.

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**Virtual Class Visits**

In previous years FVSA has been invited into physical classrooms to talk with the students to inform them of the FVSA's work. This year FVSA have switched to doing this virtually with the Learner Development Workers who request a time slot. It allows the start of the Class rep conversation and allows more people to know about the Clubs and Societies

**Clubs and Societies**

FVSA have three new Societies

- Women in STEM
- Tabletop Gaming Society
- FVSA Green club

In continuing Societies

- LGBTQ+ society
- Knit and Craft Society
- Robocraft
- Forth Valley Gaming Society

Clubs and societies are seeing a higher level of engagement than normal, this is presumed to be due to the lack of community feeling within classes and the overall college. The Gaming Society are up to around a total of 80 members.

**LGBT+ Support Network**

The Student President and the Activities and Volunteers Coordinator with the assistance of Monica Media Equalities Coordinator have launched the LGBT+ support network. This is an idea that has been modified from Stirling University where there are members of staff who are "Out" in the LGBT+ community who can offer sympathetic support and signposting information to further support within the College, Student Association and local community. FVSA are looking for other members of Staff who identify as LGBT+ within the College who are comfortable to join Elena Semple (Activities and Volunteer Coordinator) and Andrew Smirthwaite (Student President).

**FVSA LGBT+ SUPPORT NETWORK**  
SUPPORT CONTACTS FOR STUDENTS

**fvsa**  
Forth Valley Student Association

**Staff Engagement**

Through our plan of engaging with staff we held a staff questionnaire in October. From this we looked at the feedback given and decided to hold a focus group in December with SA Champions from as many departments as possible. Only 1 person came forward. Therefore, we are looking for a new way of getting more departments on board so we can liaise better with departments.

**Advisory Group**

The first FVSA Advisory group had its first meeting, its membership is now  
Trudi Craggs FVC Board Member  
Rosamund Vickers Stirling Union Democracy Coordinator  
Andrew Smirthwaite Student President  
Aleksandrs Petrovskis Vice President  
Helen Young FVC Head of Learning & Quality.

There needs to be two student members elected by the Executive committee, however for the first meeting the Executive are being given time to complete their paperwork beforehand. The FVSA are also looking for an external member which we have advertised and not had any responses.

**4. Financial Implications**

Please detail the financial implications of this item – there are no financial implications

**5. Equalities**

Assessment in Place? – No

If No, please explain why – Not applicable

**6. Risk**

Please indicate on the matrix below the risk score. Risk is scored against Impact and Likelihood as Very Low through to Very High.

	Likelihood	Impact
Very High		
High		
Medium		
Low		
Very Low	x	x

Please describe any risks associated with this paper and associated mitigating actions – None

**7. Other Implications –**

Please indicate whether there are implications for the areas below.

**Communications – Yes**  
**Health and Safety –No**

**Please provide a summary of these implications** – FVSA extensively promote events, clubs and opportunities to be involved in the work of the association.

**Paper Author** – Andrew Smirthwaite

**SMT Owner** – Kenny MacInnes

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Appendix 1

**Question**

How do you feel about the new canteen service? (This was the click and collect service)

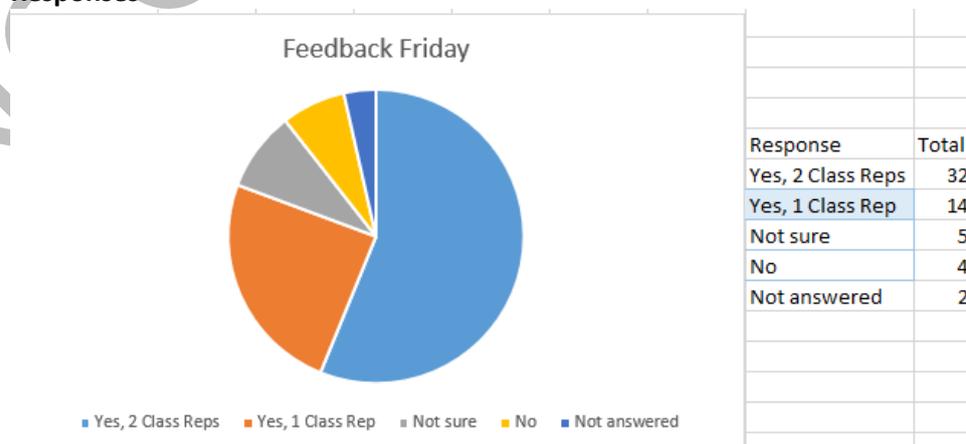
**Responses**

1. Our course is online only so we aren't on campus to try it
2. menu is to dull and basic
3. no been
4. Amazing
5. I haven't used this yet but from feedback in yesterdays class where some of my peers used the service, the response was really positive. I would likely use this service myself in the near future.
6. N/A not been in
7. N/A
8. good
9. Good idea, however I haven't been on campus for the duration of my course so I am not sure i will get full use out of this service. Hopefully soon though.
10. Good idea
11. It seems like a really smart idea! I haven't been on campus to try it out yet but next week I will be so i would probably give it a shot :)
12. I am working remotely so unless they would like to deliver, unfortunately I wouldn't be using this service until we return to college full time.
13. not used it yet
14. I haven't used it as wasn't anything I liked in the selection
15. Not the best of choices. Especially for people who are fussy and prefer a simple egg sandwich or lentil soup.
16. Really chuffed that they have managed to open up, grab and go makes me feel a bit safer about going down to the cafeteria knowing its not going to be queuing with people

**Question**

Does your class/class bubble have a Class Rep?

**Responses**



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### 1. Purpose

To share with members the activity of the project, *Tackling Racism on Campus* and highlight how Forth Valley College can take recommendations forward to be sector-leading.

### 2. Recommendations

That Board commit to fully supporting the project and consider:

- Any issues or questions arising from the paper
- How members can support raising the profile of the Project across FVC and the sector
- What support the Advance HE Steering Group can provide to FVC to effectively 'champion' the Project

### 3. Background

In October 2019 the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) published its report [Tackling Racial Harassment: Universities Challenged](#). The report pulled together research undertaken across UK universities through institutional survey responses and a call for lived experience evidence from students and staff, also through online surveys. The institutional survey response rate was high, with 89% of universities taking part. Individual responses were received from 845 students and 571 staff. From those responses, 585 students and 387 staff reported incidents of racial harassment. That equates to 69% of students and 68% of staff experiencing racial harassment at their organisation.

On 29 October 2019, the report was presented at a joint SFC and Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) event with Universities Scotland and the Scottish Government taking an active role in the event. The session looked to focus on creating a tangible response to the findings of the report and begin the process of developing a Memorandum of Understanding between the SFC and the EHRC. The [Memorandum of Understanding](#) was published in early March 2020 as 'an equal partnership for the mutual benefit of EHRC, SFC and Scotland's Colleges and Universities'

Though Colleges we not officially surveyed, racial harassment is understood by experts to be a pervasive societal problem. Therefore, the SFC has taken a strong stance to include Scotland's Colleges in the co-creation and benefits of the project. In creating a tangible response to the findings of the report, the SFC funded a Race Project, which is supported by Advance HE. The Project is overseen by an expert short life steering group of professionals, who are members of the BAME community, from across Scottish FE and HE. Monica Medina, Diversity Coordinator at FVC, sits on this steering group and also chairs a task and finish sub-group.

Through its life cycle, the steering group will inform the development of a toolkit of multi-media resources to support institutions in developing constructive and confident conversations about race, whiteness and racism. It is envisaged that the resources developed will be adapted or augmented to support conversations about other aspects of difference on campus, between staff and students. The toolkit will be branded with the design assets created under the direction of the steering group. A second work stream covered a desk-based review of race equality work in Scotland and extended this work to include equality related campaigns deemed successful.

This review was used to inform the work of the steering group, the resulting campaign and related materials.

### Steering Group

Membership of the steering group was confirmed in January 2020. The group is chaired by Khadija Mohammed from University of the West of Scotland. The first meeting took place in February 2020 and focused on creating terms of reference, the development of a creative brief and clarifying timescales. The group agreed to aim toward launching materials during Black History Month (October 2020) with the project due to be complete in summer 2021. This date was revised once the scale of the project was realised and a new date of March 2021 was agreed for the launch of the materials.

SFC support for the project included funds to engage a professional agency to create the campaign and development of the creative brief was based on the agreements reached during the first steering group meeting. Tenders were submitted and a creative agency (Morton Ward) was selected in March 2020. The creative agency has worked closely with the steering group to support focus groups and community engagement in creating a campaign to address racial harassment in the tertiary sector which is impactful in raising awareness and affecting culture change. Underpinning guidance and other resources will be created to ensure FE and HE are able to meet the challenges of addressing the issues originally raised by the EHRC report.

With the changing circumstances as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the second meeting took place remotely and it was clear that there would be an impact on steering group and the overall project. It was agreed that smaller task and finish groups be established to take forward work more effectively in the changed circumstances and that the steering group may need to increase the number of meetings taking place.

The following groups have been established:

- Education Sector Body Engagement (Heriot-Watt University facilitation)
- Tertiary Education Community Engagement (Forth Valley College facilitation)
- Creative Brief, Campaign & Evaluation (Glasgow Caledonian University facilitation)

Each of the groups will work to establish:

- Support for the steering group and steering group Chair
- Links to the original EHRC institutional recommendations
- Clarification of the Scottish context
- Buy-in and support from groups of interest
- The production of guidance materials and/or recommendations for materials; and
- Input to the creative campaign.

In June the emergence of the Black Lives Matter movement created momentum for the project and a number of new assets were added because of demand from the sector. These include a series of webinars that have already proved a great resource for organisations in advancing race equality; racial literacy training for a select number of institutions; and an additional working group to lead on creating an anti-racist curriculum.

### Forth Valley College's Race Equality Activity

Forth Valley College ethnicity data shows there has been an substantial increase in BME students since 2016.

Academic year	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Number of BME students	258	624	594	801

Similarly, the latest numbers in staff show a comparable increase with BME staff at 4.7% in 2017, up from 1.2% in 2016. Though there has been some fluctuation in percentages, we have seen significant growth in the college BME population and this coincides with reports from community organisations that predict the next census will reflect similar numbers. Like other further and higher education organisations across the UK, we have noted an attainment gap between BME and White students. This was specifically highlighted in our 2016 Public Sector Equality Duty reporting cycle. In response, we planned focus groups to identify barriers that might be causing this trend. Unfortunately, engagement with the focus groups was minimal despite the combined efforts of College Staff, our Student Association and the National Union of Students (NUS).

Reports from the last calendar year reveal that there have been three race-related hate incidents which involve both staff and students (see Appendix 1). Though there is no indication that there is a specific problem with racial harrasment at FVC, the fact that we have an attainment gap , reported incidents and reluctance to engage from BME students, despite extensive efforts indicates that we share narratives with colleges and universities across the sector. Therefore in actively engaging in the sector-wide Race Project we will be able to take advantage of the toolkit that offers well-researched actions of how to best improve race equality and create culture change.

#### 4. Key Considerations

A webinar was held on August 14<sup>th</sup> where a representative from Universities Scotland Principals group; Colleges Scotland Principals Group; Scottish Funding Council and Trade Unions> Each of the groups below were asked to sign up to a declaration and discuss changes they will be implementing to advance race equality. Our Principal, Dr Ken Thomson OBE, signed this declaration on behalf of Forth Valley College and affirmed that **'Racism exists on our campuses and in our society. Call it what it is and reject it in all its forms. We stand united against racism.'**

In order for this project to be successful across the sector, we require a senior level commitment to anti-racism and to the work of the Project. This commitment will include senior leaders engaging with training and activities developed by the Project as well as a commitment to making use of the Project's marketing campaign and toolkit. Once these resources have been made available to the college, the timeline and action plan will be finalised(see Appendix 2) and

driven forward by the Equality, Inclusion and Learning Services team. We will also look to potentially make this work part of our Equality Outcomes for the next Public Sector Equality Duty reporting cycle which begins in April 2021.

### 5. Financial Implications

As the project is funded by the SFC, there are no direct financial implications for the college. The toolkit will be available for all organisations to personalise.

### 6. Equalities

Assessment in Place? – Yes  No

An initial assessment was conducted by Advance HE at the start of the project. As the project is evolving we are yet to create a new document. However a primary function of the Creative Brief, Campaign & Evaluation task and finish group is to assess the project's inclusivity iteratively throughout the process. Additionally, the rationale behind the SFC funding the project was the idea that the work done within race equality will be extended to other protected characteristics. The aim is to improve upon the equity of all disadvantaged groups.

### 7. Risk

Please indicate on the matrix below the risk score. Risk is scored against Impact and Likelihood as Very Low through to Very High.

	Likelihood	Impact
Very High		
High		
Medium		X
Low	X	
Very Low		

Please describe any risks associated with this paper and associated mitigating actions –

The risk involved in the project is in not taking full advantage of the resources offered. The impact of participating in the project will potentially improve the lives of those who have had to endure racial harassment. Boosting our reputation as an inclusive college may attract a more diverse group of students, staff and commercial clients. As this is a sector-wide project it will be a high profile national message. An absence of FVC's participation would be striking and may cause people to question the inclusivity of the college. Overall, this addition would ensure the student experience is maximised.

Risk Owner – Kenny MacInnes

Action Owner – Monica Medina

### 8. Other Implications

Please indicate whether there are implications for the areas below.

Communications – Yes  No

Health and Safety – Yes  No

Because the campaign will come with a set of resources to be used by each organisation the marketing team will receive templates and permissions to roll out the material in print and digital forms. The Head of Communications and Marketing has been briefed on the project and is awaiting further details once they are available.

**Paper Author** – Monica Medina

**SMT Owner** – Kenny MacInnes

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### Student Population

Ethnicity	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2017/18 %	2018/19 %	2019/20 %
BME	624	594	801	4%	3%	3%
White	15,995	17,226	22,288	94%	94%	96%
<b>Overall - Summary</b>	<b>17,023</b>	<b>18,347</b>	<b>23,336</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Student Retention and Attainment

Ethnicity	Retention 17/18	Retention 18/19	Retention 19/20	Achieved 17/18	Achieved 18/19	Achieved 19/20
BME	92%	92%	96%	79%	79%	82%
White	93%	94%	96%	85%	83%	81%

### Student Ethnicity Breakdown

Ethnicity	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2017/18 %	2018/19 %	2019/20 %
- Any other background	242	226	277	39%	38%	35%
- Black, Black Scottish or Black British	6	4	8	1%	1%	1%
- Other African background	10	8	11	2%	1%	1%
African	70	61	109	11%	10%	14%
Arab	23	20	19	4%	3%	2%
Bangladeshi	2	2	1	0%	0%	0%
Caribbean	10	6	15	2%	1%	2%
Chinese	19	28	30	3%	5%	4%
Indian	31	34	47	5%	6%	6%
Mixed	58	41	57	9%	7%	7%
Other Asian	44	50	77	7%	8%	10%
Pakistani	109	114	150	17%	19%	19%
	<b>624</b>	<b>594</b>	<b>801</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Hate Incidents Reported

Year	Total	Race Related
20/21 YTD	2	1
19/20	6	2
18/19	1	0
17/18	2	0

## Anti-racism Action Plan

The following are key recommendations for creating an anti-racist action plan however it is acknowledged that these steps should be taken in an order most meaningful to our needs. Additional guidance will be launched with the rest of the toolkit by March 2021.

Below is the beginning of the Forth Valley College Anti-Racist Action Plan. Leading on from the senior level commitment, awareness raising and initial training in racial literacy, key contributors from across the college will **co-create** the next steps of the plan in order to take ownership and make the actions more meaningful to individual teams in order to have cross-college impact.

1. **Fostering an anti-racist culture of understanding**
2. **Supporting an Anti-Racist Curriculum**
3. **Constructing systematic, anti-racist development practices**
4. **Investing in a diverse workforce**
5. **Recording and responding effectively to racist incidents**
6. **Monitoring and reviewing organisational race data**
7. **Consulting with Black\*\* community partners**
8. **Responsibility and Accountability**

Date	Action	Who is involved	Statement recommendation
August 2020	College signs up to the declaration for talking racism  <i>Racism exists on our campuses and in our society. Call it what it is and reject it in all its forms. We stand united against racism.</i>	Principal and CEO	1.Fostering an anti-racist culture of understanding

<p>January 2020— May 2020</p>	<p>Improve racial literacy</p> <p>Scotland anti-racist Champions training-5 people from an organisation</p> <p>The training also includes the opportunity to pilot resources and champions will be supported by Advance HE</p> <p><b>Expression of interest submitted. Application needs to be formalised.</b></p>	<p>Champions will have senior representatives from: <b>SMT, Marketing, HR, Academic, Support Staff</b></p>	<p>1. Fostering an anti-racist_culture of understanding</p> <p>3. Constructing systematic, anti-racist development practices</p>
<p>January 2020- March 2020?</p>	<p>Understand curricular approaches</p> <p>Participation in the QAA/Advance HE working group</p>	<p>Representative from Learning and Teaching or Academic Staff</p>	<p>2. Supporting an Anti-Racist Curriculum</p>
<p>March 2020</p>	<p>Tackling racism launched</p>	<p>DC, marketing</p>	<p>1. Fostering an anti-racist_culture of understanding</p>
<p>March 2020</p>	<p>Re advertise hate incident monitoring procedure in conjunction with campaign</p> <p>Look at ways to combine with more comprehensive reporting system.</p>	<p>DC, marketing</p>	<p>5.Recording and responding effectively to racist incidents</p>
<p>April 2020—</p>	<p>Source/ create blended antiracist training to be delivered across the college</p> <p><b>LMT to be first team to complete anti-racist training</b></p>	<p>DC, Champions, Development team</p>	<p>3. Constructing systematic, anti-racist development practices</p>

June 2020	Racially literate group of staff and SA created to draft Anti-racist action plan.	Champions, DC, +more	1.Fostering an anti-racist culture of understanding 3.Constructing systematic, anti-racist development practices
Development Week June 2020	Anti-racist action group begin draft of action plan		1.Fostering an anti-racist culture of understanding 3.Constructing systematic, anti-racist development practices

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### 1. Purpose

To inform Board members of the development of the strategic partnership with South East Regional College (SERC), Northern Ireland, and seek approval for both continuation to the next phase and to take forward an application to the Forth Valley ALFoundation to enable project delivery within the next stage of the partnership.

### 2. Recommendation

- That members note the content of this paper and give approval for the next phase of the strategic partnership with SERC.
- That members give approval for the submission of a bid to the Forth Valley Foundation for additional resource to be made available to enable the expansion of the strategic partnership.
- That identified members support a joint discussion with the Board of Governors at SERC.

### 3. Background

Forth Valley College has a very strong partnership with SERC, which has benefited a significant number of staff and students across the college in recent years. In academic year 2018/19, curriculum teams across both colleges collaborated on a number of joint student projects. These areas included electronic engineering, manufacturing engineering, make-up artistry, hospitality, sport and fitness, science and early education. Students from both colleges worked together to deliver projects which enhanced their learning experience, provided evidence for learning outcomes and allowed them to develop and enhance a range of wider skills. The student project teams communicated digitally throughout the experience and learned a great deal, both from the process of digital collaboration and from the variations they discovered in the Scottish and Irish curricula. These collaborative projects continued in academic year 2019/20, but could not be fully completed due to the Covid pandemic. These projects also created opportunities for students and staff to have reciprocal visits between the two colleges.

In 2018, both colleges developed and simultaneously delivered on a ground-breaking creative learning conference called 'Creative Learning Conference: Celtic Connections Edition', in which all lecturing staff participated. The conference focussed on key contemporary themes in learning and teaching including – Technology Enhanced Learning, Cyber-Security and Internet Safety, Student Stress and Resilience and Peer Learning with Student Collaboration. The conference was developed as a collaboration with the Human Resources Department, Learning and Quality and supported by lecturers across the two colleges. Both colleges were recognised for these innovative creative learning experiences and were presented with the Innovation prize at the CDN awards in 2018. The college's submission had focussed on the unique partnership they have formed with SERC who have the same strong commitment at the heart of their approaches to learning.

Both colleges teamed up again in August 2020, to deliver another innovative, completely virtual conference, with live streaming, online quizzes, and the use of MS Teams as the delivery platform for lecturing and student facing staff. Over 270 staff from FVC participated and were matched by nearly 300 SERC staff over the two days where a number of staff worked together

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on the development and facilitation of highly engaging workshops that were recorded and banked as future resources. Another joint virtual conference is planned for January 2021, aimed at service staff and will focus on digital skills development and mental health awareness and training.

The impact of our partnership working with SERC has been very positive and has helped us develop as an organisation. We have excellent relationships with individual members of staff between the organisations, from lecturing staff, to service staff and managers. There is a great deal of commonality between our respective colleges, including our ambition for digital learning empowerment and the significance of investing in our people.

Additionally we are now in a position where we could potentially replicate this same model of strategic partnership working with other colleges and organisations across Scotland.

#### 4. Key Considerations

Through the strategic partnership with SERC over the last number of years, we have already taken advantage of shared staff resourcing for various initiatives; innovative and sector leading practice which has raised the college profile; increased staff CPD opportunities across the college; facilitated development of high quality training materials and other media and provided opportunities for students to gain a wider range of skills. It is also clear to see the high levels of staff and wider team motivation when working with SERC on the various projects delivered so far and that staff from SERC really enjoy working with our staff.

Given the success of the partnership, the true collaboration between the colleges to date and the strong inter-personal working relationships built, it is now time to update the existing Memorandum of Understanding and formalise the next phase of the strategic partnership. The next step for the partnership is to embark on a number of projects that will benefit FVC and SERC in a wider number of curriculum and service areas. See Appendix 1 for a list of potential projects, their priority rating and how each will benefit the organisation. The range of projects are vast and cut across the entire college, from Learning and Quality, Human Resources, more Curriculum Teams and Business Development. There will also be a number of projects that we have not thought about yet but will emerge as the strategic partnership continues.

In the current landscape that both colleges are operating in, with increased reliance on online and blended learning delivery, along with adaptations required to support staff with effective digital learning delivery and maintaining positive well-being against the backdrop of our finances being stretched to the limit, there is a greater need to capitalise on the strategic partnership. As an example, the partnership has already created the opportunity for us to join SERC and multiple EU countries in a joint Erasmus bid, where if successful, funding to FVC will be in the region of £50,000 helping drive forward a project that aligns itself with our own strategic priorities and the wider sector digital ambition.

In experiencing the tangible positive impact and the true operational and reputational benefit that this type of partnership can bring, consideration must be given to the long-term sustainability. The partnership will open up strategic opportunities for the next 5 years of our

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planning cycle and as an example, some of the longer-term outputs that we would wish to achieve through the partnership are as follows:

- Established and effective curriculum learning networks between SERC and FVC staff
- An established programme of students exchange visits that occur year on year
- Working with a trusted partner to establish more funded international projects
- As part of our overall digital ambition, we would have a robust system in place for the exchange of learning material and the sharing of contemporary learning and teaching practices.

These outputs tie in with our Strategic theme to ‘Cultivate a vibrant learning organisation where learners develop skills, achieve qualifications valued by industry and progress seamlessly’, where we will be able to achieve associated objectives of maximising creative and digital approaches to learning by:

- adopting and engaging, collaborating and creating blended approaches to learning
- having staff and students who are digitally competent and confident
- providing resources to support learning which are available digitally, inclusive, and accessible

An important consideration however, is that when developing the partnership further, maintaining the good relationships, project managing and enabling the individual projects, an additional resource will be required. To date this year (Year 1 of the plan) the work has been and can be absorbed by the Learning and Quality team, but in order to ensure this partnership is further developed and sustained for the following two years, a resource will be required. Appendix 1 provides an estimate of resource required over the next 3 years of the partnership. Table 1 below summarises the overall estimate required and it is anticipated that a bid will be submitted to the Forth Valley Foundation.

**Table 1 – Resource Estimate**

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

As part of the next steps for taking the partnership with SERC forward, we would like to invite members to an extraordinary joint board meeting with the SERC board members to show case what has been achieved through the partnership so far and provide further detail on the next stages of the strategic partnership.

**Financial Implications**

**Please detail the financial implications of this item** – In order to maintain the strategic partnership with SERC and move the partnership into a new phase, as well as replicate strategic partnerships with other colleges, further resource will be required to manage, coordinate, enable and keep momentum up on the wide ranging and varied projects that this brings to the college. Refer to Appendix 1 and Table 1 within this document.

**5. Equalities**

**Assessment in Place? – No**

**If No, please explain why** – EQIA Initial Screening form indicates that a full EQIA is not required at this stage.

**Please summarise any positive/negative impacts (noting mitigating actions)** – N/A

**6. Risk**

Please indicate on the matrix below the risk score. Risk is scored against Impact and Likelihood as Very Low through to Very High.

	Likelihood	Impact
Very High		
High		
Medium		
Low	X	X
Very Low		

**Please describe any risks associated with this paper and associated mitigating actions** – In taking the strategic partnership forward with SERC and that the management is not fully resourced, we would be unable to fulfil our side of the partnership and therefore there is a risk to the reputation of the college.

If a post of this nature is not funded we may miss potential partnership and funding opportunities within the next couple of years for collaborative projects.

**Risk Owner** –Kenny MacInnes      **Action Owner** – Helen Young

7. Other Implications –

Please indicate whether there are implications for the areas below.

**Communications – No**

**Health and Safety – No**

**Please provide a summary of these implications – N/A**

**Paper Author – Helen Young SMT Owner – Kenny MacInnes**

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## Appendix 1 - Strategic projects

Description	Outline proposal	Timeframe	Priority rating (1- most important - 5 least important)	Lead	Estimate - FVC Coordination Resource Year 1 (Hours)	Estimate - FVC Coordination Resource Year 2 (Hours)	Estimate - FVC Coordination Resource Year 3 (Hours)	Estimate - Additional Financial Resource (Travel/ time out/ development/ student travel)	Notes	Themes				
										Supporting staff	Supporting learners	International projects and partnerships	Supporting business / commercial activity	Organisational development
Partnership Board Meetings	4 meetings per year to manage and review overall partnership. Additional meetings for development of further opportunities.	1 year	1	FVC/SERC	17	20	20	0	Four meeting per year, allowing for 3 hours for meeting and prep time. Additional time included for informal meetings between partnership board meetings.					
KA 2 Erasmus partnership	The proposed strategic partnership for digital education focuses on addressing the innovative practices in a digital era' priority through the design, development and evaluation of the following within a TVET setting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An innovative e-learning platform that supports personalised and lifelong learning</li> <li>Teacher training programme focussed on digitisation in the classroom – teaching, learning and assessment</li> <li>CPD elements/toolkit to encompass and support lifelong learning</li> <li>Specific focus on training and tools to support inclusiveness and equity in the classroom</li> <li>Digital pedagogy</li> <li>Curriculum design and development</li> <li>Teaching and learning toolkit for teachers adapting to distance learning</li> </ul>	1 year	3	SERC	20	40	40	Associated travel will be included in the Erasmus bid	Yr 1 is a planning year and year 2 and 3 allow for average of 1 hrs per week over the academic year. This funded project will have funded development costs. Enabling resource required.					
Corporate / service staff development	Joint FVC / SERC corporate staff development focusing on differentiated activities linked to requested training from corporate units and including mental health, 26th January 2021 (AM) / 29th January 2021 (AM). Further joint training and CPD will be ongoing during the partnership - at least one joint, virtual event per year focussing on Creative and Project Based Learning.	5 months	1	FVC / SERC	20	30	30	0	Year 1 - Up to around 6 meetings with SERC for planning and 4 internal meetings with FVC staff, allowing for 2 hour per meeting and follow up actions. Same for Year 2 and 3, but an additional 10 hours added for an additional event in years 2 and 3					
Teacher professional development - Learning and digital skills mentors	Establish a network to include training, dissemination and collaboration. Community of practice. Learning and digital skills mentors (FVC) Pedagogy mentors (SERC). Quarterly meetings to include training in a range of tools and approaches as well as dissemination of good practice. CPD - contributions from staff in both colleges invited on an ongoing basis.	immediate	1	FVC / SERC	14	16	16	2000	Year 1 - allowing for around 7 meetings to plan and establish network and to plan networking events. Year 2 and 3 - 8 meetings planned, allowing 2 hours per session. 6 members of staff, 6 trips over the two years, including travel, accommodation and expenses					
Teacher professional development - early career teachers (teaching qualification)	Explore opportunities for the PDA to be delivered to SERC Staff by FVC. This is a qualification already delivered internally at FVC. Normally a pre-cursor to staff progressing to TQFE. Level 9, could be delivered remotely with 1 observation. Opportunity to pilot a couple of SERC staff this year.	1 year (pilot in 20-21)	2	FVC	8	8	8	2000	Four progress meetings per year to make sure staff are on track and delivery is going well. Allowing for 2 hours per meeting time, prep and following up on actions. Estimate for our staff to travel to SERC for enhanced development opportunities					
Accredited CPD for Staff	SQA portfolio: FVC and SERC working with SQA to look at portfolio of training and exploring a range of potential PDAs that could be delivered to staff from FVC/SERC. Development of other joint training opportunities that will arise through the partnership.	1 year	2	FVC / SERC	14.5	48	48	3000	Year 1 - 3 meetings anticipated at 1.5 hours, plus 10 hours included for development. Years 2 and 3, allocation for 4 meetings at 2 hours and time for prep and development.					
Sharing staff between the two Colleges.	Paul Smyth psmyth@serc.ac.uk Ralph Burns Ralph.Burns@forthvalley.ac.uk Looking at secondment agreement to allow exchange of staff between the two organisations.	1 year	1	FVC / SERC	6	6	6	0	Time allowed for initial set up and maintenance over the period					
International partnership and exploring options for future collaborations (teachers and students).	Delivering qualifications for international students coming to the UK Erasmus / British council funding opportunities. New bidding opportunities to be sourced and completion of bids. Claire Henderson chenderson@serc.ac.uk / FVC lead - Helen Young	2 years	3	FVC / SERC	15	20	20	0	Estimated at present but this type of activity is normally labour intensive. Support will be sought from Development and Fundraising Manager					
Broad spectrum commercial activities through a franchise system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Options of SERC infilling to the COMPEX (Electrical Offshore Safety) as a pilot exercise. SERC will feature this programme in the prospectus noting partnership working with FVC.</li> <li>Agreement to map out a cross referral process to allow learners to book onto or sign post learners to courses.</li> </ul>	6 months	1	FVC / SERC	6	8	8	2000	Coordinating meetings between Business Development Teams and reporting back to board. Estimate of travel resource to enable face to face meetings at SERC to explore opportunities and build relationships, meet potential employers, etc.					
Curriculum hubs to share materials, best practice and projects between the two colleges	Civil engineering and construction - virtual site visits Simon Cummings scummings@serc.ac.uk / Charles Cameron charles.cameron@forthvalley.ac.uk and Iasha Craig lasha.craig@forthvalley.ac.uk Science: Karen Orme korme@serc.ac.uk (DHOS) / Fiona Jackson fiona.jackson@forthvalley.ac.uk Mechanical and Electrical Engineering: Trevor Breadon tbreadon@serc.ac.uk (HOS) / William.Forrest@forthvalley.ac.uk (operations manager). Creative and Digital Media	1 year	2	FVC / SERC	48	156	156	57600	Allowing for collaboration for 6 curriculum areas for collaborative projects, information exchange and staff networking. 6 areas with 4 meetings at 2 hours per meeting (includes prep and follow up actions). Development time required, setting up platforms and support of curriculum teams estimated at 14hours per curriculum area. Estimated resource included for travel. £300 per head for 16 people per curriculum area over the					

Leadership and Management programme <i>CMI Level 5 / 7 (Bridging the Gap)</i>	Level 7 - Preparation for executive level management - strategic management collaborative projects	1 year	3	SERC / FVC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC			
Temperature check - pulse points (quality, curriculum, student support)	Structured conversations to follow. (Quality Heads: Chenderson@serc.ac.uk, Heather Miller hmiller@serc.ac.uk / rob.mcdermott@forthvalley.ac.uk , helen.young@forthvalley.ac.uk ).	1 year	3	FVC / SERC	6	6	6	1000	Four best practice and temperature check meeting per year at 1.5 hours per meeting. Additional financial resource to allow for travel to SERC for development activities.			
Systems and infrastructure (ITS) / Business transformation	PI predictor tool / SSS student support portal/ Sharepoint Andrew Emmett aemmett@serc.ac.uk / David Allison david.allison@forthvalley.ac.uk	1 year	2	FVC / SERC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC			

<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>157.5</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>67600</b>
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**1. Purpose**

To present to members the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year to 31 July 2020.

**2. Recommendation**

Members consider the financial position of the College for the year ended 31 July 2020 and approve the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2020.

**3. Background**

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) reclassification of FE Colleges came into effect from 1 April 2014. There are a number of significant implications resulting from this reclassification not least the inability to retain surplus cash without this in effect being frozen due to government resource budgeting restrictions.

The Annual Report and Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with the Accounts Direction issued by the Scottish Funding Council in July 2020. This direction requires the College to comply with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting for Further and Higher Education issued in July 2019 (2019 SORP), the Scottish Public Finance Manual (SPFM) and the Scottish governments Financial Reporting Manual (FRoM). The SPFM and FRoM both require additional disclosures.

The auditors required a formal management assessment of going concern to be prepared this year. Forecast income & expenditure, and cash flows from August 2020 to January 2022 were provided, as well as narrative.

**4. Key Considerations**

The adoption of the Financial Reporting standard (FRS) 102 and the 2019 SORP, combined with the government accounting restrictions on the ability to retain cash surpluses due to resource budgeting restrictions, means it is difficult to present the College's financial position in a way which informs readers of the true underlying financial sustainability of the College.

The key consideration for members is the long term financial sustainability of the College. This is referred to within the Annual Report and Financial Statements as the College continuing to operate on a "going concern" basis. Under the current reporting regime previous indicators such as reporting an operating surplus and having a strong Balance Sheet with net assets are no longer achievable. This does not however mean that the College is financially unsustainable.

The key measures to consider are the College's ability to generate cash from its day to day operational activities, and evidence that it can meet its liabilities as they fall due. The impact of non-cash technical accounting adjustments, while they are relevant to some extent, should be excluded when assessing the College's financial strength.

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The Financial Performance section of the Performance Report provides a detailed review of the College's financial performance for the year ended 31 July 2020 and its financial position at 31 July 2020. The key points to note are:

- The College generated an underlying operational surplus of £1,170k excluding non-cash adjustments, funding from the Forth Valley College Foundation, the estates development costs and the loan repayments. **This surplus demonstrates that the College is operating sustainably within its funding allocation.**
- The net liability position in the Balance Sheet is distorted due to the technical accounting adjustments in relation to the treatment of government capital grants and pension liabilities. Additionally, the impact of reclassification where surplus cash has been donated to an arm's length foundation or spent to support the estates development programme impacts on the net liabilities.
- £1,772k was received within 2019/20 from the Forth Valley College Foundation in relation to revenue and capital spend for the new Falkirk Campus.
- Management has carried out an assessment of going concern, and this has been reviewed by the Audit and Finance Committees. The auditors are content that there are no going concern issues as the underlying financial position has been clearly demonstrated.

This paper, the annual report and financial statements 2019/20 and the going concern assessment were considered by the Finance and Audit Committee's on 17 November 2020 and were recommended for presentation to the Board of Management for final approval.

## 5. Financial Implications

SFC guidance states that for the financial period ended 31 July 2020 Colleges are permitted to report deficits equivalent to the spend on cash budget for priorities, FRS 17 pension charges and FRS 102 adjustments. The reported financial position falls within these guidelines.

Reporting a deficit does have implications however, and to counter any queries or concerns by the users of the Financial Statements, the Underlying Performance table on page 14 schedules out the non-cash technical adjustments and one-off adjustments included within the deficit, thereby highlighting the true underlying surplus.

## 6. Equalities

**Assessment in Place?** – not applicable given the nature of this report.

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7. Risk

Please indicate on the matrix below the risk score. Risk is scored against Impact and Likelihood as Very Low through to Very High.

	Likelihood	Impact
Very High		
High		
Medium		x
Low	x	
Very Low		

Due to the adoption of FRS 102 in terms of the accounting treatment of certain items and the associated presentational changes, the College's underlying financial health is masked. There is a risk that those not familiar with the technical aspects of Financial Statements will misinterpret the state of the College's financial health. In mitigation of this, it needs to be stressed that the Board of Management, SFC and the external auditors are all in agreement that there is no going concern issue.

**Risk Owner** – Alison Stewart

**Action Owner** – Senga McKerr

**Paper Author** – Senga McKerr

**SMT Owner** – Alison Stewart

1. Purpose

To present to members the annual report from the Chair of the Audit Committee to the Board of Management for approval.

2. Recommendation

That members approve the attached report.

3. Background

The Chair of the Audit Committee presents a report of the Committee's activities on an annual basis.

As this report is linked directly to the associated financial year, the information within this paper covers the 12 month period from 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2020 period.

4. Financial Implications

Please detail the financial implications of this item – None. All audit activity is fully budgeted and progress against agreed activity is monitored.

5. Equalities

Assessment in Place? – Yes  No

If No, please explain why – Not applicable

Please summarise any positive/negative impacts (noting mitigating actions) – Not Applicable

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6. Risk

Please indicate on the matrix below the risk score. Risk is scored against Impact and Likelihood as Very Low through to Very High.

	Likelihood	Impact
Very High		
High		
Medium		
Low	X	X
Very Low		

Please describe any risks associated with this paper and associated mitigating actions – Failure to adequately check internal systems via the internal audit service could lead to systemic errors or inefficiencies. The Internal Audit function, overseen by the Audit Committee, ensures that adequate assurances are received.

Risk Owner – Ken Thomson

Action Owner – Alison Stewart

7. Other Implications –

Please indicate whether there are implications for the areas below.

Communications – Yes  No

Health and Safety – Yes  No

Please provide a summary of these implications – Not Applicable

Paper Author – Stephen Jarvie

SMT Owner – Alison Stewart

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**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE TO THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT**

**1. Introduction**

This report covers the 12 month period from 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2020. Membership of the Committee during that period underwent a number of changes following a review of committee membership. Attendance was as follows:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Attendance Record</b>
Lorna Dougall (Chair)	3 of 3 meetings
Hazel Burt (joined 21.5.20)	1 of 1 meetings
Pamela Duncan (last meeting 5/9/19)	1 of 1 meetings
Lindsay Graham (last meeting 19.11.19)	2 of 3 meetings
Beth Hamilton	1 of 3 meetings
Steven Torrie (co-opted) (joined 4 December 2018)	3 of 3 meetings
Mandy Wright (co-opted) (joined 4 December 2018)	1 of 3 meetings

The Committee met on the following dates:

5 September 2019  
19 November 2019  
21 May 2020

**2. Internal Audit**

Internal Audit is governed by the Code of Audit Practice, as published by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). The Code requires the Internal Auditors to adopt a risk-based approach to the programme, and to undertake follow-up work to ensure that all recommendations accepted by College management have been implemented.

**Audit Provider:**

Mha Henderson Loggie were appointed as Internal Auditors from July 2019. Their charge for the period was £20,664. (Fees are based upon the degree of responsibility and skill of staff, and the time involved in the work. Fees for additional services or assignments are agreed separately in advance).

**Annual Report on Audit Activities:** The Internal Auditor's report on audit activities carried out during the year 2019–2020 was considered by the Audit Committee at its 5 October 2020 meeting. Internal Audit assignments for this period were carried out broadly in accordance with the Audit Plan agreed by the Audit Committee on 19 November 2019.

**Achievements:** The audit assignments were identified based upon a review of the College risk register, the identification of new systems being implemented within the College and those audits (i.e. credits) required on a rolling basis.

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The specific audit reports produced for each assignment made recommendations for the improvement of internal procedures and controls, and each recommendation was given an agreed target date for implementation. The monitoring of internal audit recommendations is a standing agenda item on Audit Committee agendas.

**Effectiveness:** On the basis of the work undertaken during the year the auditors have expressed an opinion that the College has –  
“adequate and effective arrangements for risk management, control and governance. Proper arrangements are in place to promote and secure Value for Money.”

### 3. External Audit

**Audit Provider:** Ernst & Young LLP.

**Auditors Report:** The External Auditor's report on the Financial Statements for the year 2019-2020 is included in the papers. The audit was carried out during October/November 2020.

**Management Letter:** During the course of the audit the Auditors performed overviews of the key financial systems of the College to assess their adequacy for the purposes of ensuring that accurate, timely and complete accounting records were being maintained. The recommendations resulting from this exercise are set out in the report of the External Auditor.

### 4. Other Matters

During the past 12 month period, in addition to receiving reports from the Internal and External Auditors, the Committee also considered the Risk Register and treatment of significant risks.

The Audit Committee will also meet with the Internal and External Auditors without College staff in attendance at their meeting of 17 November 2020.

### 5. Adequacy and Effectiveness

The Committee accepts the views of the internal and external auditors that Forth Valley College's internal financial and management systems are adequate and that the Board of Management's responsibilities have been satisfactorily discharged.

Lorna Dougall  
Chair  
3 December 2020

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**1. Purpose**

To seek members approval on the composition of the Board of Management Committees going forward.

**2. Recommendation**

That members give consideration to and approve the proposed composition of committees to support the efficient and effective governance of the College.

**3. Background**

An external Board Effectiveness Review was undertaken in 2016. This review made a number of recommendations, which included

- Reviewing the remit of the SDC
- Allowing more time in the Board of Management meetings for Strategic discussion.

In September 2018 the Board of Management reviewed the committee structure to ensure that going forward we are able to make best use of the excellent Board Member resource available to support the strategic direction and governance of the College.

**4. Committee Structure**

The Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges requires colleges to have the following Committees;

- Audit
- Finance
- Nominations
- Remuneration

In addition to the above Forth Valley College has;

- HR
- Learning & Student Experience

With the completion of the new Falkirk Campus the Falkirk Campus Project Board has now been disbanded. Consideration is being given to how the utilisation and maintenance of the entire college estate will be overseen by the Board going forward and a further review of the Committee structure will be undertaken in 21/22.

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**5. Committee membership**

Due to a number of changes Board personnel the proposed committee membership is noted in the table below together with a summary of the numbers of meetings for each member.

Audit	Finance	HR	Learning & student experience	Nominations / Remuneration
<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>As required</b>
Lorna Dougall	Liam McCabe	Beth Hamilton	Davie Flynn	Ross Martin
Beth Hamilton	Andrew Caldwell	Trudi Craggs	Naila Akrim	Trudi Craggs
Hazel Burt	Andrew Carver	Davie Flynn	Lorna Dougall	Lorna Dougal
Alistair McKean (Staff)	Trudi Craggs	Kat Graham	Kat Graham	Davie Flynn
Mandy Wright (co-opted)	Ken Richardson	Vacancy	Jen Hogarth (Staff)	Beth Hamilton
Vacancy	Andrew Smirthwaite (SA)	Steven Torrie (co-opted)	Aleksandrs Petrovskis (SA)	Liam McCabe
			Vacancy	

**Non Executive members**

Naila Akrim	3
Hazel Burt	3
Andrew Caldwell	4
Andrew Carver	4
Trudi Craggs	6
Lorna Dougal	6
Davie Flynn	5
Kat Graham	5
Beth Hamilton	5
Liam McCabe	4
Ken Richardson	4
Vacancy	8

**Staff**

Jen Hogarth	3
Alistair McKean	3

**Students**

Andrew Smirthwaite	4
Aleksandrs Petrovskis	3

**Co-opted**

Steven Torrie	2
Mandy Wright	3

Following a recruitment process scheduled for early 21/22 the committee membership will be reviewed in line with the new committee structure and updated skills matrix.

**Paper Author** – Alison Stewart, Board Secretary

## Scottish Funding Council Review – Phase One Summary and Call for Views

### Summary:

This paper provides an overview of the Scottish Funding Council's (SFC) Phase One Report of *Coherence and Sustainability: A review of Scotland's Colleges and Universities* following the publication of the [report](#) on Tuesday 20 October 2020, in addition to summarising the potential key areas for development in Phase Two.

Colleges Scotland has been liaising with SFC and is now seeking the views of principals ahead of the upcoming meeting of the Funding and Finance Committee on Monday 9 November and Colleges Scotland Board meeting currently being scheduled for mid-November, to allow the college sector positions to be developed in preparation for Phases Two and Three

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### Recommendation:

College Principals' Group members are asked to:

- note the content in this paper
- raise any points of interest at the meeting
- provide comments on the SFC Review to allow Colleges Scotland to develop initial sector positions on the following, taking into account the current public sector funding environment:
  - the areas in which the sector's focus should be concentrated
  - the sector position moving forward in response to the Phase 1 report
  - areas where consensus can be built
  - what actions would make the biggest difference
  - identify areas of duplication across the education landscape and how these could be addressed
  - what key areas should be the focus of Phase 2 of the SFC Review.

# Scottish Funding Council Review – Phase One Summary and Call for Views

## Summary of Phase One

As SFC has advised, the Phase One Report has placed an emphasis on reflecting the submissions received from stakeholders in response to the call for evidence, through submissions, round-table discussions, advisory groups and recovery reports, and to distil and present back what has been received with a view to working together on next steps.

The report established the basis for creating a more collaborative and inclusive approach to tertiary education, something that the college sector has been seeking for some time, that puts the learner at the heart of the system and ensures that everyone regardless of their age or background has access to education and training at every stage of life without having to repeat learning or duplicate effort at each step.

It was advised that the current digital revolution for learners will challenge the way students learn and will shape the student experience, with opportunities available to develop more efficient and high quality curriculums online, and that there is need to build long-term relationships between colleges and universities and employers and industry. Such relationships are already in place across Scotland, but the review process has collated additional means of improving, and building upon, such relationships for the future.

The report also noted the critical role that colleges will play in Scotland's recovery, supporting Scotland's future, getting our citizens back to work, ensuring a focus on both social and economic recovery, and contributing to the success of the changed economy of the Scotland of the future. The sustainability challenges that colleges have were acknowledged in the report, with this creating an opportunity to provide the college sector with greater certainty of funding, more flexibility and streamlined funding in future.

On the basis of the responses received, SFC has developed ten key themes from Phase One that will extend into next steps. SFC made clear in the Phase One Report that it is their intention to develop many of these themes further during phase two, through debate, analysis, and the exploration of options and solutions, in a spirit of partnership and collaboration.

These are as follows:

- Theme 1: Keeping the interests of current and future students, and equalities, at the heart of everything we do
- Theme 2: Supporting the digital revolution for learners
- Theme 3: Towards an integrated, connected tertiary education and skills system for learners and employers
- Theme 4: Recognising colleges and universities as national assets and civic anchors
- Theme 5: Building long-term relationships with employers and industry
- Theme 6: Protecting and leveraging the excellence of our research and science base

- Theme 7: Driving the innovation agenda
- Theme 8: Enhancing collaboration
- Theme 9: Making the most of the sector's global connections
- Theme 10: Focusing on the financial sustainability of colleges and universities, and current funding models

## **Phase Two: September 2020 to February 2021**

Looking towards Phase two it is expected there will be a move towards more detailed development of options for change, together with developing detailed proposals for funding and outcome agreement reform.

This presents the college sector with an opportunity to decide what the sector focus should be moving forward to Phase Two, and to outline what the key sector messages to SFC are, with a view to influencing future developments. Such messaging can also be applied to complement the narrative within the 2021/22 Spending Review submission which is currently being developed.

Key areas for development in phase two will include:

- A continued focused response to the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in the areas of health & safety; supporting students to succeed; economic and social recovery; and financial sustainability. Assessing the feasibility and prioritisation of options outlined under theme three in moving towards an integrated, connected tertiary and skills eco-system for learners and employers.
- Development, with SDS and stakeholders, of skills alignment, and the funding of, and planning for, Foundation and Graduate Apprenticeships.
- Engagement with employers and industry to ensure their views and expertise help inform and improve student outcomes.
- Exploring how we can collectively enhance and support digital and blended learning options.
- Developing further SFC's outcome and impact framework, funding methodologies, quality assurance arrangements, options for targets and measures, and a Transformation Fund.
- Engagement with multi-college regions on next steps.
- Making sure student views are threaded through our considerations. We will establish a student advisory group to help facilitate this.

## **Phase Three: February to May 2021**

It is expected that Phase Three will incorporate the development of more detailed delivery and implementation plans, based on the findings and key messages communicated through Phase Two, whilst taking into account the timing of the Scottish Parliament election, on the basis that this will take place in May 2021 as currently scheduled.

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### **Recommendation:**

College Principals' Group members are asked to:

- note the content in this paper
- raise any points of interest at the meeting
- provide comments on the SFC Review to allow Colleges Scotland to develop initial sector positions on the following, taking into account the current public sector funding environment:
  - the areas in which the sector's focus should be concentrated

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- what actions would make the biggest difference
- identify areas of duplication across the education landscape and how these could be addressed
- what key areas should be the focus of Phase 2 of the SFC Review.

Colleges Scotland  
October 2020

UNCONTROLLED COPY

# The College of the Future

The UK-wide final report  
from the Independent  
Commission on the  
College of the Future

October 2020



The Independent Commission on the College of the Future is kindly supported by:



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The Commissioners wanted to pay special thanks to Lewis Cooper, Philippa Alway and David Cragg for the work they put in to make the Commission a success. Their advice, support, organisation, inspiration and management of the Commission's work has been first class and we owe a lot to them.



**Sir Ian Diamond**  
Chair of the Independent Commission on the College of the Future and the UK's National Statistician

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**Thriving societies built on the foundations of fairness and sustainability, need strong, collaborative, and inclusive colleges**

## Foreword

What do we want and need from our colleges from 2030 onwards, and how do we get there? These were the simple, yet fundamental questions our Commission set out to answer when we began our work in Spring 2019.

In light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we are now publishing this report in a totally different context. The long-term challenges facing the economy and wider society have not changed since we started this process: the issues relating to the climate crisis, technological developments, demographic changes, poor productivity and endemic regional and social inequalities are still top of the agenda. The huge difference is that the pandemic makes addressing these challenges all the more immediate and brings them into starker focus. The issues set out through this report must be front and centre of the policy agenda as we seek to achieve a skills-led recovery to the ongoing health crisis, and to rebuild healthy, connected and cohesive communities.

Thriving societies built on the foundations of fairness and sustainability need strong, collaborative and inclusive colleges that empower people with the skills they need to get on in life, support better productivity and innovation of businesses, and strengthen every community's sense of place. This report is a rallying cry for radical and decisive action in order to enable colleges to fulfil that role within a more joined-up, all-age education and skills system, allowing individuals ultimately to have greater agency and opportunities right across their lifetimes.

A strength of this Commission is that, for the first time, it has taken a four nations perspective on the current and future role of colleges and college systems across the UK. This approach has meant we can draw on and distil the rich diversity of policy and practice across the four nations as well as engaging college leaders, practitioners and policy makers in shaping our conclusions and recommendations. We also recognise an emerging and important shared trajectory, which our report echoes and endorses.

This report sets out recommendations for reform and renewal of the college systems with important implications for colleges and their governments in each of the four nations. At the same time, we fully respect and acknowledge the different policy and operational contexts in which colleges are working. We will therefore be publishing nation specific reports later this year, setting out focussed recommendations relevant to their individual circumstances. We hope that this should, in turn, provide a basis for ongoing collaboration in the exchange of policy and practice across the four nations. All are important - but there are three elements that must be priorities for all governments.

## 1 Upskilling people across the UK by making it possible for everyone to learn throughout their lives, whatever route they choose to take – with a statutory right to lifelong learning.

This must be supported by (1) equity across student finance and maintenance support for further and higher education to ensure everyone can live well whilst gaining the skills they need, and (2) a statutory entitlement in each nation to all English-Northern Irish-Welsh Level 3/ Scottish Level 6 qualifications, unlocking the opportunity for more people to progress to more advanced levels of vocational education and thus the skills needed for the economy of the future.

## 2 Backing business, driving innovation and addressing skills gaps.

Colleges must be empowered to develop a unique service for local employers for training and upskilling future and current employees and innovation support. The development of new ways for employers to make the education and skills system work for their needs should include sector specialist 'employer hubs'. Colleges will also expect to work with employer groups in the design of the curriculum.

## 3 Creating an impactful post-16 education and skills system that addresses unproductive competition between institutions.

This will ensure that everyone can access high-quality education and learning that works for them. Each nation must affirm a 10-year strategy that will deliver on national priorities for the economy and society and clearly sets out the transformational role that colleges play for people, businesses and communities.

Elements of what we set out in this report will be familiar to many – drawing on past practices or principles which are agreed but not always enacted. Given that many of these themes have been discussed for some time within each of the four nations, our central call is for action. And given the challenges we face, not least and most immediately because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, now really is the time.

If we achieve this vision, colleges will be recognised and rewarded by governments across the UK as having an important role at the heart of public policy. Parents and guardians will aspire for their children to attend college as an equally prestigious route as university. People working in colleges would recommend it as a place to work – where remuneration is fair and reflects their expertise, where they have clear development opportunities, where the leadership is diverse and fully reflective of the communities that they serve and where all staff are able to focus on what is best for their students and their community. Employers will see the college network as a key source of strategic support – as a place they turn to as they seek to innovate and develop. And people of all ages will see their local college as a place of learning and support throughout their lives.

I wish to thank our Commissioners and expert panel for their invaluable contributions. Crucially, I want to thank the many thousands of people who have engaged with us throughout our work – including college leaders, staff and students, employers of all sizes, universities, schools, independent training providers, trade unions, students' unions, politicians and civil servants in national, regional and local governments, academics and so many others who have contributed and been consulted throughout our process. The ideas in this report reflect a collective optimism of those we have spoken with for an expanded role for colleges in delivering the change our society and economy needs – and an urgency to put this into action.



# About us

The Independent Commission on the College of the Future was launched in Spring 2019 as a UK-wide, four nations process, asking two simple questions: what do we want and need from colleges from 2030 onwards, and how do we get there?

The Independent Commission was commissioned by the Four Nations College Alliance – which brings together college leaders, their representative bodies and senior government officials from across the four nations of the UK.

The Commissioners chaired by Sir Ian Diamond – have held roundtable and workshop events with a broad range of individuals and organisations across the UK. They are supported by an expert panel, who have been feeding in throughout the process.

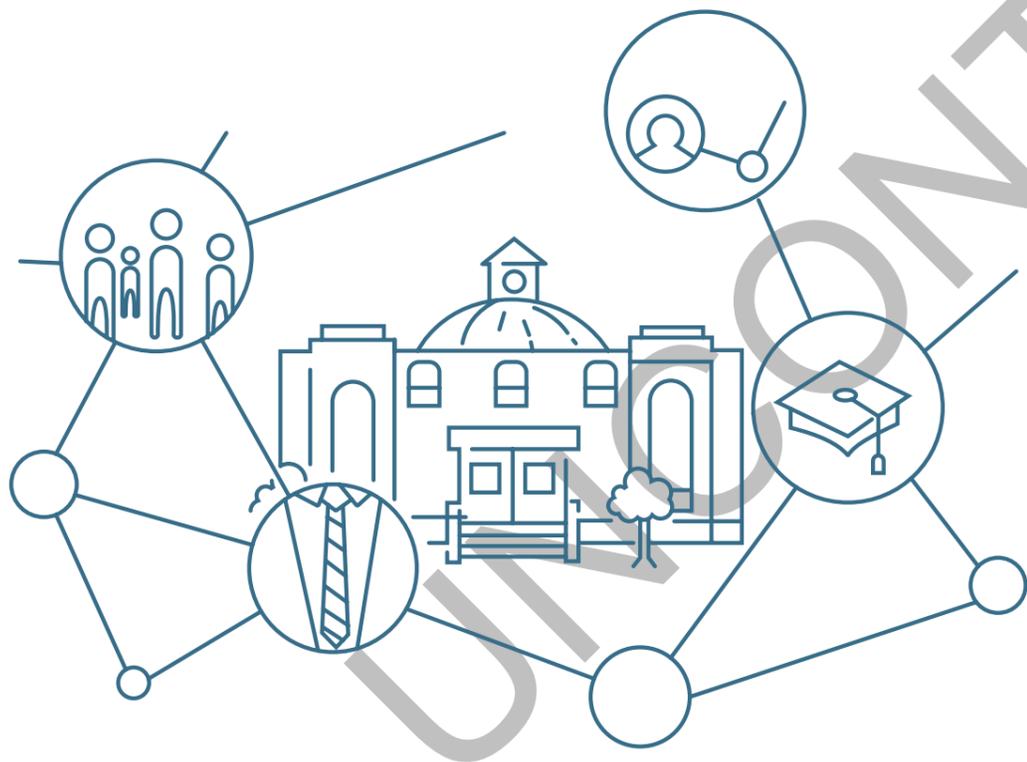


The Independent Commission has benefited from learnings across the four nations of the UK, drawing lessons and insights from reform trajectories and from exemplary institutional practices. As part of its work, the Commission has:

- Hosted or presented at over 150 events across the UK, including with college senior leaders, governors, staff and students, employers, universities, schools, local, regional and national governments, unions and many others.
- Invited international experts from the Basque Country, Ireland, Finland, Slovenia, the Netherlands and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to contribute to the Commission's thinking – including with a public seminar held jointly with the British Academy in September 2019, with over 100 stakeholders and members of the public.
- Published a Progress Report reflecting themes emanating from early engagement with a consultation process in November 2019, receiving over 60 responses from a wide range of organisations and individuals.
- Published a vision for the college of the future in July 2020, accompanied by a set of essays from education and skills experts.
- Published a report exploring the relationship between the NHS and the English college system in September 2020 as an example of how the Commission's thinking can drive change with this important employer.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WHAT DO WE WANT AND NEED  
FROM THE COLLEGE OF THE  
FUTURE BY 2030?



## The Commission's vision for the college of the future

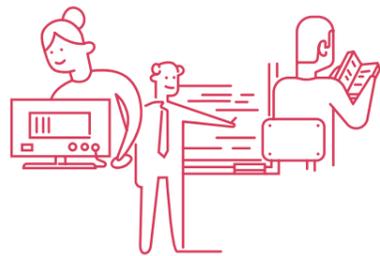
**Colleges are a  
fundamental  
piece of the  
education and  
skills system**

Colleges transform lives and are at the heart of communities across the UK's four nations. They are a fundamental piece of the education and skills system as centres of lifelong learning and as anchor institutions within their communities. Despite all of this, all too often, college resources and expertise can be poorly understood, under-utilised and insufficiently funded in relation to other parts of the education and skills system.

Colleges can and must play a strong and central role in responding to challenges and transformations, from global megatrends like climate change to immediate crises such as COVID-19, as well as the changing demands, aspirations and expectations of people, employers and communities. That is why the Independent Commission on the College of the Future is calling for a new vision for colleges.



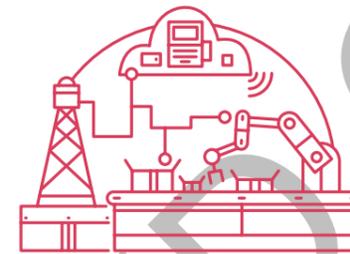
The college of the future will empower **people** throughout their lives with the skills they need to get on in life, support better **productivity** and innovation of businesses, and strengthen every community's sense of **place**.



For **people**, colleges will be a touchpoint throughout their lives and in a changing world.

The changes and challenges that we face mean that people need to be able to engage with education and training throughout their lives to have the skills and opportunities they need for good jobs and to live well.

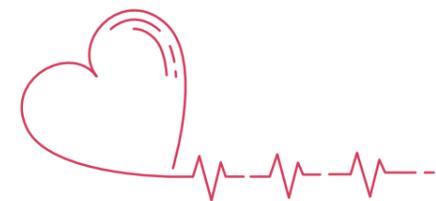
The college of the future will offer flexible and blended learning and guidance to empower each person to get a job, progress in their career and be an active citizen.



For **productivity**, colleges will provide strategic advice and support for employers to drive business change, innovation and future workforce planning.

Across the UK, we suffer from poor levels of productivity – and key changes mean that employers of all sizes have big challenges and opportunities to respond to, across the climate emergency, industrial revolution 4.0 and changing relationships across the world.

The college of the future will play an expanded role in innovation and knowledge transfer, whilst also equipping employees with opportunities to develop new skills.



For **place**, colleges will have the resources and funding to play an even greater role in fostering healthy and connected communities.

Colleges are important anchor institutions in communities across the UK, but this dimension is not sufficiently supported or incentivised.

The college of the future will position this role as a central part of their strategic mission, such as by promoting public health and social inclusion.

# How do we realise this vision for the college of the future by 2030?

## A nation-specific education and skills strategy

### Recommendation 1

#### **National strategies for education and skills to support economic growth, industrial change and lifelong learning.**

Governments need to articulate a ten-year vision for education and training. From schools through to adult skills, this would enable individuals of all abilities and circumstances, regardless of age or their career stage, to continue to learn, train and reskill, and would support better connection and coordination between delivery partners.

Each nation will develop its own national strategy which supports its respective industrial/economic strategy. This will be based on a whole government approach with better integration across employment and skills to enhance lifelong learning, social inclusion and active ageing - and to facilitate stronger partnerships nationally and locally/regionally. National strategies will provide a flexible implementation framework for college networks/regional colleges which they can apply in their individual contexts. Working closely with employers and other key partners, they will support the development of the whole workforce as well as initial education with opportunities for everyone to progress in their careers and actively contribute to their community.



## A networked approach

### Recommendation 2

#### **College network strategies to meet local priorities across the tertiary education system.**

Governments must introduce a duty on colleges to develop strategies across appropriate economic geographies that identify local and regional needs and priorities in line with the national strategy. These will be developed in consultation with employers and other key stakeholders, especially other education providers, and will deliver a coordinated approach to the learning and training offer. They will align to the local industrial structure, economic development plans and employment needs, strategic employer engagement, workforce development and local investment plans, including capital investment.

This also requires a matched duty on other tertiary providers to collaborate, including universities, schools, independent training providers and adult community learning providers. This will be reinforced through institutional/network outcome agreements across the appropriate economic geography, focused on long-term systems priorities.

### Recommendation 3

#### **Colleges as anchor institutions within the wider local and regional ecosystem.**

Colleges must have a recognised role as key anchor institutions in the local community, supporting wider community action and services as well as providing education and learning. The new college network strategies will help build stronger partnerships with other public and private agencies and civic partners and their wider investment plans locally and regionally. This will seek to ensure a more coherent and connected approach not only on skills and learning but in relation to colleges' wider civic role, adding value to the existing ecosystem in a range of areas including business enterprise, public health, lifelong learning, eliminating digital exclusion and supporting social integration. Key partners will include employers and employer representative bodies, universities, schools and adult and community learning providers, the NHS, local authorities, student and trade unions and relevant charities.

## A lifetime service

### Recommendation 4

#### A statutory right to lifelong learning.

For people to fulfil their potential, there should be a statutory right for people to be able to upskill and retrain throughout their lives through access to affordable and relevant lifelong learning opportunities. This should include a statutory free lifetime entitlement to studying or training up to English-Northern Irish-Welsh L3/Scottish L6 – essential as the minimum platform which enables people to secure good quality jobs in a modern economy. This entitlement should allow free choice for all adults across all publicly-funded tertiary education and training providers.

Funding should be equalised across further and higher education routes, with students able to access the maintenance support they need to engage in education and training, based on the following principles:

- i) Equal maintenance support across loans and grants is available for individuals in further and higher education and advanced skills training, adequate to an individual's needs whether part-time or full-time, so that everyone has the opportunity to pursue the route best suited to them throughout their lifetime.
- ii) Flexibility in the use of the entitlement and any associated maintenance support in grants and/or loans so that individuals able to build up their skills over time to match both their evolving career development needs and their personal circumstances.
- iii) Unemployed people do not lose their welfare benefits where they use their entitlement to reskill/retrain full-time in areas of identified job opportunities and skills shortages.

### Recommendation 5

#### Skills guarantee for a post-COVID economy and future labour market changes.

COVID-19 has had a major impact on a range of sectors, causing large-scale dislocation and accelerating radical wider long-term changes taking place in the labour market. People affected need targeted investment on top of the lifetime learning entitlement to upskill, retrain and reskill to help them find work in higher demand priority sectors. This offer should supplement any previous qualifications an individual has to help them maintain relevant skills, including in strategic priority sectors such as the green economy. The Skills Guarantee would provide free training to upskill employees at all levels including English-Northern Irish-Welsh Level 4/ Scottish Level 7. It should allow maximum flexibility to meet sector needs and to enable upskilling of employees over time in line with the needs of the business. Incentives should be offered to SMEs in the form of a contribution to wage replacement costs to encourage uptake and to contribute to productivity improvements in the wider economy.

## Delivering with and for employers

### Recommendation 6

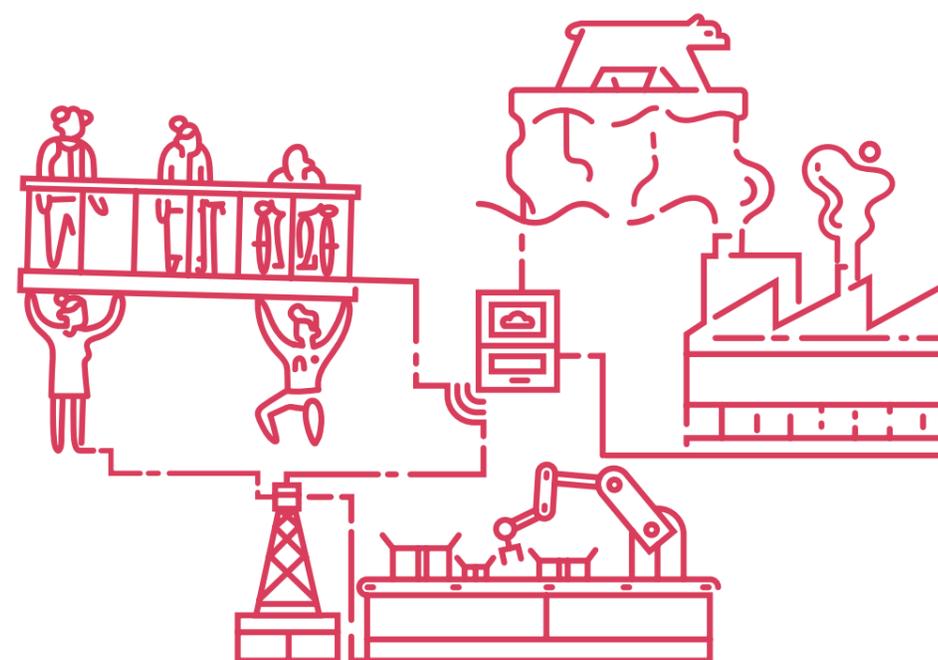
#### A new strategic partnership with employers.

Colleges need close strategic partnerships with employers, nationally and locally/regionally to ensure that the new national and network strategies (recommendations 1, 2 and 3) meet the needs of employers as well as people and their communities. Major employers find it easier to engage, so colleges will need to reach out to SMEs and work closely with employer representative bodies, with significant scope for strengthening partnerships with sectoral networks too at national, regional and local levels.

### Recommendation 7

#### A new support service to employers.

Colleges have an expanded role to play in providing a business support and brokerage service to employers. This will provide the basis for establishing recognised sector/skills-focused employer hubs appropriate to the local labour market priorities. Greater coordination between partners locally/regionally will open up the facilities and expertise of colleges to provide more enhanced support to employers. It will encourage innovation by employers, support long-term workforce development plans and help move to a higher productivity, more technologically enabled and net-zero carbon economy.



## Mission-driven funding, governance and accountability

Recommendation 8

### Stable funding and accountability frameworks for colleges.

Ensuring that colleges can take a long-term strategic focus and reinforcing strategic investment in colleges, the sector must be funded on the basis of three-year, block grant funding settlements, reflecting a trust-based strategic partnership between colleges and governments. This should be based on high-level strategic outcome agreements focused on strategic impacts, aligned to the agreed local network strategies.

Recommendation 9

### A strategic relationship with governments and simplified processes.

Oversight systems across the four nations must be simplified, driving efficiency, engendering greater trust and enabling better strategic coordination to deliver for systems outcomes across people, productivity and place. This must include developing a single post-16 education oversight and funding body within each nation (or, in the case of NI, a coordinated approach within government). This will be crucial to ensuring a coherent lifelong education service, and to addressing nugatory competition between colleges and with other education providers.



## Leading the way

Recommendation 10

### An ambitious future college workforce strategy.

Colleges need the best people who are fully empowered to deliver on this vision. To ensure this we must see colleges working with governments across the four nations to develop ambitious college workforce strategies, based on a comprehensive review. A new social partnership between colleges, unions, employers and governments within each nation would oversee key strategic priorities, including:

- Ensuring and recognising the professional status of the college teaching workforce and the ongoing evolution of the profession with a focus on continuous personal development, an expansion in secondment opportunities and a focus on developing diverse routes into the sector with a much more porous relationship with industry.
- Recognising and responding to changing aspirations and expectations of people, employers and communities, and the implications of this across both pedagogy and delivery – including a focus on staff development opportunities and wellbeing.
- A proliferation in support functions including across careers advice, business support and student representation.
- Significant investment in the digital skills of the college workforce.

The status of the college workforce should be further developed and extended through the establishment of a new UK-wide teaching network.

Recommendation 11

### Diverse and representative systems leaders.

Colleges must be led by systems leaders who reflect the communities within which they are based and the students they serve. College representative organisations must review representation in leadership structures with a focus on systematic, mandatory data collection on college leaders and governors by protected characteristics, including across race, gender, sexuality and disability. This data must be used to identify gaps in diversity and to develop targeted recruitment and development programmes in under-represented groups.

The Four Nations College Alliance should work with partner organisations across the UK to champion systems leadership capacities and competences including through the ongoing peer development programme.

Chapter one

# CONTEXT

THE CHALLENGES OF TODAY AND TOMORROW



# Context

**Whilst the skills and labour market challenges in each nation in the UK vary, there are a number of common trends**

The world is changing at a rapid pace – with longstanding global trends being met with more immediate and more local challenges. There is a need to make decisions and take action to mitigate the impact of these complex and interdependent challenges, and lead the way in shaping a fairer, more sustainable and prosperous future for all.

**“Combined, megatrends are creating pressure for people to develop new and higher levels of skills, as well as to continue upskilling throughout life and to use their skills more effectively. Many of these same trends are also creating opportunities for people with the right skills to proactively transform our economies and societies for the better.”**

OECD Skills Strategy 2019 - [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/oecd-skills-strategy-2019\\_9789264313835-en](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/oecd-skills-strategy-2019_9789264313835-en)

With colleges at the intersection of so many policy areas, from education, training and employment to innovation and social inclusion, it is important to identify the trends that are transforming the world. Whilst the skills and labour market challenges in each nation in the UK vary, there are a number of common trends.



## Ageing population

A demographic time-bomb is ticking, with replacement demand far outstripping the supply of young people entering the labour market. Indeed, by 2030, the population of those aged 65 is projected to increase by 42 per cent, while the percentage of those aged 14-64 is forecast to grow by 3 per cent (UKCES 2014). Challenges in terms of replacement demand are exacerbated by a lack of high-quality work experience opportunities for young people and employers' reliance on prior experience when recruiting (UKCSED 2011; Purcell et al 2017). At the same time, the economic fallout from the coronavirus has taken the UK into uncharted territory, with fears that an additional 640,000 18-24-year-olds could find themselves unemployed this year alone (Resolution Foundation, 2020).



## Climate change

The challenge posed by the climate crisis is existential, and the consequent changes are already greatly impacting on our lives and our world (IPPC, 2014). To mitigate the magnitude of global warming and the climate crisis, urgent action must be taken. This means dramatic changes to industries, with people needing to develop skills in new areas and continued change to the way that people live. The Committee on Climate Change (2020) has argued for governments across the four nations to develop coordinated strategies for a net-zero workforce, integrating relevant skills into education frameworks. The Committee has additionally argued that education systems have a wider role to play supporting the transition to a net-zero economy and preparing for the risks of climate change including the need for greater public awareness and understanding, and the need for technical skills in the workforce.



## Globalisation and changing trading relationships

The increasing interconnectedness of the world and the changes in the environment mean that people and goods will move around the globe in new ways. Migration flows will shift to follow the changes in economic demands and employment opportunities. Reverse migration is likely where there are areas of decline in the UK. At the same time, the UK's withdrawal from the European Union means changes in the immigration and trade policies of the UK with reductions in EU migrant labour in many higher-skilled technical occupations are exacerbating the current pressures on the supply of skilled labour, which is critical to the UK's place in the world (Cedefop, 2019). Trade deals could have a significant impact on different industries, placing significant pressures on local, regional and national economies, in addition to academic cooperation and exchange (Dhingra et al, 2016).



## Industrial revolution 4.0

Advances in information and communications technologies (ICTs), artificial intelligence (AI), virtual reality (VR) and robotics are profoundly changing the way people work, learn, communicate and live. This has the potential to support smarter and more agile ways of living and working in future, requiring a different skillset and fundamentally changing notions of career pathways – with increasing emphasis on higher and more specialised skills, and a consequent need for lifelong learning. At the same time, there are stark challenges around digital inclusion (in the workplace, in accessing public services, and in participating in society), the displacement of jobs with task automation, and concerns around privacy and safety (CSJ, 2019). The global pandemic has accelerated the application and development of new technologies, responding to and creating new demands – as well as highlighting shortcomings in digital infrastructure, resources and skills across all sectors.



## Equality, diversity and social inclusion

The slowdown in social mobility is impacting directly on the labour market and the supply of skilled workers, with a disproportionate effect on groups who continue to suffer from structural disadvantage and discrimination (intersectionally, including across class, race, gender, sexuality and disability) – who consequently struggle to get both into quality jobs, and to subsequently progress. There are also longstanding regional inequities, notably in communities previously economically dependent on traditional industry, and with many rural and semi-rural communities struggling with ongoing urbanisation (2070 Commission, 2020). All of this risks being exacerbated by the economic fallout from the pandemic with the UK economy having shrunk by 24.5 per cent from February to May 2020 (ONS, 2020) and anticipated to suffer significantly over the longer term. Vulnerable workers, including in the hospitality and retail sectors, have been hit hardest and are likely to particularly struggle to recover.



## New approaches to growth

With a growing population and climate change at the same time as economic uncertainty, there are increasing calls and movement towards an approach to growth centred around sustainability and inclusivity. With an emphasis on universal services, responsible business and good work to avoid social exclusion and environmental degradation, this requires a different approach from the state at a national level and anchor institutions at a local level.

# Colleges across the four nations

## Northern Ireland

Population: 1.8 million people

6 regional colleges educating over 80,000 students per year on 148,000 courses and employing 3,500 staff.

There are 64,000 adult enrolments and 84,000 enrolments from young people aged 19 or under.

The Department for the Economy is responsible for the policy, strategic development and financing of the statutory FE sector in Northern Ireland.

## Wales

Population: 3.2 million people

13 colleges educating over 122,000 students per year and employing 7,500 staff.

College provision includes nearly 20,000 people in work-based learning courses.

There are 47,000 young people (under 19) and nearly 75,000 adults studying at Welsh colleges.

Colleges in Wales are funded directly by the Welsh Government and are subject to inspection by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales (Estyn).

## Scotland

Population: 5.3 million people

26 colleges within 13 regions, educating over 270,000 students per year including 47,000 people studying a degree level course and over 10,000 modern apprentices.

There are 110,000 young people (under 19) and 154,000 adults studying in Scottish colleges who collectively employ approximately 11,000 staff. Colleges in Scotland are funded by and accountable to The Scottish Funding Council.

## England

Population: 53 million people

238 colleges educating over 2.2 million students per year, employing approximately 111,000 full time equivalent staff.

Training provided to more than 1.4 million adults including nearly 137,000 degree level students and 195,000 adult apprenticeships.

Education and training for 16-18 year-olds reached 669,000 people, plus an additional 69,000 apprentices.

Colleges are funded principally by the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), while higher education provision is regulated and funded via the Office for Students (OfS).

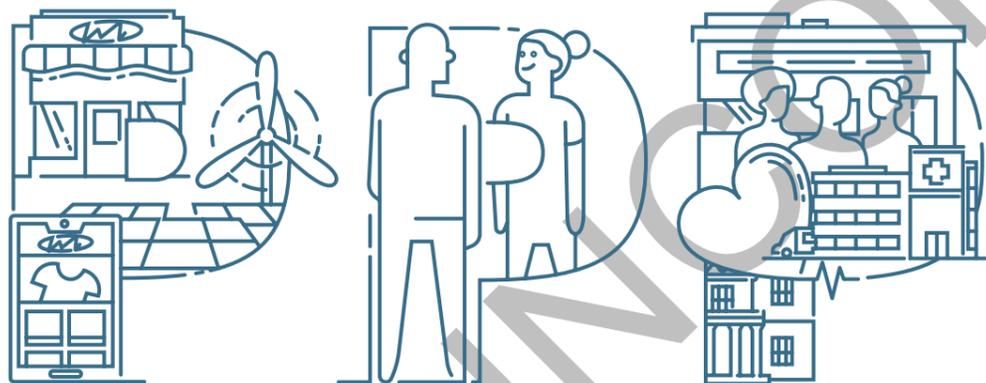
## The college system

Across the college sectors in the UK there is a strong consensus that these challenges require an ambitious, holistic and sustainable post-16 skills and education system. Throughout the work of the Commission we have seen that colleges stand ready to build on the economic and social purpose that is embedded in their history to meet the rapidly changing needs of the labour market and communities. Whilst colleges are taking steps to deliver on these interconnected agendas, current policy and investments in each of the four nations must be renewed and reformed in order for colleges to play their fullest role.

## Chapter two

# WHAT DO WE WANT AND NEED FROM THE COLLEGE OF THE FUTURE?

VISION – FOR PEOPLE, PRODUCTIVITY AND PLACE



## Colleges – at the heart of communities and public policy

**Colleges are a vital public asset sitting at the heart of communities right across the four nations of the UK**

The college of the future will have a central role to play in responding to global megatrends, as well as to more immediate and more local challenges. And colleges in turn will have to respond to consequent changes in demands, aspirations and expectations from people, employers and communities.

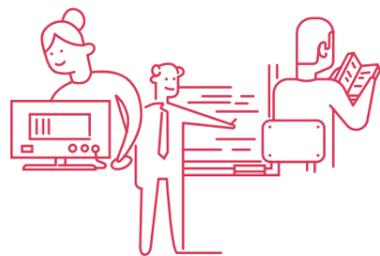
Colleges are a vital public asset sitting at the heart of communities right across the four nations of the UK – and their potential is tremendous:

- Colleges have phenomenal reach. They are one of very few institutions that are open to all parts of the community, for people of all ages, whatever their circumstances, abilities and aspirations. The potential for greatly expanding this reach is immense.
- Colleges provide a critical pivot between all other parts of the education and skills system, as well as offering a tremendous breadth of provision themselves – and can and must be centres of lifetime learning.
- Colleges hold relationships with employers of all sizes, and are a critical link between the labour market and skills system – supporting employers with meeting current and future skills needs, and supporting people with transitions into new jobs and new sectors.
- Colleges are often one of the largest employers within a locality themselves – representing an important part of the local/regional economy in their own right.

## People need to be able to engage with education and training throughout their lives.

Despite all of this, all too often, college resources and expertise can be under-utilised and their potential is not fully realised. They can suffer from being poorly understood and recognised, by policy makers, the media and the wider public. They are poorly funded in relation to other parts of the education and skills system, particularly when compared to universities. And changes in their policy remit have at times impeded their capacity to align across different areas of public policy. Given pressures on resources and time, this in turn has challenged their ability to network as they may have done in the past.

Realising this full potential requires a new vision for the role that the college of the future can and must play in addressing the core changes and challenges set out in chapter one. The college of the future has a remit across people, productivity and place.



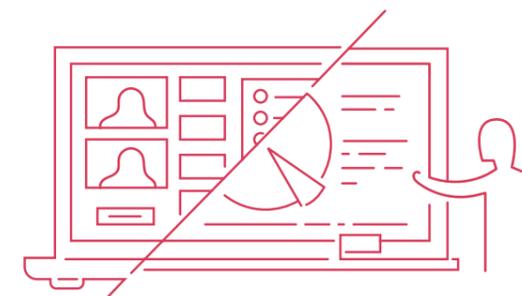
**For people, colleges will be a touchpoint throughout their lives as the world changes. Flexible and blended learning and guidance will empower each person to get a job, progress in their career and be an active citizen.**

The changes and challenges that we face across the UK, and internationally, mean that people need to be able to engage with education and training throughout their lives. This will be needed as people adapt to technological changes and to changing practices; as we ensure that people in low-skilled, low-pay sectors are not left behind, as disadvantaged groups suffer from limited opportunities to get into good quality jobs and progress within them; as we move urgently towards a carbon-neutral, green economy; and in responding to changes in the labour market and economic shocks.

The case for lifetime learning also reflects the kind of society we want to live in. A genuine culture and system of lifetime learning is crucial to ensuring increased opportunities for people to be active, healthy and socially and politically engaged.

## A genuine culture and system of lifetime learning is crucial to ensuring increased opportunities for people to be active, healthy and socially and politically engaged

This means a radical shift, with colleges providing a genuinely lifetime service to people. For adults, methods of learning will need to modernise and innovate alongside developments in ways of working and living in a modern economy. This requires an increasingly flexible and personalised service complementing independent learning and accommodating other pressing and competing priorities in a modern world, including across working and caring responsibilities. This will require a more modular offer and the use of micro-credentials, supplementing existing longer qualifications, ensuring that people have a genuine choice that is flexible to their needs and priorities at the time.



### CASE STUDY

## Building essential skills

The Skills Builder Partnership brings together more than 800 organisations including educators, employers and impact organisations around a common mission: to ensure that one day, everyone builds the essential skills to thrive.

Newcastle College has been working with Skills Builder since 2019, embedding the approach across college life. As part of the students' Personal and Social Development programme, the Skills Builder Framework underpins the skills and behaviours that all Level 1, 2 and 3 students work to develop. Learners and tutors have regular opportunities to reflect on the skills, considering areas of strength and development while also linking them to work experience and employer engagement sessions. Students log their progress over the year to build up a comprehensive record of examples, clearly demonstrating their skill development.

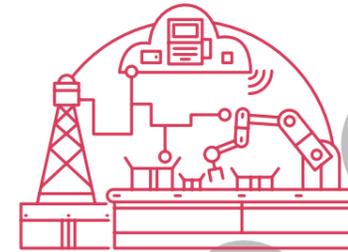
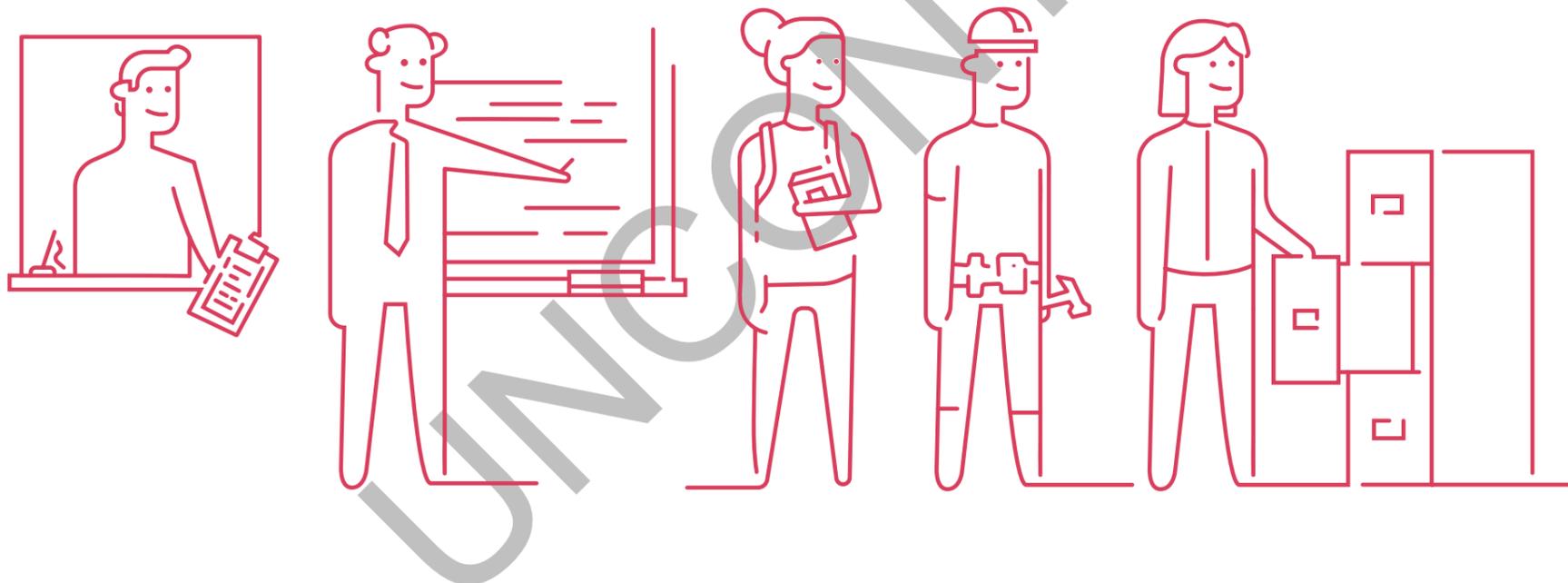
After seeing the work of Newcastle College through a wider employability working group, Sunderland, Hartlepool and Northumberland Colleges created a coordinated approach to developing the essential skills of their students. They have embedded the essential skills in teaching and learning policies, as a regular agenda item in staff and parent meetings, in displays across the sites and through a skills-based rewards system to recognise student achievement.

In the context of ongoing technological advances, a flexible, personalised lifetime service must crucially include a radical expansion of the online and blended offer colleges deliver to people. This will require serious investment in digital infrastructure, resources and college staff expertise and capacity.

Alongside this increasingly blended offer, colleges' physical estates and resources will remain critical – and as we describe below, the role that colleges must play in place-making will only become more important in addressing social and regional inequalities and more vulnerable communities who risk being hit hardest by changes in the world of work, climate change and technological changes.

This will have to be supported through funding and student finance that ensures that cost is not a barrier to engagement with lifetime learning opportunities – and ensuring that pathways across all aspects of the education and skills system are equally valued and supported.

It will also mean colleges offering much more informal support, with people of all ages using the college estate to support independent learning, to access high-quality skills and careers advice and guidance, and as a hub, incubating entrepreneurship.



For **productivity**, colleges will provide strategic advice and support for employers to drive business change, innovation and future workforce planning.

Across the UK, we suffer from poor levels of productivity (ONS, 2018), and are particularly ineffective at transferring ground-breaking innovations in process, design and technology into routine, day-to-day use by SMEs and micro businesses, which make up over 95 per cent of businesses across the UK (BEIS 2020). The need to innovate is critical, as employers respond to the pandemic, take up the benefits offered through technological innovations and seek to adapt at pace to deliver a net-zero carbon economy.

Addressing these long-standing challenges requires concerted and coordinated action from governments. Colleges have a key and expansive role to play as a part of this agenda, working in close partnership across local, regional and national systems, as a key strategic support to employers.

Colleges can and must play a central role in convening, coordinating and providing high quality strategic support to employers, across innovation and skills, and in stimulating demand, particularly from SMEs and micro businesses. This must become recognised as a core part of what a college networks delivers, in close partnership with universities, local authorities, business chambers, trade unions and others. This is vital as part of a skills-led recovery from the current recession, as we redress long-standing regional and social inequalities and as we move towards a sustainable, net-zero carbon economy supported by a green technology revolution.

A more expansive employer service would provide a mechanism for stimulating demand from employers, coordinating strategic engagement and building new deeper relationships between employers and the education and skills system. This would see colleges working closely with universities, employer representative bodies, local government and others, to play an expanded role in innovation and knowledge transfer, whilst also equipping employees with opportunities to develop new skills.

Currently, where employers do seek to engage with the education and skills system, they report finding it hard to locate the 'front door'. The offer in terms of strategic support to employers can sit across a wide range of different organisations right across the education and skills system, with local authorities and others. And different local and national government departments and agencies can also fail to align effectively.

Smaller employers in particular will often have limited capacity, expertise and experience which limits their ability to reflect on scope for innovation, or a lack of awareness of the opportunities that are available to them and their business. This points to a need for a much more expanded and joined up effort to stimulate employer aspirations and demands.

## SUMMARY

### The Cumberford-Little Report on one tertiary System in Scotland

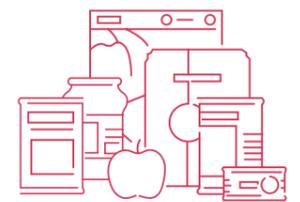
At the direct request of Scottish Ministers, the Principals of Scotland's two largest colleges published a report in February 2020 highlighting the economic and social impact of Scotland's colleges. Across several themes ranging from strategic direction, accountability and performance to innovation and exporting, the subsequent Cumberford-Little Report ("One Tertiary System: Agile, Collaborative, Inclusive") illustrated the already significant impact of Scotland's 13 college regions, and identified the potential to do much more in support of the Scottish Government and the conditions necessary to realise that potential.

The report identifies the significant economic impact colleges already have – not least, an annual boost to Scottish GDP of some £3.5bn. Authors Audrey Cumberford and Paul Little set out a series of recommendations for Government and its partners, with a starting point of defining the purpose of colleges in Scotland which they said should place employer support as colleges' cornerstone, such that colleges provide world-class lifetime learning, and high quality business support. They went on to identify the need to pay greater attention to Scotland's SME and micro-business communities which form the overwhelming majority of the country's business base. They argued that funding, accountability, performance, and quality regimes must align and support the pursuit of the new purpose, pointing to the need for systemic change in creating of a fully integrated tertiary system in Scotland.

**For place, colleges will have the resources and funding to play an even greater role in fostering healthy and connected communities.**

Colleges are important anchor institutions in communities across the UK, but this dimension is not sufficiently supported or incentivised. Placing this role as part of their strategic mission, the potential capacity of colleges can be significantly enhanced.

Changes set out in chapter one raise stark challenges for communities across the UK, and as ever these challenges risk hitting already marginalised communities hardest. Colleges can and must play a significant and expanded role in promoting public health and social inclusion, including through addressing digital poverty and literacy, providing digital hubs to people of all ages who are able to access infrastructure, resources and basic training. This requires working closely with other community partners, including adult and community learning providers, local authorities and others, to develop coherent joined-up strategies.



## CASE STUDY

### Opening the doors for a community response

Langley College unlocked the doors to its teaching kitchens to allow the One Slough Community Response team to store and make food for the vulnerable and those self-isolating in Slough. College staff turned out to support the effort which saw volunteers preparing nearly 100,000 hot meals for the community. Alongside providing access to their kitchen facilities, Langley College has also been designated the One Slough Community Response Hub. The college is being used to sort, store and dispatch food throughout the community and is the base for a Virtual Call Centre.

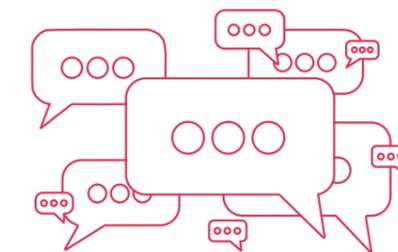
**CASE STUDY****Keeping the community active**

Grŵp Llandrillo Menai are enrolled on the Active Ambassadors Programme and have been working hard to support their local community during the COVID-19 outbreak. They are providing support through various means including collecting shopping, making time to work at local supermarkets and using technology to connect virtually so as to keep in touch and to spread positivity. Ambassadors are also supporting GLIM Rygbi to design a weekly Wellbeing Calendar for all staff and learners, ensuring helping everyone to keep mentally and physically healthy during this difficult time.

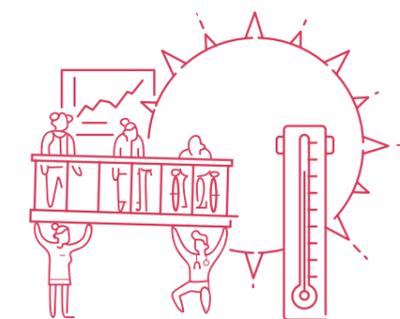
Colleges at their best are one of the few places where all parts of a community will come together – and as they become touchpoints available to everyone throughout their lives, the role that colleges will play in deepening social inclusion and cohesion and tackling discrimination needs to be given greater prominence. This must also include the college estate genuinely being recognised and used as a community asset – with sport and performing arts facilities for example being used by local partners, and colleges playing an active role with other community partners in supporting health and wellbeing strategies.

Colleges reflect the concerns of their communities and help to develop people's understanding of the world they live in. Colleges have an important role to play in reflecting on and responding to social movements for justice and human rights – including across Black Lives Matter, environmental activists and youth movements by creating opportunities for learning, debate and civic engagement amongst their students and the wider community, providing an important avenue for political education and engagement.

**Colleges at their best are one of the few places where all parts of a community will come together**

**CASE STUDY****Keeping students connected**

Fife College delivered nearly 300 devices to students in order to support remote learning during the coronavirus outbreak. Delivered while adhering to social distancing rules, laptop devices were dropped off at the homes of college students across Fife. The vital equipment is also being delivered to Fife College students who live further afield, including those in Edinburgh, Tayside, Clackmannanshire and Perth & Kinross. Staff are making the deliveries as part of the College's commitment to ensure students still have the opportunity to learn during the coronavirus pandemic.

**CASE STUDY****Colleges and universities driving change on the climate emergency**

The Climate Commission was created to address the climate emergency and drive change across the FE and HE sectors. The Commission is a partnership between Association of Colleges, EAUC, GuildHE and Universities UK to establish a comprehensive plan for sustainability in the sector. At the centre of the plans is the FE Climate Action Roadmap, which provides clear actions and guidance on how colleges can respond to the climate emergency and be net-zero emissions by 2050 at the latest.

College leaders and students were at the heart of creating the Roadmap and to ensure no-one is left behind, the Roadmap is organised in three levels – from colleges who are just starting to address sustainability, to colleges with a clear approach and who are models for others to learn from. The Roadmap is to be used by Principals and their leadership teams, but also their students who should be partners in co-developing and implementing the college's approach. With capacity and resources being a challenge for all colleges, the Roadmap highlights activities in terms of cost and time to allow colleges to choose how to build up to longer term initiatives.

The Climate Commission also has an influencing role with key sector bodies to ensure the policies and drivers are in place to support colleges in their journeys.

**CASE STUDY****How sport and wellbeing in colleges supports place-making**

Sport England's Tackling Inactivity in Colleges (TIIC) fund has invested £5m over the last two years which has enabled 49 colleges across England to engage with over 23,000 students. Significantly this includes over 11,000 inactive young people who are now regularly active. The fund is targeted at students in lower socio-economic groups and females. Participant surveys demonstrate wide ranging benefits from participation including better physical and mental health, personal development, better engagement at college and enhanced social inclusion.

College staff do not only impact their own student body but use their unique skill sets and volunteer student workforce to make a difference in their communities through strategic local partnerships. For example, Tyne Metropolitan College (part of the Tyne Coast College group) have engaged over 3,000 people in their community outreach programme this year alone. Supported by funders including Sport England, Active Partnerships, Street Games, AoC Sport, various national governing bodies and local charities like Family Gateway, staff and students at the college have delivered active programmes in schools, local sports clubs, care homes and at their on-site facilities.

As sectors and policy continue to intersect, another example of colleges making a difference through their sport departments can be seen at Walsall College where student volunteers deliver physical activity sessions to young people at risk of committing, or being a victim of, violent crime. In partnership with West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner and The Inspire Foundation, this valued programme provides a diversionary activity for vulnerable young people in the local community.

Sources:

Sport England Tackling Inactivity in Colleges: Year 2 Report. Sept 2019.  
Tyne Metropolitan College Sports Development Annual Reports 18/19 and 19/20.

**CASE STUDY****Innovating to help keep the health and care sector safe**

North West Regional College (NWRC) produced 1900 face guards at its Product Design Centre (PDC), which were delivered to medical and care staff in the local community during the COVID-19 pandemic. The team at the college's state-of-the-art campus in Limavady also produced a number of aerosol boxes, which mitigate infection risk to health professionals during intubation procedures. PDC Manager Philip Devlin said: "We are fortunate to have staff that are willing to be innovative and we came up with a modified Computer Aided Design (CAD) to utilise a laser cutter to rapidly speed up the process that has seen us increase production speed tenfold." The college's Business Support Centre has also developed a range of more than 20 online training programmes that are available to businesses and their employees. These are 100 per cent funded via the Skills Focus programme.

# Chapter three

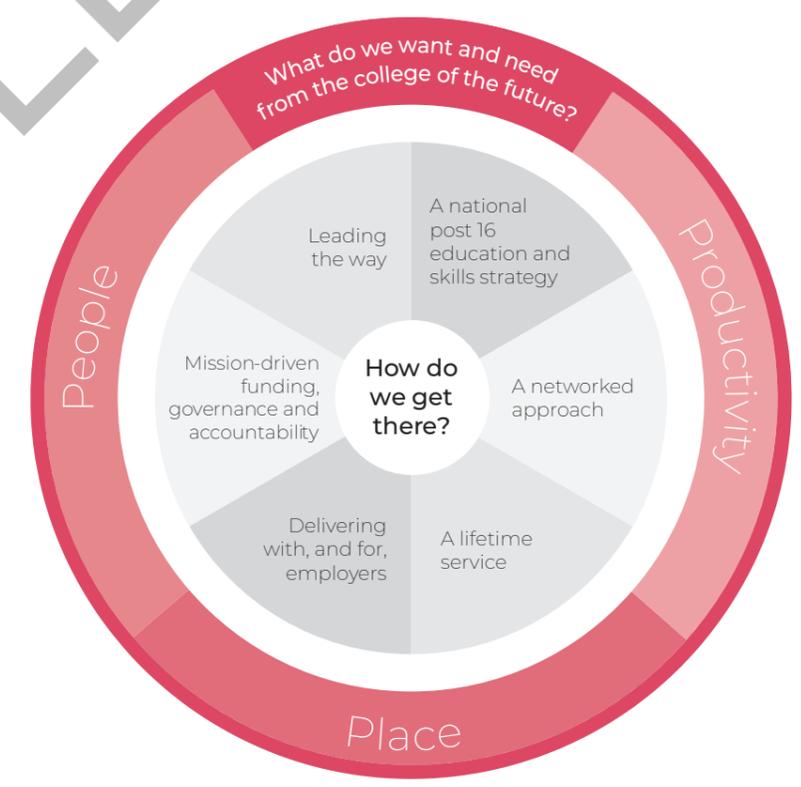
# HOW DO WE GET THERE?

A STRATEGY FOR DELIVERING FOR PEOPLE, PRODUCTIVITY AND PLACE



# Realising the vision

Delivering for this vision across people, productivity and place requires colleges operating in new ways, with systems renewal across the four nations. Here we set out eleven recommendations for taking this forward.



### RECOMMENDATIONS

National strategies for education and skills to support economic growth, industrial change and lifelong learning.

College network strategies to meet local priorities across the tertiary education system.

Colleges as anchor institutions within the wider local and regional ecosystem.

A statutory right to lifelong learning.

Skills guarantee for a post-COVID economy and future labour market changes.

A new strategic partnership with employers.

A new support service to employers.

Stable funding and accountability frameworks for colleges.

A strategic relationship with governments and simplified processes.

An ambitious future college workforce strategy.

Diverse and representative systems leaders.

# A networked approach within a nation-specific post-16 strategy

## A nation-specific education and skills strategy

Recommendation 1

### **National strategies for education and skills to support economic growth, industrial change and lifelong learning.**

Governments need to articulate a ten-year vision for education and training, from schools through to adult skills enabling all individuals of all abilities and circumstances and regardless of age or their career stage to continue to learn, train and reskill, and supporting better connection and coordination between delivery partners.

Each nation will develop its own national strategy which supports its respective industrial/ economic strategy. This will be based on a whole government approach with better integration across employment and skills to enhance lifelong learning, social inclusion and active ageing and to facilitate stronger partnerships nationally and locally/regionally. National strategies will provide a flexible implementation framework for college networks/regional colleges, which they can apply in their individual contexts working closely with employers and other key partners, to support the development of the whole workforce as well as initial education with opportunities for everyone to progress in their careers and actively contribute to their community.

### **The relationship between education and skills policy and other areas of public policy, such as health and energy, should form an integral part of the nation-specific post-16 education and skills strategy**

Governments must articulate a long-term vision for the post-16 education and skills system that sets out education and training priorities within each of the four nations from schools through to adult skills and training. This must, ultimately, enable everyone, regardless of age or their career stage to be able to study, up-skill and retrain throughout their lives. It must describe the role that colleges play together with others in delivering a vital strategic service to employers. And it must describe the wider role colleges play in place-making, as anchor institutions within their communities.

This nation-specific strategy must in turn describe the complementary relationship of different component parts of the system. This will ensure that colleges sit coherently alongside other parts of the education system. The relationship between education and skills policy and other areas of public policy, such as health and energy, should form an integral part of the nation-specific post-16 education and skills strategy.



## Strategic alignment with government priorities

There is a critical need for national post-16 education and skills strategies to be aligned with both industrial/economic and social inclusion strategies.

Alignment with other areas of government policy is vital too. Across each of the four nations, there is a need to ensure that colleges are able to play their fullest role in key government priorities, across climate change, regional inequalities, productivity and social justice – all of which requires strategic alignment nationally and within localities.

## Defining the role, scope and purpose of colleges

A national strategy must describe the role that colleges have to play for people, productivity and place within a coherent, connected and collaborative wider education and skills system.

National strategies should ensure that colleges have clarity about the scope and role in respect of other parts of the education and skills system. This means addressing nugatory competition across the education and skills system where it exists, in each of the four nations.

## CASE STUDY

### Weston College driving mental health partnerships across North Somerset

Weston College has been the driving force in building mental health partnerships across North Somerset, forming an integral part of community mental health care. Their award-winning Body and Mind framework established a regular programme of activities and support sessions linking exercise with wellbeing to engage the community and build resilience.

By linking the college's HR, mental health, sport, welfare and inclusive practice teams, it has reduced staff absence and increased student achievement and attendance. Additionally, the College was invited to join the 'Futures in Mind' committee as a Champion of Change to help transform mental health provision in North Somerset. It has trained over 200 organisations in Mental Health First Aid and shared its best practice in workforce development mental health strategies with over 300+ employers

The creation of the college's Health and Active Living Centre in 2019 (with simulated training wards, patient simulation technology and state of the art gyms, sport therapy and condition management technology) was designed to encourage a more active lifestyle whilst bridging the skills gaps across the region's health and social care. Driven by its Principal Dr Paul Phillips CBE, the concept of college led urban regeneration has been achieved through strong partnerships with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), local authorities, social care partners and health trusts.



*“We firmly believe the commitment and dedication the college has shown towards building mental health partnerships has been second to none. The impact of this has meant that the college is an integral part of community mental health care and have seamless links with CAMHS and GPs meaning that students’ mental health care is as collaborative as possible. The college is recognised as a Beacon by the community due to the college’s innovative and dynamic partnership.”*

**Colin Bradbury**  
Area Director – North Somerset,  
NHS Bristol, North Somerset & South Gloucestershire CCG

There are five key considerations which help support more cohesion and efficiency:

### 1. Ensuring provision across the education and skills system is complementary, redressing areas of nugatory competition and duplication

- Unproductive competition can particularly manifest itself across 16-19 provision between colleges and schools, as well as in some systems across higher education.
- A national strategy should set out expectations about the role different parts of the system play, which then provides a framework to be applied locally/regionally.
- Much of this ultimately requires coherent oversight at a more regional/local level.

### 2. Ensuring a strategic partnership with employers

- A nation-specific strategy should set out expectations for a joined-up approach to strategic employer support, ensuring that institutions develop coordinated employer engagement strategies, and ensuring that research and development within universities feeds into the wider education and skills system, who can offer this coordinated approach to strategic employer support.



### 3. Developing pathways, articulation and a lifetime careers advice service

- Education and skills across 14-19, adult education and workforce development can currently lack clear articulation and pathways for learners – with at times inefficient repetition across phases, and missed potential for deeper coordinated across 14-16 provision.
- A national strategy must set out a vision for lifetime learning – including in delivering a holistic lifetime careers and skills advice service.

### 4. Describing the place-making role of colleges

- Colleges have a critical role to play as community anchor institutions, as a critical part of the national infrastructure – across public health, social inclusion and the urgent transition to a net-zero carbon economy, amongst other things. It is critically important that this role is captured within national strategies, with alignment to other relevant areas of public policy.
- This in turn must be articulated within college network strategies, based on close consultation with other relevant partner organisations.

### 5. Coordinating approaches to workforce development

- Significant changes in labour market demands, an ageing college workforce, technological innovation and the aspirations and expectations of people mean that supporting the ongoing skills development of the college workforce is a core priority.
- To ensure that the required investment in the college workforce is efficient and effective, nation-specific strategies should set out approaches that will be coordinated nationally and across networks. This might be through secondments into industry and through drawing on expertise that will exist across providers within a locality. A particularly pertinent example is improving digital skills, which requires urgent focus.
- A social partnership model within each nation should bring together government, colleges, trade unions, student unions and employers to set out a college workforce strategy.

# Collaborative college networks

## A networked approach

### Recommendation 2

#### College network strategies to meet local priorities across the tertiary education system.

Governments must introduce a duty on colleges to develop strategies across appropriate economic geographies that identify local and regional needs and priorities in line with the national strategy. These will be developed in consultation with employers and other key stakeholders, especially other education providers, and will deliver a coordinated approach to the learning and training offer. They will align to the local industrial structure, economic development plans and employment needs, strategic employer engagement, workforce development and local investment plans, including capital investment.

This also requires a matched duty on other tertiary providers to collaborate, including universities, schools, independent training providers and adult community learning providers. This will be reinforced through institutional/network outcome agreements across the appropriate economic geography, focused on long-term systems priorities.

### Recommendation 3

#### Colleges as anchor institutions within the wider local and regional ecosystem.

Colleges must have a recognised role as key anchor institutions in the local community, supporting wider community action and services as well as providing education and learning. The new college network strategies will help build stronger partnerships with other public and private agencies and civic partners and their wider investment plans locally/regionally. This will seek to ensure a more coherent and connected approach not only on skills and learning but in relation to colleges' wider civic role, adding value to the existing ecosystem in a range of areas including business enterprise, public health, lifelong learning, eliminating digital exclusion and supporting social integration. Key partners will include employers and employer representative bodies, universities, schools and adult and community learning providers, the NHS, local authorities, student and trade unions and relevant charities.

#### Colleges work best when effectively networked with each other

Colleges work best when effectively networked with each other across an appropriate economic geography. Networks allow colleges to avoid inefficient competition that can otherwise exist whilst also playing a much more proactive and strategic role in stimulating demand of people and employers.

This better enables colleges to (a) collectively and individually respond to the local economy and labour market demands, including in responding to economic shocks and in major investment opportunities (b) to ensure a coherent holistic strategic offer to people, productivity and place, and (c) to develop a coordinated approach to strategic stakeholder engagement, across the education and skills system, with employers and with other public service providers. In this way, networks are able to offer a service that is holistic and consistent, but is context appropriate.

#### Attributes of a networked college system

A networked approach allows college to deliver much more coherently and effectively for people, productivity and place.

- Stimulate and coordinate demand from people, employers and communities, and play a coordinated strategic role across economic and social policy.
- Ensure that for both people and employers there is 'no wrong door' to engaging with the education and skills system.
- Agree specialisms to ensure sufficient provision across the network, with the right mix and balance combining efficiency and effectiveness.
- Coordinate sector-focused strategic support for employers across innovation and skills through employer hubs and services for people through the wider network, including lifetime careers and skills advice and digital skills centres.
- Convene employer engagement to the benefit of the whole system. This is the case in terms of specialisms across sector-focused 'employer hubs', digital hubs and coordinated lifetime careers and skills advice.
- Provide an interface for deeper alignment with other parts of the education and skills system – including allowing for clear pathways and articulation between schools, colleges and universities, a tertiary systems approach to employer and strategic stakeholder engagement and for a coordinated approach to digital transformation.
- Strategically collaborate with other partners – including with the NHS, with Job Centre Plus and with employer groups.
- Development of a coordinated and comprehensive workforce development programme for staff across the college network.

A networked system has to start with ensuring alignment between colleges within an economic geography – but must also include effective strategic alignment with schools, universities and other education and training providers. This is the means through which a network offer can offer a comprehensive service both for lifelong learning for people and strategic support to employers, which meets the needs of diverse communities across a locality. This is the logical next step for the systems in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, and must be a part of systems reforms in England.

Embedding a networked approach means that strategies must be developed in close collaboration with relevant partners – including employers and employer representative organisations, universities and schools, as well as relevant community organisations, trade unions and student unions and the NHS. Ensuring effective consultation with these key partners would be a basic expectation of governments in agreeing network strategies. And developing a networked approach across tertiary systems also provides scope for developing sectoral networks and partnerships between relevant organisations where they do not currently exist.

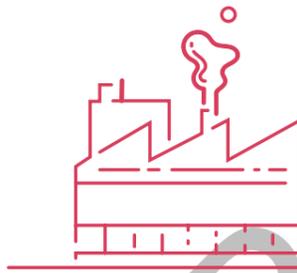
## CASE STUDY

### Colleges and university collaborate to deliver innovation in construction

A pan-Wales enterprise led by University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD) Group and involving Coleg Sir Gar, Coleg Ceredigion, Coleg y Cymoedd and Coleg Cambria is ensuring that the Welsh construction sector has ready access to innovative training solutions nationally across Wales. The hub and spoke delivery model of the Construction Wales Innovation Centre (CWIC) uses employer intelligence to make sure the right skills are in place to meet the current and future industry demand both reactively and proactively.

Spokes provide an integrated career development pathway between operatives, trades and professional construction occupations, under guidance provided by the Swansea-based Hub. They actively work together and share best practices. This is contributing to new levels of collaborative working between the education sector (schools, FE, HE and private providers) and the construction industry.

The CWIC met and exceeded its three-year planned targets to responsively and flexibly meet the needs of the Welsh construction industry. The training offered by CWIC across Wales has focused upon developing and delivering innovation and outcomes are assisting companies to grow and prosper through skills development.

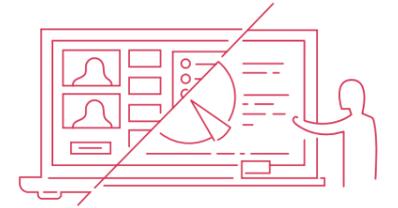


*“It is vital we have the right training in place to create the workforce of the future. CITB funding for CWIC has enabled key partners across Wales to come together and deliver the skills needed by construction firms and the Welsh economy.”*

**Mark Bodger**  
Partnership Director  
CITB Cymru

## CASE STUDY

### Greater Manchester Colleges' Group as a key strategic partner to the Mayor and Combined Authority



Greater Manchester Colleges Group (GMCG) is made up of nine colleges who work together with key strategic partner to translate policy to action and ensure skills and employment strategies are implemented effectively across Greater Manchester (GM). Representing 70,000 learners in GM, and as anchor institutions in communities, GMCG has recognised collaboration as fundamental to avoid unnecessary competition, share expertise, and provide a powerful voice for the sector. As a result of college collaboration, GMCG is now represented on all key GM Strategic bodies and is the first point of call for the CA and Mayor, not only on skills issues but challenges affecting health and wellbeing of local communities.

Collective initiatives co-developed with the CA and Mayor include:

- Joint project between colleges to deliver high quality digital and blended learning across all colleges in response to COVID-19
- Collectively tackling mental health issues for learners and staff developing services
- College secondee to Violence Reduction and knife crime Unit, leading to shared protocols, increased training for staff and students
- Development of FE/University Partnership with Principals and Vice Chancellors charting way forward for progression, social mobility and a shared vision for adult learning
- Plans for a GMCG Skills Specialisation Pilot providing a strategic place-based delivery of higher level technical and vocational skills to meet current and future needs
- Developing and implementing an effective plan for the devolved Adult Education Budget, responsive to the needs of learners in different parts of GM

*“I welcome the collaborative approach taken by the Greater Manchester Colleges Group, as it provides the opportunity to create strong strategic relationships between employers and FE colleges in Greater Manchester. The proposed development of a high quality network of skilled technical education at Level 4 and 5, is exactly what GM needs to support GM employers to address skills requirements and meet the productivity aspirations of the GM Local Industrial Strategy.”*

**Mo Isap, Co-Chair of the Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership, and the Founder & CEO of IN4.0 Group**

# Lifetime learning service for all ages and abilities

## A lifetime service

### Recommendation 4

#### A statutory right to lifelong learning.

For people to fulfil their potential, there should be a statutory right for people to be able to upskill and retrain throughout their lives through access to affordable and relevant lifelong learning opportunities. This should include a statutory free lifetime entitlement to studying or training up to English-Northern Irish-Welsh L3/ Scottish L6 – essential as the minimum platform which enables people to secure good quality-jobs in a modern economy. This entitlement should allow free choice for all adults across all publicly funded tertiary education and training providers.

Funding should be equalised across further and higher education routes, with students able to access the maintenance support they need to engage in education and training, based on the following principles:

- i) Equal maintenance support across loans and grants is available for individuals in further and higher education and advanced skills training, adequate to an individual's needs whether part-time or full-time, so that everyone has the opportunity to pursue the route best suited to them throughout their lifetime.
- ii) Flexibility in the use of the entitlement and any associated maintenance support in grants and/or loans so that individuals able to build up their skills over time to match both their evolving career development needs and their personal circumstances.
- iii) Unemployed people do not lose their welfare benefits where they use their entitlement to reskill/retrain full-time in areas of identified job opportunities and skills shortages.

### Recommendation 5

#### Skills guarantee for a post-COVID economy and future labour market changes.

COVID-19 has had a major impact on a range of sectors, causing large-scale dislocation, accelerating radical wider long-term changes taking place in the labour market. People affected need targeted investment on top of the lifetime learning entitlement to upskill, retrain and reskill to help them find work in higher demand priority sectors. This offer should supplement any previous qualifications an individual has to help them maintain relevant skills, including in strategic priority sectors such as the green economy. The Skills Guarantee would provide free training to upskill employees at all levels including English-Northern Irish-Welsh Level 4/ Scottish Level 7. It should allow maximum flexibility to meet sector needs and to enable upskilling of employees over time in line with the needs of the business. Incentives should be offered to SMEs in the form of a contribution to wage replacement costs to encourage uptake and to contribute to productivity improvements in the wider economy.

Colleges must act as a touchpoint for people throughout their lives. The changes set out in chapter one demonstrate the clear need for people to be able to reskill and retrain throughout their lives, in response to changes in the world of work, technological change and the need to move towards a carbon-neutral economy and respond to the impacts of climate change.

But this also reflects an ambition regarding the societies we want to live in. A much more holistic lifetime education and training offer is also about supporting people to live full and flourishing lives, to develop their capacities as democratic citizens and to support good ongoing health and wellbeing.

This is set out clearly in the UN Sustainable Development goals (4.3) – which says that by 2030 we must ensure that globally everyone has equal access to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education. This can and must be delivered as a key priority across the four nations.

The table below shows the correspondence of levels established between national qualifications framework and the EQF.

European Qualifications Framework (EQF)	Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England / Northern Ireland (FHEQ)	Regulated Qualifications Framework England / Northern Ireland (RQF)	Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW)	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)	The National Framework of Qualifications for Ireland (NFQ IE)
8	8	8	8	12	10
7	7	7	7	11	9
6	6	6	6	10/9	8/7
5	5/4	5/4	5/4	8/7	6
4		3	3	6	5
3		2	2	5	4
2		1	1	4	3
1		E3	E3	3	2/1
		E2	E2	2	
		E1	E1	1	

Credit: QAA

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic speaks to both these economic and social cases. This is on the one hand with an expanded role for colleges as being critical to ensuring a successful skills-led economic recovery – and on the other, with people suffering from social isolation and ongoing poor health standing to benefit considerably from access to educational opportunities.

This requires affirming a statutory entitlement to lifetime learning. This means crucially ensuring that financial support is available to people right through their lives, supporting part-time and flexible learning and ensuring that you receive adequate support whatever path you take – ensuring genuine parity across the post-compulsory education system. This means ensuring that people do not lose welfare benefits because they are engaging in education and training. And it means developing ‘Lifetime Skills Accounts’, which allow people to accumulate credits right throughout their lives.

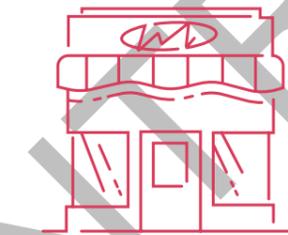
Crucially, student funding and finance needs to reflect the specific additional support that particular student groups will need – including across childcare costs, travel costs, additional funding to support disabled students as required and support for specific course related costs that could otherwise pose as a barrier to fair access.

There are many other important considerations too, as we ensure that education becomes a genuinely lifelong service.

### CASE STUDY

## City & Guilds designs digital credential certification in hospitality

City & Guilds, in partnership with the Worldchefs Association, the global professional body for chefs, has designed a certification for hospitality professionals. The key aim in its work with the Liverpool City Region was to create a more dynamic and flexible offer and reward people for doing their jobs well. The certification offers a framework to recognise the skills and experience of people working in hospitality at all levels. The framework is underpinned by a range of job roles, from work experience and entry level job roles to senior management posts, which reflect how people within the industry progress. The recognition of skills is through the use of digital credentials that can be claimed and aggregated in more flexible ways than conventional qualifications. Although COVID-19 has temporarily changed the hospitality landscape, skills continue to be the most valuable currency both for employers and those in a job or looking for a new job. The digital credential framework identifies technical and common skills which support progression in career and transition across careers.



**Student funding and finance needs to reflect the specific additional support that particular student groups will need.**

### CASE STUDY

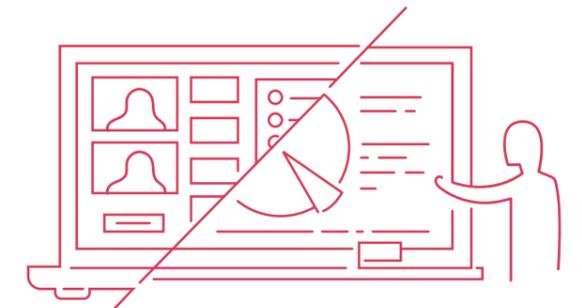
## Colleges collaborating to drive data driven innovation skills in Edinburgh and South-East Scotland city region

Borders, Fife, West Lothian and Edinburgh Colleges worked together collaboratively with the Data Driven Innovation Skills Office of City Region Deal to design and deliver learning opportunities to support the development of data literacy skills within Edinburgh and South East Scotland.

With the growing importance of the use of data to support social change, improve services and create economic growth, they identified an important opportunity for all learners to develop and enhance their data skills. To create better opportunities for future employment, the initiative takes an inclusive approach and is open to all learners, regardless of previous qualifications, including those unemployed, women returner groups, ethnic minority groups and those in the region disadvantaged through poverty.

Opportunities for study on ‘Into Work’ data science-based courses are currently on offer and delivered at Borders College and West Lothian, Edinburgh and Fife Colleges will be providing similar opportunities in the near future. An initiative aimed specifically at supporting women returners will be launched at Fife College in November 2020, supported by Equate Scotland. This will involve study of Data Science for Finance. Full-time learners on a range of programmes in Business and Social Science will also benefit from range of data subjects. Edinburgh College will be considerably scaling up this offer in 2021/22 and expects the positive change will be felt by the region’s digital and data skills sector in 2022.

Collectively these initiatives enhance skills, providing better-skilled employees and future employees and increasing opportunities for current students, with a positive impact on local economies.



### A new approach to qualifications for adults

The college of the future will have to deliver a much more flexible, personalised service. This must see a more modular offer and the use of micro-credentials, supplementing existing longer qualifications (Gauthier, 2020). This must also see deeper articulation and clearer pathways between different parts of the education and skills system. This can also be supported through the development of Lifetime Skills Accounts, enabling people to build up skills over time in a flexible and personalised way appropriate to their needs (LWI, 2016).

### Digital transformation

Being accessible to more people and employers will require ongoing focus on digital transformation (Jisc and AoC, 2020; Colleges Scotland 2020), moving towards more advanced blended and modularised learning and digital platforms for employers. Much of this should be coordinated at the national level rather than within college networks, for cost and efficiency reasons. Significantly, the online offer cannot be seen as a cost-saving measure, and is in no way cheaper to deliver than in-person learning and it will have to be supported by dual professional teaching staff to ensure resources are up-to-date and that there is quality engagement throughout with learners. Digital transformation also critically includes coordinated ongoing investment in the digital skills and capacity of the college workforce.

### A holistic approach to lifetime skills and careers guidance

Colleges are a natural community hub, and as such have a duty towards the whole community as the home for lifetime skills and careers guidance (Barnes et al, 2020). A new lifetime skills and careers advice and guidance service would be hosted within colleges, where appropriate – and where holistic services already exist, will build strong links to complement this, ensuring a coherent and connected community service. This must also include quality information and guidance about available student finance.

### An active society

Colleges are well placed to positively impact upon the health and wellbeing of people in their local communities. Using a skilled staff and a student volunteer workforce, colleges have demonstrated an ability to reach out to those with the biggest barriers to participation in physical activity in order to improve physical and mental health and promote personal and social development. These should be embedded within college strategies, creating a social movement for an active society.

### Addressing digital poverty

Colleges have a central role to play in addressing digital poverty and digital exclusion. Working in a networked manner, colleges should establish digital hubs, where communities can access not just resources and facilities, but also expert guidance and training. The college of the future will work with other key civic partners to eliminate digital poverty – and this is an example of principles that will be set in new college outcome agreements. This must also see colleges playing a leadership role in galvanising local services and resources, with local authorities and others (Corke, Rhodes, Frampton, 2020).



# Strategic partner to employers on skills and innovation support

## Delivering with and for employers

### Recommendation 6

#### A new strategic partnership with employers.

Colleges need close strategic partnerships with employers, nationally and locally/regionally to ensure that the new national and network strategies (recommendations 1, 2 and 3) meet the needs of employers as well as people and their communities. Major employers find it easier to engage, so colleges will need to reach out to SMEs and work closely with employer representative bodies – with significant scope for strengthening partnerships with sectoral networks too at national, regional and local levels.

### Recommendation 7

#### A new support service to employers.

Colleges have an expanded role to play in providing a business support and brokerage service to employers. This will provide the basis for establishing recognised sector/skills focused employer hubs appropriate to the local labour market priorities. Greater coordination between partners locally/regionally will open up the facilities and expertise of colleges to provide more efficiently and enhanced support to employers. It will encourage innovation by employers, support long-term workforce development plans and help move to a higher productivity, more technologically enabled and net-zero carbon economy.

#### The college of the future will play a key role in offering strategic support to employers across innovation and skills

A networked approach to colleges allows for a much more expansive, strategic support offer to employers. The college of the future will play a key role in offering strategic support to employers across innovation and skills. This will be delivered through specialisation across relevant college networks within appropriate economic geographies – with the development of new ‘employer hubs’.

Employer hubs will be sector or skills focused, and will convene and coordinate strategic support for employers and innovation and skills. This will involve working collectively across the college education and skills system, with economic/employment agencies and employer networks to identify and meet the skills and productivity needs of the wider economy. Employer hubs will reflect both existing specialisms across the college network, and the needs and priorities of employers, the workforce and the community.



### CASE STUDY

#### College leads on life science specialism

The Life Science Hub is recognised as the lead in the occupational area and manages FE college collaborations with occupational specialists from the six colleges of Northern Ireland. Its aim is to provide a consistent high quality educational provision for learners and employers across Northern Ireland through economic engagement, curriculum review, future scoping, CPD and supporting the Life and Health Science Sectoral Partnership activity.

Its activity focuses on analysis and prioritisation of business needs and curriculum development to support the growth of the Northern Ireland Life and Health sector. The Hub supports progression pathways by reviewing and aligning Higher Education provision, providing clear articulation routes from entry level programmes.

An example of this is the Higher Level Apprenticeship (HLA) in Applied Industrial Sciences. It is the only one of its kind in Northern Ireland and remains current, flexible and fit for purpose for local Life Sciences industry. The HLA supports employment in a variety of industrial science fields and provides articulation to a range of Higher Education pathways upon successful completion.

The Life Science Hub also leads research into the skill set of sector college workforce. Skills gaps identified are addressed with focused continuous professional development (CPD) delivered as contextualised training to directly support the curriculum and embeds effective use of new technical skills relating to the industry.

Employer hubs will have to be highly networked, with effective planning and inter-agency working – with the development of new strategic partnerships with universities, Catapult Centres and private sector networks – ensuring that employer hubs complement and align effectively with existing provision and specialisms across other providers. This will naturally also involve aligning the work of colleges with regional industrial strategies/local economic development and with other local/regional governments where they exist. And crucially, this will have to be informed by robust data and analysis, with strong coordination with national governments.

**A sector or skills focused employer hub will serve as a resource which is available for employers to use. This will include:**

- Strategic advice and guidance in workforce skills and their role in shaping innovation and business development.
- Specialist teachers/trainers and advisers with knowledge and experience of cutting-edge industry practice and technological advances.
- Advice and demonstration facilities for local employers on new technology and processes with access to state-of-the-art equipment.
- Prototyping facilities to support product development and innovation.
- Materials bank for specialist learning materials for the whole network with particular focus on online learning.
- Support in the transition to more sustainable, greener practices.

**An employer hub will likely provide leadership and coordination of provision across the college network for their particular specialism. This will involve on the supply-side, convening and coordinating sector-specific support across a network; and on the demand-side, playing a much more active role with others to understand and stimulate employer demand. This is likely to include:**

- Development and delivery of full and part-time higher technical and professional programmes at English-Northern Irish-Welsh L4-5/ Scottish L6-7.
- Development and delivery of specialist workforce development and tailored in-company retraining programmes for businesses across the relevant sector.
- Co-ordination of employer services to include student placement, apprenticeships and local employer compacts to tackle key recruitment needs.
- Support to employers in developing their own, in-house training capacity, individually and collectively, to enable more and better on-the-job learning and higher quality work placements and apprenticeships.

Colleges acting in a networked manner in strategic alignment with other key partners will furthermore significantly strengthen the scope for working with sectoral networks of employers at the national, regional and local levels – and for developing capacity, expertise and infrastructure where required.

**CASE STUDY**

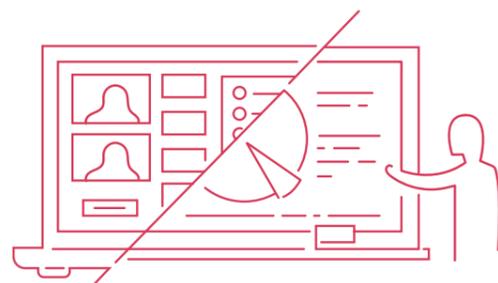
**College leads research and practice in maritime safety**

City of Glasgow College hosts a state-of-the-art maritime faculty, including the 'Oxygen Depletion in Enclosed Spaces' project, which ensures its research-based work supports upskilling and safety in the sector. In 2018 City's STEM & Innovation team, with funding from the Maritime Education Foundation (MEF), addressed the need for better safety training and developed a programme of blended learning to teach seafarers about the dangers of oxygen depletion. Through its work and collaboration with industry, the maritime sector now better knows how to act to reduce the likelihood of accidents caused by oxygen depletion inside confined and adjacent spaces. City's maritime students have benefited from two pilot courses, giving them clear visualisations of the dangers of oxygen depletion in enclosed spaces and more than 1000 students world-wide have upskilled themselves through its free online course. College staff too have developed and upskilled through the developmental opportunities, including research experience. The maritime research community has benefited also from its contribution the better understanding of oxygen depletion.



*“This project and the resulting online course are raising the awareness of dangerous spaces. This type of project is important for the College as we develop graduates ready safely to enter the labour market. It also allows us to work collaboratively with industry to solve global issues and in this case, save lives”*

**Dr Linus Reichenbach,**  
Project Manager  
City of Glasgow College

**CASE STUDY****Belfast Met leads ICT as curriculum hub**

Belfast Met was awarded the Queen's Anniversary Prize in 2019 in recognition of its excellence in Further Education training in Information and Communications Technology. It was designated Curriculum Hub for the Digital ICT sector in Northern Ireland in 2017, and continues to make a vital contribution to 'leading the city to work'.

As the designated Curriculum Hub, they are the lead college in Northern Ireland for education and training in ICT and are recognised by the Government and IT sector as a Centre of Excellence.

Alongside the leading-edge delivery of programmes to support business, the College's outreach programmes include coding clubs for young people and summer technology camps for 16-19 year old female learners. Another example is a partnership with the BBC Academy and Accenture to bring the BBC's Make it Digital traineeships to Northern Ireland as a way of enabling young people not in education, employment or training to take up career opportunities in the creative industries.

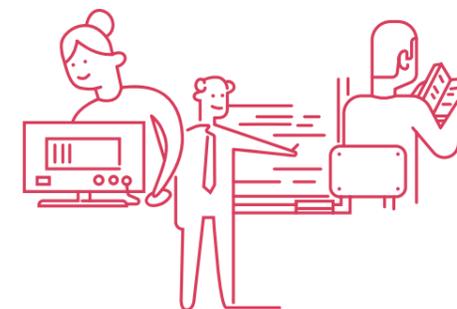
The college has also provided significant support to SMEs in recent years working through the Skills Focus to upskill and reskill employees and through the Assured Skills Programme to place over 1,400 graduates into employment in the professional and financial services sectors in Northern Ireland. Given this success in the digital sector the College has also been working to support the development of the Employability and Skills strand of the Belfast City Deal, worth £850m over the next ten years, which will be a key part of the economic recovery strategy for Northern Ireland supporting digital innovation, tourism and hospitality and advanced manufacturing.

**CASE STUDY****College tailors provision through strong and strategic employer partnerships**

Coleg Cambria – Institute of Technology (IOT@Cambria) hosts two state of the art Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing facilities providing training to support current and future skills needs and grow partnerships with engineering employers in North Wales and the North West region.

Provision is tailored to suit employer needs, with the department structured in a way that supports close partnership working and assisting in the recruitment of potential apprentices for many employers. Coleg Cambria IoT is one of the 'training leaders' in the UK in this sector and supports 500 apprentices from various engineering sectors from L2 up to delivery of 'applied' engineering degree apprenticeship (L6), which are in partnership with, and endorsed by, Swansea University. The IoT operates to support manufacturing behaviours, with apprentices clocking in and out and having daily 'start of shift meetings.' The centres also act as a catalyst to support STEM activities, with over 300 school learners attending the sites each week.

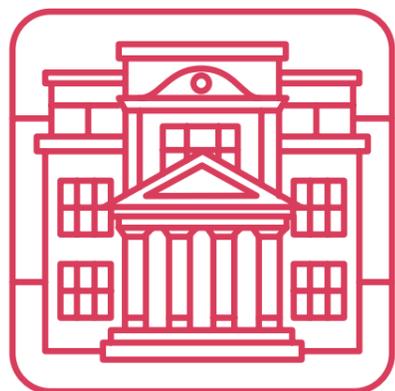
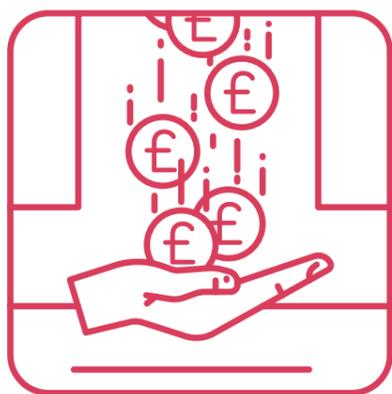
The Cambria IoT is also at the early stages of forging a partnership with Bangor University and the Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (AMRC/Cymru) to support the development of a 'Skills Factory' concept that will support industry within North Wales and the North West through modular applied skills delivery (L4 – L6). The aim is to create a regional skills ecosystem that brings together all skills support for industry, working with partners such as universities and sector groups.



*"We couldn't be happier with the service and support we have received from Cambria. The team have made it easy for all our employees to have fun and an interesting experience."*

**Dave Evans, Training and Development Officer, Magellan Aerospace.**

Sustainable funding,  
governance and  
accountability based on  
nurturing relationships  
that drives the change needed in every community



## Mission-driven funding, governance and accountability

### Recommendation 8

#### **Stable funding and accountability frameworks for colleges.**

Ensuring that colleges can take a long-term strategic focus and reinforcing strategic investment in colleges, the sector must be funded on the basis of three-year, block grant funding settlements, reflecting a trust-based strategic partnership between colleges and governments. This should be based on high-level strategic outcome agreements focused on strategic impacts, aligned to the agreed local network strategies.

#### **Colleges must be given the authority and be held accountable for strategic delivery across people, productivity and place**

Colleges must be given the authority and be held accountable for strategic delivery across people, productivity and place. This must be reflected in an approach to funding, governance and accountability which enables and demands colleges to be focusing on long-term systems outcomes, and working together and with wider partners in support of that agenda.

#### **Funding**

- Colleges/college networks should be funded on the basis of three-year block grant funding agreements – offering the stability and surety that ensures a longer-term systems focus, and ensures continuity and confidence for partners.
- Funding should in this way be based on long-term, outcomes-oriented strategic agreement with the relevant funder/regulator – agreeing the role that the college/college network will play for people, productivity and place.

### Recommendation 9

#### **A strategic relationship with governments and simplified processes.**

Oversight systems across the four nations must be simplified, driving efficiency, engendering greater trust and enabling better strategic coordination to deliver for systems outcomes across people, productivity and place. This must include developing a single post-16 education oversight and funding body within each nation (or in the case of NI, a coordinated approach within government) – crucial to ensuring a coherent lifelong education service, and to addressing nugatory competition between colleges and with other education providers.

## Regulation and accountability

- Accountability structures must reinforce the long-term, collaborative systems orientation, and be based on strategic dialogue centred around long-term outcome agreements.
- College network strategies will be developed in collaboration with other key partners – including employers, employer representatives, universities and schools, the NHS, trade and student unions and other key community partners. Oversight should include evaluating the way in which the college system aligns with their strategic priorities and the needs of the groups they represent.
- Clarity of roles in strategic oversight is critical, and across the four nations there is important work to take forward in simplifying and streamlining the regulatory landscape. The goal in each nation should be to have one post-16 education and skills funder and regulator, with clear oversight across the integrated tertiary system.
- The recommendations that we set out in this report would deliver very significant improvements in the service that people, employers and communities receive – ensuring a universally high-quality service, which is context appropriate to meet local priorities and needs.



## Governance

- Governance crucially needs to reflect the systemic approach we advocate for college networks. Delivering this means that college governors should have a dual mandate towards both institutional and systems good. What this looks like will be notably different within the four nations, and might be applied in different ways in particular regional/local contexts.
- As well as the structure of governance, college governing bodies need to ensure that they appropriately reflect the wider community within which they sit. Serious work needs to be undertaken across the four nations to ensure that governing bodies are diverse and inclusive, as well as having clarity on the particular expertise that governors respectively contribute to the board.
- This must include effective staff and student voice represented at the governing body level, who must be supported to undertake this role – including with fully funded sabbatical positions for elected student union representatives, and ensuring that staff representatives have sufficient time outside of contractual duties to undertake their additional responsibilities.
- Development of the student voice function is crucially both in ensuring that the college reflects and responds to student priorities, but also crucially as a key element of enrichment and in developing diverse future leaders.
- Governing bodies must also involve representation from appropriate regional stakeholders (including employers, local government, and other education providers).
- The robust, professional relationship between governors and executive leadership will be strengthened through ensuring that governors serve a maximum of two terms, and ensuring that governors are supported with high-quality training and support delivered through relevant agencies.

# Development and investment in a professional workforce and place-based leaders

## Leading the way

### Recommendation 10

#### **An ambitious future college workforce strategy.**

Colleges need the best people who are fully empowered to deliver on this vision. Ensuring this must see colleges working with governments across the four nations to develop ambitious college workforce strategies, based on a comprehensive review within each of the four nations. A new social partnership between colleges, unions, employers and governments within each nation would oversee key strategic priorities, including:

- Ensuring and recognising the professional status of the college teaching workforce and the ongoing evolution of the profession - with a focus on continuous personal development, an expansion in secondment opportunities and a focus on developing diverse routes into the sector with a much more porous relationship with industry.
- Recognising and responding to changing aspirations and expectations of people, employers and communities, and the implications of this across both pedagogy and delivery – including with a focus on staff development opportunities and wellbeing.
- A proliferation in support functions including across careers advice, business support and student representation.
- Significant investment in the digital skills of the college workforce.

The status of the college workforce should be further developed and extended through the establishment of a new UK-wide teaching network.

### Recommendation 11

#### **Diverse and representative systems leaders.**

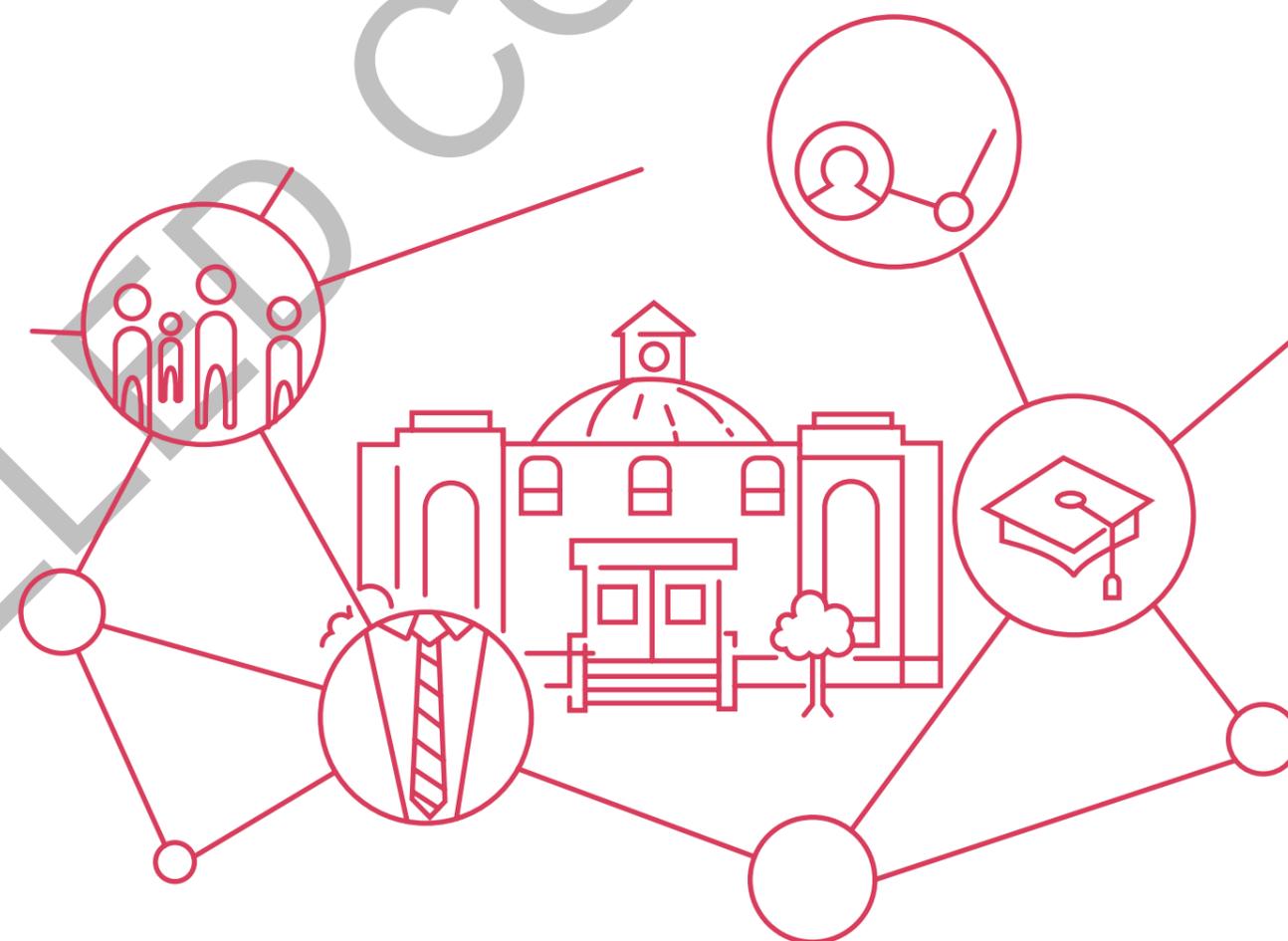
Colleges must be led by systems' leaders who reflect the communities within which they are based and the students they serve. College representative organisations must review representation in leadership structures - with a focus on systematic, mandatory data collection on college leaders and governors by protected characteristics, including across race, gender, sexuality and disability. This data must be used to identify gaps in diversity, to develop targeted recruitment and development programmes in under-represented groups.

The Four Nations College Alliance should work with partner organisations across the UK to champion systems leadership capacities and competences across the four nations, including through development of the ongoing peer development programme.

#### **The workforce must be a central focus of the ongoing renewal of college systems**

#### **Workforce development**

The workforce must be a central focus of the ongoing renewal of college systems across the four nations. Changes in the world of work, technological developments and changes in individual aspirations and expectations will mean significant changes – with the expansion into more flexible learning opportunities outside of tradition working hours and online, and ongoing significant changes and developments in pedagogy too.



Colleges have changed so much in recent years and the recent COVID-19 period has brought with it even more and rapid change in pedagogy and working practices for the college workforce. A more flexible and diverse range of approaches to teaching, learning and training will, together with a focus on the health, wellbeing and mental health of staff, highlights the need for an ambitious future workforce strategy within each nation - based on a social partnership between governments, trade unions, colleges and employers within each nation. This will ensure that colleges continue to deliver for learners, communities and employers, whilst always supporting and developing staff to harness their professionalism and commitment to the sector.

The shift towards more networked systems with specialisation across networks offers significant opportunities to develop new strategic leadership positions in teaching, research and employer engagement – and significant emphasis must be given to this across the four nations.

- The college teaching workforce must hold, and be recognised to hold, professional status. This will look different in different subject areas, but across all subject specialisms teaching staff must be recognised for their expertise both in teaching and in their subject specialism (McGoughlin, 2013). We need to continue to develop diverse pathways into the college workforce, as well as progression routes within the sector.
- This must see college networks ensuring that where relevant, teaching staff have regular exposure to current industry practice through placement/exchange and upskilling opportunities development, including through the delivery of a CPD programme to ensure the regular updating of specialist skills and teaching and learning competence (Greatbatch and Tate, 2018).
- In order to be able to develop the esteem of the college sector, pay levels need to be competitive with similar roles in other parts of the education and skills system/other specialisms where relevant for support functions.



### Routes into the college teaching workforce

Teachers enter the college teaching workforce in different ways:

- Directly from a PGCE
- With a PGCE but having worked in a school
- Directly from industry to train on the job
- Starting as teaching assistants/technicians and moving into a teaching role
- Starting on 'FE only' teaching but moving on to mixed or HE teaching roles

This is a real strength of the sector – and it is important to strengthen diverse pathways into the college workforce, including a far closer relationship with relevant industries.

### The shift towards more networked systems with specialisation across networks offers significant opportunities

- There is a longstanding challenge in attracting teaching staff for key sectors where they are much better paid in industry, and this should be a matter of strategic consideration from colleges, trade unions, employers and governments within the four nations.
- Coordination of specialisations across hubs allows for the recruitment of highly specialist roles, who can play a lead role in teaching and learning, workforce development and employer engagement across a wider network.
- College networks are also likely to develop employer placement programmes to ensure staff remain fully up-to-date with current skill requirements and business practices.
- There is an immediate priority around the development and ongoing updating of digital skills of the college workforce. This requires investment from national governments and should be coordinated to ensure that this is delivered in an efficient manner, ensuring consistent skills across the college system.
- The workforce would benefit from the reestablishment of a UK-wide teaching network, with an emphasis on learning and research in pedagogy.
- Employer hubs will allow for the development of a range of strategic leadership positions in curriculum development, pedagogy and research, which would be attractive to staff from other parts of the education and skills system and industry, presenting the college sector as an attractive career for a diverse workforce.
- An increasingly networked tertiary system across relevant economic geographies also presents an opportunity for the development of a wide range of non-teaching specialist roles – including in lifetime careers and skills advice and guidance, pastoral support and student voice functions, all of which must be developed in order that colleges can deliver across their full remit.

## CASE STUDY

### College leader's ambition for excellence through collaboration

The recently launched WorldSkills UK Centre of Excellence, the first of its kind to be launched across the UK, will draw on WorldSkills UK's unique insights into global skills development to mainstream excellence in training standards with a new college network. The initiative has been designed in response to overwhelming demand from college leaders throughout the UK to help create a new cadre of world-class educators, supporting their professional development in delivering higher standards in training so more young people and their employers succeed. The aim is also to put higher standards at the heart of boosting productivity, placing colleges at the heart of local economic development. The WorldSkills UK Centre of Excellence will convene this collaborative leadership network and provide support, resources and opportunities to mainstream excellence in technical education throughout the UK, and with a focus on raising aspirations and standards in areas of the UK that have high levels of social deprivation. It will initially run as a three-year pilot programme, in partnership with NCFE and colleges across the four nations.



*"We are committed to delivering excellent teaching programmes and developing world-class skills at Coleg Gwent. [...] Being part of the WorldSkills UK Centre of Excellence is a fantastic opportunity to further enhance our skills training by sharing best practice and providing learners the opportunity to learn from the very best."*

**Guy Lacey, Principal, Coleg Gwent**

*"Vocational skills and training are key to our success here in the South of Scotland and so we understand how important they are, how to help promote them, and how they help prepare our students for their careers after they leave us."*

**Joanna Campbell, Principal, Dumfries and Galloway College**

## Diversity and inclusion

- Across both executive and non-executive leadership in colleges across the UK, there is a serious issue of equality and diversity, with leadership teams and governing bodies disproportionately male and white, and failing to reflect the diverse student population that colleges serve.
- Concerted work is needed to address these failings, including through the setting of targets for leadership, and through a focus on developing new pathways into working in the college system and progression routes within the system.
- There is a particular challenge too in the lack of data collected on representation across executive and non-executive leaderships across the four nations, and we recommend that this gap is addressed as a matter of priority.
- This therefore requires work led by the relevant college representative bodies, together with government, to develop systematic, mandatory data collection of college leadership and governors by protected characteristic, and for governors, of the expertise/skill they contribute to the board.
- This data must be used to identify gaps in diversity (both by protected characteristics and in terms of expertise) to develop targeted recruitment programmes for governors and training for managers in under-represented groups in leadership within the sector, to ensure leadership and governance reflects the community the college serves and is highly skilled to provide system leadership.

## SUMMARY

### Developing the digital skills of the college workforce

A joint Jisc and AoC research project, [Shaping the Digital Future of FE and Skills](#) conducted over the summer of 2020, highlights a range of responses about the shift to online learning during the pandemic and the requirement for upskilling staff. 66 per cent of respondents thought the digital shift had a positive impact on their team and 55 per cent pointed to an increase in their levels of productivity. Others struggled, however, with nearly half of staff (49 per cent) saying they were concerned they would not be able to deliver the quality of teaching they expected of themselves.

Additionally, findings from Jisc's [learner digital experience insights 2020 report](#) published in September 2020 collated responses from more than 19,000 FE learners. When asked what one thing organisations could do to improve the quality of digital teaching and learning, among the top answers learners gave was "help teaching staff to develop digital skills".

## Leadership

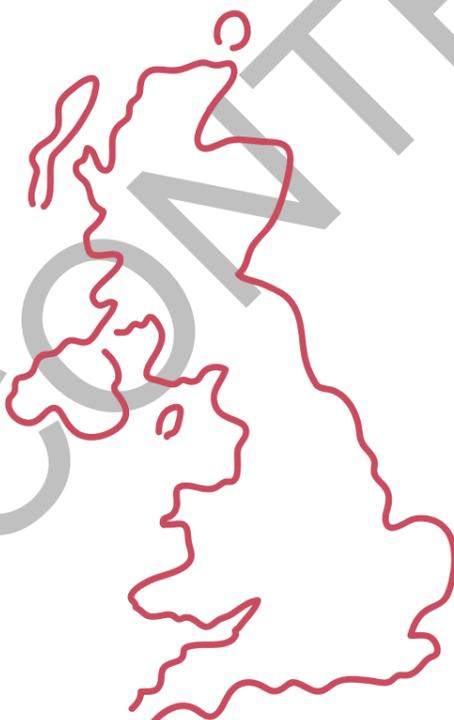
- Leaders must be empowered and held accountable for driving strategic outcomes on the wider system engendering a well-networked approach, alongside effective institutional management. This will require significant work across the four nations to build on systems leadership where it exists and develop it where it does not.
- There is tremendous productive learning from across the four nations of the UK, and that there is a key role for the Four Nations College Alliance to work relevant organisations across the four nations to support future leadership development.

### SUMMARY

## Four Nations College Alliance

The Four Nations College Alliance was established in 2017, and brings together college leaders, college representative bodies and senior civil servants from across the four nations of the UK – to seek to learn from the different policy contexts and institutional practices that exist and to champion systems leadership across the sector.

The alliance has received support from the Gastby Foundation, Edge Foundation and the Education Training Foundation.



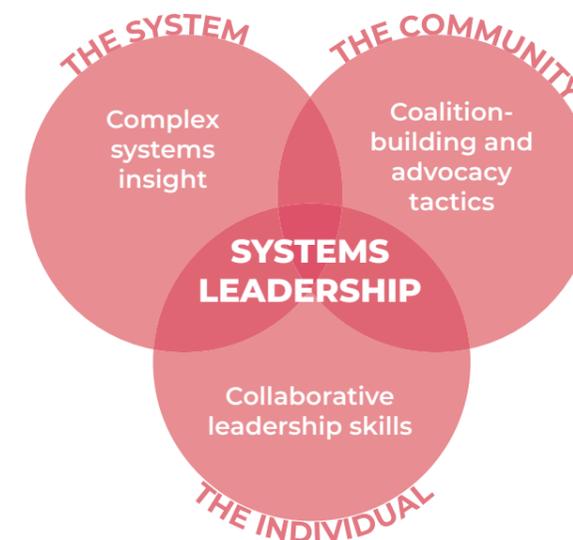
### DEFINITION

## Systems leadership

*“Systems leadership is a set of skills and capacities that any individual or organization can use to catalyze, enable and support the process of systems-level change. It combines collaborative leadership, coalition-building and systems insight to mobilize innovation and action across a large, decentralized network.”*

(Dreier et al, 2019)

### The key elements of systems leadership



GRAPHIC: HARVARD KENNEDY INSTITUTE

## Chapter four

# NEXT STEPS FOR TAKING THIS FORWARD

Colleges and governments can't deliver this vision alone



**Achieving this vision requires not just system renewal within each of the four nations, but also requires significant cultural change within and outside of the college sector**

Achieving this vision requires not just system renewal within each of the four nations, but also requires significant cultural change within and outside of the college sector. And it requires many other partners to step into new relationships with colleges.

The Four Nations College Alliance will be taking forward this work, in close partnership with colleges and college representative bodies across the four nations. This will include:

- Working with policy makers, college leaders and college representative bodies to support the implementation of our recommendations.
- Working with college leaders and college representative bodies to champion systems leadership development, amplifying good practices from inside and outside of the sector.
- Working to continue to build engagement with other sectors, building consensus for change and better-connected local education and skills ecosystems. This will include taking forward work across the four nations with the NHS and with sector councils.

### Recommendations for the four nations

The four nations of the UK are at markedly different stages of their reform programmes and operate within notably different contexts. We have drawn very significantly from important policy reforms and outstanding institutional practices across the four nations.

And yet across all four systems, there are common challenges and changes (as set out in chapter one), there is a common strategic remit for colleges to realise (as set out in chapter two), and there are key strategic components which will allow colleges to deliver on this (as set out in chapter three).

We have set out eleven overarching common recommendations for governments across the four nations. We will set out further specific recommendations for each of the four nations in a series of nations-specific reports to be published this autumn.

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