



Education
Scotland
Review:
May 2016

How did we do?
Summary for Students



Introduction

In March 2016, Education Scotland undertook a full review of the quality of education and training at Forth Valley College on behalf of the Scottish Funding Council.

All colleges and education providers in Scotland are subject to these independent reviews to measure how well they are performing.

The full report for Forth Valley College was published in May 2016 and can be accessed at: www.educationscotland.gov.uk

This booklet will tell you more about the review and highlight key findings.

How does the review process work?

HM Inspectors carry out the review and make their evaluations based on **three** principles:

- **High quality learning**
- **Learner engagement**
- **Quality culture**

HM Inspectors are also supported during the reviews by Associate Assessors and importantly student team members.

In order to make their evaluations, the review team visits classes to observe learning and teaching and hold discussions with learners and staff. They also look at information on learner attainment, progress and outcomes to assess how well the College is helping learners to succeed in their studies. They also speak with other key people and organisations involved with the College such as members of the Board of Management, employers, external agencies and partners, schools and community groups.

The results of the review are provided as judgements of effective or limited effectiveness or not effective.

How did we do?

We were effective in all **three** areas!

- High quality learning
- Learner engagement
- Quality culture

The review noted a sector leading nineteen areas of positive practice and also three areas of excellent practice.

Overall, the report demonstrated that the College was performing well and was offering high quality programmes and services for students and other stakeholders.



Key findings from the report... why we're so good!



We deliver a wide range of programmes that meet the needs of our students

Our students are placed on programmes that are appropriate to their interests and ability

Our students have opportunities to develop skills for learning, work and life

Our courses develop the skills that match the future workforce requirements of employers

Our courses align with regional and national skills priorities

We have a clear, well-articulated mission statement 'Making Learning Work'

The College has strong and forward thinking leadership

We work proactively and collaboratively with an extensive range of key partners including employers, universities and local authorities

We continue to perform well and have won several national awards in recent years

Success rates for both our full-time and part-time Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) programmes are above the sector average.

More than 90% of our full-time students gain employment, progress to another college programme or enrol with a university.

Our students are well-motivated, committed to their studies and enthusiastic about their learning

Our students speak positively about their wider college experiences

Our students work effectively both independently and with their peers

Student satisfaction with our programmes is very high.

We are very committed to learner engagement and value student feedback

Our students receive clear and helpful information about college programmes and other aspects of college life

We have a wide range of high quality, comprehensive support services

We put appropriate arrangements in place for those with additional support needs

Our students have access to a wide range of external, specialist support agencies

We have effective arrangements in place in regards to safeguarding, corporate parenting and PREVENT legislation

We promote wider issues such as sustainability, environmental awareness and health and well-being

We provide clear direction for the promotion of equality and diversity

Our staff adapt lessons to meet student needs

We incorporate essential skills and core skills development within programmes

Our students receive regular, detailed feedback

Our teaching staff are encouraged to adopt creative, engaging approaches to learning

Our teaching staff use relevant industry experience to benefit students

In addition to gaining certificated qualifications, our students also benefit from wider educational experiences eg. work placements, guest speakers, visits to employer premises or places of local interest, mock interviews, live-client briefs etc

Many students participate in volunteering, fundraising and community projects which develop citizenship skills and promote wider achievement

Many students gain additional certificates and awards out with their programme of study

There are positive relationships between staff and students

We offer an open and supportive environment

We are very committed to learner engagement and value student feedback

We offer many opportunities for students to influence and shape their own learning.

Almost all class groups have a class representative

We are highly supportive of the Forth Valley Student Association who are innovative in their approach to engaging with students

The Student President and Executive Team are highly visible on all campuses.

The Student Association is represented on a wide range of college committees

Our students have access to high quality accommodation and well-equipped facilities

Our students use ICT and a range of high quality resources support their learning

We have a strong quality improvement culture

Annual programme reviews ensure our provision remains current and relevant to the employment market

Things we need to work on...

Some theory lessons need to be a bit more engaging and stimulating

We need to focus more on approaches to learning and teaching in our self-evaluation processes

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Excellent Practice

The Education Scotland Review also highlighted **three** examples of sector leading practice at Forth Valley College.

Schools Data Sharing Portal

Working in partnership with Falkirk Council, the College has created a schools data sharing portal to help school partners track, manage and support transition to college programmes by providing direct access to real-time information about the application process for each pupil.

Creative Learning Action Community

The College has formed a Creative Learning Action Community with staff from across the College coming together to explore the concept of creativity in learning and teaching. Departments are now collaborating on a range of interdisciplinary projects to stimulate curiosity, widen peer learning networks and consolidate learning out with the confines of set curriculum.

'Listening to Learners' Focus Groups

The College has increased learner engagement by holding Listening to Learners focus groups twice per year. This has expanded the number of students who are able to offer their views regarding their learning experiences in a formal, structured way. Since the launch of Listening to Learners, over 2,500 students have had the opportunity to participate in the focus groups. Feedback has influenced changes to programme design, learning and teaching, resources, assessment and learning support.

What next?

Education Scotland will continue to monitor progress during annual engagement visits to the College.

Get involved!

The Education Review highlighted the many ways in which the College offers students the opportunity to have their say. If you want your views to be heard, there's lots of ways you can make sure it happens!

Join the Student Association Team, put yourself forward as class representative, take part in the Listening to Learners focus groups or write a post for the student blog 'Fusion' (www.fvcfusion.com).



It's your college so get involved!

Falkirk Campus

Grangemouth Road
Falkirk
FK2 9AD
T: +44(0)1324 403000

Alloa Campus

Devon Road
Alloa
FK10 1PX
T: +44(0)1259 215121

Stirling Campus

Drip Road
Stirling
FK8 1SE
T: +44(0)1786 406080

Raploch Community Campus

Drip Road
Stirling
FK8 1RD
T: +44(0)1786 272300



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