

Key	
	Ongoing
	Closed
	Overdue

L&T COMMITTEE ACTION LOG 21/11/22

No	Meeting Date	Action	Lead	Deadline	Status	Commentary
1	6/9/22	Risk 10 had been introduced as a new risk following a request from the Board of Management. The Committee discussed the broad definition of risk and further discussion will take place at the next meeting.	LG	Sep 22	Closed	Further discussion will be held at meeting scheduled for 6/9/22 regarding overlap with Risks 8 and 9. Discussed at Sep meeting - COMPLETE
2	6/9/22	Interim PIs – PS to bring individual student case studies to committee re trends of withdrawals and challenges students face.	PS	Nov 22 June 23	Ongoing	PS will bring case studies to the Committee alongside the Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding Report.
3	6/9/22	Bd Secretary to circulate the Terms of Reference and collated self evaluation report for members to review.	LG	Nov 22	Closed	Terms of Reference circulated and approved via email.



**Dumfries and
Galloway College**

One step ahead

LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE 21.11.22

LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	21 November 2022
Subject of Paper	Strategic Risk Register
Paper No.	LT1122-3.1
Agenda Item	Item 3.1
FOISA Status	Disclosable
Primary Lead	L Grierson
Date of production	08 November 2022
Intended Outcome	Approval

Financial Implications:	YES
Equality and Diversity Implications:	N/A
Learner and Learning Implications:	YES
Risks Assessed:	YES
Publicly Available:	YES

Strategic Risk Register

1 Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide the Committee with the opportunity to review the College's Strategic Risks associated with L&T Committee.

2 The Report

2.1 The Principal and Executive Leadership Team routinely review the Strategic Risk Register to reflect the risks the College is facing and the mitigation that will be applied to each risk. Currently L&T Committee has 3 risks assigned to it for review.

Risk 8 – Failure to achieve highest academic performance levels – no change

Risk 9 – Failure to adhere to academic compliance arrangements

Risk 10 - Failure to achieve an effective student experience

2.2 There has been no change to the scoring of the risks, however, the documentation has been updated to show the 3 lines of defence as discussed at Audit Committee and agreed by Board of Management.

3 Recommendation

3.1 It is recommended that the Committee consider and, if so minded, approve the Strategic Risk Register.

Lorraine Grierson
Secretary to the Board
8 November 2022

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER UPDATE L&T COMMITTEE – NOV 22

RISK DEFINITION		ORIGINAL TASK				RESIDUAL RISK					
No	Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Total	Risk Level	Likelihood	Impact	Total	Risk Level	Risk Appetite	Trend
Responsible Person - VP Learning, Skills and Student Experience											
8	Failure to achieve highest academic performance levels										
		4	4	16		3	4	12			=
9	Failure to adhere to academic compliance arrangements										
		5	3	15		4	2	8			=
10	Failure to achieve an effective student experience										
		3	4	12		2	4	8			=

KEY: ASSESSMENT OF RISKS

Risks which should be monitored by the Risk Management Group:	Scores: 1 – 8	Minor Risk
Risks to be brought to the attention of SMT and the Board of Management:	Scores: 9 - 15	Significant Risk
Risks to be reported to, and monitored by, Board of Management:	Scores: 16 – 20	Major Risk
Risks to be reported to, and monitored by, Board of Management:	Scores: 21 – 25	Fundamental Risk

Risk Score Matrix Impact	5	10	15	20	25
	4	8	12	16	20
	3	6	9	12	15
	2	4	6	8	10
	1	2	3	4	5
	Likelihood				

Strategic Objective:

Risk No: 8

Reference to Departmental Risk Registers:	Organisational
Owner:	VP Learning Skills and Student Experience
Description of the Risk:	Failure to achieve highest academic performance levels
What are the possible consequences if the risk was to emerge?	Loss of reputation in the region, financial sustainability, ability to attract future students and educational partners. Note – College performance has been a long term issue that predates COVID

Numerical Scoring of Gross Risk (i.e., without controls in place)					
What is the predicted LIKELIHOOD of the risk occurring?	(A) 4/5	What is the predicted IMPACT of the risk?	(B) 4/5	What is the total risk score? (A x B)	16/25
The GROSS risk is therefore: MIN/SIG/MAJ/FUN	Major Risk				

3 LINES OF DEFENCE	MITIGATIONS	MONITORING
FRONT LINE (Management Assurance) Operational Delivery /Systems /Quality Assurance /Supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online reports with curriculum areas performance Action planning at curriculum area level Regular curriculum team meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managers and Directors monitor course PIs Self-evaluation reporting monitored by Performance
OVERSIGHT OF MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY Internal Compliance and quality checks / Legal and Regulatory / Financial controls / Management controls / Project assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College wide enhancement plan developed from self-evaluation Action planning from portfolio reviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College wide enhancement plan monitored annually Annual portfolio review to examine improvement actions Regular reportage on performance to SLT Reportage to L&T Committee on College wide self -evaluation and portfolio reviews
INDEPENDENT ASSURANCE Internal Audit / external bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual scrutiny by Education Scotland annually by HMI and STMs Self-evaluation reportage to Scottish Funding Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reportage by Education Scotland presented to the BoM SFC Outcome Team monitor returns and provide feedback as required

Numerical Scoring of NET Risk (i.e., with controls in place) (2 cont)					
What is the predicted LIKELIHOOD of the risk occurring?	(A) 3/5	What is the predicted IMPACT of the risk?	(B) 4/5	What is the total risk score? (A x B)	12/25

Risk Status	Meeting 1 SIG	Meeting 2 SIG	Meeting 3	Meeting 4
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MEETING	AMENDMENTS TO RECORD
1	No Change
2	Risk updated to show the 3 lines of defence.
3	
4	

No.	Risk and Risk Appetite	Avoid	Averse	Cautious	Moderate	Open	Hungry
8	Failure to achieve highest academic performance levels						

Classification	Description
Avoid	No appetite for risk. The organisation is not prepared to accept any risks.
Averse	Prepared to accept only the very lowest levels of risk, with the preference being for very safe decision-making and strategy implementation, while recognising there may be little opportunity for innovation or the exploitation of new opportunities.
Cautious	Willing to accept some low risks, while maintaining an overall preference for safe decision-making and strategy implementation, despite the probability that there is restricted potential for innovation and increased outcomes and benefits.
Moderate	Tending predominantly towards exposure to only modest levels of risk in order to achieve acceptable, but possibly unambitious outcomes or benefits.
Open	Prepared to consider innovative decisions and strategic implementation and selecting those with the highest probability of productive outcomes and benefits, even where there are elevated levels of associated risk.
Hungry	Proactively taking innovative/creative/pioneering decisions and adopting forms of strategic implementation, while accepting the associated substantial risk levels in order to secure highly successful outcomes and benefits.

Strategic Objective:
Risk No: 9

Reference to Departmental Risk Registers:	Organisational
Owner:	VP Learning Skills and Student Experience
Description of the Risk:	Failure to adhere to academic compliance arrangements, eg awarding bodies, Education Scotland
What are the possible consequences if the risk was to emerge:	Loss of reputation, financial loss, loss of ability to deliver and develop new courses, loss of ability to issue international visas and impact on student certification.

Numerical Scoring of Gross Risk (i.e. without controls in place)					
What is the predicted LIKELIHOOD of the risk occurring?	(A) 4/5	What is the predicted IMPACT of the risk?	(B) 3/5	What is the total risk score? (A x B)	12/25
The GROSS risk is therefore: MIN/SIG/MAJ/FUN	Significant risk				

3 LINES OF DEFENCE	MITIGATIONS	MONITORING
FRONT LINE (Management Assurance) Operational Delivery /Systems /Quality Assurance /Supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessor marks in line with national standards utilising awarding body resources. Action planning at curriculum area level Regular curriculum team meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal verifier appointed for each unit and a cycle of verification is followed. Self-evaluation reporting monitored by Performance
OVERSIGHT OF MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY Internal Compliance and quality checks / Legal and Regulatory / Financial controls / Management controls / Project assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management scrutiny of the cycle of verification and appointment of internal verifiers. Issues from internal verification are identified and action planned to ensure conformity with national standards. College wide enhancement plan developed from self-evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny of internal verification reports by managers. SLT scrutiny of annual verification activity. College wide enhancement plan monitored annually Reportage to L&T Committee on College wide self -evaluation and portfolio reviews
INDEPENDENT ASSURANCE Internal Audit / external bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External verification by awarding body according to an annual cycle and risk Annual scrutiny by Education Scotland annually by HMI and STMs Self-evaluation reportage to Scottish Funding Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External verifier presents report of visit to curriculum and performance team. Performance directorate monitor external verification and report to SLT and the L&T Committee. Reportage by Education Scotland presented to the BoM SFC Outcome Team monitor returns and provide feedback as required

Numerical Scoring of NET Risk (i.e. with controls in place) (2 cont)					
What is the predicted LIKELIHOOD of the risk occurring?	(A) 2/5	What is the predicted IMPACT of the risk?	(B) 2/5	What is the total risk score? (A x B)	4/25

Risk Status	Meeting 1 MIN	Meeting 2 MIN	Meeting 3	Meeting 4
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MEETING	AMENDMENTS TO RECORD
1	No Change
2	Risk updated to reflect the 3 lines of defence.

3	
4	

No.	Risk and Risk Appetite	Avoid	Averse	Cautious	Moderate	Open	Hungry
9	Failure to adhere to academic compliance arrangements						

Strategic Objective:
Risk No: 10

Reference to Departmental Risk Registers:	Organisational
Owner:	VP Learning, Skills and Student Experience <i>(Inc Infrastructure/Marketing/ICT)</i>
Description of the Risk:	Failure to achieve an effective student experience
What are the possible consequences if the risk was to emerge?	Loss of reputation in the region, financial sustainability, ability to attract future students, ability to retain students and potential to limit student progression.

Numerical Scoring of Gross Risk (i.e., without controls in place)

What is the predicted LIKELIHOOD of the risk occurring?	(A) 3/5	What is the predicted IMPACT of the risk?	(B) 4/5	What is the total risk score? (A x B)	12/25
The GROSS risk is therefore: MIN/SIG/MAJ/FUND	Significant Risk				

3 LINES OF DEFENCE	MITIGATIONS	MONITORING
FRONT LINE (Management Assurance) Operational Delivery /Systems /Quality Assurance /Supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear arrangements for applications, onboarding and retention Student block surveys and Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (SSES) Student engagement prior to course start and on course Continuous self- evaluation and action planning by support and teaching areas Action planning at curriculum area level Regular curriculum team meetings Students' association officers' meetings with students Student focus groups Student class representatives input to course teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of early student experience Performance return survey and SSES results to CMs Performance enhancement measure support areas to improve the student experience Self-evaluation reporting monitored by Performance and Directors
OVERSIGHT OF MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY Internal Compliance and quality checks / Legal and Regulatory / Financial controls / Management controls / Project assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College wide enhancement plan developed from self-evaluation Action planning from portfolio reviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring of College wide enhancement plan Portfolio review to examine improvement actions Regular reportage on performance and student satisfaction to SLT Reportage to L&T Committee on College wide self -evaluation, enhancement plan and portfolio reviews
INDEPENDENT ASSURANCE Internal Audit / external bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual scrutiny by Education Scotland annually by HMI and STMs Self-evaluation reportage to Scottish Funding Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reportage by Education Scotland presented to the BoM SFC Outcome Team monitor returns and provide feedback as required

Numerical Scoring of NET Risk (i.e., with controls in place) (2 cont)

What is the predicted LIKELIHOOD of the risk occurring?	(A) 2/5	What is the predicted IMPACT of the risk?	(B) 4/5	What is the total risk score? (A x B)	8/25
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Risk Status	Meeting 1 MIN	Meeting 2 MIN	Meeting 3	Meeting 4
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MEETING	AMENDMENTS TO RECORD
1	No Change
2	Risk updated to show the 3 lines of defence
3	
4	

No.	Risk and Risk Appetite	Avoid	Averse	Cautious	Moderate	Open	Hungry
10	Failure to achieve an effective student experience						





**Dumfries and
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One step ahead

L&T Committee 21.11.22

LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	21 November 2022
Paper No.	LT1122-4.1
Agenda Item	Item 4.1
Subject of Paper	Student Association Report
FOISA Status	Disclosable
Primary Contact	Danielle Hughes
Date of production	02 November 2022
Intended Outcome	For Discussion

Financial Implications:	N/A
Equality and Diversity Implications:	N/A
Learner and Learning Implications:	Student Performance and Experience
Risks Assessed:	N/A
Publicly Available:	YES

1 Introduction

The purpose of this report is to showcase the work of the Student Association to the Learning & Teaching Committee.

2 Activities

2.1 Class Reps

Our Class Representatives have now been elected and the first round of meetings has commenced. These will be approached with the option of online meetings or in-person at each campus.

2.2 Podcasting Studio

Our old Radio Booth was no longer in working condition, so we have converted this into a podcasting studio with the support of our Learning Technologist. We aim to set up a podcast run by the student association, and to get staff and students involved in creating the content of these.

We are making connections within Rockpool Podcasts (Ayrshire College) for advice from a well-established college podcast.

This space will also be available to be used by Curriculum Teams.

2.3 Here For You Event

Due to the impact of the Cost-of-Living Crisis, we are arranging an event to support students during this time. The event will be branded as 'Here For You' to tie in to our college values, and will take place Wednesday 30th November 10am – 3pm.

We have invited organisations in who offer cost-of-living support across the area to take a stall and will have representation from the college support teams (student advisors, funding, student association).

This will also be open to staff to attend and HR will be present representing our Employee Assistance/Benefits programme.

2.4 Boost Programme

We are working on a Boost Programme for students with a focus on Skills and Wellbeing.

Our student survey has brought feedback in regarding how students are feeling about their time with the college so far.

	Positive	Negative
I have felt cheerful and in good spirits	81.67%	18.33%
I have felt calm and relaxed	80.00%	20.00%
I have felt active	80.00%	20.00%
I woke up feeling fresh and rested	70.00%	30.00%
My daily life has been filled with things that interest me	78.33%	21.67%

The survey used the WHO 5 questions, and we can see from the table above that we had a high volume of positive feedback. Negative feedback was passed to our Live & Learn Programme.

We are also working on skills workshops to help students fill any gaps which can benefit their learning & time with the college.

2.5 Bridge 2 Business Enterprise Roadshow

The Bridge 2 Business Enterprise Roadshow will take place on Thursday 17th November.

The event will involve a panel Q&A discussion with local business people & college alumni, along with Confidence Building and Intro to Enterprise workshops.

Recommendations

The Learning & Teaching Committee is asked to note the activity undertaken and the progress made by Dumfries and Galloway College's Student Association and discuss any points raised.

Danielle Hughes

Student Association President

November 2022



**Dumfries and
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One step ahead

L&T COMMITTEE 21.11.22

LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	<u>21 November 2022</u>
Subject of Paper	Annual SPSO Complaints Report
Paper No.	LT1122-5.1
Agenda Item	Item 5.1
FOISA Status	Disclosable
Primary Lead	Sony Rutter
Date of production	10 November 2022
Intended Outcome	Discussion

Financial Implications:	N/A
Equality and Diversity Implications:	N/A
Learner and Learning Implications:	YES
Risks Assessed:	N/A
Publicly Available:	YES

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The College is required to comply with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman's (SPSO) Model Complaints Handling Procedure and report annually on its performance in handling complaints and also as part of our duties under Freedom of Information legislation. The College has adopted the standardised Complaint Categories developed by the College Development Network's Complaint Handling Advisory Group.
- 1.2 This report covers the period August 2021 to July 2022. In this period there were 17 frontline complaints (Stage 1*) and 13 complaints requiring a full investigation (Stage 2**). One complaint was escalated to Stage 2.

* complaints that are straightforward, requiring little or no investigation

** complaints that are complex, serious or 'high risk and where the customer is not satisfied with the frontline response

2 2021-2022 Performance Indicators 1 – 4

2.1 *Indicator One: The total number of complaints received*

1	Quantitative Indicator	2021-22	2020-21
1.1	Number of complaints received	30	20
1.2	Number of complaints received per 100 population as a %	0.65%	1.31%

Breakdown of Complaints	2021-22	2020-21
Stage 1 Number of complaints received	17	16
Stage 2 Number of complaints received	13	4
Stage 1 Number of complaints escalated to Stage 2	1	0

Breakdown of Complaint Categories	2021-22	2020-21
Stage 1		
Customer Care	3	4
Applications, Admission, Progression	3	4
Course Related	6	6
Services	5	2
Stage 2		
Customer Care	8	0
Applications, Admission, Interview, Enrolment	1	0
Course related	4	4
Escalated Complaint		
Course related	1	0

Breakdown of Complaints per Quarter	2021-22	2020-21
Stage 1		
Quarter 1 (August 21 – October 21)	5	6
Quarter 2 (November 21 – January 22)	3	2
Quarter 3 (February 22 – April 22)	7	5
Quarter 4 (May 22 – July 22)	2	3
Stage 1 Total Number of complaints received	17	16
Stage 2		

Quarter 1 (August 21 – October 21)	1	1
Quarter 2 (November 21 – January 22)	0	0
Quarter 3 (February 22 – April 22)	3	0
Quarter 4 (May 22 – July 22)	9	3
Stage 2 Number of complaints received	13	4
Stage 1 Number of complaints escalated to Stage 2		
Quarter 4 (May 22 – July 22)	1	0

2.2 *Indicator Two: The number and percentage of complaints at each stage which were closed in full within the set timescales of five and 20 working days*

2	Quantitative Indicator	21-22		20-21	
		No.	%	No.	%
2.1	Number of complaints closed in full at stage 1 within five working days as % of all stage 1 complaints responded to in full	12	71%	10	63%
2.2	The number of complaints closed in full at stage 2 within 20 working days as % of all stage 2 complaints responded to in full	6	43%	1	25%
2.3	The number of complaints closed in full after escalation within 20 working days as % of all complaints responded to in full after escalation.	0	0%	0	0%

2.3 *Indicator Three: The average time in working days for a full response to complaints at each stage*

Quantitative Indicator		Average time in working days 2021-2022	Average time in working days 2020-2021
3.1	Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 1	3.52	6.31
3.2	Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 2	29.38	39
3.3	Average time in working days to respond to complaints after escalation	29	0

2.4 *Indicator Four: The outcome of complaints at each stage*

	Quantitative Indicator	Upheld		Partially upheld		Not upheld		Resolved***	
		21-22	20-21	21-22	20-21	21-22	20-21	21-22	20-21
5.1	Number of complaints as a % of all complaints closed at stage 1 <i>1 complaint escalated to Stage 2</i>	8 (50%)	6 (38%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	2 (13%)	7 (44%)	5 (31%)	3 (19%)
5.2	Number of complaints as a % of all complaints closed at stage 2 *	7 (54%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (15%)	2 (50%)	4 (31%)	2 (50%)
5.3	Number of complaints as a % of all complaints closed after escalation	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 0%)

***A complaint is resolved when both (the organisation) and the customer agree what action (if any) will be taken to provide full and final resolution for the customer, without making a decision about whether the complaint is upheld or not upheld

3 Customer Satisfaction with Complaints Process

3.1 To ensure compliance with the College Complaints Handling Procedure, we requested feedback from complainants regarding their satisfaction with the service they received, and not the circumstances or outcome of their actual complaint. They were asked to evaluate the service considering the following points:

- Whether the complaints process was easy to access
- Whether they received a prompt acknowledgement of their complaint
- Whether their complaint was thoroughly investigated
- Whether they received a fair and clear response and within an appropriate timescale
- Whether they were dealt with courteously at all times

3.2 Following the issue of the monitoring email, a very low number of complainants responded. However, the feedback did indicate that they were satisfied with how their complaint had been dealt with (17%).

4 Learning from Complaints: Service Delivery Improvements

4.1 Following complaints received in Academic Year 2021-22, service delivery will be improved in the following areas:

👉 *Complaints Handling - Complainant Feedback*

As many complainants did not respond to the monitoring email issued by the Performance Team, for session 22-23 a feedback survey (via Microsoft Forms platform) has been devised. This will allow the team to easily produce quantitative data for key indicators – access to the CHP, prompt acknowledgement of complaint, the way in which they were treated by staff, friendliness, courtesy etc and timescales for handling complaints. This process will be reviewed at the end of academic session 2022-23. However, it is anticipated that complainants will find this approach to providing feedback much easier and encourage each complainant to respond.

👉 *Complaints Handling – Staff Training*

A LearnNet Complaints Handling unit is being developed and all staff will be required to complete this. It is anticipated that this training will raise awareness of the complaints handling process and in particular the requirement to adhere to the timescales for actioning complaints and ensure compliance with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman performance indicators. If this proves to be successful, all staff will be required to undertake this training each academic session.

5 Key Observations

5.1 **Number of complaints received**

On comparison to session 20-21, the number of Stage 2 complaints received increased significantly (from 4 to 13). There is no data to indicate the reason for the increase. However, the comments received are all isolated comments that do not pertain to any one key area or team within the college. The number of Stage 1 complaints were comparable (16 for 20-21 and 17 for 21-22).

5.2 **The number and percentage of complaints at each stage which were closed in full within the set timescales of 5 and 20 working days**

5.3 An improvement of 8% for Stage 1 complaints is noted (71% for 21-22 compared to 63% for 20-21).

5.4 For stage 2 complaints there were various factors which impacted on the adherence to the 20 working day timescale. These included complaints received during the summer break when key staff were on annual leave, and complexity of complaints which required lengthy communication with the complainants. However, for Stage 2 complaints an improvement of 18% was noted (43% for 21-22 compared to 25% for 20-21).

5.5 **The average time in working days for a full response to complaints at each stage**

In accordance with the Complaints Handling Procedure the target for resolution of Stage 1 complaints is 5 days and Stage 2 complaints is 20 days.

- 5.6 In 2021-22 the average time in working days to close a Stage 1 complaint was 3.52 days (6.31 days in 20-21). This is an improvement of 2.79 days per stage 1 complaint.
- 5.7 In 2021-22 the average days to close a Stage 2 was 29.38 days (39 days in 20-21). This is an improvement of 9.62 days per stage 2 complaint.
- 5.8 A proportion of the complaints (50%) received during Quarter 4 (May 22 – July 22) were received during the summer break, when many key staff were on annual leave. Extensions were allocated (in agreement with the complainant) to allow additional time for actioning /investigating complaints.

6 SPSO (Scottish Public Services Ombudsman)

- 6.1 No complaints relating to Dumfries and Galloway College were submitted to SPSO during Academic Session 2021-2022.

Recommendations

Please refer to the service delivery improvements noted in the report and discuss any points raised.

Sonya Rutter
Performance Manager
10th November 2022



LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	<u>21 November 2022</u>
Subject of Paper	Education Scotland and SFC Update
Paper No.	LT1122-6.1
Agenda Item	Item 6.1
FOISA Status	Disclosable
Primary Lead	Douglas Dickson
Date of production	08 November 2022
Intended Outcome	Discussion

Financial Implications:	YES
Equality and Diversity Implications:	N/A
Learner and Learning Implications:	YES
Risks Assessed:	N/A
Publicly Available:	NO

Introduction

This paper identifies to the committee key inspection and enhancement activities for academic year 22/23.

Main Report

Education Scotland: Progress Visit

It is anticipated that Education Scotland's annual progress visit will take place in early 2023. The visit will enable ES gather evidence about the progress the college is making towards delivering against the targets and milestones identified within our improvement plan. Evidence is gathered through professional dialogue with staff and students and the review of key processes.

Education Scotland: HMIE Engagement in Scotland's Colleges 2021/22

Education Scotland have produced an overview of HMIE Engagement In Scotland College's based on their progress visits. In the report, see attached, there are some aspects to note –

- Colleges and college staff adapted well to online delivery.
- Curriculum has been adapted well for blended or hybrid learning.
- It was recognised that online delivery was more challenging for FE students.
- Uncertainty around mental health support funding may impact the provision of this service.
- College adapted evaluation arrangements; a minority of colleges paused them.
- Success and retention rates for full time further education students have declined.
- There are curriculum areas with low rates of success that predate COVID.
- Overall colleges engaged well with industry to plan or address skills gaps.
- There were low response rates to the Student Satisfaction Engagement Survey which made planning for enhancement more challenging.

Scottish Funding Council: Self-Evaluation Reporting for Colleges

SFC have asked that we report on our Outcome Agreement for AY 2021-22 and that we prepare self-evaluation report. Within the report we will, within our action plan for enhancement, reflect on the Education Scotland Progress Visit from March 2022.

We have been asked to utilize the Jisc Digital Elevation Tool as part of this process to establish a clearer picture of our digital journey and planning.

The report should focus on outcomes for students and outcomes for economic recovery and social renewal. The deadline for the submission of the report is the 5th December, however due to the timing of Board meetings we have requested that we submit after December's meeting.

Recommendations

The Committee are asked to note the contents of this report and discuss any of the items presented.

Douglas Dickson
Vice Principal, October 2022

HMIE engagement in Scotland's colleges

Overview report

Academic year 2021/22



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Introduction

On behalf of the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), Education Scotland's HM Inspectors of Education (HMIE) have continued to work closely with all colleges in Scotland to provide independent assurance, support and challenge as the sector continues to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. This national overview report provides a summary of findings from Progress Visits (PV) carried out in all 27 colleges during academic year (AY) 2021/22 and of outcomes for learners in AY 20/21. It highlights aspects of positive practice and ongoing challenges faced by the sector. It is intended that the report be used by stakeholders including colleges, Scottish Government (SG), SFC, and Education Scotland to inform future arrangements to support improvement in the college sector in Scotland.

Background

HM Inspectors, worked collaboratively with colleges and SFC to plan and coordinate a schedule of progress visits (PVs) to colleges during AY 2021/22. Each PV was carried out by a team of HM Inspectors, Associate Assessors (AAs) and Student Team Members (STMs). During the PV, the team engaged in professional dialogue with college managers, staff, learners and other stakeholders to gather evidence on progress made towards achievement of improvement targets, and importantly how each college was dealing with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The team drew on evidence from these activities to evaluate how well a college was performing during this period and whether it had made satisfactory progress or not towards achieving improvement priorities. At the end of the PV, HM Inspectors produced a summary report of findings which was shared with the Principal and the college's Board of Management and/or the Regional Board.

The outcomes of PVs will inform HMI approaches to engagement in individual colleges during AY 2022/23.

During PVs, HM Inspectors explored the following five overarching themes:

- **Curriculum, learning, teaching and assessment;**
- **Services to support learning;**
- **Learner engagement;**
- **Evaluation to facilitate improvement; and**
- **Learner progress and outcomes.**





1. Key findings from Progress Visits AY 2021/22

1.1. Summary of Progress Visit outcomes

HM Inspectors found that twenty-two colleges/institutions have made progress towards achievement of their improvement targets. Five colleges have not yet made sufficient progress towards improving some aspects of provision and/or outcomes for learners and will require further engagement to monitor and assess the effectiveness of actions taken to address these.

1.2. Curriculum, learning, teaching and assessment

ASPECTS OF POSITIVE PRACTICE

- All colleges demonstrated resilience and resourcefulness in adopting new and innovative working practices during the COVID-19 pandemic. They reported a positive impact on learning and teaching using hybrid delivery models and that some online approaches may remain in place beyond the pandemic.
- Overall, colleges delivered online learning effectively. Teaching departments took account of COVID-19 restrictions, including social distancing, to carefully plan and prioritise a return to on-campus learning for practical-based subjects. This was particularly helpful to learners on further education (FE) level programmes who were experiencing frustration at the limited amount of face-to-face delivery.
- In most colleges, managers and teaching staff work well together to plan and adjust the curriculum to ensure that, overall, the needs of learners and stakeholders are met. They take good account of internal and external intelligence and feedback to make well-balanced decisions about the curriculum on offer.
- During periods of COVID-19 restrictions, some curriculum teams incorporated additional activities to help new learners develop a sense of belonging within the college community and overcome anxieties about learning in isolation. These included social events and opportunities to engage with staff and learners informally.
- Most colleges make productive use of local, regional, national and sector specific labour market information to inform their curriculum offer. Teaching departments draw effectively on feedback and intelligence from industry partners and regional stakeholders to respond to identified and projected skills requirements.
- All colleges have adapted their curriculum to accommodate the increasing demand for remote delivery and blended learning. They use a range of online platforms well to enable and support digital delivery of learning and teaching, including Virtual Learning Environments (VLE), online video-conferencing facilities and social media.
- Most teaching staff engage productively in professional learning activities to develop and enhance their digital skills to deliver effective online learning experiences.
- Learners identify the most effective aspect of digital learning is the accessibility of learning and teaching. They particularly value being able to access and revisit video recordings of lessons and practical demonstrations out with class times;

the use of simulation software within vocational specialisms; facilities to submit assessments electronically; and the ability to receive instant feedback on their work from staff.

- In most colleges, learners appreciate and value the commitment and support of teaching staff. They report that the openness and flexibility of teachers helps them to progress on their programme.
- All colleges work successfully with awarding bodies to implement alternative assessment arrangements. Learners engage well with new formative and summative assessment models and value the introduction of more holistic approaches to assessment, account of project and portfolio-based evidence, and the use of open book assignments.

ASPECTS FOR IMPROVEMENT

A few colleges do not have sufficient arrangements in place to assess the level of digital skills of learners prior to enrolment. As a result, some new learners do not have sufficient digital skills to be able to engage fully in learning activities at the start of their programme.

In a few colleges, curriculum teams use a variety of digital platforms to deliver online learning. This presents complexities and challenges for

learners who require to navigate and use a number of different digital platforms within their programme.

In a few colleges, some learners did not have access to an appropriate device to enable them to participate fully in remote learning, or access online college services.

In most colleges, learners on FE level programmes that are predominantly practical, experience challenges in maintaining motivation and engagement when delivery is not on campus and face-to-face.

Some colleges reported challenges in working with secondary schools to plan and deliver provision for young people in the senior phase. Access to practical programmes was particularly affected by periods of college closure.

In some colleges, the number of school-age learners undertaking college provision has reduced significantly for a number of reasons, including pupils preferring in-school learning to online delivery of college programmes. The breadth of college curriculum accessed by young people has narrowed as a result.

Some colleges are not taking sufficient action to monitor learner progress across programmes where learning and teaching is blended.





1.3. Services to support learning

ASPECTS OF POSITIVE PRACTICE

- From the start of the pandemic, curriculum and support staff worked collegiately to ensure continuity of service and provide learners and staff with equipment and resources learners to enable them to work off-campus.
- During the pandemic, almost all colleges made arrangements to enable learners requiring additional support to access services quickly and easily. Support teams provide options for learners to contact support services online, by phone or in person. Staff teams work together to tailor coordinated support and this has helped many learners to overcome challenges and engage productively in their learning. Early referral to support services is helping vulnerable learners to progress and remain on their programme.
- Most colleges use a range of approaches and resources to promote and support wellbeing and mental health. A significant number of learners have accessed counselling services and the number of learners seeking counselling is continuing to increase.
- In almost all colleges, support service managers and teams worked quickly to ensure pre-entry, admission and enrolment facilities were

available online and working well. Arrangements were streamlined to enable learners to access application and student funding services more easily. In-person appointments and phone and video calls were used well by staff to engage and communicate with learners. As a result, learners receive prompt responses to queries raised and fewer learners face financial hardship due to reduced waiting times for accessing support funds.

ASPECTS FOR IMPROVEMENT

In a few colleges, a reduction in the level of additional funding available to provide support for mental health is leading to uncertainty regarding continuity of provision and ability to meet demand.

In a few colleges, recruitment and induction arrangements do not provide learners with sufficient information about the range and type of support services available to them.

1.4. Learner engagement

ASPECTS OF POSITIVE PRACTICE

- Almost all colleges work closely with their Students' Association (SA). Productive collaboration between college staff and the SA at operational and strategic levels is stimulating initiatives that improve and enhance the learner experience. These include delivery of short programmes to develop digital skills, roll-out of peer mentoring schemes, and arrangements for improving learner communication and retention.
- Almost all colleges have an effective class representative system in place. SAs host useful training events and meetings to assist class reps. to carry out their role successfully. This includes introducing class reps. to ways of gathering and conveying feedback from their peers to help shape improvements to the learner experience. However, class reps. report they feel less comfortable representing the views of other learners gathered through remote platforms.
- In most colleges, learners report that staff are flexible, enthusiastic and responsive to their needs. Teaching staff make good use of real-time learner feedback to make timeous adjustments. Most learners are confident that their opinions are respected by staff and that they can influence positive change.

- Most learners can articulate the benefits of hybrid delivery models. Many value and enjoy the flexibility of remote learning to accommodate family and work commitments and avoid travel costs.
- In some colleges, the increased use of online platforms and social media has enhanced engagement between teaching staff and learners.

ASPECTS FOR IMPROVEMENT

In a number of colleges, the number of class representatives has declined and some colleges do not have sufficient arrangements to ensure all class groups have a class representative in place.

In a few colleges, there is insufficient SA representation on college planning groups.

In some colleges, learner involvement and contribution to curriculum team review is not sufficient to fully support evaluation and planning for improvement.





1.5. Evaluation to facilitate improvement

ASPECTS OF POSITIVE PRACTICE

- Most colleges adjusted evaluation arrangements to help to manage the diverse range of challenges created by the pandemic. In a minority of colleges, evaluation arrangements were paused to enable staff to manage frequent unplanned disruptions and challenges.
- In most colleges, college managers draw on the findings from personal development review and evaluation processes to inform and plan professional learning activities. This has led to improvements to professional practice that has enhanced delivery of the curriculum.
- Within evaluative activities, teaching staff reflect well on the impact of hybrid delivery. They draw constructively on the findings to adjust programme schedules and timetables, and capture best practice.
- In some colleges, curriculum staff and support teams use a range of methods effectively to evaluate and improve the quality of provision and services. This includes arrangements for observing and evaluating learning and teaching, use of learner feedback, and peer mentoring of staff.
- Most colleges are in the process of adapting their approaches to evaluate the quality of learning and

teaching to reflect the emerging prevalence of hybrid and remote learning. Most curriculum managers are engaging teaching teams in discussing approaches and experiences of delivering learning in different ways and are drawing on the findings to shape future arrangements.

ASPECTS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Overall, approaches to the evaluation of learning and teaching are not yet sufficiently systematic. Often college managers and staff rely on informal mechanisms, limiting their ability to evaluate and improve the quality of the learning experience.

In most colleges, some staff do not engage sufficiently in evaluative activities to inform planning for improvement.

In most colleges, some curriculum teams do not have sufficiently detailed improvement action plans to fully enable staff to set appropriate actions, monitor progress and measure improvement.

A minority of colleges do not share best practice approaches effectively across curriculum teams.

In some colleges, low response rates to learner surveys is reducing the ability of managers to identify cross-college issues that require improvement. Generally, learner participation in the national Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (SSES) is low with insufficient numbers of learners complete the survey to express their views.

1.6. Learner progress and outcomes

ASPECTS OF POSITIVE PRACTICE

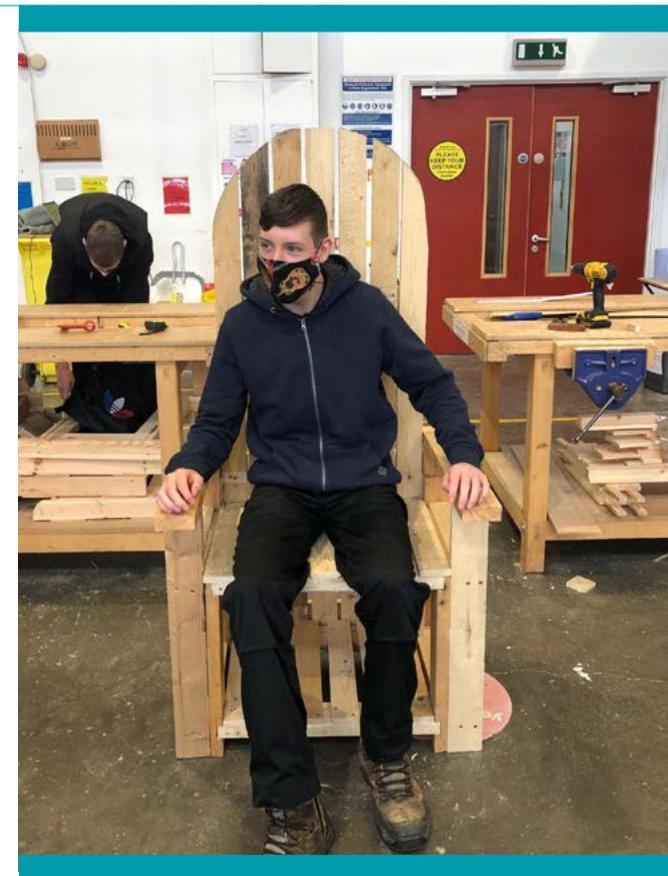
- In most colleges, the majority of learners complete their college programme and achieve a successful outcome, leading to a certificated award.
- In AY 2020-21, the majority of colleges achieved better than sector average rates of learner successful completion at FE level.
- Attainment rates for full-time Higher Education (HE) learners have remained stable at around pre-pandemic levels overall.
- In almost all colleges, there are identifiable progression pathways for learners.
- In some colleges, staff make effective use of predictive software to support staff to identify and focus on learners that are at greatest risk of leaving their programme early. This facility helps staff to identify learners who require additional support and assess the effectiveness of any interventions put in place.

ASPECTS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Attainment rates for learners on full-time FE programmes have declined overall. Managers and staff in almost all colleges recognise that FE learners are more likely to find remote learning challenging.

Rates of further withdrawal for learners on full-time FE programmes have increased.

In a number of colleges there are curriculum areas with persistently low rates of learner success, many of which pre-date the COVID-19 pandemic. Most of these colleges recognise that further work is required to identify and analyse the factors that contribute to learner withdrawal and low success rates.



1.7. Summary of key findings

- All colleges responded well to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic by adapting delivery models to facilitate remote and blended learning. This allowed learners to continue their learning. All colleges worked well with respective awarding bodies to create alternative forms of summative and formative assessment.
- Most teaching staff have developed enhanced digital skills. This is leading to innovative and effective ways of working allowing learners to engage in a more flexible way. However, in a minority of colleges, learners enrol without sufficient assessment of their current digital competences. Some learners still experience barriers to engagement through a deficit of digital knowledge and/or a lack of access to digital hardware and software. These factors are likely to lead to increased rates of learner early or further withdrawal.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, self-evaluation arrangements in a minority of colleges were paused as staff managed frequent, unplanned challenges. Staff in most colleges made rapid change to their practice as situations unfolded to identify planned actions and potential improvements.
- Most colleges engaged well with industry and external stakeholders to identify potential barriers to recruitment, employment, and training. This allowed colleges to prioritise planning, address gaps in skills and capitalise on funding opportunities. In this way, colleges are continuing to contribute to wider regional economies.
- In all colleges, learners benefit from streamlined communications and services. Adjusted support services across all colleges are catering to a wide range of learner needs that include additional support needs, funding issues and learner counselling. This helps to promote successful retention and attainment.
- In most colleges, learners appreciate and value the commitment and support of teaching staff and comment that staff are flexible, enthusiastic and responsive to their needs. Learners feel listened to and that their feedback helps to shape curriculum. These approaches are promoting positive outcomes across most colleges. However, the arrangements for class representative recruitment in some colleges is inconsistent.
- In the majority of colleges, most learners complete their college programme and achieve a successful outcome, leading to a certificated award. However, a minority of colleges have seen consistently low rates of learner success within specific curriculum areas which pre-date the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Most colleges recognise that learners on full-time FE programmes are more likely to find remote learning challenging. Learners undertaking programmes with practical content have often been frustrated by the limited amount of face-to-face delivery available. This has influenced learner further withdrawal and attainment rates.
- Almost all colleges report that some blended delivery approaches adopted during the pandemic may remain in place in the future.

2. Analysis of learner outcome data, AY 2020/21

2.1. Background

The SFC produce college performance indicators (PIs) annually for the previous academic year. In addition, SFC produce an accompanying overview report which examines data patterns and trends over a number of years. The most recent documents are [AY 2020-21](#).

The purpose of this data and associated indicators is to inform stakeholders about the performance of the sector in relation to learner outcomes. The reported PIs support the evaluation of performance of learners by level of programme and hours of study, both over time and against other similar colleges. The PIs can be used, for example, to monitor and compare performance of groups of specific interest, such as those with protected characteristics or care-experienced learners, thereby supporting the wider college improvement agenda.



Currently SFC reports on three PIs, each expressed as a percentage of total enrolments:

Completed successful – the percentage of learners who successfully complete a programme within a specified timescale during the course year;

Completed with partial success – the percentage of learners completing the course year but not considered to be fully successful; and

Withdrawn – the percentage of learners who withdrew from the course after enrolment. This can also be examined further by **early withdrawal** (withdrawn before completing 25% of the programme) and **further withdrawal** (withdrawn after completing 25% of the programme but before the end of the programme).

2.2. Impact of the pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the examination and assessment arrangements for learners during AY 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22. SFC commentary on the impact of the pandemic on college activity is provided in [Appendix 1](#).

In response to the pandemic, measures put in place to protect staff and students in AY 2020-21 were more restrictive and longer lasting than those experienced in AY 2019-20. This severely limited colleges' ability to deliver learning and teaching activities and student support services in person. This culminated in a reduction in overall enrolments and successful student outcomes in AY 2020-21. Those challenges notwithstanding, colleges continued to adapt, taking swift action to protect staff and students' wellbeing and contribute to the national effort to tackle the virus and support vulnerable communities.

Full consideration should be given to these exceptional circumstances when considering data and direct comparisons between AY 2019-20 and AY 2020-21 and earlier years cannot be made without careful consideration of this context.

2.3. Analysis

The current definition of learner attainment is the achievement of a recognised qualification or award, and this underpins the completed successful PI as a measure of learner success.

- There has been no overall significant improvement in attainment on full-time FE programmes in the last ten years. Rates of learner attainment have altered very little since AY 2012-13, when 65.5% of learners who enrolled on full-time Further Education (FE) programmes completed successfully. More recently, this trend has continued, with learner success rates hovering between 65% and 66% over a number of years, until the onset of the pandemic in AY 2019-20.
- The successful completion rate for full-time FE programmes in AY 2020-21 fell by 4.7 percentage points (pp) to 61.3% compared to the previous year. The rate for learners completing their programmes with partial success decreased 2.2 pp to 11.0%. These changes can largely be attributed to the increased rate of learner withdrawal rate for full-time FE programmes over the same period.
- Both SFC data and the findings of HM Inspectors highlight that most withdrawals in AY 2020-21 occurred towards the second half of the academic year. Some of the reasons given for increased student withdrawal rates are: learner fatigue with the blended

learning model, uncertainty around assessment methodologies, lack of time in-person for practical activities, reduction in work placement opportunities, childcare, caring and other commitments and the lack of opportunity to interact in-person with peers and lecturers. This concurs with the findings of HM Inspectors during PVs to colleges in AY 2021-22.

- Over the last ten years, successful outcomes for full-time HE learners shifted marginally from year to year between 70% and 71%. This is a similar pattern to the attainment rates for FE learners described previously. Successful outcomes for AY 2019-20 and AY 2020-21 have fluctuated and are slightly above previous levels, and again, should be interpreted with caution in light of the impact of the pandemic.
- The successful completion rate for full-time HE programmes in AY 2020-21 decreased slightly to 72.1% compared to the previous year. The rate for learners completing their programmes with partial success decreased by 10.2 pp. Again, these changes were due to the increased withdrawal rate for learners on full-time HE programmes over the same period.
- The withdrawal rate for full-time HE learners in AY 2020-21 increased from AY 2019-20, however the increase is not as significant as in FE full-time. This is likely to be as a result of resilience of HE full-time learners in coping with the increased digital and self-directed learning requirements in their courses during the pandemic.

2.4. Variation between colleges

There are significant variances between individual colleges in terms of levels of learner retention and attainment. These differences occur due to a wide range of issues, including the operating context of the college, the level and type of programmes and awarding body criteria, and mode of delivery.

- For AY 2020-21, these differences have been amplified by the impact on colleges of dealing with the pandemic.
- There are many factors influencing these additional variations in PIs, including different approaches by individual colleges to on-campus practical learning, and regional variations in coronavirus restrictions.
- A number of colleges (11 of 27) have persistently low rates of full-time FE learner attainment across multiple subject areas. Five colleges have persistently low rates of full-time HE learner attainment across multiple subject areas. Many of these pre-date the onset of the pandemic.

2.5. Full-time FE learner outcomes

There is widespread interest in the attainment of FE learners due to the volume of delivery this represents, and the demographic of the FE learner population, therefore the remaining analysis will focus on full-time FE programmes. It is important to examine trends for an individual college over time before drawing conclusions about performance, particularly as the majority of results for AY 2020-21 have been estimated. It is important to note that individual college retention and attainment rates will fluctuate, with minor differences from year to year.

- There is significant variance within the key FT FE PIs across the sector. The sector average for learners completing successfully is 61.3%, with a range of 20.9 pp.
- For learners completing with partial success, the sector average is 11.0%, with a range of 18.8 pp.
- Overall sector average for learner withdrawal is 27.7% with a range of 21.7 pp. This can be broken down to show an average early withdrawal rate of

7.5%, with a range of 6.3 pp and an average further withdrawal rate of 20.3%, with a range of 16.2 pp.

- Those colleges with the greatest number of learners completing successfully also have better than sector average performance in learner retention or partial success, or both.
- Small island or specialist colleges all have better than sector average retention rates. However, this ability to retain and encourage learners to complete successfully is not always reflected in attainment, with a number showing higher levels of learners completing with partial success compared with pre-pandemic figures.
- Larger colleges who have lower withdrawal rates or those with low levels of partial success have better than sector average attainment. Those colleges with the lowest rates of successful completion have either poorer than sector average performance for learner retention or partial success, or both.

2.6. Differences at programme SCQF level

- Most full-time FE enrolments (80%) are on programmes delivered at SCQF levels 5 and 6. A further 14% of enrolments are on access-level programmes at SCQF level 4.
- Level 6 programmes have higher successful completion rates (63.3%) and lower total withdrawal rates (26.2%) than level 4 and 5 programmes.
- SCQF levels 4 and 5 programmes have higher total withdrawal rates of around 3-4 percentage points greater than the sector average for all full-time FE programmes. This also translates into higher early and further withdrawal rates on these programme levels.
- Successful completion rates on SCQF level 5 programmes (56.3%) are the lowest 5.0 pp below the sector average for all programmes.

2.7. Differences between subject areas

Overall, some subject areas have much lower rates of learner success than others, and for some of these this pattern has continued over time.

- Learner outcomes for full-time FE business, management and administration and social subjects are below 60%.
- Only five of the eighteen subject areas have success rates above 70%.
- In full-time HE, overall attainment rates are higher, however in two subject areas are below 70% (hospitality and tourism, and computing and ICT).
- Some individual colleges have very low rates of attainment in some or all of the following subject areas: computing and ICT, hairdressing, beauty and complementary therapies, hospitality and tourism, media, science, social subjects, and sport and leisure.
- Programmes such as SQA Highers are more likely to be incorporated into the social subjects and science subject areas. These pass rates can be influenced by changing priorities amongst

learners. For example, learners who initially enrol for a number of Highers, but elect not to continue with one or more if they are not a prerequisite for entry to a higher level college or university course.

- In subject areas such as nautical studies and construction, a much higher proportion of learners are employed and have their fees paid by their employer. These subject areas have relatively high success rates.

2.8. Differences between key learner groups

2.8.1. Care experienced learners

It is a key Scottish Government ambition to increase the number of care experienced learners undertaking and successfully completing college programmes.

- In AY 2020-21, the proportion of care experienced learners increased by 1.4 pp from the previous year.
- Overall, care experienced learners are less likely to complete successfully and more likely to withdraw when compared to the other reported key interest groups.
- In AY 2020-21 the success rate for care experienced learners fell by 3.2 pp and the rate of withdrawal increased by 3.7 pp from the previous year.
- These changes in success and withdrawal rates are not dissimilar to those that seen in most of the other reported key groups.

2.8.2. Learners from disadvantaged backgrounds

Learners from more deprived backgrounds are less likely to successfully complete and more likely to withdraw from their programme when compared with other key learner groups.

- In AY 2020-21, learner success rates on programmes lasting 160 hours or more for those from the 10% and 20% most deprived postcodes, were below the overall figure of 68.6% for all enrolments.
- This highlights a gap of around 5 pp in attainment between the most deprived learners and the rest of the learner population.
- The gap between the most and least deprived is wider still and varies between colleges.
- The gap in attainment between the most deprived and the rest of the learner population has widened in AY 2020-21.

- This increase in the attainment gap of around 2.0 pp can be attributed to increased FE learner withdrawal from college programmes during the pandemic.
- There is significant variation in the attainment rates of learners from the 10% and 20% most deprived postcode areas between colleges.
- The differences in learner profile and demographic are considerable across the college sector, and this is likely to be a contributory factor to varying attainment levels.

2.9. Aspects for further exploration

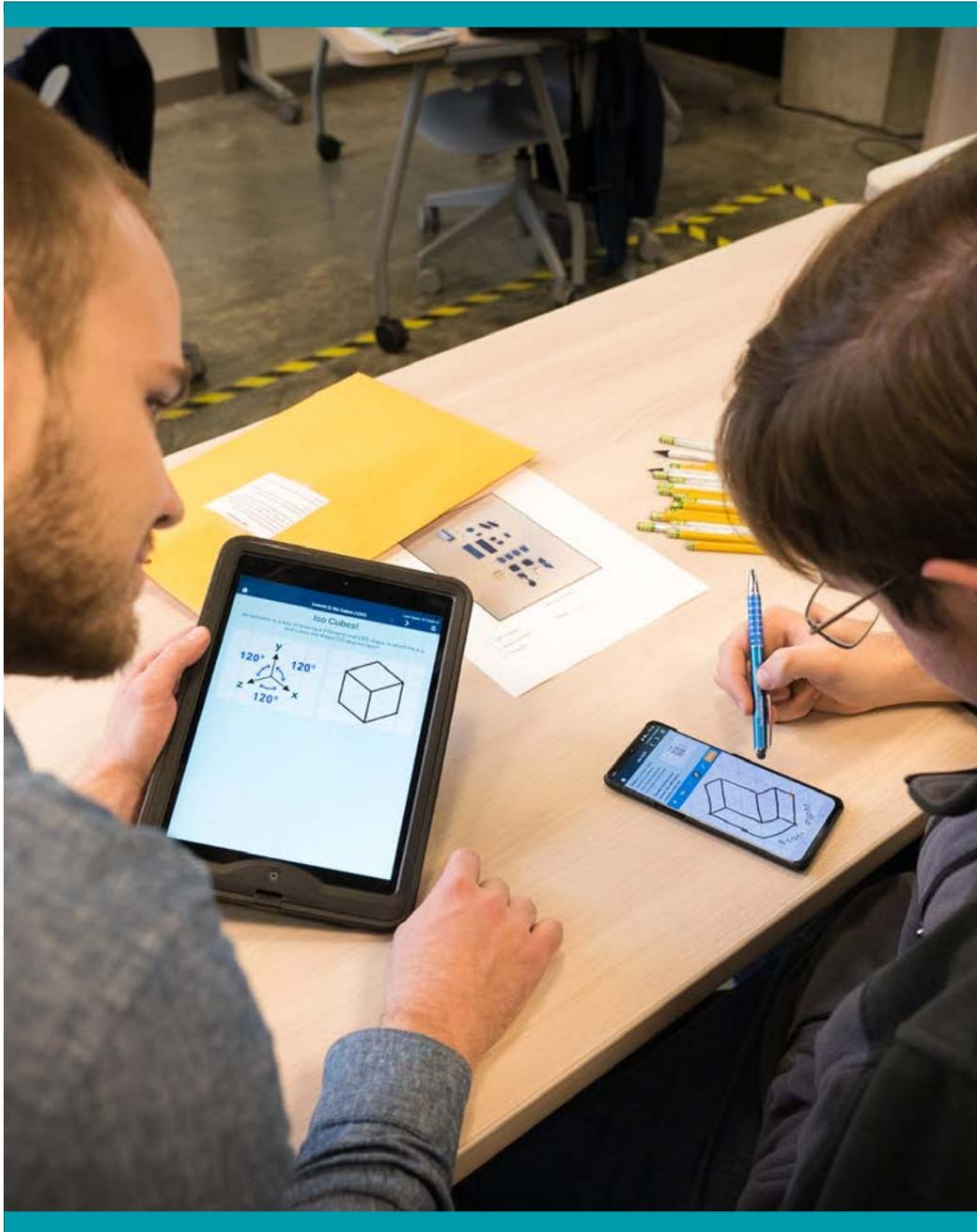
The most significant factor to take account of when interpreting the college sector PIs for AY 2020-21 is the continuing impact of the pandemic and resulting restrictions on learning and teaching and college attendance for different groups of learners.

Analysis of the data confirms that learner retention is the single biggest contributory factor impacting on attainment rates. On full-time FE programmes, prior to the pandemic, withdrawal rates had remained at around 25% for 10 years. Colleges have implemented a range of measures and interventions to try and reduce this withdrawal rate but even the highest performing colleges have withdrawal rates of around 20% for learners on full-time FE programmes.

The following are key aspects for consideration when seeking to address rates of learner withdrawal and improve outcomes for learners on full-time FE programmes:

- the need for a national, strategic conversation to consider why rates of learner withdrawal are so stubbornly high for full-time FE programmes. Learner drop out from college programmes and its impact on the Annual Participation Measure both locally and nationally, requires further exploration to support improvement in both pathway planning and successful outcomes for learners.
- The gap in attainment for learners from the most deprived backgrounds has widened and varies between individual colleges. This attainment gap requires further exploration to ensure equity and equality of outcome for all learners.
- The gap in attainment for care-experienced learners has widened and requires continued focus to secure improvement in outcomes for this key group.
- Rates of attainment across a number of individual colleges and in individual subjects areas vary and in some cases are very low. This requires focused attention to secure improvement in learner outcomes for key industry sectors or in individual colleges.
- The current measures of learner retention and attainment are important indicators of success. However, this provides only a partial view of the success of Scotland's FE learner population as a whole. These learners will also have made important gains in terms of skills and progress from previous learning.
- For many learners, particularly younger learners and those from the most deprived backgrounds, their success is often skills achievement and progress, even if they fail to complete or fully attain their intended qualification. Often for these learners the educational journey will take longer.
- There is a need to acknowledge the potential benefits gained by learners who remain on a programme but do not complete successfully as an indication of the impact of college study on their development.





3. Analysis and next steps

The following aspects require further consideration and exploration to support improvement in outcomes for learners in Scotland's colleges:

- The variability in learner outcomes across establishments, subjects, SCQF levels and for key learner groups including; care-experienced learners, learners from the most deprived backgrounds, learners on full-time FE programmes.
- Equity, equality and support for colleges to meet the needs of all learner groups, including the most vulnerable.
- The impact of digital poverty on the learning experience.
- The quality of learning and teaching across the sector, and the emergence and impact of digital learning as a key characteristic of a post-compulsory learning.
- The learner journey and pathway planning, and the impact of college drop out on the Annual Participation Measure, both locally and nationally.
- The impact of poverty and deprivation on college attainment and the linkages between the Scottish Attainment Challenge and the senior phase.

Appendix 1 - SFC commentary on the impact of the pandemic

1. The ongoing COVID pandemic and the requirement for public health control measures continued throughout 2020-21. The measures put in place to protect staff and students in 2020-21 were more strict and long-lasting than was experienced in 2019-20 and severely limited colleges' ability to deliver learning and teaching activities and student support services on campus.
 2. Students faced significant disruption as a consequence of the pandemic; for example, the academic year started with a mix of in-person and remote learning for most, then between the end of December to February 2021 college campuses were mostly closed and learning, teaching and support services were moved completely online. From February to April colleges operated under temporary lockdown restrictions with only 5% of students permitted on campus. It was only from April and for the last few months of term that
 3. Students could be back in-person in greater numbers. Even then, the majority of learning remained hybrid/blended. For many students
- this high level of disruption to learning throughout the academic year limited their ability to complete their course and qualification as planned.
- Furthermore, numerous issues impacted students' ability to complete their qualification:
 - Students may have been medically affected by the pandemic either directly or via their families and/or dependants.
 - Students with childcare or caring responsibilities may have found it more difficult to complete their course as originally intended.
 - Some students on courses containing a practical element or a work placement in subjects such as engineering, construction, hair, beauty, social care and childcare, were unable to complete their course as intended and therefore had to 'defer' completing their course and qualification to the following academic year.
- The entire student population was also affected by the 'softer' impacts of the pandemic on their education, such as losing access to peer support and in-person lecturer support. While institutions continued to take steps to address digital poverty, supported by additional funding, not all students had readily-available access to the necessary broadband and/or equipment to facilitate effective digital learning and assessment.
4. The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses external exams did not take place for the second year running and lecturer estimated grades were used as the core element for certification.
 5. Throughout 2020-21 colleges continued to be responsive to developing digital platforms for learning and for innovative ways to engage with learners, together with the ongoing adaptation of assessment through the SQA and other awarding body alternative assessment arrangements.

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**Dumfries and
Galloway College**

One step ahead

L&T COMMITTEE 21.11.22

LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	<u>21 November 2022</u>
Subject of Paper	Student Engagement Surveys
Paper No.	LT1122-7.1
Agenda Item	Item 7.1
FOISA Status	Disclosable
Primary Lead	Phil Storrier
Date of production	04 November 2022
Intended Outcome	Discussion

Financial Implications:	NO
Equality and Diversity Implications:	N/A
Learner and Learning Implications:	Student Performance and Experience
Risks Assessed:	N/A
Publicly Available:	NO

1 Introduction

- The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with a summary report of the findings of our Early Experience Student Survey for academic year 2022/23.
- The summary report gives insight into how students feel about their early experience at Dumfries and Galloway College scoring us 4.5 out of 5 overall.
- Student voice is critical in informing how we progress as part of our wider evaluation.
- The survey has been developed to be simple and easy to complete by students whilst still providing specific and meaningful data.
- The report also presents data and analysis from our 21/22 Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey with the Scottish Funding Council.

2 Main Report

2.1 2022/23 Student Engagement Surveys:

2.2 This academic session we decided to use two cross College surveys to gather high level student feedback on experience. We issued the initial survey on 12th September 2022 (for two weeks) and will run the SFC Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (SSES) later in the academic year.

2.3 The summary report (attached) has been shared across College with all staff. The survey has been set up in a way where the Performance team can drill down into curriculum and course specific level detail and feedback for use by curriculum teams to understand success and inform enhancements.

2.4 Based on curriculum specific feedback teams have been asked to complete a You Said / We Did activity as part of this to be submitted within the DG-SEE system. Performance will track completion of this activity.

2.5 College wide themes have been identified and reports shared with specific service areas. Similar You Said / We Did reporting will be done and will be included in the Block Self-Evaluation report as well as reported back to students.

(The summary report has been attached below)

3 2021/22 Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (SSES) results:

3.1 The SSES is a national approach to monitoring student satisfaction and provides a means to evaluate and enhance College provision in Scotland. It can also serve to provide us with interesting insight into the student experience and as a tool to inform future improvements. It should be noted that due to the pandemic the SSES was not collated in 2019/20 session and so these are our second set of responses since 2018/19.

Response rates	HE		FE		Total Respondents
	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time	
DGC	62.58%	12.28%	40.41%	11.56%	624
National	36.6%	18.9%	47.2%	17.1%	31,970

- Response rates at FTHE were 25.98% above the national average however at all other modes our response rates were lower.
- In comparison to our 20/21 returns we have seen improvement in response percentages in 3 of 4 modes:
 - Full Time Higher Education - an increase of 19.6% returns
 - Part Time Higher Education – a decrease of 5.72%
 - Full Time Further Education – an increase of 4.71%
 - Part Time Further Education – an increase of 6.46%

Overall, I am satisfied with my College experience – College

	Sum of Satisfied	Sum of Total	Sum of Satisfied %
DGC	565	624	90.5%
National	30,022	33,007	91.0%

- Overall satisfaction for the College was 90.5% (set against a minimum target of 90%) which was an 1.5% increase on the previous academic year – it is 0.5% lower than the national average for 21/22. This is an excellent result for the College.

Overall, I am satisfied with my College experience

	HE FT	HE PT	FE FT	FE PT
Strongly Agree	42.7%	57.1%	56.2%	54.4%
Agree	45.7%	42.9%	35.0%	42.2%
Disagree	10.6%	0.0%	4.0%	4.4%
Strongly disagree	1.0%	0.0%	4.7%	0.0%
Satisfaction Total	88.4%	100%	91.2%	96.6%

DGC SSES breakdown by mode								
	FT FE		PT FE		FT HE		PT HE	
	Response Rate	Satisfied						
DGC	40.4%	91.2%	11.1%	95.6%	62.6%	88.4%	12.3%	100.0%
National	47.2%	92.7%	17.1%	93.9%	36.6%	85.7%	18.9%	89.4%

- 21/22 satisfaction performs above national averages in all modes except FT FE where we were 1.5% below the national average.

Satisfaction breakdown by mode:

FT FE	Sum of Satisfied	Sum of Total	Satisfied Percentage
01 – Overall I am satisfied with my College experience.	250	274	91.2%
02 – Staff regularly discuss my progress with me.	250	274	91.2%
03 – Staff encourage students to take responsibility for their learning.	246	274	89.9%
04 – I am able to influence learning on my course.	267	274	97.4%
05 – I receive useful feedback which informs my future learning.	252	274	92.0%
06 – The way I'm taught helps me learn.	244	274	89.1%
07 – My time at college has helped me to develop knowledge and skills for the workplace.	239	274	87.2%
08 – I believe student suggestions are taken seriously.	253	274	92.3%
09 – I believe all students at the college are treated equally and fairly by staff.	246	274	89.8%
10 – Any change in my course or teaching has been communicated well.	229	274	83.6%

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11 – The online learning materials for my course have helped me learn.	235	274	85.8%
12 – I feel that I am part of the college community	229	274	83.6%
13 – The college’s Student Association influences changes for the better.	256	274	93.4%

PT FE	Sum of Satisfied	Sum of Total	Satisfied Percentage
01 – Overall I am satisfied with my College experience.	65	68	95.6%
02 – Staff regularly discuss my progress with me.	65	68	95.6%
03 – Staff encourage students to take responsibility for their learning.	62	68	91.2%
04 – I am able to influence learning on my course.	67	68	98.5%
05 – I receive useful feedback which informs my future learning.	63	68	92.6%
06 – The way I’m taught helps me learn.	66	68	97.1%
07 – My time at college has helped me to develop knowledge and skills for the workplace.	64	68	94.1%
08 – I believe student suggestions are taken seriously.	65	68	95.6%
09 – I believe all students at the college are treated equally and fairly by staff.	63	68	92.6%
10 – Any change in my course or teaching has been communicated well.	61	68	89.7%
11 – The online learning materials for my course have helped me learn.	58	68	85.3%

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12 – I feel that I am part of the college community	60	68	88.2%
13 – The college’s Student Association influences changes for the better.	67	68	98.5%

FT HE	Sum of Satisfied	Sum of Total	Satisfied Percentage
01 – Overall I am satisfied with my College experience.	176	199	88.4%
02 – Staff regularly discuss my progress with me.	175	199	87.9%
03 – Staff encourage students to take responsibility for their learning.	169	199	84.9%
04 – I am able to influence learning on my course.	194	199	97.5%
05 – I receive useful feedback which informs my future learning.	174	199	87.4%
06 – The way I’m taught helps me learn.	182	199	91.5%
07 – My time at college has helped me to develop knowledge and skills for the workplace.	164	199	82.4%
08 – I believe student suggestions are taken seriously.	178	199	89.4%
09 – I believe all students at the college are treated equally and fairly by staff.	168	199	84.4%
10 – Any change in my course or teaching has been communicated well.	153	199	76.9%
11 – The online learning materials for my course have helped me learn.	174	199	87.4%
12 – I feel that I am part of the college community	162	199	81.4%
13 – The college’s Student Association influences changes for the better.	182	199	91.5%

PT HE	Sum of Satisfied	Sum of Total	Satisfied Percentage
01 – Overall I am satisfied with my College experience.	7	7	100%
02 – Staff regularly discuss my progress with me.	5	7	71.4%
03 – Staff encourage students to take responsibility for their learning.	5	7	71.4%
04 – I am able to influence learning on my course.	7	7	100%
05 – I receive useful feedback which informs my future learning.	6	7	85.7%
06 – The way I’m taught helps me learn.	6	7	85.7%
07 – My time at college has helped me to develop knowledge and skills for the workplace.	6	7	85.7%
08 – I believe student suggestions are taken seriously.	5	7	71.4%
09 – I believe all students at the college are treated equally and fairly by staff.	6	7	85.7%
10 – Any change in my course or teaching has been communicated well.	5	7	71.4%
11 – The online learning materials for my course have helped me learn.	6	7	85.7%
12 – I feel that I am part of the college community	4	7	57.1%
13 – The college’s Student Association influences changes for the better.	6	7	85.7%

Key analysis to note:

Strengths

- Full time responses are all above 82.0% with the exception of Q10 at HE.
- 98.0% of FT HE and 97.0% of FT FE students felt that they were able to influence the learning on their course.
- Student across all modes felt that the Student Association influences change for the better.

Areas for enhancement

- 19.1% of FT HE students disagreed that changes in their courses were communicated well.
- 28.6% of PT HE student disagreed or strongly disagreed that staff regularly discussed progress with them.
- 71.4% of PT HE student felt that student suggestions are taken seriously.
- 28.6% of PT HE students strongly disagreed that they felt part of the College community.

Actions for SSES 21/22 data:

- SSES data is shared with curriculum teams to provide additional resource for consider planning and improvement within curriculum areas.
- Particular areas to focus on include: initiatives to enhance feeling of belonging, ensuring appropriate measures into community key information and changes to students and focus on PT HE students and their wider experience.
- Work has been done to improve returns and we need to further enhance those responses.
- Information will be shared with support teams including marketing to promote and share strength of satisfaction broadly across the student population.

Recommendations

Committee are asked to note the contents of the report and discuss any of the items presented.

Name: Phil Storrier

Designation: Director of Student Experience and Academic Performance

Date: 8th November 2022

Appendix 1 – HGIOC?

What is our capacity for improvement?		
Leadership and quality culture	Delivery of learning and services to support learning	Outcomes and impact
How good is our leadership and approach to improvement?	How good is the quality of the provision and services we deliver?	How good are we at ensuring the best possible outcomes for all our learners?
1.1 Governance and leadership of change 1.2 Leadership of learning and teaching 1.3 Leadership of services to support learning 1.4 Evaluation leading to improvement	2.1 Safeguarding and child protection 2.2 Curriculum 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment 2.4 Services to support learning 2.5 Transitions 2.6 Partnerships	3.1 Wellbeing, equality and inclusion 3.2 Equity, attainment and achievement for all learners

Appendix 2 - DG-SEE Framework:

Note: A similar process exists for support staff.

Block	Activity	Lead	Key Contributors	Completion Date
1	Start of Year Strategic Evaluation	CM	CT	Week 2
	Monthly Enhancement Meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of KPI's Improvement Actions Student Feedback DG-SEE 	CM	CT	Week 4 Week 8 Week 12
	Early Experience – Student Survey	P PT	S	Week 4
	DG-SEE Block 1 (Min 4 Submissions Per Course Area)	CM	CT	Week 12
	Student Feedback Activity	CM CT	S	Week 12
	Portfolio Review 1	DOSEAP DOC	CM	Week 12
	2	Monthly Enhancement Meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of KPI's Improvement Actions Student Feedback DG-SEE 	CM	CT
	Block 1 – College Wide Report	DOSEAP	P	Week 16

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	Student Feedback Activity + You Said, We Did	CM CT	S	Week 24
	DG-SEE Block 1 (Min 4 Submissions Per Course Area)	CM	CT	Week 24
	Portfolio Review 2	DOSEAP DOC	CM	Week 24
3	Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey	P All Staff	S	Week 27
	Monthly Enhancement Meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of KPI's• Improvement Actions• Student Feedback• DG-SEE	CM	CT	Week 28 Week 32 Week 36
	Block 2 – College Wide Report	DOSEAP	P	Week 28
	Student Feedback Activity + You Said, We Did	CM CT	S	Week 36
	DG-SEE Block 1 (Min 4 Submissions Per Course Area)	CM	CT	Week 36
	Curriculum Enhancement Plans	CM	CT	Week 36

KEY:

DOSEAP - Director of Student Experience and Academic Performance

DOC - Director of Curriculum

CM – Curriculum Manager

CT – Course Team

P – Performance Team

PT – Personal Tutor

S - Students



**Dumfries and
Galloway College**

One step ahead

EARLY EXPERIENCE STUDENT SURVEY – SUMMARY REPORT



Date: October 2022

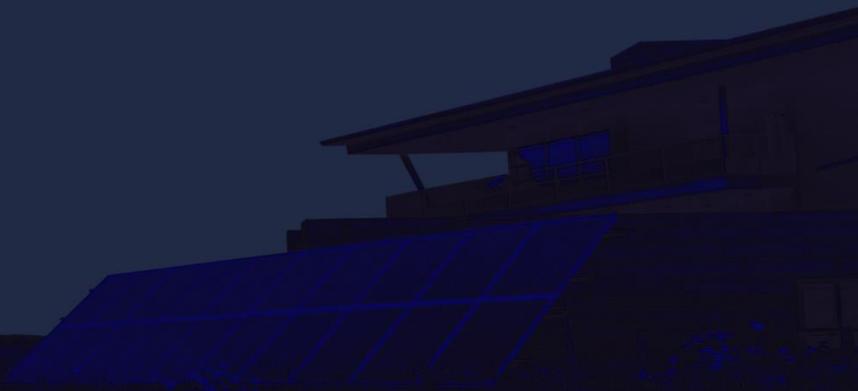


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Introduction

The Dumfries and Galloway College Early Experience Student Survey was compiled by the Performance Team to ascertain levels of student satisfaction. The survey was open for 2 working weeks from 12 September 2022 to 27 September 2022 and could be accessed by students via a link on LearnNet and was hosted in a Wufoo Survey. Digital screens displaying QR codes were also utilised to promote the survey. Personal Tutors were asked to promote and encourage engagement with the survey.

Students were invited to rate their satisfaction from 1 star (very poor) to 5 stars (great). The questions sought feedback in each of the following areas:

- Feeling Welcome and Valued
- Learning Experience so far
- Our Staff
- Places and Platforms for Learning
- “One Thing” we could do better

As this is the first academic session the Early Experience Survey has been issued, we are unable to make a comparison. However, the findings of this report will form the basis for benchmarking the next academic session.

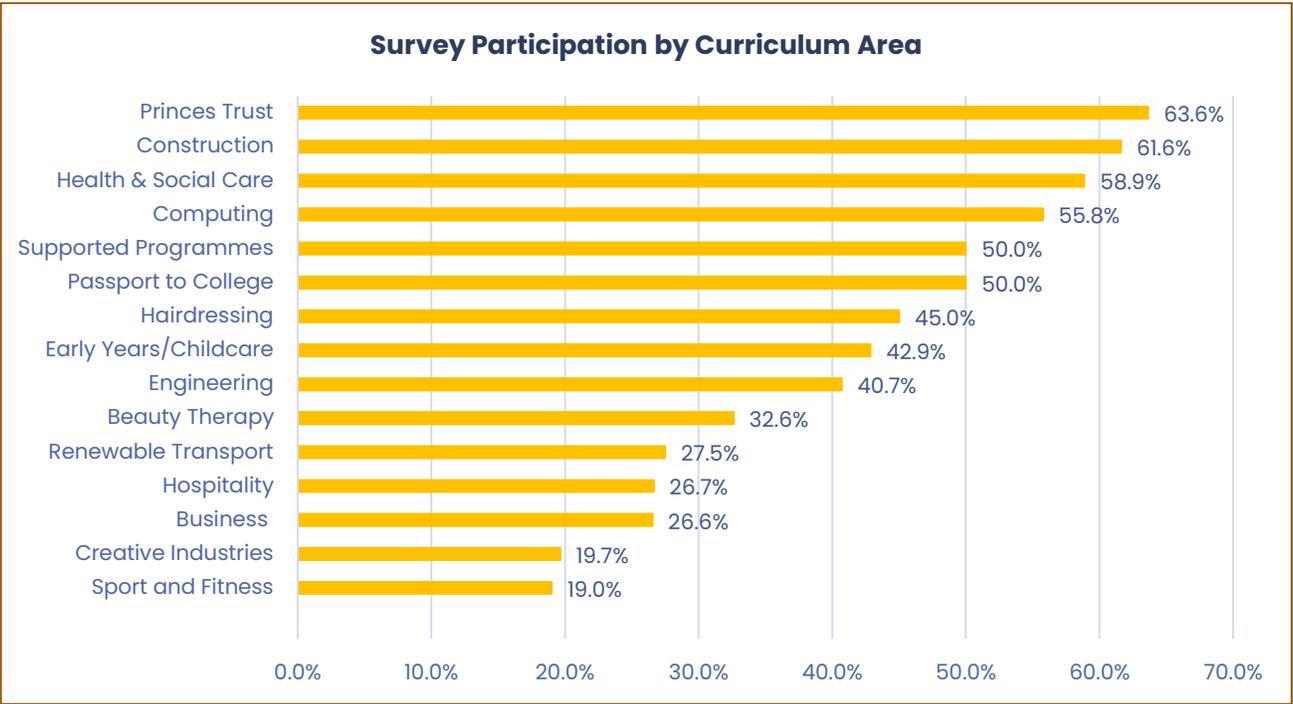
This is a high-level report detailing the overall satisfaction per curriculum area. Specific curriculum/support area data has been shared with the relevant manager. Action grids have been produced to allow opportunity to feedback on the comments raised. This will form part of the College DG-See process.

Survey Participation

Overall participation in the survey was positive with 753 responses in total. Of these, 26 duplicate responses were removed, and 5 invalid responses could not be matched to a student enrolment. The remaining 722 responses were valid.

40.5% of the total eligible current student population took part. The response rate varied across curriculum teams, with the highest response rate from the Prince's Trust at 63.6%, followed by Construction at 61.6%.

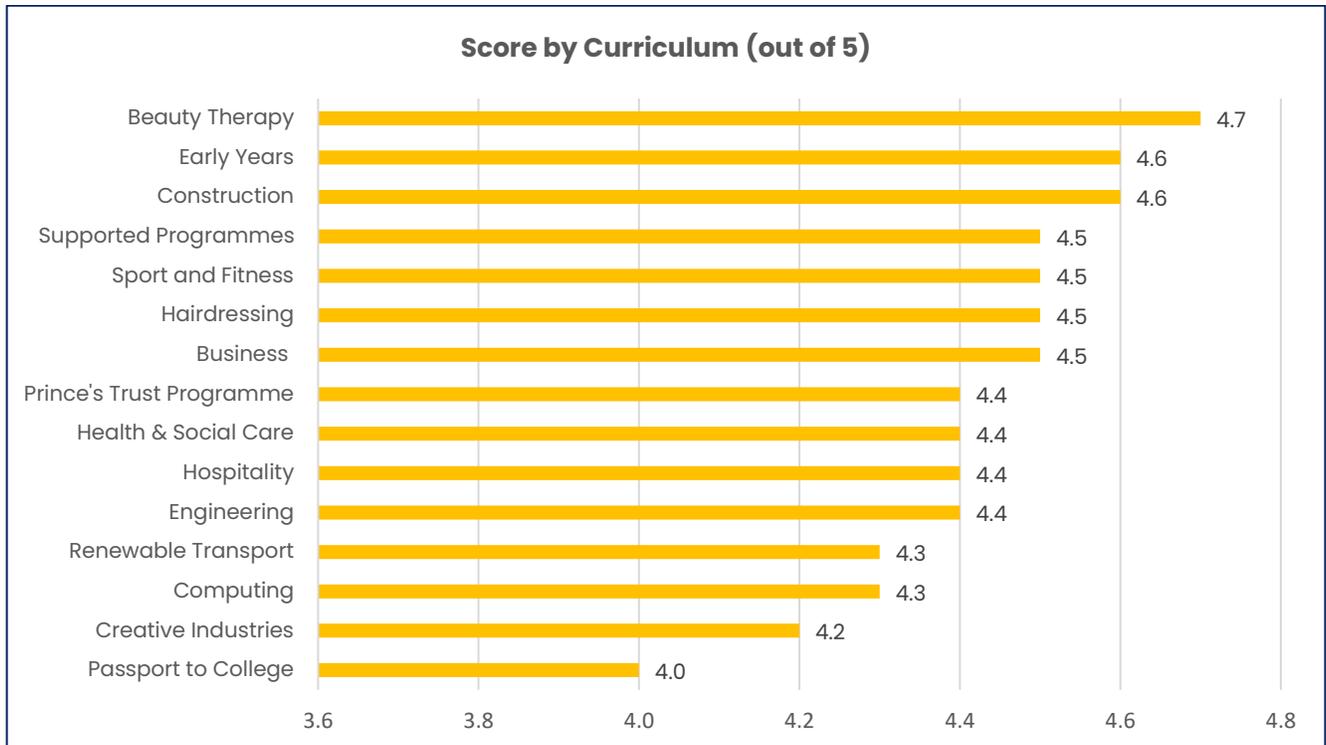
Chart of Respondents by Curriculum Area



Overall Results

The average overall score across all questions was 4.5 out of 5. This is extremely positive.

The charts below display the overall satisfaction rating by Curriculum Area and by the count of results by each score (1 to 5):



Results, by Question

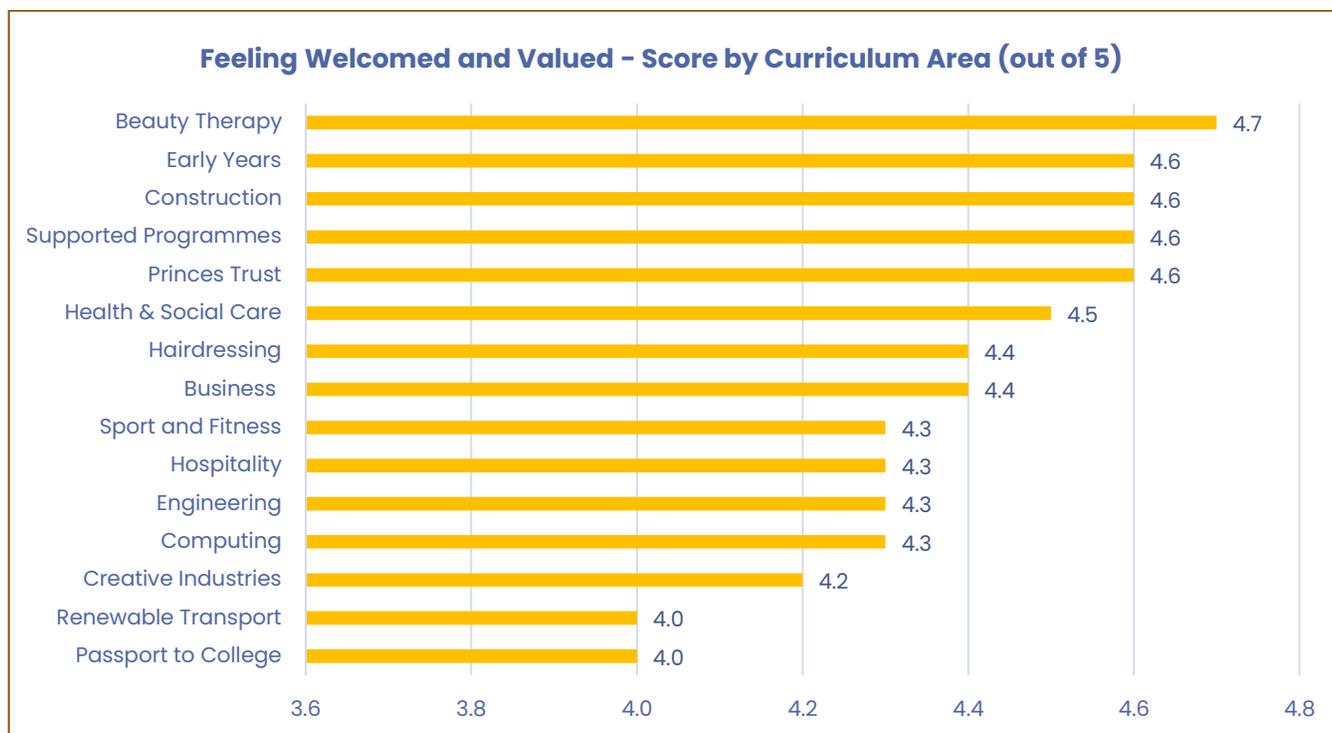
Average score (out of 5) across all Curriculum areas by Question:



Results by Question

Question 1 - Feeling Welcomed and Valued

Students were asked – things like welcome activities, induction processes, sense of belonging, staff and fellow students, feeling that you are cared about as a student. How do you feel about this?

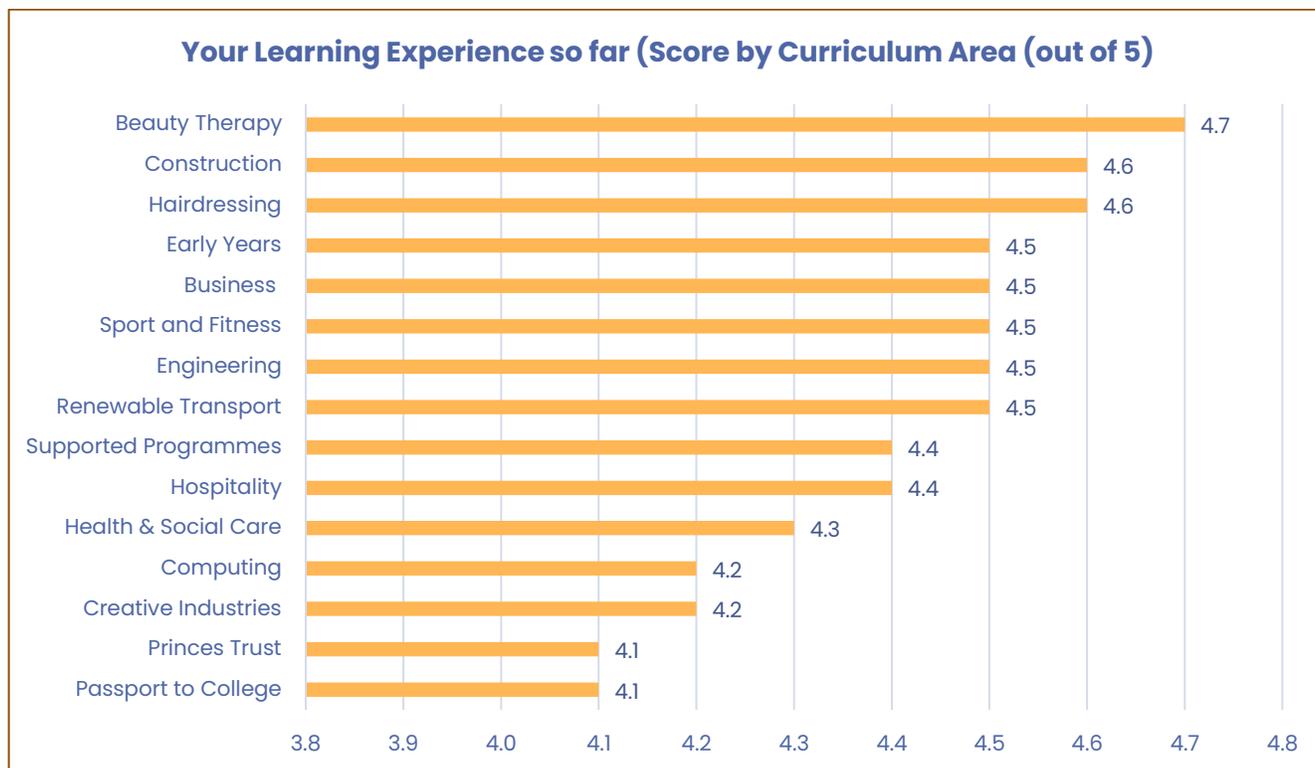


Students were given the opportunity to make comments relating to each of the four questions. A selection of comments from the Feeling Welcomed and Valued question are:

- 👉 I have no issues, my tutor and fellow students are approachable and we communicate well.
- 👉 The course is very welcoming, lecturers come off as very accepting and nice. Explanations of lessons are in detail and the induction was straight forward and went well.
- 👉 Dumfries and Galloway college has a very welcoming environment. The staff are very welcoming and help you feel valued.
- 👉 Course it's great, the staff makes it much better and easier to learn as they are friendly and supportive.
- 👉 I feel very welcomed and accepted not only in this course but also the whole college as a place.

Question 2 – Your Learning Experience so far

Students were asked – things like your course and classes, your expectations, being engaged and making progress, getting feedback. What is your experience?

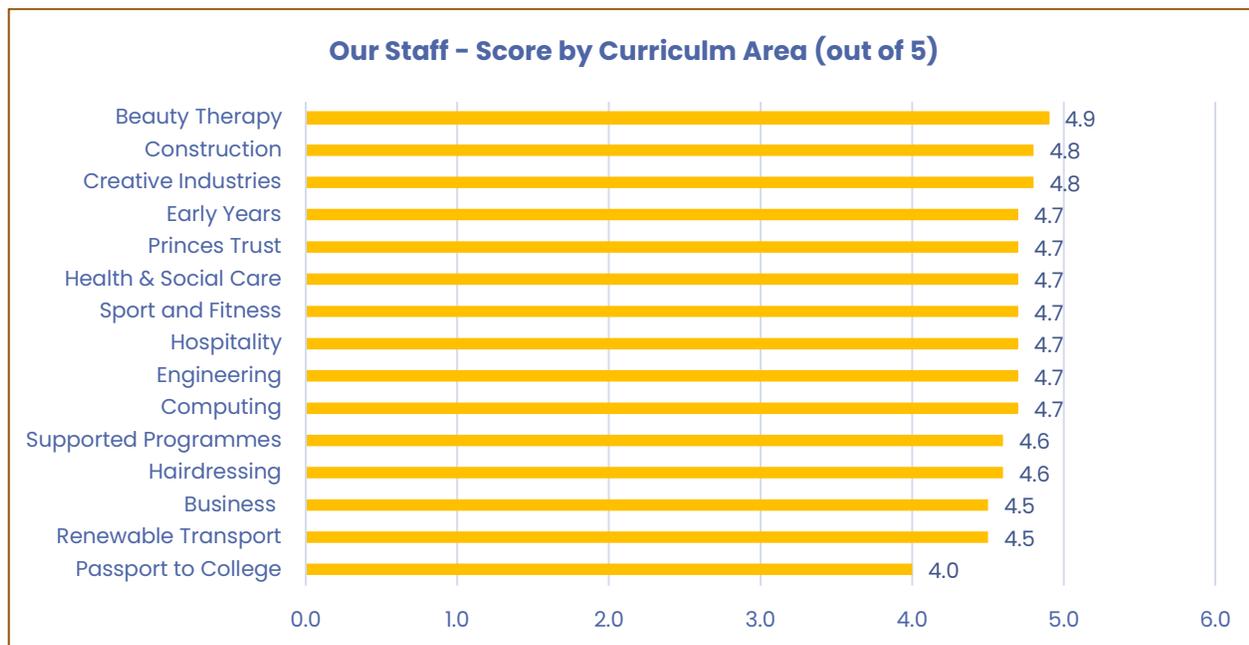


Students were given the opportunity to make comments relating to each of the four questions. A selection of comments from the Learning Experience so far question are:

- 👉 I am enjoying my course and get good feedback. Any issues I've had have been addressed with a positive response. As a mature student in a class of younger students my experience has been good.
- 👉 Yes all good, really feel like I'm engaged with and I love the environment both in class and online.
- 👉 I constantly get feedback from the tutor and feel he is helping me understand the techniques and requirements more.
- 👉 It is made very clear what we are to do assessment wise and I am happy with the feedback and process I am making.
- 👉 I felt a bit lost at first as it is such a big change from school but feel like I have settled into a routine and feel much happier.

Question 3 – Our Staff

Students were asked – things like how helpful and approachable are your lecturers, Personal Tutor, perhaps specialist student services staff, and a wide range of college support staff. Do you feel supported as a student and an individual by our staff? How are we doing?

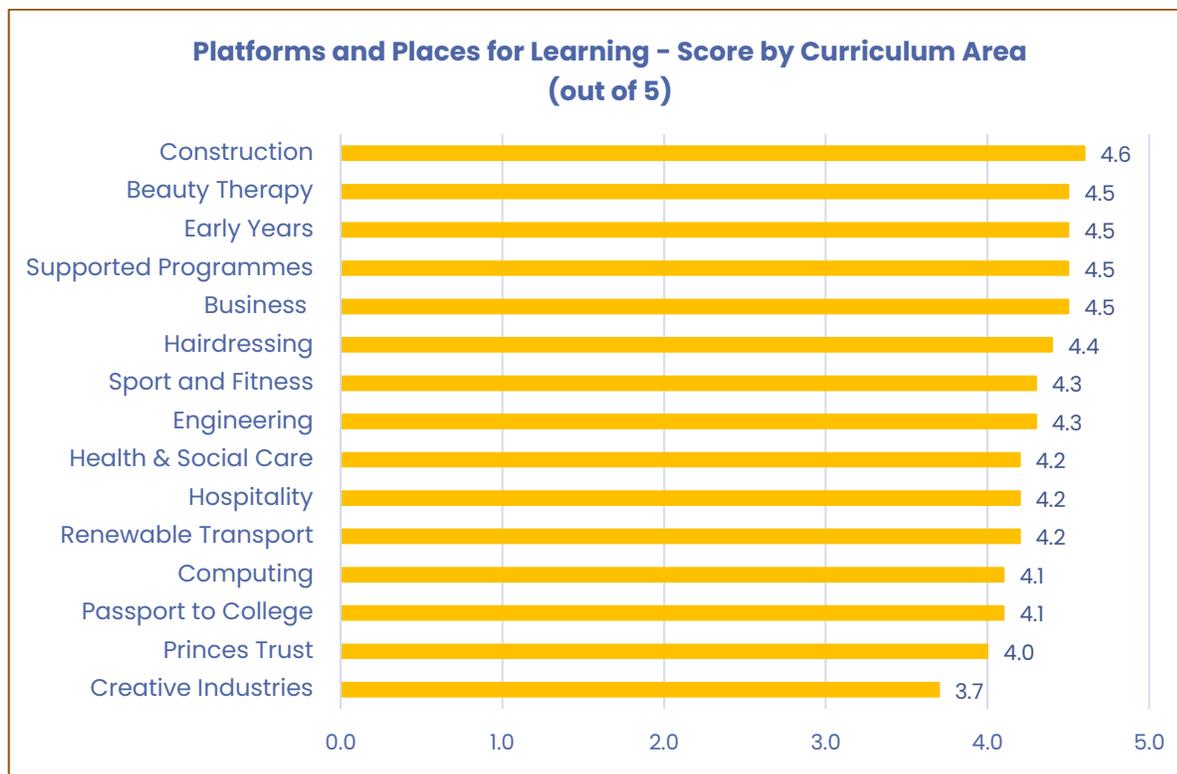


Students were given the opportunity to make comments relating to each of the four questions. A selection of comments from the Our Staff question are:

- 👉 Every lecturer I've come in contact with is very approachable and able to speak to easily.
- 👉 I find my lecture very caring and extremely comfortable to talk to regarding, college and personal life.
- 👉 Friendly and contactable.
- 👉 Overall I feel like the support is there. The tutors are always happy to help, same with the wider range of college staff. Five star.
- 👉 Yes I feel supported as a student and that I can ask questions whenever need be.

Question 4 - Places and Platform for Learning

Students were asked - things like College spaces - buildings, studios and workshops and online learning environments. Please tell us about your experience.



Students were given the opportunity to make comments relating to each of the four questions. A selection of comments from the Platforms and Places for learning question are:

- 👉 The beauty salons are very well equipped and have all the equipment needed for practicals.
- 👉 The learning zone are very helpful for completing work and assignments and have very up to date technologies and are easy to access.
- 👉 Still getting to know my surroundings but like the compactness of the college is a bonus and the hub and the Henry Duncan Building IT screen is first class for teaching and a first for me.
- 👉 Online is working so much better than I originally thought, I'm overall happy learning through the computer. I sometimes wish we came into class the odd time just for social aspects, although when put to the teachers they

spoke about possibilities of this happening, which is nice to know. As for the college being open for me to go in and study if I need to is a great help.

- ▶ A fantastic, clean and modern environment to study in.

Question 5 - "One thing"

Students were asked - If there is one thing we could do to make your experience at College better what would that be?

There were 217 responses to the "one thing we could do better" question. These are free text responses which have been examined for key themes.

Overall, the most common responses related to course and class management (28.1%), catering provision, choice and pricing (26.7%), Estates (12.9%) and on campus activities (9.7%). Comments also reflected issues relating to transport (7.4%) and students wish to study more on campus (6%).

The Performance Team
October 2022