

Alloa Campus at 4.30 pm
(Refreshments available from 4 pm)

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of interest

FOR APPROVAL

3. Minutes of meeting 4 October 2017
4. Matters Arising
 - a) S/17/004 Operational Plan 2017-18
 - b) S/17/005 Safeguarding Our Learning Community
 - c) S/17/008 Student Association Activity
 - d) S/17/009 Student Activity Paper

FOR DISCUSSION

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 5. Flexible Workforce Development Fund | Zak Stark |
| 6. Student Association Activity | Alan Buchan |
| 7. Outcome Agreement Revised Guidelines & Target Setting | David Allison |
| 8. Student Application Profile & Credits Report | David Allison |
| 9. Review of Risk | |
| 10. Any Other Competent Business | |

For Information

11. Policy Briefing Note
 12. College's Scotland Value to the Economy
-

S1.19, Stirling Campus (commencing at 4.30pm)

- Present: Mrs Anne Mearns (Chair)
Mr Alan Buchan, Student Association President
Mr Davie Flynn
Mr Scott Harrison
Mr Liam McCabe
Ms Amy Scobbie, Student Association
Mr Steven Torrie (Co-opted Member)
- Apologies: Mrs Fiona Campbell
Mr Andrew Carver
Mrs Lorna Dougall
Mrs Caryn Jack
- In Attendance: Dr Ken Thomson, Principal
Mr David Allison, Associate Principal and Executive Director Information Services and Communication
Mrs Fiona Brown, Associate Principal and Executive Director Learning and Teaching
Mrs Jean Duff, Student Services Manager (Item S/17/005 only)
Ms Pauline Barnaby, Development and Fundraising Manager (Item S/17/006 only)
Mr Stephen Jarvie, Corporate Governance and Planning Officer
Ms Karen Corbett, Education Scotland

The Chair noted her thanks to Lorna Dougall for chairing the meeting of 8 June 2017.

S/17/001 Declarations of Interest

None.

S/17/002 Minutes of meeting held on 8 June 2017

The Minute of the meeting of 8 June 2017 was accepted as an accurate record.

S/17/003 Matters arising

a) S/16/040 Outcome Agreement 2017-20

The Chair noted that members had expressed concerns regarding the impact of national bargaining on the achievement of the College's Outcome Agreement. She read a note from SMT which confirmed both College unions had accepted the pay offers for the current year and that this situation was being monitored.

b) S/16/042 Forth Valley College Policy Sector Briefing

The Chair noted that she had had discussions with the Chair of the Board regarding the provision of an external focus to members and that this matter would be covered in the upcoming Board Effectiveness session.

S/17/004 Operational Plan 2017-18

The Principal presented the draft Operational Plan to members for comment and sought approval for the content of the document.

He noted the manner in which the Operational Plan ties into the overall College planning cycle and other key strategies.

Members provided a range of feedback on the document and what they would like the content to cover, particularly in relation to making targets SMARTer wherever possible and clearly demonstrating where possible what success against each operational target would look like.

a) It was agreed that the Operational Plan would be revised to incorporate the feedback provided by members and a further draft would be brought to a future meeting

S/17/005 Safeguarding Our Learning Community

The Student Services Manager presented members with the annual update on safeguarding within the College.

She highlighted the continuing trend of increasing mental health related matters and outlined the training and developments in support of this to ensure staff are aware of these issues and that students can access support both internally and externally via the counselling service contracted by the College.

She reported that additional funding had been sought and secured which had enabled the College to appoint a Health and Wellbeing Officer to take these matters forward.

Amy Scobbie also updated members on the work via the Student Association which supports the provision of mental health first aid training. She also outlined the results of a stress questionnaire which the Student Association had conducted last year. She confirmed that the key messages arising from this would be discussed with the Principal to identify the next steps.

a) Members noted the content of the update

S/17/006 Fundraising Activity Report

The Development and Fundraising Manager gave a presentation on the key areas of activity within fundraising to support the content of the paper.

Members queried whether the Health and Wellbeing Officer post was sustainable. The Development and Fundraising Manager confirmed that this was being investigated and that the College had been in contact with the current funding body to investigate the feasibility of further funding for this post.

The Principal noted that this role was bringing considerable added value to the College and that discussions would be had on the potential for mainstreaming this role into the College establishment.

The Development and Fundraising Manager also highlighted the success of the STEM summer school activity, particularly in the positive gender balance achieved with attendees.

Members queried whether fundraising could be used as part of students learning and assessments, as it would have additional benefits particularly for students who progress to a self-employed route.

The Principal confirmed that fundraising and team activity is already embedded in some courses and that this could be expanded as appropriate.

Members also noted the value that the fundraising activity brought to the College in raising the profile of the College and students to external stakeholders.

- a) Members noted the content of the report

S/17/007 College Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan 2016-17

The Associate Principal and Executive Director Learning and Teaching presented the draft report which is a requirement of the new Education Scotland approach to College evaluation.

In conjunction with Karen Corbett, Education Scotland, she outlined the background to the new approach and highlighted the key messages arising within the report.

The Associate Principal and Executive Director Learning and Teaching informed members that the College was required to submit the report to Education Scotland and SFC by 31 October and that the Committee's comments would be incorporated into the document which would be presented to the full Board of Management on 26 October 2017 for final approval.

Members welcomed the comprehensive report, which showed clear evidence of engaging with and listening to learners. Members noted that the section on areas of development would benefit from further clarification.

Members also noted that partnership work could be further enhanced.

The Principal noted that there was some nervousness in the sector as to what grade each College would be assigning themselves and whether scores would be inflated.

Karen Corbett acknowledged the concern and noted that Education Scotland was looking at this.

a) Members noted the content of the report

S/17/008

Student Association Activity

The Student Association (SA) President presented an update to members on the activity of the SA since the last meeting. He highlighted the very successful Fresher's Fayres which had occurred recently.

He also noted that the SA Advisory Board had been established and thanked the Board members who volunteered to be members.

He highlighted that the SA had a new Activities and Volunteer coordinator in place and that elections would be happening in the near future for the remaining SA volunteer posts.

The SA Vice President updated members on her activities and provided further information on the continued expansion of mental health first aid training which she delivers. She noted that the SA were also looking to engage in a Mental Health agreement between the SA and the College.

She also highlighted an upcoming campaign to engage with staff and students in the College with Care responsibilities. This may involve signing up to the Carers Charter.

The SA President also touched on succession planning as his and the Vice Presidents terms finish at the end of the current academic year.

a) Members noted the content of the report and expressed their support for the ongoing good work of the Student Association

S/17/009

Student Activity Report

The Associate Principal and Executive Director Information Services and Communication presented an update on Student Activity within the College. He highlighted that the College had managed to reach its assigned credit target last year and that, while there were challenges in terms of this years activity levels, particularly

FE full time recruitment, it was not anticipated that the College would not meet this year's credit target. He also noted that the FE full time issue did appear to be sector wide.

The Principal noted that this information was being used to work with Heads of Department to identify areas to target for further recruitment, particularly in regard to the January intake.

Members discussed potential other ways to bolster recruitment and agreed that the College should watch this matter closely.

a) Members noted the content of the report

S/17/010 Review of Risk

Members agree the risks as laid out in the content of the presented papers.

S/17/011 Any Other Competent Business

None

1. Purpose

To provide an update on the Flexible Workforce Development Fund, activity to date and progress made.

2. Recommendation

That members note the potential business associated with this fund, as well as the opportunity to generate additional new business.

3. Background

The Scottish Government launched the [Flexible Workforce Development Fund](#) (FWDF) on 7th September 2017. This pilot provides the opportunity for employers operating in Scotland who pay into the UK Governments Apprenticeship Levy to apply for up to £10,000 in training.

This training will be delivered by Scottish Colleges who have been tasked with contacting employers across their region to establish eligibility and interest in this fund.

The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) has provided colleges with FWDF allocations identifying that FVC has 705 employers operating within the region who would be eligible to apply to this fund, of these employers 155 are based in Scotland and 550 UK wide.

SFC have been unable to provide colleges with details of these employers, so FVC have sent letters out to 758 contacts providing information on the fund. As of 10th Nov 2017 we have spoken with 98 contacts of which 65 are eligible and we are working with them to progress to application stage. 9 have went to other colleges and 24 are not eligible, however through discussion we have identified some other training options including Modern Apprenticeships (MAs), IOSH and Flexi Learning Provision.

As well as letters being sent out a [landing page](#) has been created on the FVC website to provide further information and allow employers to note interest. Employers noting interest are then being contacted directly by FVC and offered support with their FWDF application.

SFC have indicated that any unallocated FWDF may be redistributed allowing colleges who have used their full allocation to reopen funding to employers. It is likely any redistribution will take place early 2018.

We are now focusing attention on progressing those employers who have been identified as eligible and interested in the fund to application stage. This will support us in meeting our FWDF allocation as well as building a reserve list. This list can then be used as and when SFC redistribute any unallocated FWDF funding.

Systems and processes are in place to progress applications in line with SFC guidance and linking into our existing Business Development Process. This ensures that if audited by the SFC we will meet all requirements.

4. Key Considerations

SFC have asked that employers are encouraged to access their regional college, however if they have existing relationships they can apply through their college of choice. It is the employers' responsibility to identify their training needs and they have until 15th December 2017 to have applications submitted and approved by their chosen college.

Only one application can be submitted and employers are asked to sign a declaration that they have only made one application, as well as provide evidence of their UK Apprenticeship Levy payment. All training must be completed and certificated by the end of June 2018.

5. Financial Implications

FVC has an allocation of £491,951 FWDF. Funding is allocated directly to colleges and the SFC have requested that once this allocation is spent colleges should hold waiting lists of eligible applicants. After the 15th December, SFC will look at allocations with a view to redistributing funds.

Although Colleges themselves are UK Apprenticeship Levy payers we have been advised that it would not be looked on favourably by the Scottish Government if we apply for funding to support the training of FVC staff via the FWDF.

SFC have advised that colleges are not permitted to utilise CREDITS when calculating the cost of training. This has resulted in some training provision accessed via FWDF being more expensive than the publicly advertised courses.

Employers are also unable to use this fund to subsidise the cost of part funded MA Apprentices.

6. Equalities

Assessment in Place? – Yes No

If No, please explain why – This fund has a neutral impact for learners with protected characteristics. It is unlikely to affect the retention, attainment or experience of existing college students. It may add to the prevalence of older learners in some subject areas.

FWDF activity is unlikely to result in any negative impacts for learners or staff with protected characteristics as it is purely about providing upskilling and development opportunities for eligible organisations employees.

In terms of mitigating actions, the college is attempting to redress any gender imbalances in specific subject areas. In addition, learners on these courses will be monitored for profile, retention and attainment and will be asked to feedback on their experience as per college practice. Therefore, any further impacts will be monitored on an ongoing basis.

7. Risk

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

	Likelihood	Impact
Very High		
High		X
Medium	X	
Low		
Very Low		

Potential Risk

- a) Other colleges attract employers operating within the Forth Valley to apply to them for FWDF training, resulting in loss of new business opportunities and potential existing business moving across to other colleges.
- b) FVC does not attract enough interest to fulfil our FWDF £491,951 allocation, risking future SFC redistribution/allocation of funding to FVC.

Mitigation of Risks

- a) FVC has put considerable effort into contacting employers operating within the Forth Valley, as well as contacted those out with the region who have or currently work with us.
- b) FVC is actively working towards gaining more interest that we have funding to build a reserve list of employers for future FWDF. We are also collating feedback from employers on their view of the FWDF in order that this can be shared with SFC to potentially shape any future funding.

Risk Owner – Andy Lawson

Action Owner – Zak Stark

8. Other Implications

Please indicate whether there are implications for the areas below.

Communications – Yes No

Health and Safety – Yes No

Please provide a summary of these implications –

Paper Author – Zak Stark

SMT Owner – Andy Lawson

1. Purpose

To inform members on recent activity of FVSA.

2. Recommendation

That members note and comment on the operational plan and Student Association update.

3. Key Highlights

This year is shaping up to be another successful year for FVSA. There have been high levels of student engagement across the College, and both the officers and staff members have been working hard to ensure that the SA are achieving and where possible exceeding our objectives.

So far 179 class reps have been trained, with over 170 students giving positive feedback on the training delivered.

The Vice President is continuing the successful SMHFA training for students, with a further 80 students scheduled to attend sessions by the end of February.

The elections for voluntary Executive and Liberation Officers are now underway, there have been 16 enquiries for the positions available, and we expect to have a strong FVSA executive committee for the year ahead and potential candidates to replace the sabbatical officers for the next academic year.

4. Financial Implications

Please detail the financial implications of this item – The SA has an operational budget and all activities are planned within this budget.

5. Equalities

Assessment in Place? – Yes No

If No, please explain why – Some of the planned activities will require impact assessment, however this will be done on an individual basis.

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

6. Risk

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

	Likelihood	Impact
Very High		
High		
Medium		
Low	x	x
Very Low		

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

Risk Owner - Alan Buchan

Action Owner - Alan Buchan

7. Other Implications

Please indicate whether there are implications for the areas below.

Communications – Yes No

Health and Safety – Yes No

Please provide a summary of these implications - The operational plan will be published on Moodle for students to access. Printed copies will be required to be available for students at each campus office for accessibility.

Paper Author – Alan Buchan

SMT Owner – Andrew Lawson

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Forth Valley Student Association

Student Association Update

November 2017

Last updated on: 10/11/17



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Key Highlights

Executive & Liberation Officer Elections

The nominations are now closed for the executive and liberation officer roles; there has been a high level of interest compared to previous elections. There were around 16 enquiries for the positions, 13 meetings with students to discuss the roles and a number of visits to discuss the elections and roles available within class groups.

Class Rep Training

The Student Association delivered 9 Class Rep training sessions across the College, to 179 students. So far this year the feedback on our new format has been overwhelmingly positive. Rob McDermott, Quality Manager, attended each session to carry out a Listening to learners training session, which should prepare class reps fully on supporting the College in gathering feedback. There are a further 102 reps still to be trained; invites have been sent out to these students to carry out online training.

SMHFA Training

Following on from last year, the Vice President has continued to provide SMHFA training on campus due to the high amount of students requesting it, and the prevalence of mental health issues being disclosed.

To date there have been 175 students/staff who have completed this training.

There are another 5 sessions booked in between now and February, there will be 255 students/staff trained by the end of the planned sessions. The majority of these are full class groups, at the request of lecturers and students.

Campaigns

#CarersCan Campaign

The Vice President is working on a campaign to develop awareness of and better support for student carers. Meetings have been held with local carer's centres, Carers trust Scotland and internal support staff. The campaign will include developing a student carer policy, a carer's passport and becoming accredited for supporting Carers.

Events

FVC graduations

The President and Vice President attended both Forth Valley College graduation ceremonies. It was an excellent opportunity to speak to previous students and celebrate their achievements.

FVC Student Tourism Conference

The Student President was invited to attend a conference organised for all Travel & Tourism students within the College. There were a number of guest speakers including Marc Crothall, Chief Executive of The Scottish Tourism Alliance and Tracey Martin, Economic Development Officer for Visit Falkirk.

Meetings

September

NUS Development Consultant

Sinead Lindsay, NUS Scotland Development consultant visited the Falkirk office to meet with the team and offer development support for the year ahead.

Stirling University- #isitOK campaign

The FVSA team met with Jill Stevenson, Head of Student Support Service and Astrid Smallenbroek, Student President to talk about their #IsitOK campaign which focuses on preventing and responding to violence against women. The Vice President is keen to work on streamlining the campaign to ensure visibility and impact amongst students in the Forth Valley Area.

October

Carers Trust

The Vice President met with Paul Traynor, Policy Development Consultant at Carers Trust Scotland to discuss best practice in supporting student carers.

CDN Article on Integrated Degree Program

The Student President was invited to an interview as part of an article that has been commissioned by College Development Network on Integrated Degree Programs. The article will focus on the benefit of the programs and how FVC work with Universities to deliver this.

Re-Union Meeting

The FVSA team visited Re-Union at Lock 16 of the Union Canal in Camelon. The organisation offers volunteering opportunities and training to the local community, and in particular support people recovering from addiction and those with mental illness. FVSA will be looking to support the organisation to offer volunteer opportunities to our students, and to support their work within the community through promoting the organisation.

FVC Entrepreneurship Meeting

The Student Liaison Officer met with Seem Arshad, Lecturer to discuss opportunities to develop entrepreneurship within the student body.

Chaplaincy Meeting

The Student President, along with Stephen Jarvie, met with Rev Dr Janet Foggie regarding the chaplaincy service at Stirling University, and gathered information on how a similar service could be implemented within FVC.

Engineering SVQ Apprentices Listening to Learners

The Student President attended an apprentice Listening to Learners session hosted by William Forrest, Curriculum Manager. The session brought together a number of class reps who had already conducted sessions within their groups to speak about issues facing apprentices across the department.

Futsal/Football sessions

The Activities and Volunteer Coordinator met with Waimun Lee to discuss setting up football five-a-side sessions within the Falkirk games hall. Students are interested in developing five a side teams and there is potential for students and staff to link up as there is already a staff five a side session that play regularly.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – FVSA Operational Plan

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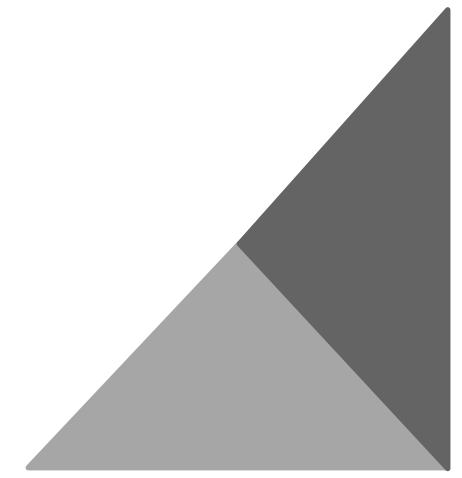


Forth Valley Student Association

Operational Plan
Academic Year 2017/18

Last updated on: 10/11/17

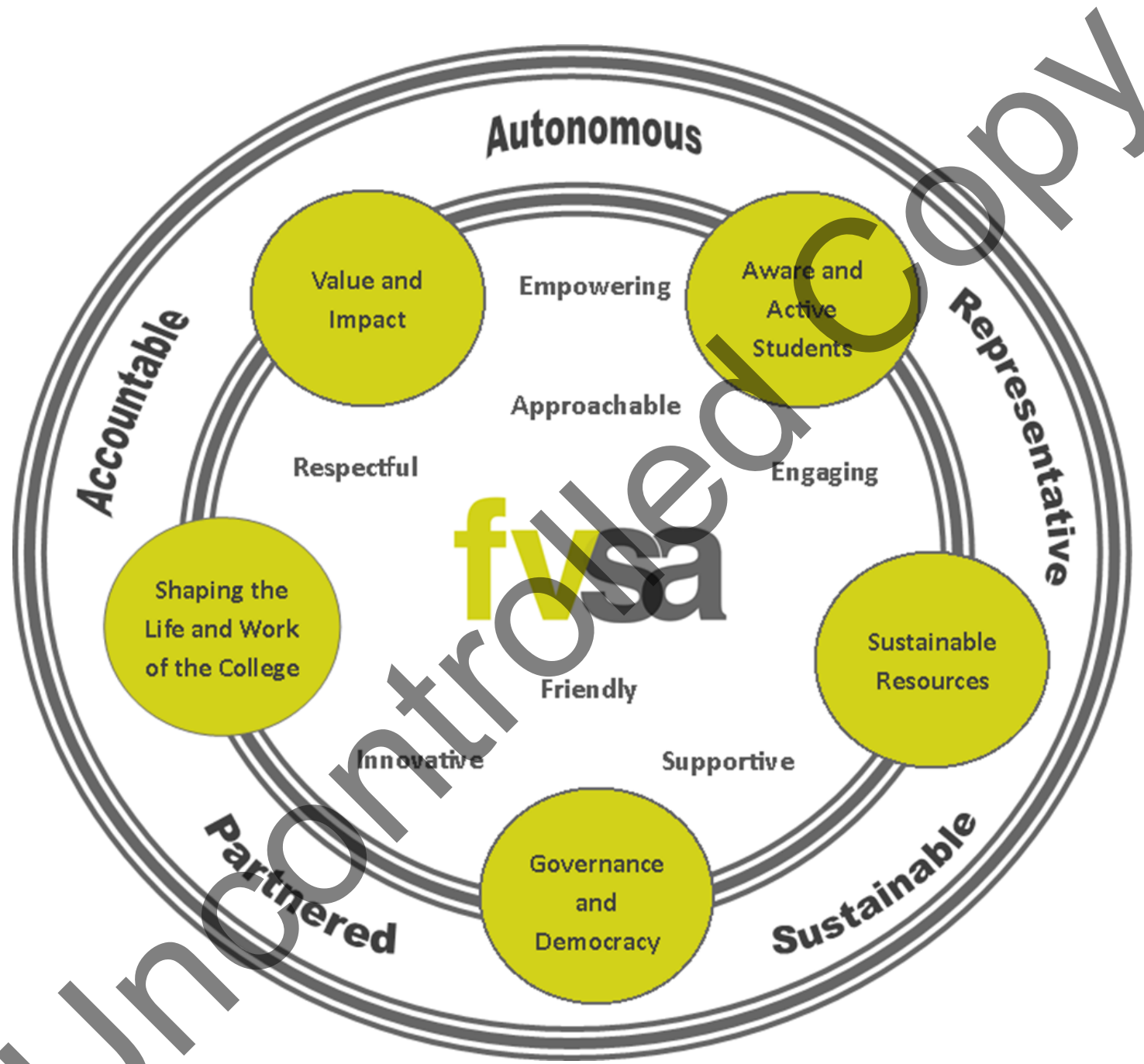
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Our Values

FVSA will always strive to maintain its core values and ensure that these values are represented in any of its actions.

Empowering

FVSA will always endeavour to give students the information required to make decisions on issues affecting student life and ensure that these opinions are taken into account.

Engaging

FVSA will maximise the number of opportunities for students to give feedback, both to the SA and to the College.

Approachable

FVSA will maintain an active presence on every campus and visibly identify themselves to students as often as possible.

Respectful

FVSA will respect the views of our students and will act on behalf of our students where possible.

Friendly

FVSA will always endeavour to have positive communications and good relationships with students and staff within the College.

Innovative

FVSA will maintain a forward thinking approach and work with the College in delivering new initiatives which benefit our students.

Supportive

FVSA will fully support our students when required and if necessary will refer them to support providers when we are unable to assist.

Operational Plan

Forth Valley Student Association has developed an operational plan for the academic year 2017/18 which aims to maximise effectiveness for students. The plan has factored in a number of key goals, which were identified via student feedback, elected officer manifestos and tying in with the operational and strategic plans of Forth Valley College.

The Student Association aims to provide our students and partners such as the College with a clear identification of our priorities for the year ahead, and will allow the opportunity for our achievements to be measured.

The operational plan will tie into a two year strategic plan, which will set out a vision for the future of the Student Association within Forth Valley College. All plans will retain the core values of the Student Association and will reflect the voice of our students.

The Operational Plan will focus on five key themes which are set out in our Strategic Plan;

- Aware and active students
- Value and impact
- Shaping the life and work of the College
- Sustainable resources
- Governance and democracy



Aware and Active Students

Objective	Assigned to	Start date	Due Date	Status	Update/Evidence
Develop student led clubs & Societies in order to develop a sense of community across the college and tackle social isolation.	AVC	19/9/17	30/6/18	In progress	A number of enquiries have been made by students, including jujitsu and Futsal/Football.
Review the current Class Rep system to improve training materials and resources for class reps to improve skills and increase engagement. .	President/SLO	1/7/17	30/4/18	In Progress	Updated training materials are now in place, over 170 of the 174 responses providing positive feedback.
Develop a Department Rep system in order to develop future student leaders and bridge the skills/knowledge gap between class reps and elected Sabbatical Officers.	President/SLO	1/7/17	30/6/18	In Progress	Development of pilot in progress, FVSA will work with two Curriculum Managers to develop the role and implement a trial within Creative Industries and Tourism in Block 2.
Develop a Communications and Engagement Plan, in order to monitor and improve how FVSA communicates and engages with students.	All Team	1/7/17	18/7/17	Complete	Formal Communication/Engagement Plan in Place, reviewed at the end of session 17/18 which will form a communication and engagement strategy.

Value and Impact

Objective	Assigned To	Start date	Due Date	Status	Update/Evidence
Developing support for students through implementing liberation groups.	AVC/ Liberation Officers	1/8/17	30/6/18	In Progress	AVC developing networks internally and with local community organisations, as well as promoting liberation groups to students.
Collaborate with Student Services in order to engage student's pre entry, promote FVSA and identify the needs of incoming students.	President	1/10/17	30/6/18	In Progress	Plans in place for the year ahead, develop pre entry information and attend pre entry events in Summer 2018. Materials prepared, working to identify pre entry engagement opportunities
To work with both students and the College to develop the FVSA Strategic Plan (July 2018 – June 2020), in order to ensure students are driving the work of FVSA, and that the College are able to support the development of FVSA throughout the plan.	All team	1/1/18	30/6/18	Not Started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold focus Groups with students/advisory group/SMT • Develop plans in line with College strategic direction. Pass completed plan onto incoming officer team to publish.
Update Student Contact Database to be able to better track student enquiries to increase contact with students to help them shape the work of FVSA.	Admin Assistant	1/7/17	18/8/17	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update database • review functionality • train FVSA team on use

Shaping the life and work of the College

Objective	Assigned To	Start date	Due Date	Status	Update/Evidence
To increase support and awareness for young carers/carers throughout Forth Valley College by organising a student carers campaign.	VP	1/7/17	30/6/18	In Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective policy in place • Carers Charter • Carers Pass • 'C' on registers denoting student Carers • Carers identified during induction/registration • Student Carers Report produced to evidence support requirements.
Develop a Mental Health Agreement between FVSA and FVC in order to improve support for students experiencing mental ill health.	VP	1/7/17	19/1/18	In Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health partnership agreement • Report produced on work carried out over the academic term 2017/18 and student feedback gathered through SMHFA training/events.
To work with the College and students who require earlier access to timetables to plan improvements to the current process.	President	1/8/17	30/6/18	In Progress	Set out plans for improvement, and review success through student/staff feedback.
To improve the sustainability of the Healthy Body Healthy Mind Committee in order to secure a long term commitment between the College and FVSA.	VP	5/9/17	17/4/18	In Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Plan in place • Chair in place for session 18/19

Sustainable Resources

Objective	Assigned To	Start date	Due Date	Status	Update/Evidence
Secure appropriate funding for FVSA before current funding runs out in order to promote sustainability of FVSA and allow for development.	President/SLO	01/8/17	30/1/18	In Progress	Gather evidence in support of funding ahead of submitting a funding proposal to FVC Foundation.
To start a clubs/societies/sports fund, in order to develop a sustainable base for clubs to grow in line with the demands of students.	AVC/SLO	1/8/17	30/6/18	In Progress	Set up fund/process for allocation of funds to clubs/socs/teams. Identify ways to develop sustainable income to the fund. Fund now in place, developing fundraising methods to sustain fund.
Develop a multi-year plan to reduce carbon footprint of FVSA in order to promote environmental responsibility.	SLO	1/8/17	30/6/18	In Progress	Set targets to reduce travel/printing and monitor success in line with FVSA strategic plan.

Governance and Democracy

Objective	Assigned To	Start date	Due Date	Status	Update/Evidence
Pilot a new class rep training program which extends throughout the year via online training in order to improve the development of class reps and maintain engagement.	SLO	01/7/17	1/4/18	In Progress	Measure success via participation levels and feedback on the training materials/content.
Implement elections for executive/liberation roles in order to improve democratic representation within FVSA.	SLO	1/7/17	22/12/17	In Progress	Executive committee roles filled and elected officers engaging with FVSA decision making processes.
Develop training for students on submitting motions at student council in order to improve the ability of students to shape the work of FVSA.	AVC	1/8/17	1/10/17	In Progress	Awaiting materials from NUS Scotland to ensure the process is the same to improve accessibility of engaging with NUS.
Review all SA materials and promote accountability of Officers to students in order to ensure students are able to influence the work of FVSA and hold elected officers to account.	SLO/President	1/7/17	30/11/17	Complete	Materials in place and students supported in holding elected officers to account through class rep training information.
To set up an advisory group in order to provide strategic direction and support to the Students' Association and ensure that it is able to develop effectively in line with the <i>Framework for the Development of Strong & Effective College Students' Associations in Scotland</i> .	President	1/7/17	29/9/17	Complete	Group membership filled and meetings held, input to FVSA Strategic Plan.

Calendar of Events

Block 1 (August - December 2017)

Event	Date	Campus
Fresher's Fayre	19 th September 2017	Falkirk
	20 th September 2017	Stirling
	21 st September 2017	Alloa
Class Rep Training	17 th , 18 th & 19 th October 2017	Falkirk
	24 th & 25 th October 2017	Stirling
	26 th & 27 th October 2017	Alloa
Executive/Liberation Elections	October/November	All
1 st Student Council Meeting	20 th November 2017	Alloa
	22 nd November 2017	Stirling
	24 th November 2017	Falkirk
16 Days of Action	25 th November 2017 - 10 th December 2017	All

Block 2 (January - June 2018)

Event	Date	Campus
Re-Fresher's Fayre (Including HBHM Event)	6 th February 2018	Stirling
	7 th February 2018	Alloa
	8 th February 2018	Falkirk
Class Rep Training	20 th February 2018	Falkirk
	21 st February 2018	Alloa
	22 nd February 2018	Stirling
No Smoking Day	14 th March 2018	All
Student Association Elections	March/April 2018	All
2 nd Student Council Meeting	18 th April 2018	Alloa
	19 th April 2018	Falkirk
	20 th April 2018	Stirling

1. Purpose

For Strategic Development Committee members to note the revisions made to the Outcome Agreement Guidance and discuss the direction of target setting for our new Outcome Agreement for 2018-19 to 2020-21.

2. Recommendation

That Strategic Development Committee members note the changes within the revised guidance and discuss the direction of targets that we wish to set within our Outcome Agreement to cover from 2018-19 to 2020-21, to inform an SMT session on target setting. It would be helpful if members could focus on the key priority measures (highlighted with an asterisk in Appendix 1), and in particular focus on targets within Section 4, with target 4a being the target SFC will focus on as the highest priority.

3. Background

Last year we entered a new three year cycle for Outcome Agreements covering the period from 2017-18 to 2019-20. As such, the expectation from SFC set out in this year's guidance is that changes to the context statement within our Outcome Agreement should be minimal to reflect only significant changes since last Session, while still ensuring that Colleges meet both existing and new Scottish Government priorities, with focus to be on the targets within the Outcome Agreement.

4. Key Considerations

Key Changes to Guidelines

In her letter to SFC, the Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science took the opportunity to restate that colleges are not required to prioritise full-time provision for 16-24s but rather should be responsive to the current needs of learners and the economy. This very much reflects the enrolment pattern for the current session witnessed within Forth Valley College, and the College Sector, so is welcome.

The Minister has also asked for intensification of the Outcome Agreement process. In the new guidance, and through discussion with our Outcome Agreement Manager, there is a desire for targets to be as ambitious as they can be for the College and across the Sector, with a primary focus on retention and attainment. SFC also wish intensification of agreements in the areas of widening access, articulation, gender, Developing the Young Workforce, skills, innovation and apprenticeships.

SFC are also looking to reduce the length of time taken to agree Outcome Agreements, with a well-developed draft Outcome Agreement submitted by 15 December 2017, with a focus on targets being set, rather than a focus on text. Independently, SFC will be undertaking an exercise to set sector targets for each of the Outcome Agreement targets, and then work back to what

they expect individual colleges to achieve, with dialogue with regions if college-set targets are falling below anticipated targets.

The number of strategies/plans that are expected to be referenced from within the Outcome Agreement has grown, with a full list shown within Table 1, and will require further work by the College through this Session to have these in place for next session.

Table 1 – Strategies and plans

Strategy/Plan	New Requirement	Available
Access and Inclusion Strategy	No	Yes
BSL Plan	No	Yes
Corporate Parenting Plan	Yes	Yes
Developing the Young Workforce Plan	No	Updated annually
Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment	Yes	Yes
Gaelic Language Plan	No	Within OA
Gender Action Plan	No	Yes
Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Report	No	Yes
Estates Strategy	Yes	No
STEM Strategy and Action Plan	Yes	No
Student carers support policy	Yes	No

Outcome Agreement National Performance Measures

Appendix 1 displays the revised outcomes & targets for 2018-19, and shows where appropriate, the targets set for Sessions 2017-18 to 2019-20 through our current Outcome Agreement. It's worth noting that although the overall number of targets has remained static at 10, the length of this document has doubled from a two page to a four page listing of targets, mainly through targets which previously asked for one number or percentage expanded to show 'the workings'. All targets highlighted in purple are new for 2018-19. There are a number of new 'sub-targets' added for Session 2018-19:

- 1b)ii) Volume and proportion of Credits delivered to full-time learners aged 16-19 and 20-24
- 4d) Proportion of full-time Care Experienced students successfully achieving a recognised qualification
- 4e) Proportion of full-time FE enrolled students aged 16-19 successfully achieving a recognised qualification

There are also three targets which have been expanded significantly from last session (last session's target is highlighted in blue in the appendix):

- 4c) Proportion of senior phase age pupils successfully completing a vocational qualification delivered by the College

- 8) The number and proportion of full-time qualifiers in work, training and/or further study 3-6 months after qualifying
- 9) The percentage of students overall, satisfied with their college experience (SSES survey)

Performance from the last two years against existing targets, and targets set last year for Sessions 2017-18 to 2019-20 are shown.

5. Financial Implications

Please detail the financial implications of this item – There is potential for SFC to consider situations where there is a concern over a variation in delivery against Outcome Agreement commitments. This action would involve SFC considering – taking context and ambition into account – whether funding needs to be recovered; taking a holistic view of both good and unsatisfactory progress to arrive at its decision.

6. Equalities

Assessment in Place? – Yes No

If No, please explain why – Through the Outcome Agreement the college sets out and monitors its aspirations for all protected characteristics.

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

7. Risk

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

	Likelihood	Impact
Very High		
High		
Medium	X	X
Low		
Very Low		

Please describe any risks associated with this paper and associated mitigating actions – There is a risk of financial claw-back if the College doesn't make satisfactory progress towards meeting its Outcome Agreement commitments.

Risk Owner – David Allison

Action Owner – David Allison

8. Other Implications –

Please indicate whether there are implications for the areas below.

Communications – Yes No

Health and Safety – Yes No

Please provide a summary of these implications -

Paper Author – David Allison

SMT Owner – David Allison

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Appendix 1: Part 2 - Outcomes & targets

No	Measure	Performance		Current	Targets		
		2015-16	2016-17	Year Target	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
1a)*	The volume of Credits delivered						
	Credits Delivered: Core	84,031	83,926	84,647	84,647	84,647	
	ESF	2,241	2,370	2,230	2,230	2,230	
	Core + ESF	86,272	86,296	86,877	86,877	86,877	
1b)i)	Volume and proportion of Credits delivered to learners aged 16-19 and 20-24						
	Volume of Credits delivered to learners aged 16-19	39,471	40,153	40,000	40,000	40,000	
	Proportion of Credits delivered to learners aged 16-19	46%	46%	46%	46%	46%	
	Volume of Credits delivered to learners aged 20-24	18,297	18,475	18,300	18,300	18,300	
	Proportion of Credits delivered to learners aged 20-24	21%	21%	21%	21%	21%	
1b)ii)	Volume and proportion of Credits delivered to full-time learners aged 16-19 and 20-24						
	Volume of Credits delivered to full-time learners						
	Volume of Credits delivered to full-time learners aged 16-19						
	Proportion of Credits delivered to full-time learners aged 16-19						
	Volume of Credits delivered to full-time learners aged 20-24						
	Proportion of Credits delivered to full-time learners aged 20-24						
1c)*	Volume and proportion of Credits delivered to learners in the most deprived 10% postcode areas						
	Volume of Credits delivered to learners in the most deprived 10% postcode areas	9,820	9,147	10,000	10,000	10,000	
	Proportion of Credits delivered to learners in the most deprived 10% postcode areas	11.4%	10.6%	12%	12%	12%	
1d)	Volume and proportion of Credits delivered to learners from different protected characteristic groups and Care Experienced						
	Gender -						
	Volume of Credits delivered to females ⁽¹⁾	40,375	37,753	42,244	42,244	42,244	
	Proportion of Credits delivered to females ⁽¹⁾	48%	44%	49%	49%	49%	
	Volume of Credits delivered to males ⁽¹⁾	45,897	48,383	43,790	43,790	43,790	
	Proportion of Credits delivered to males ⁽¹⁾	52%	56%	51%	51%	51%	
	Volume of Credits delivered to Other learners ⁽¹⁾						
	Proportion of Credits delivered to Other learners ⁽¹⁾						
	Ethnicity -						
	Volume of Credits delivered to students where ethnicity is Black or an Ethnic Minority	2,482	2,592	2,500	2,500	2,500	
	Proportion of Credits delivered to students where ethnicity is Black or an Ethnic Minority	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	
	Disability -						
	Volume of Credits delivered to students who are disabled	11,985	11,686	12,000	12,000	12,000	
	Proportion of Credits delivered to students who are disabled	14%	14%	14%	14%	14%	
	Care Experience -						
	Volume of Credits delivered to Care Experienced Learners	1,613	1,885	1,700	1,800	1,900	

No	Measure	Performance		Current	Targets		
		2015-16	2016-17	Year Target	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
	Proportion of Credits delivered to Care Experienced Learners	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	
2a)*	Number of senior phase age pupils studying vocational qualification delivered by the College	266	829	380	380	380	
2b)	Volume and proportion of Credits delivered to senior phase age pupils studying vocational qualifications delivered by colleges						
	Volume of Credits delivered to senior phase age pupils studying vocational qualification delivered by the College	1,206	3,122	1,850	1,850	1,850	
	Proportion of Credits delivered to senior phase age pupils studying vocational qualification delivered by the College	1.4%	3.0%	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%	
2c)	Volume and proportion of Credits delivered to learners at S3 and above as part of 'school-college' provision						
	Volume of Credits delivered to learners at S3 and above as part of 'school-college' provision	4,895	4,412	5,100	5,200	5,300	
	Proportion of Credits delivered to learners at S3 and above as part of 'school-college' provision	6%	5%	6%	6%	6%	
2d)	Volume and proportion of Credits delivered at HE level to learners from SHEP schools						
	Volume of Credits delivered at HE level						
	Volume of Credits delivered at HE level to learners from SHEP schools	3,574	4,075	3,100	3,100	3,100	
	Proportion of Credits delivered at HE level to learners from SHEP schools	16%	18%	15%	15%	15%	
3)	Volume and proportion of Credits delivered to learners enrolled on STEM courses						
	Volume of Credits delivered to learners enrolled on STEM courses ⁽²⁾	29,197	31,811	30,000	30,000	30,000	
	Proportion of Credits delivered to learners enrolled on STEM courses ⁽²⁾	34%	37%	35%	35%	35%	
4a)*	Proportion of enrolled students successfully achieving a recognised qualification:						
	The number of FT FE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification						
	The total number of FT FE enrolled students						
	The percentage of FT FE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	70%	73%	71%	71.5%	72%	
	The number of PT FE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification						
	The total number of PT FE enrolled students						
	The percentage of PT FE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	91%	93%	91%	91%	91%	
	The number of FT HE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification						
	The total number of FT HE enrolled students						
	The percentage of FT HE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	75%	70%	75%	75%	75%	
	The number of PT HE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification						
	The total number of PT HE enrolled students						
	The percentage of PT HE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	88%	88%	89%	89%	89%	
4b)*	Proportion of enrolled MD10 students successfully achieving a recognised qualification:						
	The number of MD10 FT FE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification						
	The total number of MD10 FT FE enrolled students						
	The percentage of MD10 FT FE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	72%	71%	71%	71.5%	72%	
	The number of MD10 PT FE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification						
	The total number of MD10 PT FE enrolled students						

No	Measure	Performance		Current Year Target	Targets		
		2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
	The percentage of MD10 PT FE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	89%	95%	91%	91%	91%	
	The number of MD10 FT HE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification						
	The total number of MD10 FT HE enrolled students						
	The percentage of MD10 FT HE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	63%	68%	68%	71%	75%	
	The number of MD10 PT HE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification						
	The total number of MD10 PT HE enrolled students						
	The percentage of MD10 PT HE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	92%	74%	89%	89%	89%	
4c)*	Proportion of senior phase age pupils successfully completing a vocational qualification delivered by the College						
	The number of senior phase FT FE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification						
	The total number of senior phase FT FE enrolled students						
	The percentage of senior phase FT FE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification						
	The number of senior phase PT FE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification						
	The total number of senior phase PT FE enrolled students						
	The percentage of senior phase PT FE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification						
	The number of senior phase FT HE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification						
	The total senior phase FT HE enrolled students						
	The percentage of senior phase FT HE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification						
	The number of senior phase PT HE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification						
	The total number of senior phase PT HE enrolled students						
	The percentage of senior phase PT HE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification						
4c)	Proportion of senior phase age pupils successfully completing a vocational qualification delivered by the College - Session 2017/18	63%	82%	70%	72%	75%	
4d)*	Proportion of full-time enrolled Care Experienced students successfully achieving a recognised qualification						
	The number of CE FT FE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification						
	The total number of CE FT FE enrolled students						
	The percentage of CE FT FE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification						
	The number of CE FT HE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification						
	The total number of CE FT HE enrolled students						
	The percentage of CE FT HE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification						
4e)*	Proportion of full-time FE enrolled students aged 16-19 successfully achieving a recognised qualification						
	The number of FT FE enrolled students aged 16-19 achieving a recognised qualification						
	The total number of FT FE enrolled students aged 16-19						
	The percentage of FT FE enrolled students aged 16-19 achieving a recognised qualification						
5)	Number of starts for direct contracted apprenticeships (including industry bodies such as CITB and SECTT) ⁽³⁾	256	279	347	357	367	

No	Measure	Performance		Current Year Target	Targets		
		2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
6)	Number and proportion of full time learners with substantial 'work placement' as part of their programme of study Total number of full time learners Number of full-time learners with substantial 'work placement experience' as part of their programme of study Proportion of full-time learners with substantial 'work placement experience' as part of their programme of study						
		582	670	600	600	600	
7)*	Number and proportion of successful students who have achieved HNC or HND qualifications articulating to degree level courses with advanced standing The total number of students who have achieved HNC or HND qualifications progressing to degree level courses Number and proportion of successful learners who have achieved HNC or HND Qualification articulating to degree level courses with advanced standing Proportion of successful learners who have achieved HNC or HND Qualification articulating to degree level courses with advanced standing						
		N/A	N/A	157	160	160	
		N/A	N/A	40%	40%	40%	
8)*	The number and proportion of full-time college qualifiers in work, training and/or further study 3-6 months after qualifying Response rate The total number of full-time FE college qualifiers (Confirmed destination) The number of full-time FE college qualifiers in work, training and/or further study 3-6 months after qualifying The proportion of full-time FE college qualifiers in work, training and/or further study 3-6 months after qualifying The total number of full-time HE college qualifiers (Confirmed destination) The number of full-time HE college qualifiers in work, training and/or further study 3-6 months after qualifying The proportion of full-time HE college qualifiers in work, training and/or further study 3-6 months after qualifying						
8)	Number of full time college qualifiers in work, training and/or further study 3-6 months after qualifying Proportion of full time college qualifiers in work, training and/or further study 3-6 months after qualifying	N/A N/A		1,575 94%	1,575 94%	1,575 94%	
9)	The percentage of students overall, satisfied with their college experience (SSES survey) Response rate Full-time Part-time Distance Learning						
9)	SSES Survey - The percentage of students overall, satisfied with their college experience	94%	94%	95%	95%	95%	
10)	Gross carbon footprint	2,262 tCO2	N/A	2,221 tCO2	2,180 tCO2	2,139 tCO2	

Notes: ⁽¹⁾ Please note that more detailed target setting to address subject specific under-representation will be required as part of the College's Gender Action Plan (Access & Inclusion Strategy)

⁽²⁾ Revised target - Definition of STEM activity includes more Superclass categories than when setting targets for 2016/17. The revised definition is reflected in performance and targets, but not current year target.

⁽³⁾ Revised target - now includes MAs from industry bodies. Note that 2016/17 Target and past performance reflects only directly contracted MAs.

* **Key priority measure**

1. Purpose

To provide Strategic Development Committee members with a profile of our full time applications and to provide a report on progress towards meeting our enrolment and Credits targets.

2. Recommendation

That members consider the content of the report, and consider any further analysis required.

3. Background

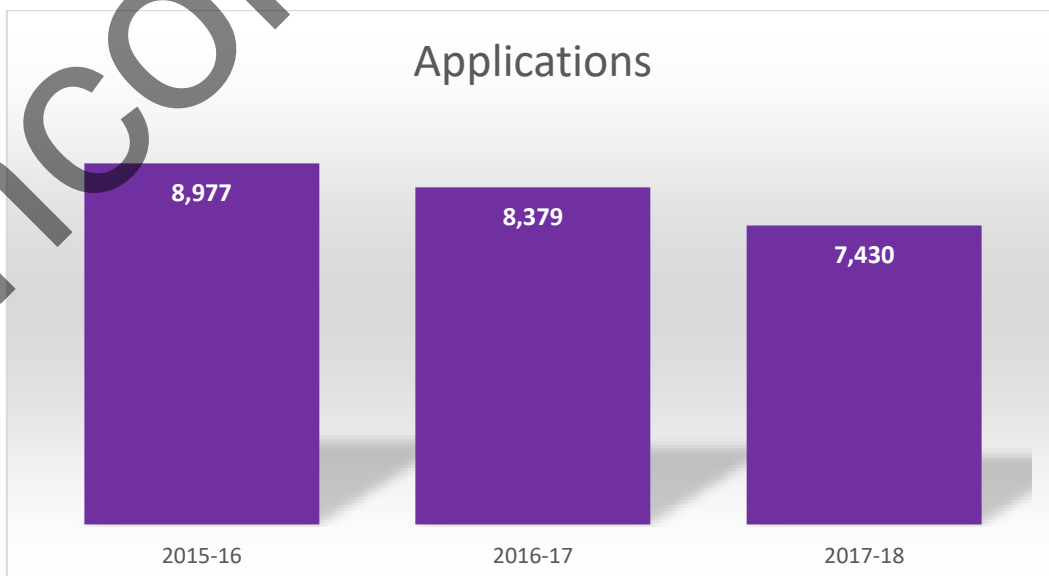
The College has a strong track record on meeting its activity targets, and could face financial claw-back if this target is not met. This report provides an update on how the College is progressing towards our activity targets for Session 2017/18. This paper also provides information on the profile of our full-time applications, over the last few years, with a focus on applications for the current session.

4. Key Considerations

Applications trend

Now that our main recruitment for August start full-time students has completed an analysis of applications received has been undertaken to allow this information to be used in preparation for recruitment for Session 2018/19. The numbers behind the charts are provided in table format within Appendix 1. Figure 1 shows that our overall student applications have decreased year-on-year over the last three sessions, noting that the target number of places available has been approximately 3,100 over each of these three years.

Figure 1: Overall student applications



This trend is displayed when the information is interrogated by all characteristics. Figure 2 shows the three year trend by teaching Department, with applications for all Teaching Departments falling from Session 2015-16 to Session 2017-18, with only the Department of Care, Health & Sport displaying an increase in application from Session 2016-17 to Session 2017-18. Figure 3 display this information by Campus highlighting the same trend.

Figure 2: Applications by Teaching Departments

Department	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
AP	710	602	530
ASME	808	720	644
BS	1,236	1,313	959
CI	1,665	1,597	1,467
CO	706	564	464
CR	2,038	1,718	1,808
EICE	522	490	399
HSS	1,292	1,375	1,159

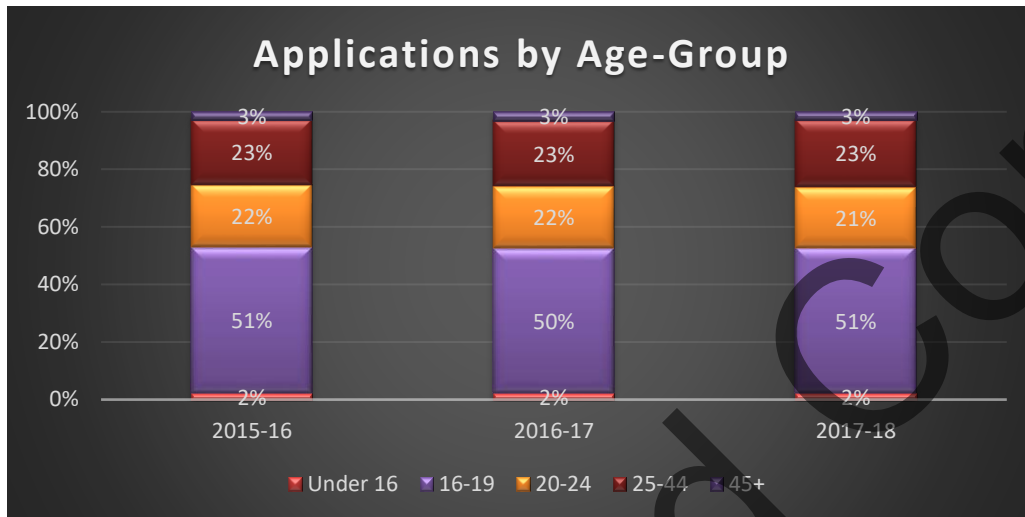
Figure 3: Applications by Campus

Campus	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Alloa	1,520	1,411	1,297
Falkirk	5,008	4,621	4,063
Stirling	2,449	2,347	2,070

Consistency of information

Having established that we have a downward trend in applications year-on-year we then looked at the ratio/percentage of applications for each of the three sessions by a variety of characteristics such as age, gender, SIMD decile, domicile, disability etc with the result being that our application data over these three sessions has been remarkably consistent, with only very small percentage changes witnessed regardless of characteristic. Figure 4 below provides applications by age-group as an example of this consistency.

Figure 4: Applications by Age-Group



Session 2017-18 Applications

Given the consistency of spread of applications across the three sessions our focus has been on Session 2017-18 to profile our applications. Figure 5 shows our applications by Council Area, which is as expected, however given its population would we expect the overall percentage of applications from Stirling to be higher?

Figure 5: 2017-18 Applications by Council Area

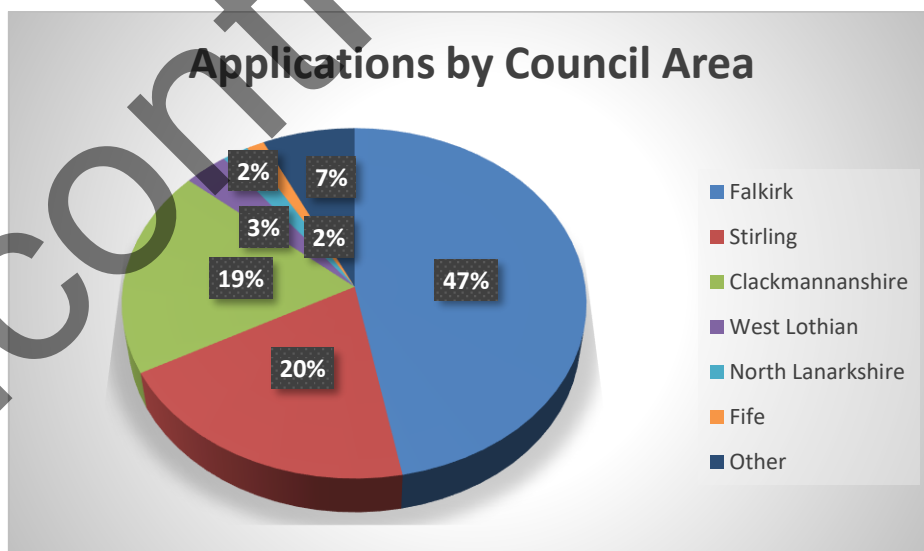
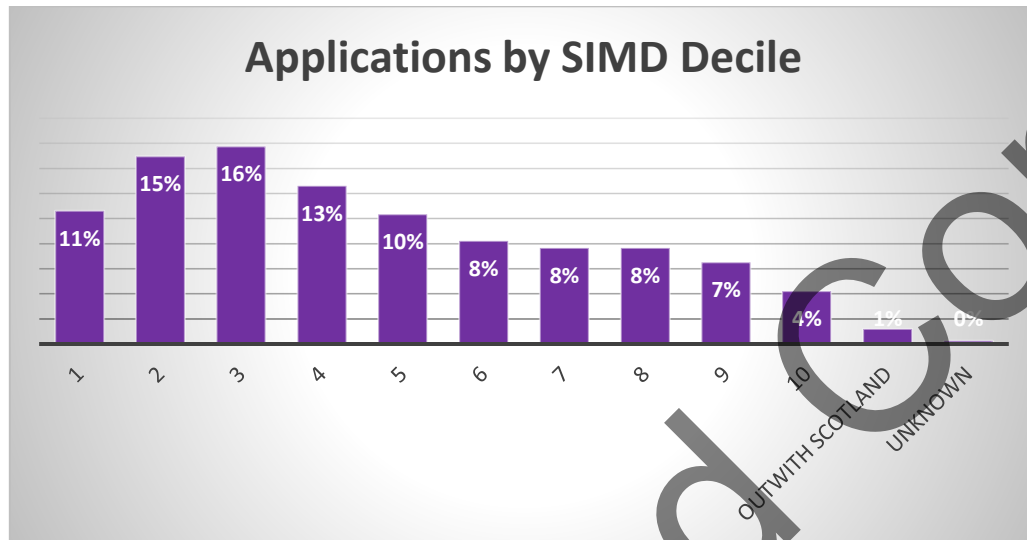


Figure 6 displays applications by Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) deciles, with 1 being the most deprived and 10 being the most affluent. This shows that we are attracting 11% of our applications from the most deprived 10% (MD10) and 55% from the most deprived 40% (MD40). As a comparison, 7% of Forth Valley's population reside within MD10.

Figure 6: 2017-18 Applications by SIMD Decile



Overall, our applications are split by 58% from females and 41% from males, however there are larger imbalances when you look at gender split (Figure 7) by Teaching Department, which is further witnessed at subject area (superclass) and course level.

Figure 7: 2017-18 Applications by Gender

Department	Female	Male	Other	Prefer not to say
AP	55.7%	43.4%	0.4%	0.6%
ASME	38.4%	61.3%	0.2%	0.2%
BS	68.0%	31.8%	0.0%	0.2%
CI	39.8%	59.4%	0.2%	0.6%
CO	6.5%	93.5%	0.0%	0.0%
CR	81.9%	18.0%	0.0%	0.2%
EICE	12.3%	87.2%	0.0%	0.5%
HSS	86.7%	12.8%	0.3%	0.3%
Overall	58.4%	41.1%	0.1%	0.3%

Conversion to Offer

In Session 2017-18 41% (3,066) of all applications were converted to offer, 34% (2,533) were withdrawn or suspended due to lack of activity by the applicant, for 13% (1,000) of applications the course criteria wasn't met or the applicant was referred to an alternative course, while for 11% (811) of applications the outcome was that the course was full (includes waiting lists) or no offer was given. Of the 811 in this category, 553 applicants were given no offer of a place, while 278 were either placed on a waiting list or informed that the course was full.

Figure 8: 2017-18 Applications by Status

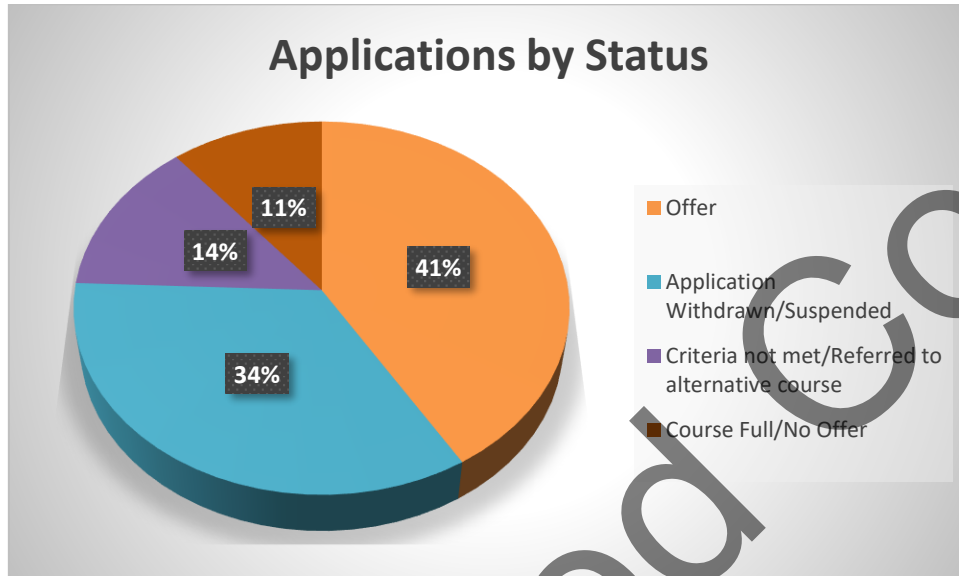
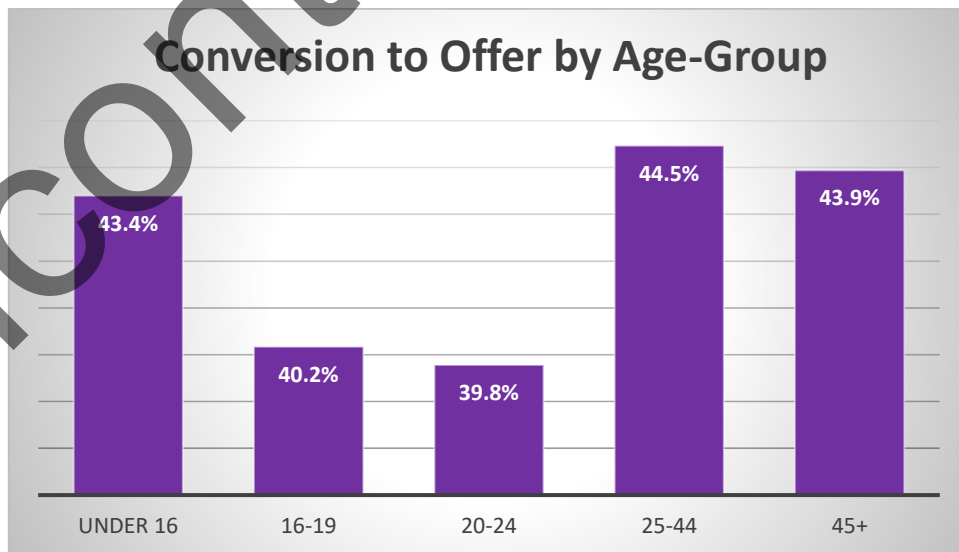


Figure 9 displays conversion to offer rates by age-group, and suggests that younger and more mature applicants are slightly more likely to convert to offer than those in the 16-19 and 20-24 year old age-groups. However it should be noted from Figure 4 that 51% of enrolments come from 16-19 year olds, and that there are a much lower number of applications from Under 16s and those aged 45 plus.

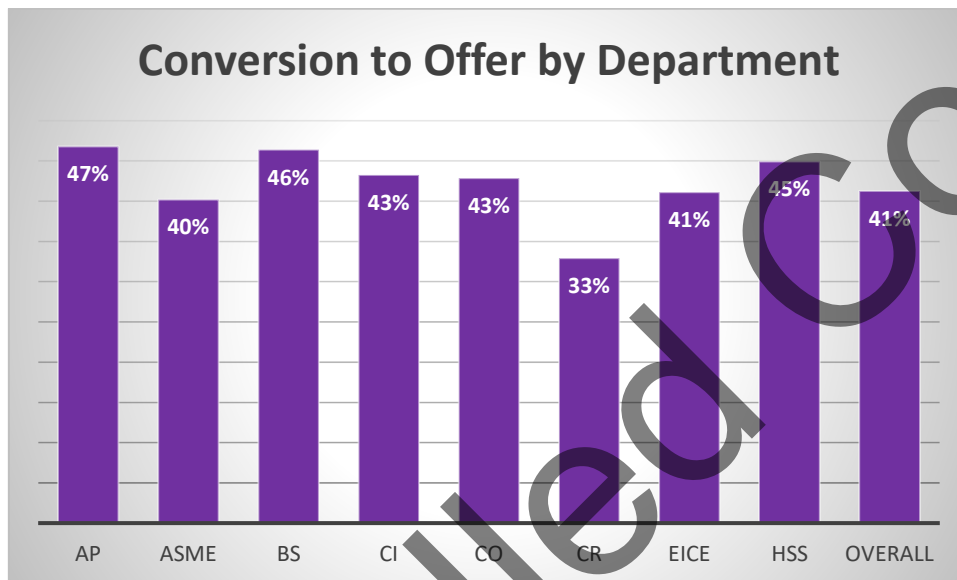
Figure 9: 2017-18 Conversion to Offer by Age-Group



Comparing conversion rates across Departments (Figure 10) demonstrates that Care, Health & Sport has the lowest conversion rate at 33%, most likely due to high levels of competition for

places, while Access & Progression (47%), Business (46%) and Hospitality and Salon Services (45%) are well above the College average of 41%.

Figure 10: 2017-18 Conversion to Offer by Department



Figures 11 and 12 display females and males converting to offer by Department respectively. Overall the percentage of male applications converting to offer is higher than female applications converting to offer. Interestingly, the two Departments with the largest imbalance of application from females, Construction and Electrical Instrumentation & Chemical Engineering, have higher conversion rates for females compared to males.

Figure 11: 2017-18 Females Converting to Offer

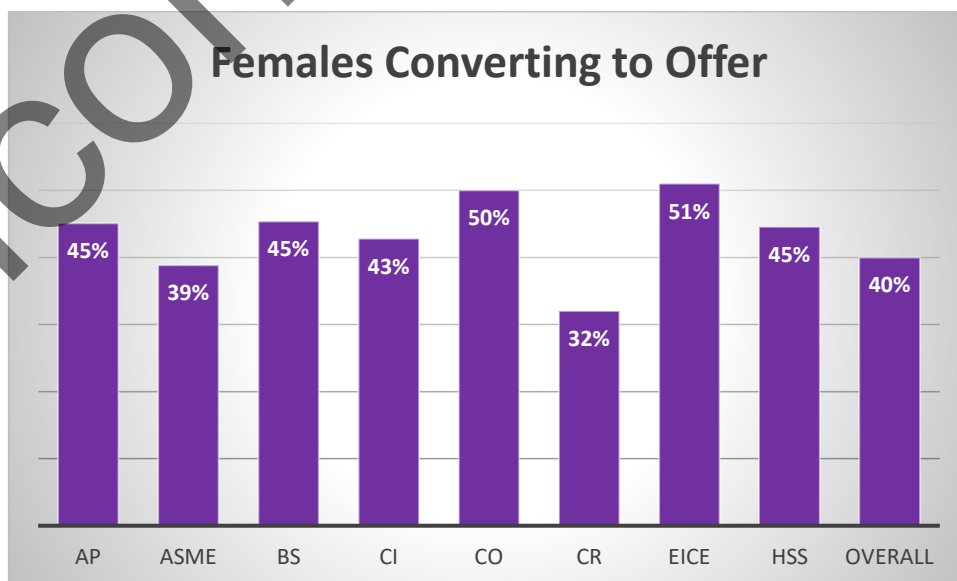
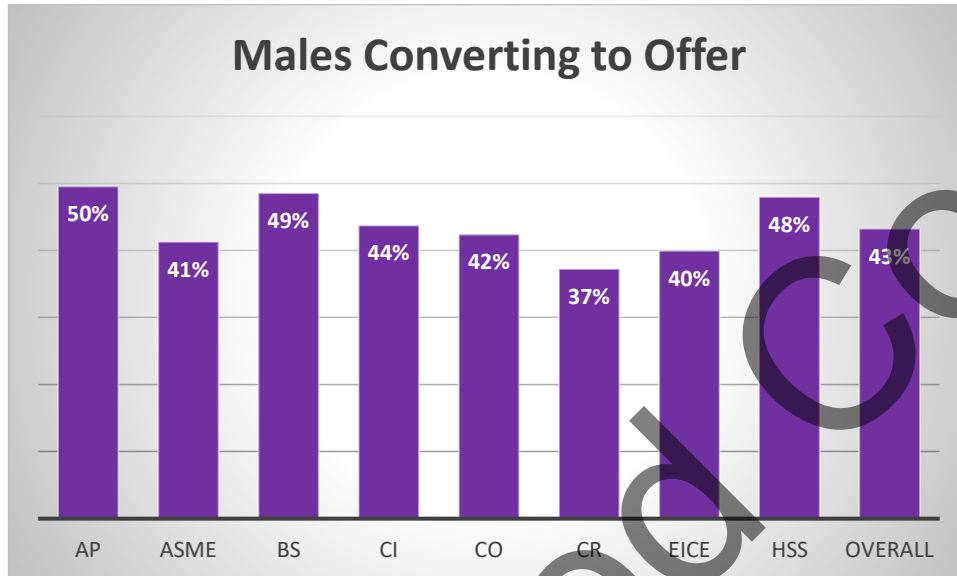


Figure 12: 2017-18 Males Converting to Offer



A comparison of conversion rates by SIMD deciles suggests that there are small variances by deciles, however most are close to the average of 41%. There is a significantly lower conversion rate for applicants from out-with Scotland. Unknown tends to be from applicants from newer housing which isn't yet matched to the SIMD database.

Figure 13: 2017-18 SIMD Decile converting to Offer

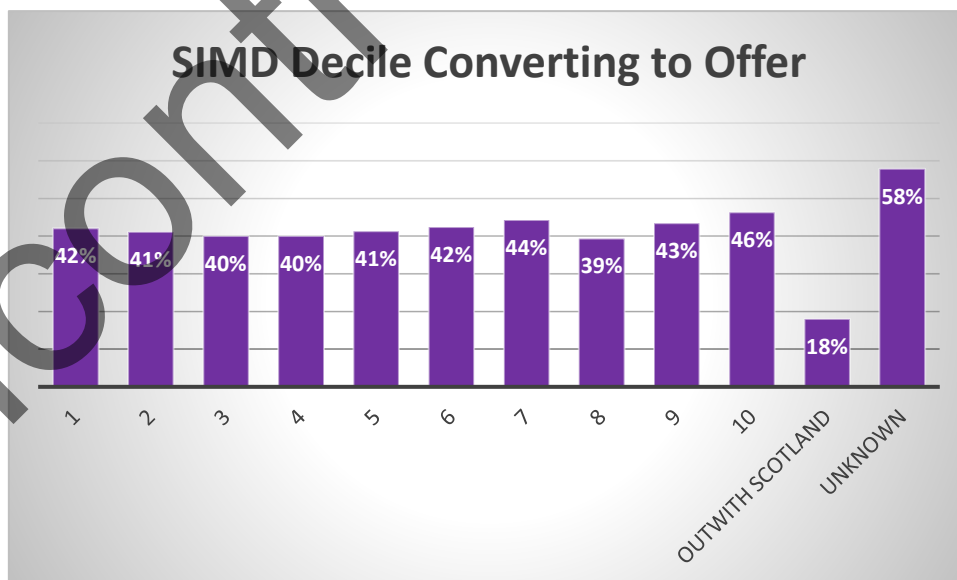
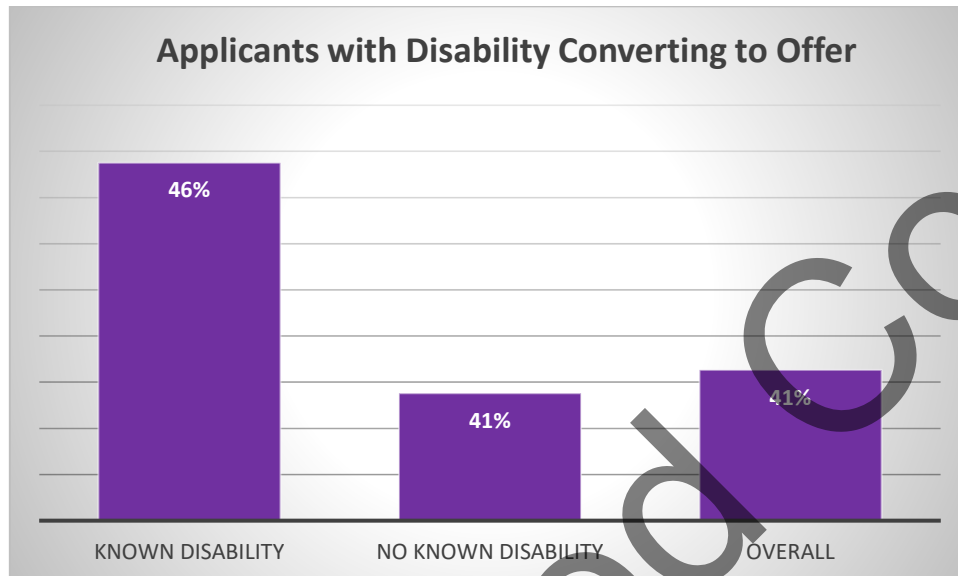


Figure 14 demonstrates that applicants who have declared a disability have a higher conversion rate to Offer, than those with no declared disability.

Figure 14: 2017-18 Applicants with a declared disability converting to Offer



Session 2017-18 Enrolments

Figure 15 shows a comparison of full time enrolments at the same point last year. As previously reported we have seen a drop in demand for our full time FE courses. Anecdotally, more potential college students are staying on at school, and with the economy showing signs of recovery this may signal a movement in College recruitment from full time study to other modes of study, as we have seen in the past. Similar to last year we have also seen students with offers at HE level not converting to enrolment, as they have been offered a place at university, however our HE courses have fared better than last year, largely due to additional places being offered within Care. Included within our HE figures are associated students through our Integrated Degree Programmes with the University of Stirling and linked programmes with Heriot Watt and Strathclyde, which have also faced recruitment challenges.

Figure 15 – Full Time Recruitment Summary

Level	Department	Enrolments 16/17 as at 03/11/16	Enrolments 17/18	Variance	% Variance
FE	Access & Progression	240	228	-12	-5%
	Applied Science, Maths & Mechanical Engineering	187	164	-23	-12%
	Business	179	141	-38	-21%
	Creative Industries	254	244	-10	-4%
	Construction	140	110	-30	-21%
	Care, Health & Sport	326	326	0	0%
	Electrical Instrumentation & Chemical Engineering	149	97	-52	-35%
	Hospitality & Salon Services	357	351	-6	-2%
FE Total		1,832	1,661	-171	-9%
HE	Access & Progression	17	21	4	24%
	Applied Science, Maths & Mechanical Engineering	124	128	4	3%
	Business	309	275	-34	-11%
	Creative Industries	405	381	-24	-6%
	Construction	46	64	18	39%
	Care, Health & Sport	177	262	85	48%
	Electrical Instrumentation & Chemical Engineering	127	142	15	12%
	Hospitality & Salon Services	114	117	3	3%
HE Total		1,319	1,390	71	5%
Overall		3,151	3,051	-100	-3%

Figure 16 shows overall recruitment for this session compared to last session at this point. Overall, enrolments have increased by 8%, with increases being witnessed within part time and evening. There may be elements of timing in these figures, however we have witnessed a marked increase in enrolment numbers for our evening provision, both through our website, and through information evenings.

Figure 16 – Session enrolment comparison by mode of attendance

Mode of Attendance	Enrolments 2016/17 as at 3/11/16	Enrolments 2017/18	Variance	% Variance
Full Time	3,151	3,051	-100	-3%
Part Time	2,614	2,977	363	14%
Evening	682	987	305	45%
Assessment of Work Based Learning	484	490	6	1%
Flexible/Distance Learning	430	409	-21	-5%
Total	7,361	7,914	553	8%

Session 2017/18 Progress towards our Activity Target

Our overall Credits target has increased by 663 due to an allocation of additional Credits to meet the need for more trained Child Care staff to meet the Government's commitments in this area, with this allocation coming after our Curriculum Review process.

Significant progress has been made towards our overall Credits target, however the current estimate is that we currently still have a Credits gap of approximately 3,600 Credits, based on current delivery and planned delivery, as per Figure 17. This is predominantly a result of full time enrolments being below target.

Work is ongoing from Departments and SMT to identify additional provision to ensure we close this gap, and deliver to our Activity target. To date we have identified additional provision which could deliver 2,700 further Credits, and implementation is underway. This has included additional January start provision, both full time and part time, additional evening classes, and additional flexible learning provision.

Figure 18 shows a comparison of this session with last session at this time by way of comparison, which shows that we are just over 200 Credits better off this session than last year at this time.

Figure 17 – Credits 2017/18

Credits Allocation	Total
Core Grant	83,984
ESF	2,230
Additional Care Credits	663
WSUMs Target	86,877

Credits Mode of Attendance	Current Credits	Estimated Credits	Total Credits
Full Time	47,933	3,678	51,611
Part Time	14,572	4,682	19,254
Evening	2,721	740	3,461
Assessment of Work Based Learning	1,934	2,900	4,834
Flexible/Distance Learning	1,115	2,950	4,065
Total	68,275	14,950	83,225

Variance	3,652
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Figure 18 – Credits Comparison

Mode of Attendance	Credits 2016/17 as at 3/11/16	Credits 2017/18	Variance	% Variance
Full Time	49,858	47,933	-1,925	-4%
Part Time	13,146	14,572	1,426	11%
Evening	2,001	2,721	720	36%
Assessment of Work Based Learning	1,880	1,934	54	3%
Flexible/Distance Learning	1,179	1115	-64	-5%
Total	68,064	68,275	211	0%

5. Financial Implications

Please detail the financial implications of this item – There is potential for SFC to claw-back funding if the College does not achieve its activity target.

6. Equalities

Assessment in Place? – Yes No

If No, please explain why – All of our courses are analysed at Department and Course level in relation to protected characteristics, with Departments actively involved in addressing any imbalances.

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

7. Risk

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

	Likelihood	Impact
Very High		
High		
Medium	X	X
Low		
Very Low		

Please describe any risks associated with this paper and associated mitigating actions – There is a risk of financial claw-back if the College doesn't achieve its Activity Target. The College's SMT will closely monitor progress against our Activity target, and our teaching Departments have developed proposals, to ensure that the target is met.

Risk Owner – David Allison

Action Owner – David Allison

8. Other Implications –

Please indicate whether there are implications for the areas below.

Communications – Yes No

Health and Safety – Yes No

Please provide a summary of these implications -

Paper Author – David Allison

SMT Owner – David Allison

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Appendix 1 - Application Profile Data

Figure 4: Applications by Age-Group

Age-Group	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Under 16	192	179	159
16-19	4,565	4,231	3,759
20-24	1,944	1,803	1,571
25-44	2,024	1,906	1,743
45+	252	260	198

Figure 5: 2017-18 Applications by Council Area

Council Area	Applications
Falkirk	3,492
Stirling	1,497
Clackmannanshire	1,420
West Lothian	248
North Lanarkshire	151
Fife	100
Other	522

Figure 6: 2017-18 Applications by SIMD Decile

SIMD Decile	Applications
1	790
2	1,111
3	1,170
4	937
5	768
6	611
7	569
8	569
9	484
10	313
Outwith Scotland	89
Unknown	19

Figure 7: 2017-18 Applications by Gender

Department	Female	Male	Other	Prefer not to say
AP	295	230	2	3
ASME	247	395	1	1
BS	652	305		2
CI	584	871	3	9
CO	30	434		
CR	1,480	325		3
EICE	49	348		2
HSS	1,005	148	3	3
Overall	4,342	3,056	9	23

Figure 8: 2017-18 Applications by Status

Status	Applications
Offer	3,066
Course Full/No Offer	811
Criteria not met/Referred to alternative course	1,000
Application Withdrawn/Suspended	2,553

Figure 9: 2017-18 Conversion to Offer by Age-Group

Age-Group	Applications	Offers
Under 16	159	69
16-19	3,759	1,510
20-24	1,571	625
25-44	1,743	775
45+	198	87

Figure 10: 2017-18 Conversion to Offer by Department

Department	Applications	Offers
AP	530	248
ASME	644	259
BS	959	445
CI	1,467	635
CO	464	199
CR	1,808	595
EICE	399	164
HSS	1,159	521
Overall	7,430	3,066

Figure 11: 2017-18 Females Converting to Offer

Department	Applications	Offers
AP	295	133
ASME	247	96
BS	652	296
CI	584	250
CO	30	15
CR	1,480	474
EICE	49	25
HSS	1,005	448
Overall	4,342	1,737

Figure 12: 2017-18 Males Converting to Offer

Department	Applications	Offers
AP	230	114
ASME	395	163
BS	305	148
CI	871	381
CO	434	184
CR	325	121
EICE	348	139
HSS	148	71
Overall	3,056	1,321

Figure 13: 2017-18 SIMD Decile converting to Offer

SIMD Decile	Applications	Offers
1	790	332
2	1,111	457
3	1,170	468
4	937	375
5	768	317
6	611	259
7	569	252
8	569	224
9	484	210
10	313	145
Outwith Scotland	89	16
Unknown	19	11

Figure 14: 2017-18 Applicants with a declared disability converting to Offer

SIMD Decile	Applications	Offers
Known Disability	754	345
No Known Disability	6,676	2,721

1. Purpose

To provide the Strategic Development Committee with the College Scotland's Policy Briefing document and identify key issues currently being discussed at the College Principals Group.

2. Recommendation

That members note the content of issues currently being discussed at Colleges Scotland and see further information and understanding on key issues.

3. Background

The Strategic Development Committee has asked for background information on policy discussion at Scottish Government in relation to the FE and HE sector. Colleges Scotland currently provides a monthly policy briefing document which is attached for information. The Principal will update the Committee on the key policy drivers and attach appropriate papers for information.

4. Key Considerations

The Policy Briefing document for November is attached. At the College Principals Group (CPG) meeting held at Colleges Scotland on the 6 November 2017 there were three key policy drivers under discussion, namely:

1. Spending review Submission
2. Flexible Workforce Funding
3. Learner Journey 15-24

Spending Review Submission

Colleges Scotland have presented their Spending Review submission to Scottish Government, approved by the Colleges Scotland Board. In the document the following are discussed, sufficient funding made available to support the May 2017 agreement through the National Bargaining process. That capital funding is provided to ensure the backlog maintenance requirements are catered for and that future investment is a real term adjustment for inflation. This document has been seen by SFC and discussed with all political parties.

Flexible Workforce Funding

£10 million was identified from the Apprentice Levy to be allocated to Colleges on a pro rata basis to be utilised with Apprenticeship Levy paying companies for continued professional development that would have an impact on productivity. The funding would be capped at £10,000 per company. Forth Valley College have been allocated £460,000 which would relate to 46 different companies taking advantage of the funding. The SFC have asked for an update on the number of companies engaging with Colleges by the 15 December with the potential for a re-distribution should there be underspends. It is generally agreed the funding cap is too low and many Colleges are finding it challenging to allocate to interested parties within the time limit set by SFC. The Employability

Minister has been lobbied on these issues and is willing to reconsider the cap. Colleges Scotland will provide feedback to SFC nearer to the 15th date. Currently we have written to all Apprenticeship Levy payers in Forth Valley region and other employers we have a direct relationship with. At the time of writing we have 56 companies interested in further discussions. The Business Development team have worked very hard with this initiative and looks to result in a positive outcome for the College.

Learner Review 15-24.

Scottish Government have initiated a review of the Learner Journey from 15 to 24 with particular emphasis on the sixth year of school and the first year of University. There are five projects with representation on each of these from the college sector.

Project 1 – Learner Choice and Application

College lead: Lydia Rohmer

Project 2 – Careers information, advice and guidance

College lead: Hugh Hall

Project 3 – Access & application (single college application process)

College lead: Heather Dunk

Project 4 – Provision, Transition & Progression

College lead: Ken Thomson

Project 5 – Funding

College lead: Tony Jacimciw

The college sector position on the Learner Journey Review and each of the five projects, is proposed below.

Project 1 – Learner Choice and Application

The college sector's preferred position is that project 1 recommends a single digital platform which signposts to services which can help the young person find the information they require to make informed choices, and which includes an online folder to store information like the individual's skill sets, CVs, work experience and other relevant material. This platform should seamlessly integrate opportunities through apprenticeships, college or university provision.

Project 2 – Careers information, advice and guidance

The college sector's preferred position is that project 2 recommends a national approach to careers information, advice and guidance with colleges and universities to align existing quality frameworks to ensure equity of access and support for all learners across Scotland. Colleges should play a key role in ensuring students have access to quality CIAG in school, and before transition points between education levels.

Project 3 – Access & application (single college application process)

Perspectives on a single application system across the college sector vary significantly. Regional colleges are already processing applications on a regional basis, a pilot was undertaken in Fife/Dundee and Angus and some colleges (Fife and Forth Valley) are looking at more integrated

approaches across schools, local authorities and colleges, and in some cases universities too. The motivation for this project appears to be understanding unmet demand, and the college sector's likely position for project 3 will be for a nationally agreed and implemented data standard. A pilot expansion of the Forth Valley College application system would be welcomed.

Project 4 – Provision, Transition & Progression

The remit of project 4 is an extensive project, covering provision, transition and progression. The project has been broken down into five further subprojects, noted below:

Subproject 1 – Ensuring the learning offer enables all young people to progress in their learning, regardless of their abilities or intended destinations

Subproject 2 – Ensuring that young people are fully supported in making key transitions in learning

Subproject 3 – Improving knowledge, understanding and parity of existing pathways (qualifications & other experiences)

Subproject 4 – Ensuring that the design & delivery of the senior phase curriculum increases opportunity and choice

Subproject 5 – Use of data/measuring success across sectors to improve learner journeys

The college sector's position on project 4 is likely to be that the role of colleges in widening access to education should be recognised and supported to allow expansion. Opportunities to progress whilst changing course cannot, and indeed should not, be constrained by the individual's first choice of post-school pathway. Staff bridging opportunities should be provided, to ensure that colleagues across college and university are matching and aligning curricula. Pockets of good practice around creating seamless pathways from school to FE, and FE to HE, should be enhanced and expanded.

Project 5 – Funding

It is felt that the outcome from project 5 should be to prioritise the development of a system wide analysis of unit cost and rate of return, or decide it cannot be done.

Sleep In The Park

The attached policy briefing note provides information on the Sleep In the Park event designed to raise awareness of homelessness through a mass sleep out on 9 December in Edinburgh. College lecturer Ruth Davis is participating in Sleep in the Park with some of our Go Forth students, a programme that we run in collaboration with ASC - Addiction Support and Counselling.

5. Financial Implications

This is a discussion document and whilst there maybe financial implications when policy is agreed, currently there are no financial implications. We do however continue to scenario plan outcomes when they become more tangible.

6. Equalities

Assessment in Place? – No

If No, please explain why – Not required

7. Risk

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

	Likelihood	Impact
Very High		
High		
Medium	*	*
Low		
Very Low		

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

The important aspect of the policy briefing is to understand the intelligence as it develops so the Colleges are able to scenario plan decision making, risk and financial implications as they develop.

Risk Owner – Dr Ken Thomson

Action Owner – Dr Ken Thomson

8. Other Implications –

Please indicate whether there are implications for the areas below.

Communications – No
Health and Safety – No

Dear Chairs and Principals (copied to Board Secretaries and Principals PAs)

Please see below Issue 126 of our Policy Briefing Note.

We would be grateful if you could share the note with your senior management teams and board member colleagues or if you would like additional names added to the circulation list, please let us know.

Regards

Colleges Scotland

Tel: 01786 892100

Policy Briefing Note: Issue 126 – Friday 3 November 2017

1. College Contribution to Economy

Ministerial Meeting

The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) is hosting a meeting for principals of colleges and universities to discuss key changes to Outcome Agreements. The Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science, Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP, will be in attendance to discuss the Scottish Government's aspirations. The meeting will take place on **Wednesday 8 November 2017** (1030-1230) at Edinburgh College, Granton Campus. If you haven't already done so, please confirm your attendance by emailing admingroup@sfc.ac.uk.

National STEM Strategy Launched

The Scottish Government launched its [STEM Strategy](#) on Thursday 26 October 2017. Key actions include:

- Improving the supply of STEM talent to the teaching profession
- Establishing a new network of specialist STEM advisors for schools
- Addressing unconscious bias and gender stereotyping
- Prioritising STEM in the expansion of apprenticeships
- Increasing access to public science engagement events
- Creating positive STEM role models, mentors and coaches
- Delivering up-to-date advice and information on STEM careers.

Colleges Scotland issued a [media statement](#). The Scottish Government's press release is available to view on their [website](#).

Student Support Review

The full recommendations from the Student Support Review Board will be published in mid-November. Further details will be available in due course. Thank you to the colleges who provided short video clips of students speaking on their experience of student financial support which will be shown as part of a wider presentation at the launch of the review's report.

Four Nations FE Leadership Forum

A delegation of principals and Colleges Scotland attended the Four Nations FE Leadership Forum on Tuesday 24 and Wednesday 25 October 2017 in Belfast. The event provided an opportunity to share insights into the provision of education across the UK and build relationships with colleagues in England, Northern Ireland and Wales.

Overseas Vocational Education and Training (VET) Visitor

On Friday 27 October 2017, Colleges Scotland had the opportunity to meet with Mr Gincu, Director of VET Education, Republic of Moldova, in Stirling to hear more about their European Aid project and to share with him more about the college sector in Scotland.

SFC Gender National Conference

The SFC is holding a Gender National Conference on **Monday 4 December 2017** at the Hilton Edinburgh Carlton Hotel. The SFC will be publishing its first annual progress report on the implementation of the Gender Action Plan at the event. For further information and to register, visit the [SFC website](#). Please note that registration closes on **Friday 24 November 2017**.

Ethnic Minority Impact Awards 2017

Colleges Scotland and College Development Network (CDN) are jointly supporting this year's Ethnic Minority Impact Awards which take place on **Friday 17 November 2017** at the Marriott Hotel, Glasgow. Further information about the Awards is available on the [CEMVO website](#).

Scottish Strategy for Autism Questionnaire

The Scottish Government is seeking views on the final phase of the Scottish Strategy for Autism via an [online questionnaire](#). They are keen for as many people with an interest to participate, particularly those on the spectrum. The deadline for responding is **Wednesday 29 November 2017**.

Sleep in the Park

[Sleep in the Park](#) is a mass sleepout being held on **Saturday 9 December 2017** in Princes Street Gardens, Edinburgh, which aims to tackle homelessness in Scotland. The initiative is being supported by the third and private sectors as well as the Scottish Government. Colleges are being given an allocation of free tickets for students as a result of philanthropists having donated money to fund places for students; please email a.mahon@capital-events.co.uk for details.

Christmas Jumper Day 2017

Colleges Scotland has signed up to Save the Children's [Christmas Jumper Day](#) which takes place on **Friday 15 December 2017**. Christmas Jumper Day aims to 'make the world better with a sweater' and staff will be making a donation to wear one on the day. Our text code for donations is TEAMCOSCO for anyone wishing to support this good cause.

2. Parliament

Education and Skills Committee

On Wednesday 25 October 2017, the committee took evidence on the Children and Young People (Information Sharing) (Scotland) Bill. Maggie Murphy, Glasgow Kelvin College, gave evidence on behalf of the sector – view the [Official Report](#) and [watch a recording](#).

Cross Party Group on Skills

The next meeting including AGM is scheduled for **Tuesday 21 November 2017**, further details will be available in due course. To attend this meeting, please [email Joanne Buchan](#).

Cross Party Group on Colleges and Universities

The next meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday 13 December 2017**, further details will be available in due course. To attend this meeting, please [email Boab](#) at Universities Scotland.

Consultations

A reminder that Colleges Scotland is preparing sector responses to the following consultations:

- [Consultation](#) on Free Bus Travel for Older and Disabled People and Modern Apprentices (deadline for submissions is **Friday 17 November 2017**)
- [Consultation](#) on Measuring the Attainment Gap and Milestones Towards Closing it (deadline for submission is **Monday 20 November 2017**)
- [Consultation](#) on Rural and Remoteness Funding Review – Scottish Funding Council (deadline for submissions is **Monday 4 December 2017**)
- [Consultation](#) on the Proposed Sanitary Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Bill (deadline for submissions is **Friday 8 December 2017**)
- [Inquiry](#) into Immigration in Scotland – Westminster's Scottish Affairs Committee (deadline for submissions to the committee is **Sunday 31 December 2017**. Colleges Scotland will be submitting evidence by mid-November)
- [Consultation](#) on Excellence and Equity for All: Guidance on the Presumption of Mainstreaming (deadline for submissions is **Friday 9 February 2018**).

We would be grateful if you could share your views or your own college responses at least one week before the deadline; please email policy@collegesscotland.ac.uk.

The recent consultations we have responded to are available to view on our [website](#) for information.

3. Funding

National Bargaining

The next meeting of the NJNC Side Table (Lecturing) is scheduled for **Wednesday 8 November 2017**. Meetings of the NJNC Side Table (Lecturing) and Side Table (Support) are scheduled for **Thursday 16 November 2017**.

SFC Publications

The SFC has published the following documents since the last briefing note:

- [Amendments to Student Support Regulations 2017-18](#)
- [College Student Satisfaction Survey 2016-17](#)
- [College Outcome Agreement Guidance 2018-19](#)
- [University Outcome Agreement Guidance 2018-19](#)
- [Evaluating Contextual Admissions Data](#)

Key Information/Events/Dates

The General Teaching Council (GTC) Scotland Annual Report

The GTC Scotland has published its [Annual Report 2017](#). The report sets out GTC Scotland's progress against its strategic objectives, highlighting performance over the reporting period, key activities and events. As the Scottish Government's review of Education Governance continues, the report shares GTC Scotland's plans for the coming year and the ways in which the organisation is ensuring it is fully prepared for any changes.

Scottish Public Service Ombudsman (SPSO) Annual Report

The SPSO has published its Annual Report 2016/17. The SPSO is committed to developing and promoting learning, impact and public service improvement activities that add lasting value to Scottish public services. A copy of the report can be downloaded from the [SPSO website](#).

The Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland (CESPLS) Annual Report

The CESPLS has published its Annual Report and Accounts for 2016-17 which were laid before the Scottish Parliament on Monday 30 October 2017. A copy for the report is available to download from the [CESPLS website](#).

Teaching Psychology in Schools & Colleges – Event Report

The British Psychological Society (Scotland) held an event on Thursday 1 June 2017 in Edinburgh on psychology education in Scottish schools and colleges. This was the first event of its kind, bringing together organisations and individuals from a range of backgrounds and perspectives – school teachers, college lecturers, university academics, student teachers, representatives from national education agencies. A copy of the event report is attached for information.

Education Buildings Scotland Conference

A reminder that the inaugural [Education Buildings Scotland Exhibition & Conference](#), in partnership with the Scottish Government, will bring Scottish education built environment and policy professionals together from early years, schools, colleges and universities. The event takes place on **Tuesday 21 and Wednesday 22 November 2017** at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre and is free for all those directly employed in colleges. Speakers include Jackie Galbraith, Vice Principal – Strategy and Skills, Ayrshire College, Carol Turnbull, Principal, Dumfries and Galloway College and Dr Ken Thomson, Principal, Forth Valley College.

Scottish Knowledge Exchange Awards 2018

A reminder that entries are open for the Scottish Knowledge Exchange Awards which are designed to celebrate the impacts achieved through innovative knowledge exchange collaborations. For the first time, this year they are accepting applications from colleges. There are five categories:

- Building Skills through Knowledge Exchange Award
- Innovation of the Year Award
- Multiparty Collaboration Award
- Outstanding Contribution to Knowledge Exchange Award
- Social and Environmental Impact Award

For further information and to enter, please visit the [Interface website](#). The deadline for entering is **5pm on Monday 27 November 2017**.

EduTech FE & HE 2017 Conference

A reminder that the [EduTech FE & HE 2017](#) conference will take place **Thursday 30 November 2017** at Strathclyde University. The event aims to gain a greater understanding of the latest, most innovative digital developments and their transformational powers for both students and staff. It will cover many areas including: implementing digital transformation across your institution, learning analytics, the augmented reality revolution, technology and the poverty related attainment gap, the vital role of computer science and engaging women in tech and bridging the digital skills gap. Get tickets [here](#).

UK Council for International Student Advisers (UKCISA) Seminar

UKCISA is holding a seminar on **Monday 27 November 2017** (1300-1630) at the University of Strathclyde. The seminar is for anyone with an interest in international student issues and will provide an opportunity to develop and maintain local networks. Edinburgh College will be presenting at this event. For further information and to book online, please visit the [UKCISA website](#).

CDN Marketing Awards 2018

The CDN Marketing Awards are now open for entries in the following nine categories:

- Communications and PR
- Customer Experience
- Design
- Digital Marketing
- Events
- Integrated Marketing Campaign
- Internal Communications
- Market/Marketing Research
- Promotional Literature.

For further details and to enter online, visit the [CDN website](#). The deadline for entries is **Friday 15 December 2017**.

Dates

- **SQA Star Awards Ceremony 2017** - Friday 3 November 2017 in The Assembly Rooms, Edinburgh.
- **Holyrood's Staying The Course: Support and Retention in Further Education Conference** – Tuesday 14 November 2017 in Edinburgh. [Book online](#).
- **The Skills Show** – Thursday 18 – Saturday 20 November 2017 at the NEC, Birmingham. [Book online](#).
- **European Vocational Skills Week** – Monday 20 November 2017 – Friday 24 November 2017.
- **CDN College Awards** – Thursday 23 November 2017 at the Glasgow Hilton Hotel. [Book online](#).
- **Edutech FE & HE 2017 – Post 16 conference** on Thursday 30 November 2017, Glasgow. [Book online](#).
- **Scotland Policy Conferences – Next Steps for Apprenticeships and Skills Development in Scotland** – Wednesday 6 December 2017 in Edinburgh. [Book online](#).
- **SCQF Partnership Conference** – Thursday 22 February 2018. [Book online](#).

Upcoming Key Meetings

- **College Principals' Group** – 1000-1400 on Monday 6 November 2017 at Argyll Court, Stirling
 - **All Chairs' and Principals' Meeting** – 1200-1600 on Wednesday 22 November 2017, venue tbc (postponed)
 - **College Principals' Group** – 1000-1400 on Monday 4 December 2017 at Argyll Court, Stirling (it is envisaged that this meeting will be replaced by the new College Principals' Group Strategic Forums)
 - **Employers' Association** – 1000-1400 on Monday 11 December 2017 at Argyll Court, Stirling
 - **Funding and Finance Committee** – 1200-1400 on Wednesday 13 December 2017 at Scottish Enterprise, Edinburgh (postponed)
-



A report from the British Psychological Society, Scotland. October 2017.

Teaching Psychology in Scottish Schools and Colleges - the Future

Introduction

This report describes the ongoing work of the British Psychological Society Scottish Branch's (BPS-S) Pre-Tertiary Working Group¹, which was set up in 2016. The remit of the group is to gather information on all aspects of pre-tertiary Psychology education in Scotland and to identify areas of concern and where support is needed. To date this group has completed two major pieces of work during 2017: an audit of pre-tertiary education providers on their perception of current and future Psychology education provision, and a one-day conference of key stakeholders involved in Psychology education in Scotland, held in Edinburgh on 1st June. In this report we summarise the key findings of the audit, the main themes raised by stakeholders at the conference, and proposals for future actions.

Overview of pre-tertiary Psychology teaching in context

In Scotland, Psychology has been taught in further education colleges since the early 1990s and in schools since 1999, and its popularity reflects the pattern of growth internationally over the last few decades; Psychology is popular in schools in at least ten other European countries, and is long-established in US high schools.

Prior to 2016, the only teacher training in Psychology was the in-service TQFE (Teaching Qualification for Further Education) for college lecturers. Many Psychology teachers in schools therefore initially trained in and taught other school subjects before starting to teach Psychology. Some have added Psychology to their teaching qualification via GTCS' Professional Registration process. A new Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE, secondary) course in Psychology teaching began in the academic year 2016-17 at the University of Strathclyde, allowing newly qualified teachers (NQTs) in Psychology to enter the profession for the first time. The Working Group are unaware of any plans for courses at other institutions, although, anecdotally, demand from Psychology graduates appears to be high.

¹ The Pre-Tertiary Working Group comprises: Jason Bohan, Jonathan Firth, Kirsten Russell and Morag Williamson.

In Scottish schools, the main courses taught are the National Qualifications (NQs) provided by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA): National 5 Psychology (or 'N5') and Higher Psychology. There is currently no Advanced Higher (AH) or National 4 ('N4'). Both N5 and Higher involve a practical research assignment and an exam, both externally assessed. In 2017, 622 candidates sat the N5, and 3666 sat the Higher qualifications; entry figures have increased steadily since the first exams in 2000. These courses are also taught at most FE colleges, and in addition, many college students study for the Higher National Certificate (HNC) and/or Higher National Diploma (HND) in Social Sciences; these courses are at SCQF levels 7 and 8, and include elements of Psychology and research methods (as well as Sociology, History and Politics). Psychology is cited as being the third most popular subject studied at UK universities (Trapp et al, 2011) and the SQA figures show that, in a Scottish context, this popularity extends to pre-tertiary education, with room for further expansion.

Teachers of Psychology in schools and colleges have formed a strong community, with activities including events, sharing of resources, and peer support. Most teachers engage in either the Association for the Teaching of Psychology Scotland (ATPS, c.60 members), or the PsychEmail network (c.170 participants), or both.

However, whilst studying Psychology in Scotland's schools and colleges is increasingly popular there has been little data collected on educational leaders' views as to the current provision and future growth of Psychology as a subject. As such, in 2016 the BPS-S established a Pre-Tertiary Working Group to address this issue. Their remit was to gather information on all aspects of pre-tertiary education in Scotland and to identify areas of concern and where support is needed.

Initially the Working Group conducted an audit of Scottish education providers and asked a range of questions related to their perception of the subject and its place in the curriculum, as well as how the subject is delivered at their institution. In addition, the Working Group organised an open conference on the state of pre-tertiary Psychology education in Scotland and invited key stakeholders to the event. This provided an opportunity for individuals and organisations across the education sectors to discuss the issues they see as important to the continuing future growth of Psychology in pre-tertiary education. The outcomes of both are summarised in the following sections.

Audit of provision of Pre-tertiary Psychology Education

An online questionnaire was emailed to 429 Scottish school head teachers and 17 FE college principals in March/April 2017. Of these, 36 schools and 6 FE colleges completed the survey.

81% of the school responses revealed that pupils were currently studying Psychology, with 39% responding that Psychology was taught in-school by staff members, and 42% taught via their local FE College. 19% reported that Psychology was not available to pupils. However, these percentages should be treated with caution due to the size of the sample, and the possibility that centres which currently offer Psychology were more likely to respond.

This popularity of the subject was also reflected with 76% heads estimating that there was a high-to-medium demand for N5/Higher Psychology from pupils and parents. As well as its inherent interest value, the popularity of the subject may well relate to the skills it provides; 91% of head teachers viewed it as a useful subject for developing skills for life, work and future study.

The survey also asked questions related to Psychology's place within the wider curriculum. There was general agreement that Psychology was considered to be a science comparable to the natural sciences (68%). But unlike other science subjects there was less agreement on whether it should be a core subject in the curriculum; only 24% agreed / strongly agreed, 35% neither agreed nor disagreed, 41% disagreed / strongly disagreed. So, whilst the subject is popular and considered valuable for assisting personal and academic development, the majority were less sure that it should be a core subject in the curriculum.

Other questions related to who should be teaching Psychology. Head teachers were asked if Psychology NQ courses "could potentially be taught well in my centre by a teacher of another subject, even if they have not studied Psychology at degree level". 63% disagreed / strongly disagreed with this statement, with only 24% agreeing / strongly agreeing. This suggests that most head teachers see the value in employing Psychology teachers who have training and a degree specific to the subject. In open responses, some head teachers pointed out that employing a Psychology teacher was a luxury in the current financial situation, whilst others suggested that Psychology teachers could positively contribute across the broader curriculum.

College responses must be treated with great caution as only six of the 17 FE colleges responded; those who did respond may well be those that already view the subject favourably, therefore these results should not be treated as indicative of the state of Psychology in the FE sector in general.

All college respondents said they provided a range of Psychology courses: all offered Higher Psychology, and all but one offered Psychology National 5. Five of the six delivered Psychology within HNC/HND courses and almost all provided Psychology units as elements of other courses. Modes of provision included daytime classes, evening classes and school-college partnerships.

Similar to the data from schools, the popularity of the subject was again evident in this sector, in that all but one college respondent estimated demand for Psychology to be 'high'. As for perceptions of the value and status of the subject in the curriculum, there was strong agreement that a Higher or N5 Psychology compared well to other subjects in developing useful skills for life, work and future study, and also that Psychology is a research-based, scientific subject. This positive evaluation of the subject was also reflected in the consensus view that, in order to ensure it is well taught, lecturers should have studied Psychology at degree level. In addition, most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Psychology should be taught in all colleges at multiple levels, suggesting that colleges may see Psychology as a core curriculum element to a greater extent than schools. There was substantial agreement that Psychology lecturers can contribute to the broader college curriculum, such as cross-curricular promotion of wellbeing, interdisciplinary projects, and in-house CPD on teaching and learning, and young people's social-emotional development.

In sum, data from both schools and colleges, though limited, show high demand from students for Psychology, positive perceptions of its value and status as a subject in the overall curriculum, and agreement that it should be taught by those with an appropriate degree-level qualification in the discipline. Based on the responses submitted, one apparent difference between the sectors is that colleges see Psychology as having greater importance in their curriculum than do schools. We might speculate that this may be, at least in part, attributable to the sectors' different histories of delivering Psychology: many colleges have a long-established tradition of Psychology education, having offered 'NC' Units from the early 1990s onwards; they were thus relatively well-prepared for teaching the new NQ courses in 1999, in terms of degree-qualified staff and resources. In addition, many college staff teach Psychology at both HE and FE level, strengthening their ability to provide Psychology education. For schools the process has been more recent and more complex: Psychology was not taught in schools before 1999, and although demand from pupils for the new courses was evident from the start, a general lack of school staff with a Psychology qualification led to a more chequered pattern of provision, including school-college partnerships and delivery by teachers of other subjects, or indeed non-provision; many schools still do not offer Psychology.

Event: Teaching Psychology in Scottish Schools and Colleges - the Future

Teaching Psychology in Scottish Schools and Colleges - The Future was an open event organised by the British Psychological Society Scottish Branch (BPS-S) Pre-Tertiary Working Group which took place on 1st June 2017 in Edinburgh. It brought together organisations and individuals from a range of backgrounds and perspectives – school teachers, college lecturers, university academics, student teachers, representatives from national education agencies - who are all involved in

Psychology education in Scotland, to discuss the subject's future at a time of major changes in Scottish education. Through bringing people together in this way, it was intended that a broad network or coalition for pre-tertiary Psychology would be established; this was a longer-term aim of the event.

Dr Scott Hardie, Chair of BPS-S, welcomed delegates and introduced a range of speakers including a keynote address by Joe Walker, Senior Education Officer with a Psychology remit, from Education Scotland. The event included a presentation of the BPS-S survey results presented by Morag Williamson and Kirsten Russell on behalf of the Working Group, and there were also presentations by PGDE Psychology course staff and by Psychology educators from school, college and university sectors. A final plenary discussion session led by Jonathan Firth gave delegates the opportunity to discuss issues relevant to pre-tertiary Psychology education. Below we summarise the key themes that delegates identified.

Key themes from the day

Following a review of the presentations, group discussion, and post-event feedback, the following themes have been identified by the Working Group:

1. Links between schools/colleges and the higher education (HE) sector

In his talk, Dr Jason Bohan (Glasgow University) drew attention to the fact that the number of 1st year Psychology undergraduates who have previously studied the subject in some form has increased dramatically (to around 70% in his own experience); this was potentially problematic in terms of the student's transition to HE, as research suggests that students can become demotivated if their prior learning is not taken into consideration (see Kitching and Hulme, 2013) and this could have the unwanted consequence of students switching honours subjects if they do not feel challenged or engaged in their studies. In discussion, delegates felt that cross-sector links were beneficial in several respects but were generally under-developed and the BPS-S could help to facilitate future discussions. It was also noted that preparation for studying Psychology at university was not the sole aim of pre-tertiary Psychology and that the subject provided broader benefits to students' personal and academic development at school or college.

2. Psychology in the 'Broad General Education' (BGE)

Several speakers raised the issue of Psychology's role in the 'Broad General Education' phase which lasts from pre-school/primary up to approximately S3 (age 13-15) of secondary school. The keynote speaker, Joe Walker, argued for the value of psychological skills to future citizens. Val Martin (University of Strathclyde) described how some PGDE trainees had recently taught aspects of Psychology to

younger pupils whilst on placement and had developed materials on topics that appealed to the children, including non-verbal communication. Psychology education projects for primary school children are increasingly being conducted (e.g. Rhodes, 2017). In discussion, delegates were generally in favour of teaching Psychology to younger age groups, but it was recognised that teacher expertise was required, especially in terms of ethics, for example when teaching sensitive topics.

3. Psychology across the curriculum

Both the keynote speaker and several other delegates pointed out that Psychology already exists in various guises in several areas of the school/college curriculum, such as biology, RME/RMPS, PSE, etc. It was felt that such content should be explicitly identified as Psychology. Likewise, cross-curricular projects on aspects of learning and general well-being, for example on motivation, 'mindsets', 'emotional intelligence' etc, were essentially psychological and required appropriate expertise. Psychology teachers would likely be well-placed to be involved in such projects, and/or to evaluate the quality of any external provision. In addition, these are areas where collaboration with educational psychologists would be helpful, but delegates believed this did not often happen.

4. Teacher training and continuing professional development (CPD)

The event included a description of the new Psychology PGDE course by Val Martin and Norrie McKay (both University of Strathclyde), and several of their students attended the event. Norrie McKay described the difficulties of placing both students and NQTs due to the relatively restricted numbers of schools in the Glasgow area which offer Psychology. Students were placed as far afield as North Berwick and Arran this year. It was acknowledged that this situation may change over time, as the course is accepting a smaller cohort in the coming year, and the number of schools offering Psychology is gradually increasing.

5. Quality and demand of Psychology courses

There was some discussion of whether the content of SQA's suite of courses is appropriate, and whether it prepares learners well for their future work and studies. Some delegates felt that Higher Psychology was too easy, while others felt that it was very demanding, with coursework which is more comparable to that in AH courses in other subjects, and a lower-than-average pass rate due to the stronger emphasis on analysis and evaluation. Generally the content was seen to be relevant and interesting to young learners. The emphasis on research skills including assessed practical research was seen as a strength that should not be watered

down by future changes. The SQA is currently reviewing the Higher syllabus, and it was suggested that BPS-S and HE stakeholders could assist in this process. It was also noted that there are other courses available, and that if the current courses do not meet pupils' and centres' requirements there could be a shift in uptake, for example with more online study of introductory-level HE courses by school learners.

6. Role of Psychology education in meeting national policy objectives

The keynote speaker asked delegates to consider the potential of Psychology education in raising attainment and reducing the 'attainment gap', which are major current education objectives of the Scottish government. In order to realise such potential, Psychology might be taught (in some appropriate form) to much younger children, i.e. at Primary/pre-school level, and even to parents. Support for parents exists and often focuses on psychological processes such as attachment, mental health and learning, but is generally outwith the education system. The government regards engagement with parents as crucial in raising attainment.

Recommendations for future actions

Unless otherwise stated, these recommendations refer to proposed future actions for BPS-S and/or the Working Group. Some recommendations are dependent on funding being obtained.

1. Links between schools/colleges and the HE sector

It is recommended that BPS-S facilitate communication between HE and the school/FE sector by collating and publicising information on existing links and collaborative projects, providing information/advice to support the development of new links, and holding further events. This could help to improve articulation between undergraduate 1st year content and Higher/A-level/HN courses. It is also important to investigate ways of informing HE stakeholders about the content and value of pre-tertiary Psychology courses.

2. Psychology in the BGE

It is recommended that BPS-S investigate ways to facilitate support materials being collated or produced for the Primary and S1-3 age groups, and offers professional support via CPD for teachers working with this age group as a collaborative venture, such as a one-off course involving an HE institution, ATPS, and educational psychologist(s). SQA has been asked to introduce N4 Psychology, and BPS-S could write to SQA supporting this request.

3. Psychology across the curriculum

BPS-S could establish links with researchers who study psychological processes relevant to the broader pre-tertiary curriculum, and facilitate a dialogue between this group of researchers, Education Scotland, GTCS and SQA to ensure that relevant curriculum areas such as PSE and Health & Wellbeing are based on psychological evidence and are delivered by knowledgeable professionals.

4. Teacher training and CPD

BPS-S could play a coordinating role in ongoing CPD provision for staff, in partnership with other organisations, to help ensure that a range of affordable CPD options are available throughout the year and for colleagues at different stages of their teaching careers. This could include supporting the current PGDE course which is still in its infancy, as well as investigating the possibility of further courses being launched, especially in areas that are unlikely to benefit from the current Glasgow-based course e.g. the north-east of Scotland.

5. Quality and demand of Psychology courses

It is recommended that BPS-S prepare a briefing document for SQA's revision/review of Higher Psychology in late 2017/early 2018, in order to offer input regarding course content and assessment, including information on BPS pre-tertiary policies, availability of expertise in the discipline of Psychology, and the key findings from this report. *See also Conclusions for an update on this point (below).* Over the longer term, research could be undertaken to look at the content and skills included in Psychology courses and how they compare in terms of demand to other pre-tertiary courses.

6. Role of Psychology education in meeting national policy objectives

The psychological basis of Scottish Government policy objectives such as the Pupil Equity Fund - and consequent decision-making within institutions - could be evaluated, and findings circulated. BPS-S could contact STEMEC, the Scottish Government's advisory group on STEM education (see <http://bit.ly/2hSV0PY>) to promote Psychology's role in future developments around STEM education. One or more BPS-S or Working Group members could attend/contribute to the Holyrood conference on STEM education in March 2018 (<http://stem.holyrood.com>).

Conclusions

Psychology education in Scotland's schools and colleges is healthy. There is strong demand from students and parents and education providers recognise the value of the subject for the personal and academic development of learners. There is also acknowledgement that Psychology should be taught by subject specialists, and that Psychology teachers can positively contribute across the curriculum. Overall it appears that Psychology is perceived to have a positive and growing place within the school and college curriculum, however, certain issues are recognised which need to be addressed. At the same time, there are promising areas of untapped potential.

The Working Group has therefore set out the above recommendations in order to pursue the aim of further developing and supporting pre-tertiary Psychology in Scotland. An important focus is on facilitating links and collaborative action amongst key stakeholders; indeed the June 2017 event in Edinburgh, and the subsequent dissemination of this report, constitute first steps in establishing a supportive, collaborative network. The BPS-S is committed to supporting such activity and will organise future forums to that end.

One specific action already initiated is BPS-S representation at SQA N5/Higher review meetings (see recommendation 5a above). Pre-tertiary Working Group member Dr Jason Bohan has agreed to act as this representative and will report on progress in appropriate forums, such as the annual ATPS CPD event (autumn 2017) and future BPS-S education events.

The recommended actions above are not definitive; the Working Group will continue to explore other avenues in support of pre-tertiary Psychology in Scotland, especially collaborative activities, and we encourage all organisations and individuals who share our objectives to contact us with comments and suggestions for future actions (contact details are below).

Contact Information

Contact us via the BPS Scotland website: <http://www.bps.org.uk/networks-and-communities/member-microsite/scottish-branch>, or email ScottishChair@bps.org.uk

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