University of the Highlands and Islands
Inverness College

Board of Management

Meeting	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Date and time	Tuesday 5 June 2018 at 8.30 a.m.
Location	Boardroom, 1 Inverness Campus

Board Secretary
29 May 2018

AGENDA

Welcome and Apologies

Declarations of Interest

ITEMS FOR DECISION

1. **MINUTES (5)**
   Meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee held on 6 March 2018

2. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS (5)**
   Action List

3. **LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGY (5)**
   Covering report by Depute Principal

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

4. **HIGHER MEDIA ACTION PLAN (5)**
   Report by Depute Principal

5. **END OF YEAR STUDENT SURVEY (10)**
   Report by Quality Manager

6. **STUDENT RECRUITMENT (10)**
   Report by Depute Principal

7. **STUDENT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT UPDATE (5)**
   Report by Head of Student Services

8. **HISA END OF YEAR UPDATE (10)**
   Report by Student President

9. **QUALITY ENHANCEMENT (15)**
   Report by Depute Principal

10. RESEARCH REPORT (5)
Report by Head of Research Development

11. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT REVIEW (5)
Report by Depute Principal

12. CORPORATE PARENTING (5)
Report by Head of Student Services

13. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT (10)
Report by Head of Curriculum

14. RISK REGISTER ANNUAL REVIEW (10)
Report by Depute Principal

15. AUDIT REPORTS - RECOMMENDATIONS (10)
a. Student Support
b. Partnership Working

16. LEARNING, TEACHING AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE SELF EVALUATION AND COMMITTEE CHAIR EVALUATION EXERCISES (20)
Report by Board Secretary

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ITEMS FOR NOTING

17. MINISTERIAL LETTERS OF GUIDANCE
a. Letter to SFC
b. Letter to SDS

18. AOCB

19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING
25 September 2018 @ 8.30am

If any member wishes to add an item of business to the Agenda, please inform the Chair and the Board Secretary as soon as possible. Additional items of business will only be considered for inclusion in the agenda in advance of the start of the meeting.

![University of the Highlands and Islands Inverness College logo]

Board of Management

MINUTES of the MEETING of the LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE held in the Boardroom, 1 Inverness Campus on Tuesday 6 March 2018

PRESENT:	Ollie Bray, Sarah Burton, Jaci Douglas, Helen Miller, Fiona Neilson, Gavin Ross, Tom Speirs
CHAIR:	Sarah Burton
APOLOGIES:	Chris O'Neil, Gabriel Starr
ATTENDING:	Depute Principal
	Head of Curriculum
	Head of Student Services
	Director of Rivers and Lochs Institute
	Secretary to the Board of Management

The Chair referred to the recent resignation of the Teaching Staff Member on the Board, Kate White and on behalf of the Committee, recorded her appreciation of Kate's input to the work of the Committee.

1. **MINUTES**

   The Minutes of the meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee held on 5 December 2017 were **AGREED** as a correct record, were **APPROVED** and signed.

2. **LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

   A report by the Board Secretary advised that a review of the Terms of Reference of the Learning and Teaching Committee had been carried out by the Chair, in consultation with the Depute Principal and the Head of Research Development. It was proposed that the name of the Learning and Teaching Committee be changed to Learning, Teaching and Research Committee and the remit be amended to reflect the important role of research activity in the College.

   The Committee **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** the changes to the Terms of Reference of the Learning and Teaching Committee to the Board of Management for approval.

3. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

   The Committee considered each of the actions and **AGREED** that a number of actions had been completed so could be removed from the list. The outstanding actions would be completed as per the time line.

4. **RESEARCH**

   Professor Eric Verspoor, Director of the Rivers and Lochs Institute, gave a presentation on the work of the institute. He referred to its establishment in 2012, to its mission, its current staffing profile and its staffing model which included positions and secondments with academia, government, industry and non-government organisations.

There were a number of exciting research projects underway including AS3IG (Assessment of Salmon Stocks in Scotland: Integrating Genetics), Farm Wild Markers, AMBER (Adaptive Management of Barriers in European Rivers), and the development of DNA-based metagenomics methodologies for seabed monitoring and aquaculture management.

In addition, the Institute was involved in a number of outreach projects with STEM, local primary schools and would include secondary schools in the near future. There were a number of strategic research areas identified within the 2015-20 Research and Innovation Strategy and he outlined the 2016-20 development priorities, one of which was the establishment of the River Ness Centre, which would incorporate an integrated research centre including outreach for schools and a tourism centre.

The Committee asked a number of questions and the Chair thanked Professor Verspoor for his very interesting and informative presentation.

Tom Speirs entered the meeting during the presentation.

5.   **HIGHER MEDIA ACTION PLAN**
A report by the Depute Principal provided an update on the progress being made with the various actions outlined in the action plan, which had been drawn up after the investigation into the failure of all students on the 2016-17 Higher Media award.

The Committee were pleased to **NOTE** that all actions were progressing well with several having been completed.

6.   **STUDENT RECRUITMENT 2017-18**
A report by the Depute Principal provided an update on student recruitment in 2017-18. The current student activity indicated that
- FE recruitment was below target. Additional actions were being taken to ensure that target was met, and
- HE recruitment had exceeded the funded undergraduate target.

The level of 'over-trading' at FE (activity over and above our funded target) experienced in previous years had been pulled back and an effort had been made to ensure that no full-time programmes exceeded the 18-credit limit now imposed by SFC. FE recruitment in general had become more challenging, both in August and in January with, for example, a number of students enrolling directly onto HE courses and fewer Christmas school leavers starting courses in January. These factors had contributed to the current activity levels. However, although FE activity was below target at this point in the year, the college still expected the activity target to be met by the year-end. In addition to the activity still to recruit, the Head of Curriculum and PDMs were ensuring that all credits were accounted for on all FE programmes.

The only financial implications of not achieving FE target would be the loss of ESF funding.

The Committee **NOTED** the position.

Jaci Douglas left the meeting.

7.   **QUALITY ENHANCEMENT**
A report by the Depute Principal provided a summary of quality enhancement and related activities taking place across the college including the progress against actions relating to underperforming programmes and Higher and National 5 Awards.

The Committee discussed the report and the following points were made:-
- Targeted intervention was in place for computing, art and design, social sciences, engineering craft, hospitality and care practice
- There were global pressures on computing programmes as a result of the level of provision from India
- There was a move to rename hospitality to a more meaningful title e.g. Hotel and Restaurant Management.
- A checklist was being used for staff teaching Higher and National 5 Awards, mentors had been allocated and a range of other measure were in place.

The Committee **NOTED** the range of activities and **REQUESTED** that in future reports, the number of enrolments be included in tables to put into context the percentage of withdrawals.

8.   **STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT REVIEW**
A report by the Depute Principal provided a description of the College's planned approach to ensuring that the quality and impact of its engagement with key stakeholders was systematically captured and evaluated. Because of the introduction of the Education Scotland quality framework "How Good is our College", the onus was now on colleges to collect this evidence themselves.

It was proposed that five common questions be asked of all key stakeholders and that the survey would provide the opportunity for free text responses. A Heat Map template would be used to provide an overall picture of the level of engagement and satisfaction across curriculum and support teams and would enable college level and team analysis, the identification of good practice and areas for development.

Having received assurance that information would be fed back in a timely manner to stakeholders through scheduled meetings with teams or groups, the Committee **AGREED** to the proposed approach to the stakeholder engagement review.

9.   **STUDENT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT**
A report by the Head of Student Services provided an update on the progress made with the formal Student Partnership Agreement (SPA) across the 4 aspects of
- **Student Representation**
  It was important that each of the three HISA Inverness posts (President, VP Education and VP Activities and Welfare) be contested in the forthcoming elections. It was also recognised by the HISA President that there would be the need for a handover with the newly elected student officers in advance of them taking up office.

- **Student Community**
  Moving forward it would be important that students recognised which activities contributed to "student life and community" and to ensure that the activities were fully visible and understood.
  Feedback would be sought from stakeholders who had participated in the recent Happy, Healthy You event to see if there were any key messages to be learned.
- **The College Welcome**
  The welcome literature, which was circulated with all offers of a place, had been redrafted to engage with students from an early point and support them in preparing for study.
- **Learning and Teaching**
  Student feedback on learning and teaching continued to come in through attendance at the course committee meetings (CCM), focus groups and the SRC.

The Head of Student Services also referred to the work which had begun with sparqs (Student Partnership in Quality Scotland) on a project around the "How Good is our College" framework.

The Committee **NOTED** the report.

10. **STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION REPORT**
A report by the Student President provided an update on the work of HISA in Inverness. The Head of Student Services advised that PDM's were attending meetings of the Student Representative Council (SRC) to provide feedback and close issues raised more quickly. The Student Satisfaction Survey had been launched on 5th March with an offer of a free breakfast role or slice of pizza for each completed return. There had been a 10% return on day one and early analysis showed the student satisfaction rate at 90%.

The Committee **NOTED** the report

11. **GENDER ACTION PLAN – MID YEAR REPORT**
A report by the Head of Student Services provided an update on the Gender Action Plan which focussed on FE only and on areas/programmes which displayed a severe gender imbalance (greater than 75% in one gender), in either enrolments, retention or successful completions. HE programmes were encompassed within the UHI GAP which subject network leaders had devised across the partnership.

Gender recruitment targets (numerical targets) had been set for 2018/19 and these would act as a stepping stone to help the college achieve the ambitious aims and milestones set by the SFC for the sector.

It was fully recognised that a cultural shift was required and a long term project had begun with Inverness High School, along with feeder primary schools. Further developments were also underway or planned with school leavers, College front facing teams and with employers.

The Committee discussed the challenges ahead and **NOTED** the work being undertaken as part of the GAP.

The following items of business were included in the agenda for noting so no discussion took place at the meeting.

12. **CUSTOMER SERVICES EXCELLENCE – REVIEW**
A covering report by the Head of Student Services provided a summary of the findings of the recent Customer Service Excellence review which took place in December 2017 and shared the review report. The College had retained the award and had 11 areas which were recorded as being "compliant plus".

13. **HALF YEARLY COMPLAINTS REPORT**
A report by the Quality Manager provided an analysis of complaints covering the period 1 August 2017 to 31 January 2018.

14. **2016-17 COLLEGE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**
A report by the Depute Principal provided a summary of the college sector performance Indicators (PI) for 2016-17, published by SFC on 28 February.

15. **GLOBAL CHALLENGES RESEARCH FUNDING: REQUEST FOR 3 YEAR STRATEGIES**
The Committee were provided with the link to the SFC announcement on Global Challenges Research Funding: request for 3 year strategies.

16. **HOW GOOD IS OUR COLLEGE?**
Education Scotland had published the first set of reports based on the new quality framework for colleges.

17. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
Tuesday 5 June 2018 at 8.30 a.m.

Signed by the Chair: _____

Date: _____

Outstanding Actions from Learning and Teaching Committee

26 September 2017

Item	Action	Responsibility	Time line	Actioned
Gender action plan	Annual progress report	Head of Student Services	Sept 2018	

5 December 2017

Item	Action	Responsibility	Time line	Actioned
Student experience	In future, an indication of timescales in relation to any further analysis and responses provided	Quality Manager	Future student experience reports	
HISA Inverness	An objective review of the resource requirements of HISA Inverness be submitted to the next meeting of the committee if other timescales permitted.	HISA President Inverness Student Association Coordinator HISA	~~March 2018~~ June 2018	
Curriculum Development	An explanation of which developments were already in place and which were still being progressed	Head of Curriculum	~~March 2018~~ June 2018	
Research	Update on REF discussions Research funding report	Head of Research Dev	~~March 2018~~ June 2018	
Corporate Parenting	Update	H o SS	~~March 2018~~ June 2018	

6 MARCH 2018

Item	Action	Responsibility	Time line	Actioned
Quality Enhancement	In future reports the number of enrolments be included in tables to put into context the percentage of withdrawals	Dep Principal	Future reports	

University of the Highlands and Islands
Inverness College

Subject/Title:	Learning and Teaching Strategy
Author: [Name and Job title]	Roddy Henry, Depute Principal
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	5 June 2018
Date Paper prepared:	25 May 2018
Brief Summary of the paper:	The college agreed to adopt the UHI Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy (L&TES). This paper proposes the amendments to the college's Learning and Teaching Strategy to reflect this decision
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Decision
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change	Learning and Teaching Strategy and link to strategic plan
Resource implications:	No
Risk implications:	No
Equality and Diversity implications:	No
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	n/a

Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-confidential	
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in "open" business* [Yes/No]	Yes	

*If a paper should **not** be included within "open" business, please highlight below the reason.

Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (S33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court (S36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (S38)		Other (please give further details)	
For how long must the paper be withheld? (express either as the time which needs to pass or a condition which needs to be met.)			

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http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/ScottishPublicAuthorities/ScottishPublicAuthorities.asp and

http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/web/FILES/Public_Interest_Test.pdf

Learning and Teaching Strategy

Executive summary

The college has agreed to adopt the UHI Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy (L&TES). This paper proposes the amendments to the college's Learning and Teaching Strategy to reflect this decision. An amended strategy with tracked changes is attached for the committee's approval.

The amendments to the college's strategy are minimal and can be found within the context statement on page 2 and within *Strategic Objective 2* on page 3.

Background information

The committee approved the adoption of the UHI L&TES at its meeting in December 2017. The Learning and Teaching Strategy has been amended to reflect the adoption. The 'Enhancement Values' will also be embedded in the college's self-evaluation and professional discussion on learning and teaching (PDLT) processes for 2018-19.

Roddy Henry
Depute Principal.

START
TOMORROW
TODAY

Learning & Teaching Strategy
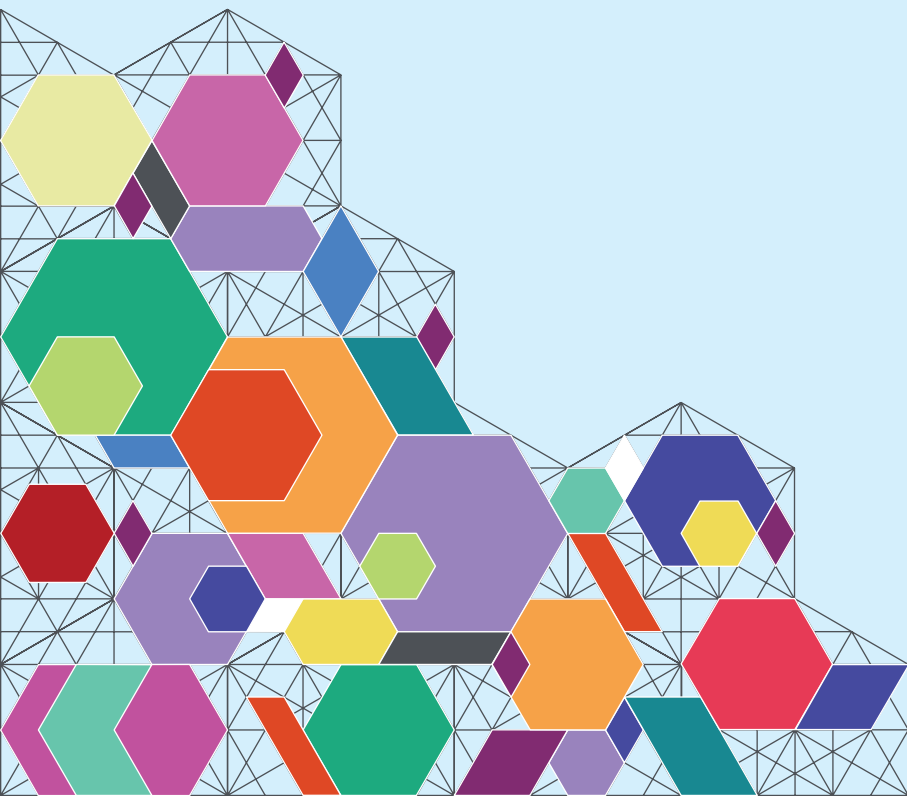
Learning and Teaching 2017-2020

How to use this Strategy

It is intended that this strategy will provide clear direction to the Board of Management, staff and stakeholders of Inverness College UHI on our strategic approaches to Learning and Teaching.

Staff should make use of this strategy when creating their Operational Plans.

Context

The term learning and teaching, in the context of this strategy, defines key elements of our core purpose: the development of our curriculum, our teaching practice and its links with research, and how well these activities support students to achieve on their courses of study.

The Learning and Teaching Strategy relates to the following themes in the Strategic Plan 2017-20: Student Life, Curriculum, Professional Practice, Research and Innovation and Sustainability. The strategy also takes account of other college strategies, in particular the Student Engagement Strategy and the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Strategy, and the university's Learning and Teaching <u>Enhancement</u> Strategy.

The objectives relate to:

- Curriculum development
- Teaching practice
- Research-teaching linkages
- Student outcomes

Strategic Objective 1:
To deliver a progressive and valued curriculum that is responsive to demand and contributes to the growth of our region.

We will achieve this by:

- Maintaining strong links with key partners and the communities we serve to systematically gather and analyse intelligence on labour market trends, skill needs and employer sector demands, and review and develop our curriculum accordingly.
- Targeting and/or tailoring provision to ensure that people who face the greatest challenges, including those from challenging backgrounds and those

from deprived and remote communities, have at least an equal opportunity to access our curriculum and progress successfully.

- Making the most of our tertiary nature to ensure access and progression pathways are effective, efficient and understood.
- Ensuring that workplace experiences, enterprise and entrepreneurship are key features of our curriculum and central to the graduate attributes and essential skills developed by our students.
- Continuing to identify and develop across our curriculum opportunities for research, innovation and knowledge exchange.

Strategic objective 2:
To maintain excellent standards of teaching practice across the college.

We will achieve this by:

- ~~Maintaining a Framework for Excellent Learning and Teaching~~Adopting the values in the UHI Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy as a reference to support staff and teaching teams to evaluate their practice, facilitate professional dialogue, inform ongoing professional development and ensure consistency of practice.
- Ensuring our teaching practice is consistently inclusive, takes account of individuals' additional needs and supports a positive and respectful environment for learning for all students.
- Ensuring that effective and innovative practices are identified, celebrated and shared to help inform the practice of other staff and teaching teams.
- Providing ongoing professional learning and development opportunities specific to teaching practice and the learning process and ensure, through evaluation and monitoring, that these opportunities have a positive impact on practice and the student experience.
- Establishing research and innovation in pedagogy that informs practice, including the development of staff research profiles.

Strategic objective 3:
To grow the research-teaching linkages across our curriculum.

We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring that teaching on degree awards is informed by relevant research outputs and that there is a structured approach to support staff teaching on degrees at SCQF level 9 and above to be engaged in research activity.
- Ensuring that research activity across the college and the university is embedded in teaching within the relevant curriculum areas.

- Engaging proactively with the university's Research-Teaching Linkage project to build staff and student capacity for research.
- Creating opportunities, wherever possible, for postgraduate research students to engage in teaching.

Strategic objective 4:
To maintain and improve successful outcomes for our students and support them into positive post-course destinations.

We will achieve this by:

- Maintaining effective mechanisms for self-reflection and programme evaluation that support high rates of successful completion for students on all levels of programme and modes of delivery.
- Ensuring that outcomes for students in specific groups and with protected characteristics are systematically reviewed and monitored, and actions are taken to maintain equity of success and achievement for all students.
- Responding quickly and positively to student feedback to ensure that student satisfaction with learning and teaching is consistently high.
- Monitoring school leaver destinations, student enrolments, attainment and progression rates and the destinations of our further and higher education leavers to inform our learning and teaching and to evaluate the impact it is having on progression and positive post-course destinations.

Key Performance Indicators

KPI
Student recruitment against targets and over time
Student progression rates
Student retention rates
Student successful completion rates
Successful completion rates by specific learner groups
Student satisfaction rates
College and university leaver destination rates
Staff research profile
Postgraduate research student involvement in teaching
External quality reports and endorsements

Cross Reference to Strategic Plan

This strategy links to the following strategic aims:

Strategic Aim
Student Life
We will build a vibrant campus community that all of our students are proud of, and within which they are engaged and supported to reach their potential. We will strengthen our existing relationships between our students, staff, employers and the wider community to further increase student participation and the student voice
Curriculum
We will offer a progressive curriculum that is valued by our students, employers and the communities we serve, and that is delivered in a variety of ways to make it accessible to all. We will ensure the curriculum remains relevant, responsive to demand and aligned with employment opportunities, providing a range of progression pathways that contribute to the economic growth and social cohesion of our region.
Professional Practice
Recognising that people have the greatest influence on our success, we will operate in a positive culture where we stretch ourselves to deliver the highest standards of service, support and delivery that exceeds expectations.
Research and Innovation
We will build upon our successes in research by strengthening our impact and excellence and growing our regional and international reputation. We will continue to support and grow an innovative and inspired postgraduate researcher community. Our research will directly inform innovation and entrepreneurship activity in key sectors regionally and internationally

University of the Highlands and Islands
Inverness College

Board of Management

Subject/Title:	Higher Media Action Plan
Author: [Name and Job title]	Roddy Henry, Depute Principal
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	5 June 2018
Date Paper prepared:	28 May 2018
Brief Summary of the paper:	This paper provides an update on the Higher Media action plan agreed by the Board of management in December 2017. Good progress is being made against all actions with most now complete. Please see attached action plan template.
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:**:** • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change	The paper links to risk management in that it provides assurance on the actions being taken to minimise risk to student attainment and institutional reputation.
Resource implications:	No
Risk implications:	No
Equality and Diversity implications:	No
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	n/a

Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-confidential
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in "open" business* [Yes/No]	Yes

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Higher Media Investigation – Action Plan: June update

No.	Recommendations	Actions		Resp.	Initial Timeline	Progress at 28 May 2018	
4	That data monitoring and reporting processes are reviewed and revised, to provide managers with a clear understanding of the full range of course performance levels. (Findings 7 and 8)	1.	Progress against all existing action plans for all underperforming courses (FE and HE) will be monitored at each SMT and Academic Management Committee (AMG) meeting. The Head of Curriculum will lead the collation and reporting of progress.	HoC	January 2018	Complete	1
		2.	The Head of Curriculum will provide progress reports against actions for underperforming programmes, at an appropriate level of detail, at each meeting of the Board's Learning and Teaching Committee.	HoC	March 2018	Complete	2
		3.	The Depute Principal will lead a review of performance reporting and monitoring arrangements for all courses, at all levels, including the progress against and impact of actions for improvement. The outcomes will be submitted to SMT for approval. The review of key course performance indicators being led by the Depute Principal will run concurrent with the review of reporting and monitoring arrangements.	DP	May 2018	The review highlighted a gap in our monitoring and support for externally assessed SQA awards, ie National 5 and Higher awards. The new arrangements for close monitoring and support for these awards appear to be working well, and a review of National 5 and Higher results will be undertaken in early August when the results are published. Draft KPI 'barometer' now with Info Systems Specialist; to be completed with 2017-18 data by end September 2018. Revision of TI process has been agreed by SMT (see action 4), which includes the monitoring of actions for improvement. A revised PI report structure to be presented to SMT for approval.	3
5	That the targeted intervention process is	4.	The Head of Curriculum will convene and lead a discreet working group to	HoC	March 2018	Complete	4

	revised to ensure its effectiveness in improving outcomes for learners. (Finding 9)		review and revise the targeted intervention process in light of and in conjunction with the review of course performance reporting and monitoring. The outcomes will be submitted to SMT for approval.				
6	That the process for internal quality monitoring and reporting is reviewed and revised as necessary to ensure non-compliance is reported to SMT. (Finding 10)	5.	The Quality Manager will ensure that regular and timely reports on internal audit activity are presented to the Depute Principal and tabled at relevant committee meetings, including the SMT, ASQC, AMG and OMG meetings.	QM	January 2018	Complete	5
		6.	The Depute Principal will oversee a comprehensive review and revision of existing quality assurance arrangements, including documentation and guidance. The review will ensure that responsibilities are clear and explicit, training needs are identified and implemented and that monitoring arrangements are comprehensive and effective.	DP	May 2018	Review complete and training provided to assessors and verifiers (see also action 5). Summary of audit and External Verifier outcomes will be reviewed annually by Quality Manager and Depute Principal	6
7	That consideration be given to revisiting management training in relation to: a. Providing constructive feedback b. Management communication c. Writing evaluative reports	7.	The Director of Organisational Development will review the personal skills framework to ensure that the management skills identified in the report as lacking are clearly articulated as management and SMT personal skills going forward for review at individual PDR.	DoOD	March 2018	Complete	7

	d. Managing staff development and performance improvement e. Managing attendance and promoting wellbeing at work	8. The Director of Organisational Development will develop a short management refresher programme to pick up on the prior learning through LEAD. The proposed programme, including an implementation schedule, will be submitted to SMT for approval.	DoOD	March 2018	Complete: programme agreed to run May – September 2018	8
		9. The Depute Principal will lead the development of a peer review process for end-of-year evaluative reports. The process will be submitted to SMT for approval by the end of May 2018. A mandatory workshop on evaluative writing has been included in the programme for the January 2018 staff development days.	DP	May 2018	The college's involvement in the Scottish Government's *College Improvement Project (CIP)* has contributed to a change of emphasis away from evaluative writing, and onto a focus on the activity of evaluation and the subsequent actions. Sessions on 'evaluation for improvement' for PDMs, Programme Coordinators and support managers have been held with follow-up peer review sessions planned for June. Four teams are piloting a revised approach.	9
8	That processes are put in place to monitor and report upon departmental key data in relation to management processes and compliance therewith: a. PDRs	10. The Director of Organisational Development will ensure that there is an institutional schedule in place for the completion of PDRs in Academic Year 2017-18.	DoOD	February 2018	Complete .	10

b. Staff attendance monitoring and management	11. The HR Manager will develop and implement regular information reports from the HR system on completion of PDRs and staff attendance in line with the college procedure. The aim is to ensure reporting on compliance with PDR at critical points, to include new starts, returners and variable staff.	HR Manager	April 2018	Complete	11
	12. The HR Manager will develop and implement individually tailored training and guidance for line managers on people related policies and procedures.	HR Manager	August 2018	Training developed and piloted successfully. Implementation in 2018-19, schedule tbc.	12
	13. The Director of Organisational Development will refine and enhance the PDR process to include reference to relevant key performance indicators and organisational expectations in line with strategic and operational objectives.	DoOD	May 2018	To be finalised for 2018-19 PDRs	13

University of the Highlands and Islands
Inverness College

Board of Management

Subject/Title:	End of Year Student Survey
Author: [Name and Job title]	Liz Cook, Quality Manager
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	5th June 2018
Date Paper prepared:	26th May 2018
Brief Summary of the paper:	The report provides college wide analysis of the Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (previously referred to as the pre-exit survey)
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:**:** • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change	The paper links directly to the strategic plan.
Resource implications:	Yes / **No** **If yes, please specify**:
Risk implications:	Yes / **No** **If yes, please specify:** Operational: Organisational:
Equality and Diversity implications:	Yes/**No** **If yes, please specify:**
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	Not applicable

Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-confidential
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in "open" business* [Yes/No]	Yes

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Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey – Headline Report

Contents

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the methodology used to gain student engagement with the survey, and a cross-organisation summary of the outcomes from the responses provided. The responses to the survey are made available to curriculum and support teams to feed into self-evaluation activities. The analysis of the data provides the basis for recommendations which can be found at the end of the report. These are predominantly from a cross-organisation perspective; however where identified are aimed at specific curriculum or services areas.

Introduction

All colleges across Scotland are required to participate in the Scottish Funding Council's (SFC) Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey. This forms part of the Regional Outcome Agreement and as such is a Performance Indicator of the College, used by the SFC to measure success. In 2018, SFC set a benchmark figure of 50% response rate for colleges. UHI APs are only required to submit FE figures, whereas other colleges across Scotland submit both FE and HE (HN) figures. The outcomes are published as part of a sector-wide report, which ultimately provide ICUHI with benchmark data which is used, in part, to inform continuous improvement within the organisation.

The mandatory SFC questions were embedded within a wider college survey. The Inverness College UHI survey was broken down into the following categories:

- SFC student satisfaction and engagement survey questions
- Learning & teaching
- Support and guidance
- Assessment and Feedback
- Organisation and management
- Student representation
- Quality of Service

Methodology

In preparation for this year's survey a comprehensive strategy was developed to inform working practice, including the cross college approach targeted at raising the response rate and ensuring students understanding of the questions in order to elicit a valid response.

The plan has been well published, and will not be rehearsed here in its entirety. It should be noted an evaluation of the strategy and staff engagement with it will be written as a separate report for the attention of ICUHI SMT.

The headlines from the strategy included:

- A clear alignment with the NSS, providing cohesion between the surveys
- A number of awareness raising sessions with PATs, to ensure full understanding and to allow sharing of current practice of engagement
- The development of guidance materials for staff and students

- A launch event for the SSES; with multiple prizes, and a clear SSES brand
- Engagement with HISA to adopt a collaborative approach to the promotion of SSES in conjunction with the election
- Bespoke approach to individual cohorts of students when identified as being most appropriate, for example, ESOL, block release, work based, Supported Education.
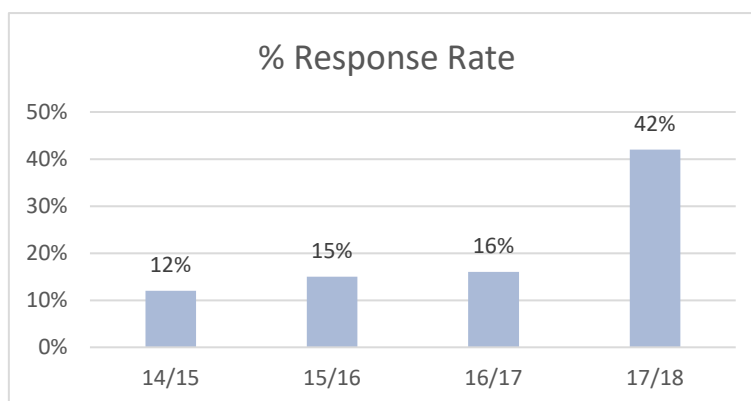
A total of 4044 students were targeted by the survey through an individual link sent to student email addresses. This excluded those students identified as taking part in the NSS, and those on a course of less than four credits. Surveys were completed by 1684 students in total, which equates to a 42% response rate. This is an increase of 26% compared to the previous year.

Response Rate by Level and Mode

Level and Mode	%
FEFT	64
FEPT	46
HEFT	37
HEPT	18

The table above shows the percentage response rate for each of the levels and modes. It can be seen that the response rate by HE students is lower than that of FE students. This may be due to the timing of the SSES and NSS nationally. This is an area identified for further exploration in future survey approaches.

Responses by Curriculum Area

Curriculum Area	% Response Rate
Business & Commuting	45
Care Practice	31
Construction Craft	59
Cultural & Creative Industries	36
Education	48
Engineering and Building Technology	36
Engineering Craft	50
Forestry, Science, Maths and Agriculture	37
Hairdressing, Beauty & Sport	46
Hospitality	48

The response rate across curriculum area ranges from 31 – 59% of the potential students. This reflects the overall increase in response rate. Recognising this good achievement in the current academic year, teams will now need to reflect as part of their self-evaluation activities how this response rate can be improved at a local level. Engagement with the survey will be considered as part of the evaluation of the survey administration.

Interpretation of the results

In analysing the data, percentages throughout the survey are calculated on the basis of respondents to questions, as in the case of some services, not all students have accessed them.
Trend data has been provided where this is available. It should be noted that due to an error in the construction of the survey in 2016-17, it is not possible to provide a full breakdown of satisfaction rates across all questions. In these cases, data is provided from 2015-16 as a comparator. The scale used within the Customer Service section was changed this year, from a five point scale to a four point scale to bring this question set in line with other question scales within the survey.

In comparing trend data, the following categories of percentage satisfaction have been used:

|	
	Overall satisfaction > 80%
	Overall satisfaction 70-79%
	Overall satisfaction < 70%

Within the free text response analysis, it should be recognised that there are highly individualised responses. High level categorisation has been undertaken to identify discernible themes or patterns emerging, the result of which can be relatively granular. It should be noted the free text analysis adds colour to the quantitative

data available, and assist individual teams identify what is working well or requires enhancement for their particular service or curriculum area.

Reflection from the Early Experience Survey are referenced where this was considered to be valid to do so.

Findings

Overall Satisfaction with College Experience

Overall % Satisfaction

Year	Satisfaction
14/15	92%
15/16	87%
16/17	87%
17/18	94%
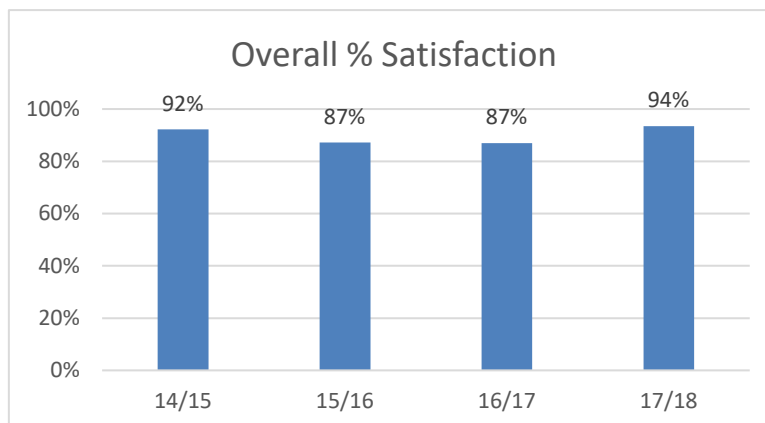
There was a 7ppt increase in the overall satisfaction rate of students from 2017 to 2018. It is likely there are multiple contributory factors which have seen this result. They include:
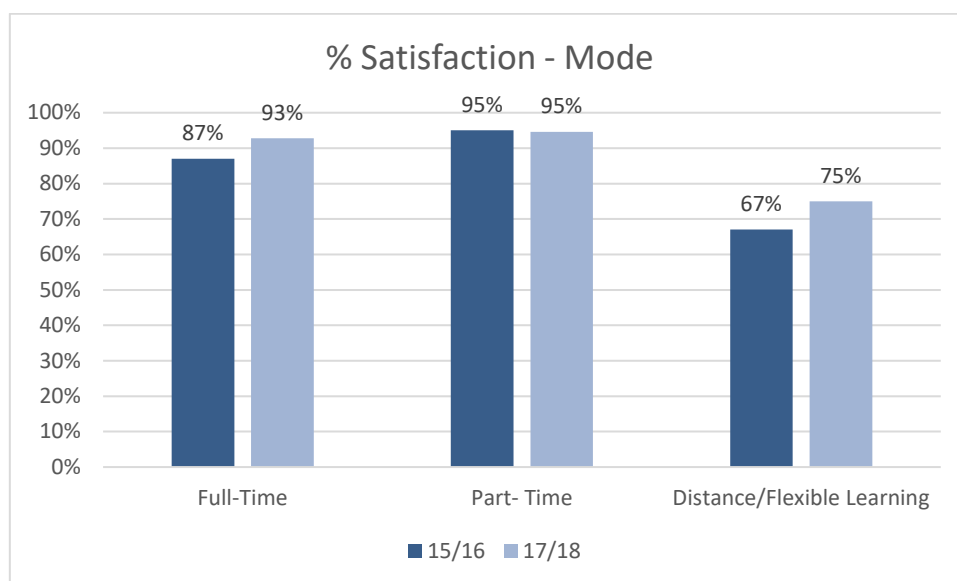
- A planned sustained level of activity in preparing for the launch of the survey in terms of understanding the purpose and output from the survey – staff and students
- The timing of the survey
- A sustained level of satisfaction seen in the Early Experience Survey 2017
- Students being happier whilst completing the survey

Satisfaction - Level

% Satisfaction by Level

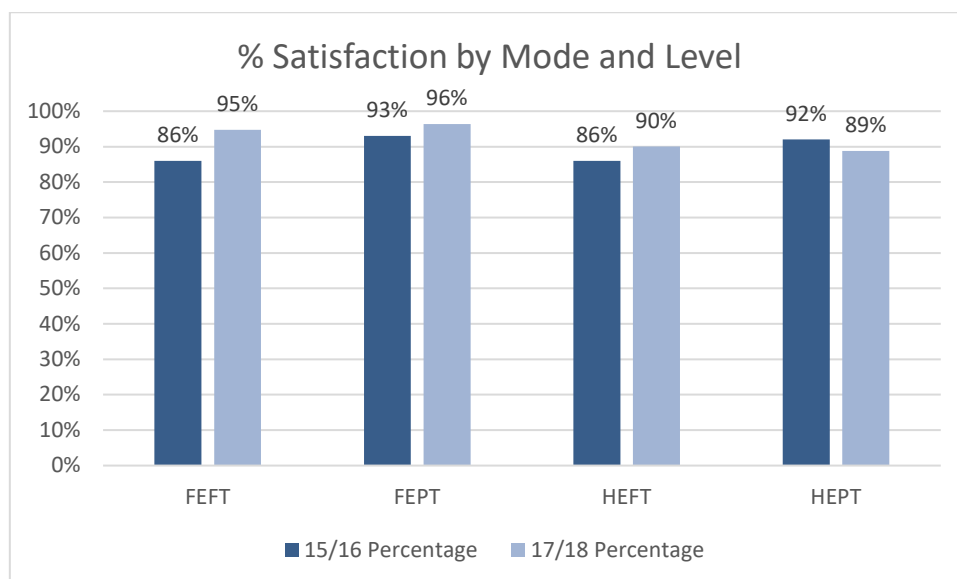| Year	FE N/A N/A	HE N/A N/A
15/16	89%	87%
16/17	87%	88%
17/18	95%	90%
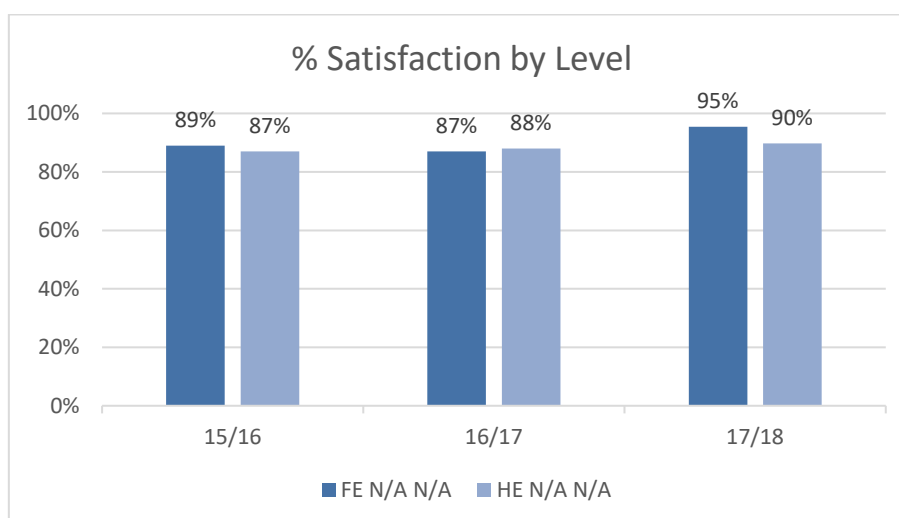
It can be seen that the overall satisfaction rate is higher in FE students than HE students, 95% and 90% respectively. Further analysis is required to identify the areas concerned.

Satisfaction – Mode of Attendance

% Satisfaction - Mode

- Full-Time: 87% (15/16), 93% (17/18)
- Part-Time: 95% (15/16), 95% (17/18)
- Distance/Flexible Learning: 67% (15/16), 75% (17/18)

Legend: ■ 15/16 ■ 17/18

The satisfaction levels for full time and part time students is broadly comparable. Those engaged with distance learning are less satisfied. This relates to a small (i.e. less than ten) learners.

Satisfaction - Mode of Attendance and Level of Study

% Satisfaction by Mode and Level

- FEFT: 86% (15/16), 95% (17/18)
- FEPT: 93% (15/16), 96% (17/18)
- HEFT: 86% (15/16), 90% (17/18)
- HEPT: 92% (15/16), 89% (17/18)

Legend: ■ 15/16 Percentage ■ 17/18 Percentage

There has been a positive shift in the satisfaction levels of FEFT students, for 2018 sitting at 95% compared to 86% for the previous year. A marginal decrease of 3% in satisfaction level can be seen in HEPT learners. There have been marginal increases in satisfaction levels for the remaining areas; 3% for FEPT and 4% for HEFT students.

Satisfaction - Ethnicity

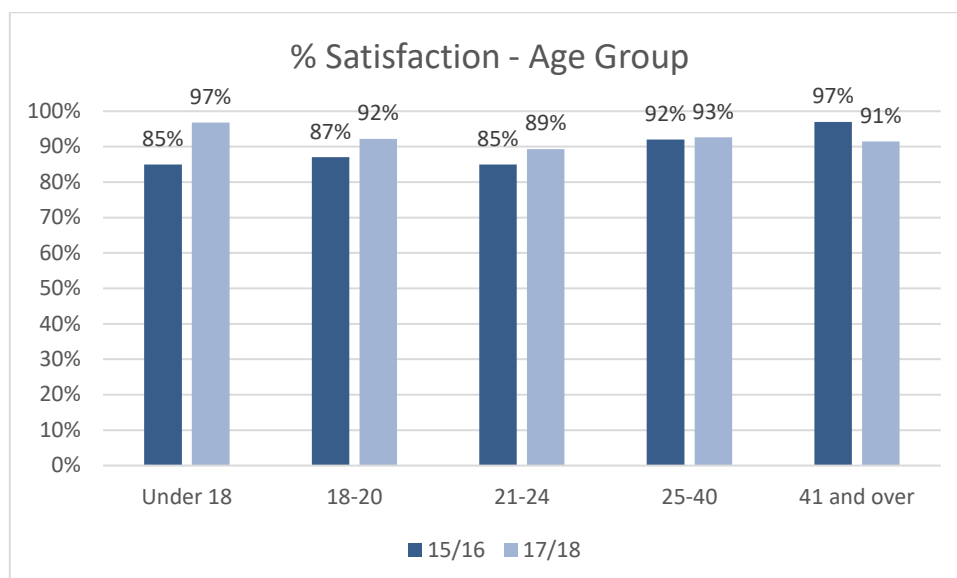| Satisfaction by Ethnicity		
	15/16	**17/18**
Ethnic Background	% Satisfaction	% Satisfaction
Arab	50%	0%
Other	50%	100%
White - Northern Irish	50%	80%
White - Republic of Ireland	N/A	100%
White - Welsh	67%	88%
Other Mixed	75%	89%
White - Scottish	87%	93%
White	87%	95%
Other White Background	88%	96%
White - English	90%	94%
White and Asian	N/A	100%
White/Black African	N/A	100%
Asian - Bangladeshi	100%	100%
Asian - Chinese	N/A	100%
Asian - Indian	N/A	50%
Asian - Other	100%	100%
Asian Pakistani	N/A	100%
Black - African	100%	100%
Black - Caribbean	N/A	0%
Gypsy, Traveller or	N/A	100%
Polish - White	100%	98%
Not Given	N/A	80%

The table above highlights satisfaction levels by ethnic background. The two categories highlighted in red represent a small (i.e. under ten) number of learners. The remainder of categories show a high level of satisfaction.

Satisfaction – Declared Disability

% Satisfaction - Declared Disability

Rest of Survey Respondents — 94%

Declared Disability — 92%

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

■ 17/18 ■ 15/16
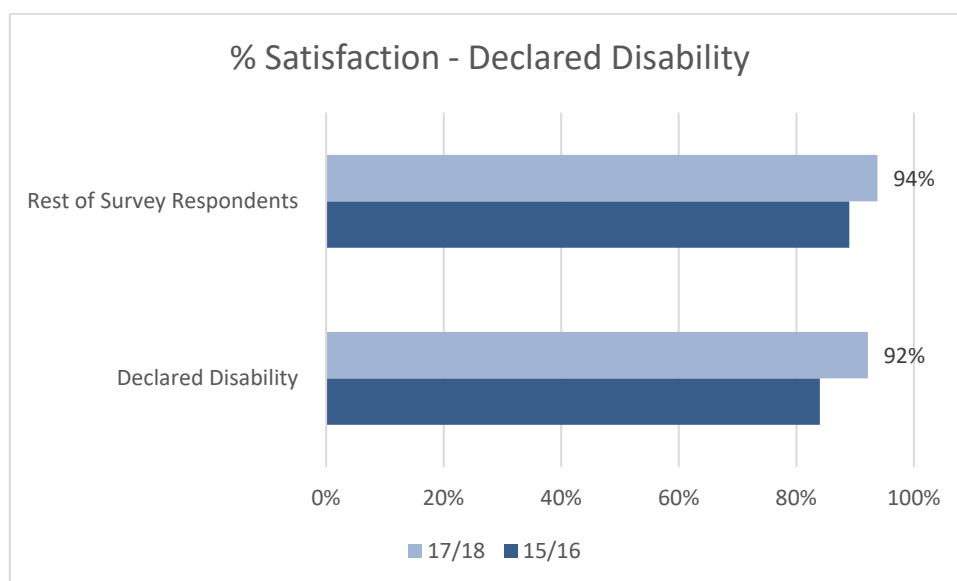
The rate of satisfaction between those learners with a declared disability and the rest of the survey respondents is broadly comparable, and sits high at 92% and 94% respectively. This represents a positive shift from the satisfaction levels expressed in the Early Experience Survey, where the gap was wider at 6ppt.

Satisfaction – Age Group

% Satisfaction - Age Group

|	Under 18	18-20	21-24	25-40	41 and over
15/16	85%	87%	85%	92%	97%
17/18	97%	92%	89%	93%	91%

■ 15/16 ■ 17/18

The largest increase in satisfaction levels can be seen in the under 18s category; 12ppt over a two year period. The largest decrease is seen in the 41 and over category: an 8ppt drop over a two year period. The lowest level of satisfaction is seen in the 21-24 category at 89%.
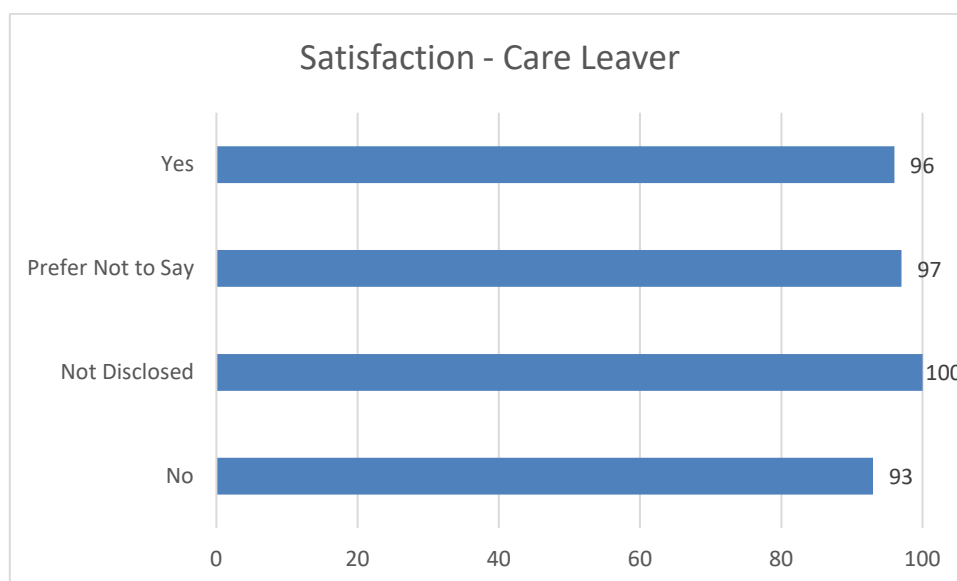
Satisfaction – Gender

% Satisfaction - Gender
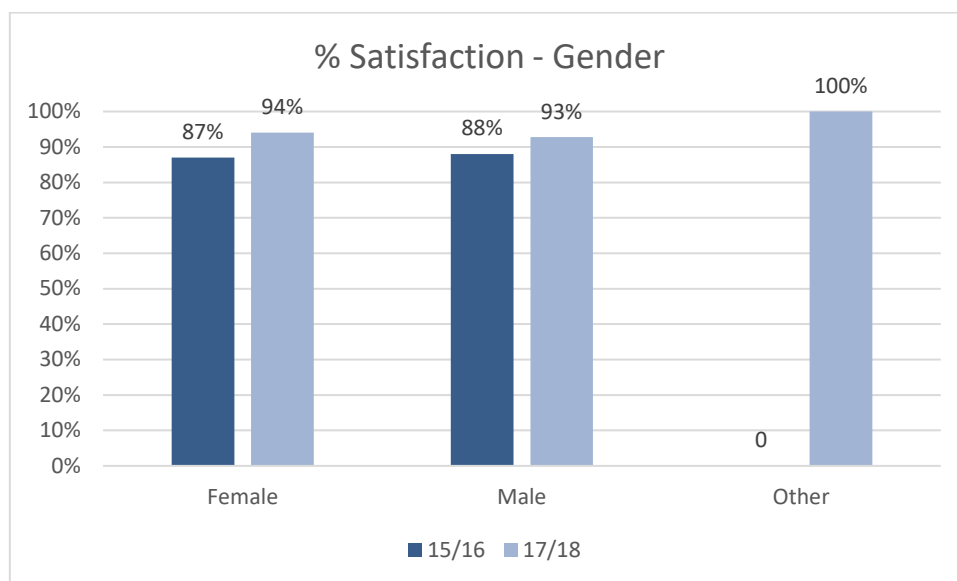
The satisfaction rates across all gender categories are comparable.

Satisfaction Care Responsibilities

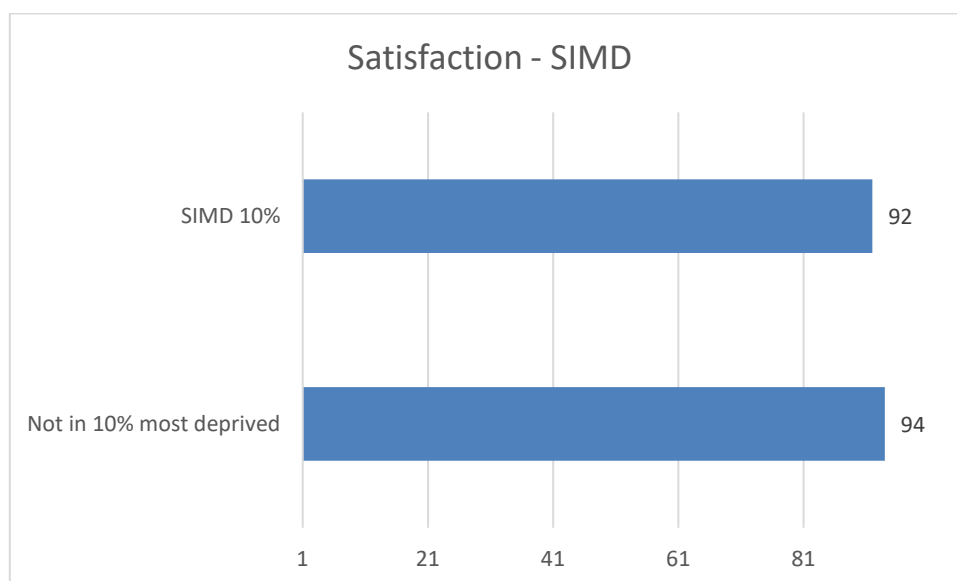### Satisfaction - Care Responsibilities
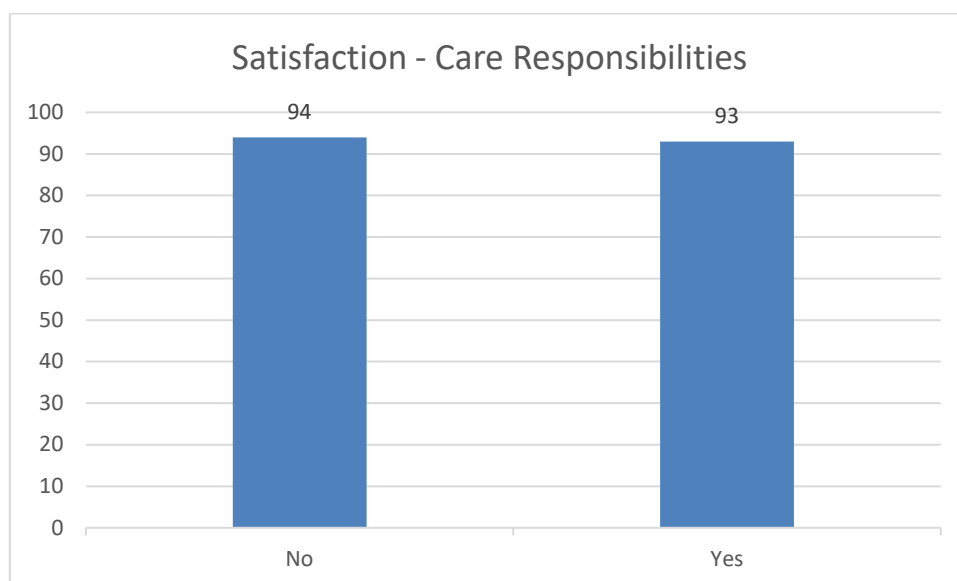
It can be seen there is a comparable level of satisfaction between those learners with care responsibilities and those without. Both are high, at 93% and 94% respectively.

Satisfaction - Care Leaver

It can be seen there is a comparable level of satisfaction across all four categories.

Satisfaction - SIMD

It can be seen there is a comparable level of satisfaction between those learners from the most deprived postcodes and those who live outwith these postcode areas. Both are high, at 92 and 94% respectively.

Satisfaction Rate - Curriculum Area

Overall Student Satisfaction by Department				
	14/15	**15/16**	**16/17**	**17/18**
Business and Computing	92%	87%	77%	90%
Care Practice	97%	90%	84%	96%
Construction Craft	96%	89%	93%	99%
Cultural & Creative Industry	92%	86%	78%	90%
Education	N/A	95%	76%	94%
Engineering & Building Technology	92%	78%	65%	86%
Engineering Craft	96%	77%	84%	96%
Forestry, Science, Maths and Aquaculture	83%	88%	75%	93%
Hairdressing, Beauty & Sport	89%	87%	86%	95%
Hospitality	N/A	95%	79%	92%

All curriculum areas experienced a positive significant increase in satisfaction levels of their students. Considering the trend data over a three year period, it is possible to see that the largest increases in satisfaction levels are in Engineering Craft (+19%) and Construction Craft (+10%). Two areas experienced a marginal decrease; Education and Hospitality. Satisfaction rates are high across all curriculum area, ranging from 86% to 96%.

SFC Mandatory Questions

	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18
1. Overall, I am satisfied with my college experience	92%	87%	87%	93%
2. Staff regularly discuss my progress with me	77%	79%	73%	83%
3. Staff encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning	96%	96%	96%	97%
4. I am able to influence learning on my course	N/A	80%	80%	86%
5. I receive useful feedback which informs my future learning	N/A	82%	79%	88%
6. The way I'm taught helps me learn	80%	77%	77%	86%
7. My time at college has helped me develop knowledge and skills for the workplace	89%	83%	83%	89%
8. I believe student suggestions are taken seriously	76%	73%	71%	80%
9. I believe all students at the college are treated fairly and equally by staff	84%	82%	83%	87%
10. The college Student's Association influences change for the better	74%	77%	74%	80%

The results for the SFC mandatory questions can be seen in the table above. The satisfaction rates range from 80% to 97%. The lowest scoring categories are students believing their suggestions are taken seriously and that the Students Association influences change for the better. Whilst they are the lowest scoring areas, they have seen an increase from the previous year by 9 and 6ppt respectively. It is anticipated the projects around student partnership will highlight more transparently how student suggestions are acted upon. As HISA moves into its second year at ICUHI; the impact on the perception of the Students Association will likely be seen in the forthcoming year.

Students strongly believe staff encourage them to take responsibility for their own learning, with a 97% agreement rate. This continues to be a high scoring question.

Further analysis by level and mode is required to ensure more targeted activities can be identified and undertaken to further increase the satisfaction rates.

Learning and Teaching

	15/16	16/17	17/18
I have been able to access IT resources when I need to	92%	88%	91%
I was supported and sufficiently prepared in using the technologies within my course (e.g. Video Conference, Jabber, Blackboard, Smartboard	93%	76%	80%
Library resources and services meet my needs	97%	86%	87%

Students felt the least satisfaction in relation to being prepared to use technologies available to them in their course. This is the case over the 2018 and 2017 timeframe; and whilst the number of respondents in 2016 (representative of 2017 rate) was lower than 2018, there was a significantly higher level of satisfaction.

My Support and Guidance

	15/16	16/17	17/18
I have received sufficient advice and support with my studies	91%	82%	88%
I have had reviews with my PAT to discuss my progress	93%	75%	80%
I have been able to contact staff when I needed to	90%	90%	93%

Students express a high level of satisfaction about the level of support and advice received; and the ability to contact staff when they need to. Reviews with PATs has seen an increase of 5ppt since the previous year (2018 vs 2017); it remains the lowest scoring question in this category.

Assessment and Feedback

	15/16	16/17	17/18
Assessment requirement were made clear to me in advance	90%	83%	85%
Feedback on my work has been timely	90%	75%	82%
Exams and assessments are well organised	91%	78%	80%

There is an increased level of satisfaction amongst students across all the questions in this category, ranging from 2 – 7ppt. Remaining one of the lower scoring categories means curriculum teams will need to drill down into individual programme areas to ensure the approaches to assessment and feedback are balanced, consultative and give fair access to assessment.

Organisation and Management

	15/16	16/17	17/18
Overall, the course has run smoothly throughout the year	N/A	74%	86%
Any changes in the course or teaching have been communicated effectively	76%	75%	83%
If my lecturer was away, suitable alternative arrangements have been made	78%	70%	79%

Good increases in the level of satisfaction can be seen in this category. Ranging from 8 – 12ppt, a contributory factor could include the work undertaken in relation to timetabling and room audits. This remains one of the lower scoring areas; and there are some themes emerging through the free text comments in relation to staff changes. Curriculum teams will need to analyse the data to programme level to determine where they can influence change for the better.

Student Representation

	15/16	16/17	17/18
I know who my class rep Is and what they do	N/A	71%	73%

This category is the lowest scoring category, and despite a slight improvement requires focus on improvement in the forthcoming year.

Customer Service

	VS / S	VS	S	D	VD
Admissions / Applications	95.19%	32.02%	63.17%	3.66%	1.15%
Funding (e.g. bursary, hardship, EMA , childcare funding)	85.19%	33.23%	51.96%	10.49%	4.32%
Cash Office (e.g. fees, invoice, fee waiver, Independent Training Account)	90.44%	30.39%	60.05%	7.11%	2.45%
Childcare (Early Learning and Childcare Centre)	93.41%	35.68%	57.73%	5.45%	1.14%
Additional Support Needs Team (if you have met to have your needs assessed)	92.24%	36.42%	55.82%	5.73%	2.02%
Guidance (e.g. UCAS, SAAS, course information and choice, careers, accommodation)	91.44%	31.72%	59.72%	6.55%	2.01%
Wellbeing and Counselling	91.15%	31.71%	59.44%	6.64%	2.21%
Hairdressing & Beauty Salons	92.47%	38.88%	53.59%	5.95%	1.58%
Cafeterias	86.14%	30.78%	55.36%	10.26%	3.60%
ICT (e.g. help with PC problems)	93.97%	34.28%	59.69%	5.30%	0.73%
Learning Resource Centre	94.72%	35.21%	59.51%	4.23%	1.06%
Library	96.59%	38.76%	57.83%	2.87%	0.54%
SkillZone	94.10%	33.04%	61.06%	3.64%	2.26%
Lecturing Staff	94.10%	40.29%	53.81%	4.05%	1.85%
Reception	95.48%	35.70%	59.78%	3.51%	1.00%
Student Association (HISA)	91.16%	29.39%	61.77%	5.51%	3.33%

In all areas, students are satisfied with the levels of customer service provided by the individual areas. The range is 85.19% to 96.59%; teams will need to further analyse their individual results to determine the split between the very satisfied and satisfied responses; and whether there are any areas for improvement emerging from the dissatisfied respondents.

Free Text Responses

Students were asked to comment on their learning and teaching experience. There were over 180 responses to the question.

Question: Please write any other comments about learning and teaching

Broad Theme	Number of Comments
Admissions	2
Learning and Teaching	53
Assessment and Feedback	45
Facilities	7
Support and Guidance	11
Organisation and Management	7
Student Engagement	7
Positive	26
Resources	13
Curriculum	7
Catering	1
Communication	2
Induction	3
TOTAL	**184**

The response rates across the mode and level of programme are shown in the table below:

Mode and level	No of responses
FTFE	62
PTFE	33
FTHE	65
PTHE	24

Of the 53 comments raised in relation to Learning and Teaching, students comment about an inconsistency of approach of lecturers across curriculum areas. Teaching in some modules is identified as minimal – for example, over use of PPT, worked examples, being left to work through a book. Students are pleased with the content of their lessons in other areas, the support they receive in the classroom and the engagement of staff and students.

Comments related to assessment and feedback focus on the number and timing of assessments. A greater level of feedback would be helpful, as would more timely feedback.

Where students have made a general positive comment, they describe extreme satisfaction with teaching staff, increased levels in their own confidence and an awareness of where they need to develop to improve.

Students would like to see more pc's available to them in the LRC; and a greater level of resource in the SkillZone.

They feel it would be useful to receive more help with the on-line technical aspect of their learning, and feel staff should be well versed in the technology in order to offer full support. Students comment positively about their PATs.

Question: Please comment or tell us how we can improve customer service

Broad Theme	Number of Comments
Assessment and Feedback	9
Communication	33
Funding	19
ASN	1
Induction	5
Learning and Teaching	10
Facilities	19
Support and Guidance	13
Organisation and Management	6
Student Engagement	3
Student Life	1
Positive	89
Resources	8
Catering	96
Curriculum	3
Finance	5
Front of House	10
Quality	9
TOTAL	**339**

The response rates across the mode and level of programme are shown in the table below:

Mode and level	No of responses
FTFE	128
PTFE	84
FTHE	111
PTHE	16

96 of 339 comments made reference to the canteen. The themes emerging are around price, quality of food and staff attitude.

There were a pleasing number of positive comments, with students expressing feeling satisfied in the way they are dealt with during the course of their learning journey. Two examples are provided below:

'On the whole, for such a large and complex organisation catering for so many differing needs it all appears to run very smoothly. My course is run well and I have access to help when I need it. The library service is brilliant and helpful. I.T. - I have rung 2 or 3 times and they couldn't help me at all so I gave up and found help by my friends instead.'

'I have found my overall experience here at UHI to be 'The Right Move'. The staff in every department has been most helpful and they have answered all of my questions. Even outside of class on their own time they have answered my questions and given helpful advice.'

The comments regarding communication reflect individual communications between staff and students in terms of approach, and a lack of enthusiasm. There are also comments regarding communication between departments across college.

Students would like information about funding to be clearer; and in relation to facilities they would appreciate longer opening hours, especially for the LRC and the gym.

Question: Please add any other comments you may wish to make below.

Broad Theme	Number of Comments
Admissions	5
Assessment and Feedback	5
Catering	39
Communication	3
Curriculum	7
Funding	8
Finance	1
Front of House	1
Quality	8
Induction	1
Learning and Teaching	52
Facilities	34
Support and Guidance	14
Organisation and Management	14
Student Engagement	11
Positive	29
Resources	10
Student Life	5
TOTAL	**247**

The response rates across the mode and level of programme are shown in the table below:

Mode and level	No of responses
FTFE	69
PTFE	56
FTHE	97
PTHE	25

The comments on learning and teaching represent a wide range of broadly individualised responses. There are a number of positive comments in nature about both lecturing staff and the course. There are some concerns raised in relation to the inconsistency of lecturing approach (HE), and some learners would appreciate greater level of support with Blackboard.

Comments regarding the canteen raise concerns that the food is unhealthy and expensive. A microwave would be appreciated.

Comments about facilities focus on issues such as extension of hours of the gym and parking issues. There is a desire for more teaching space to be created.
Positive comments reflect satisfaction with the overall experience. Two examples are highlighted below to illustrate this:
'Just a massive thank you for the experience so far. I am very grateful to you all for what is a challenging but massively rewarding time of my life. Much appreciated.'

'Its a great experience for me, I havent been college for more than 15 years. Its harder as you get older, I am willing to learn, hope is not to later. I am having struggling a bit,but at the same time. I am very excting as well. Its a great place to be and I am learning a lot's of interesting subjects. its a new world. Many thanks'

Recommendations and Next Steps:

Recommendations:

- Exploration as to how to increase the response rate overall; with a focus on HE students specifically.
- Individual teams reflect on the engagement with the survey in their area, and identify ways to increase the response rate at a local level.

It is recommended there is a focus on improvement in the following areas:
1. The preparation of students, and staff, to use the technologies available within the organisation to best support learning and teaching.
2. Consistency in approach of PATs, and awareness raising with respect what constitutes a progress review.
3. The brand, transparency and effectiveness of the class rep system

Next Steps

- Further analysis of 'Overall Satisfaction' and SFC mandatory question sets by mode and level – 30th June 2018
- Individual area evaluations as part of overall self-evaluation process - 31st August 2018
- Identify best approach to the three areas recommended for improvement – 30th June 2018

University of the Highlands and Islands
Inverness College

Subject/Title:	Student Recruitment Update
Author: [Name and Job title]	Roddy Henry, Depute Principal
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	5 June 2018
Date Paper prepared:	28 May 2018
Brief Summary of the paper:	To provide the committee with an update on students activity in 2017-18 and recruitment for 2018-19.
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:** • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change	• Growth in the curriculum • Financial sustainability
Resource implications:	No **If yes, please specify**:
Risk implications:	Yes **If yes, please specify:** Operational: Organisational: achieving student numbers targets
Equality and Diversity implications:	No **If yes, please specify:**
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	n/a

Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non confidential
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in "open" business* [Yes/No]	Yes

*If a paper should **not** be included within "open" business, please highlight below the reason.

Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (S33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court (S36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (S38)		Other (please give further details)	
For how long must the paper be withheld? (express either as the time which needs to pass or a condition which needs to be met.)			

Further guidance on application of the exclusions from Freedom of Information legislation is available via

http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/ScottishPublicAuthorities/ScottishPublicAuthorities.asp and

http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/web/FILES/Public_Interest_Test.pdf

Student Recruitment Update

Executive summary

2017-18 student activity:

- FE activity is currently 97.3% of total target (796 credits short). Some activity is still to accrue and the year-end target is achievable.
- HE recruitment has exceeded the funded undergraduate target.

The chart below shows the changing pattern of full-time enrolments over time across FE and HE:
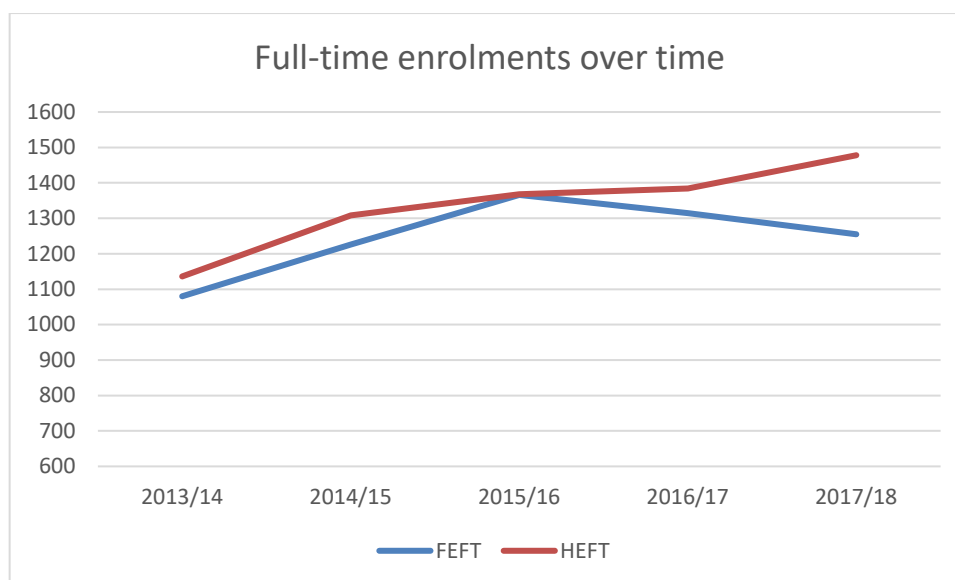
Full-time FE enrolments have increased since 2013-14, reaching a peak in 2015-16 and then falling back by 110 enrolments. The biggest reduction in full-time FE enrolments since 2015-16 has been in engineering (-75). The college has met its contractual FE target in each year since and including 2014-15.

Over the same five-year period, full-time HE enrolments have increased by 30% (342 enrolments).

2018-19 student recruitment:

Targets for 2018-19 recruitment:

FE provisional Credit target: 29,200
HE PPF target: 1,608 FTE

The UHI region has received an overall reduction of 1% in FE credits for 2018-19. The allocation of this reduction is still to be agreed: the provisional target above represents 99% of the college's 2017-18 target. The PPF target for funded HE FTE reflects the current enrolment and the fact that the university as a whole has now reached its funded numbers allocation.

Current application and offers rates for both FE and HE are slightly down on the same time last year, with 'offers in progress and accepted' down by 6% for FE and 3% for HE overall.

Marketing, Admissions and curriculum teams are working closely together to target marketing on courses with places remaining, and to ensure that applications are processed and offers given as quickly as possible. Offers to target are being monitored continuously.

Background information

Student recruitment can be measured in several ways: enrolments, head-count, credits and full-time equivalents (FTE). For reporting purposes, and in line with funding methodologies, credits are used as the measurement for student activity at further education (FE) level and FTE is used for the measure at higher education (HE) level.

The college is allocated a FE credit target via the FE Regional Board (FERB). The allocation (or target) is a share of the total FE funding provided to the region by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). There is also a small allocation of European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF) funding available for additional credits.

The HE FTE target is a funded undergraduate (UG) target. Each year, the Academic Partners each submit their UG funded FTE targets to the Partnership Planning Forum (PPF). These are collated to create the university's UG funded numbers target: the individual and collated targets are known as the *PPF targets*.

Student activity against 2017-18 targets as at 28th May 2018

The FE core credit target for 2017-18 is 29,069, with an additional ESIF credit target of 438, making a total of 29,507.

FE	2017/18
Core Credit Target	29,069
ESF Target	438
Total Target	29,507
Total Credits as at 28/05/2018	**28,711**
Balance to achieve	**796**
Total Credits as at 22/05/2017	*30,396*

Currently, the total enrolments for 2017/18 at FE level is 4,470 heads generating 28,711 credits, which is 97.3% of our target. Some further FE enrolments will take place before the end of the academic year, including Modern Apprentices, work based SVQs and commercial courses.

The HE (PPF) target for 2017/18 for undergraduate students with a fee status of 'Scottish' or 'European' is 1,595.4 FTE.

As at 28th May the FTE, counting by module attachment is 1,611.9 FTE as a result we have exceeded our target.

PPF Target HE FTE (Undergraduate students, including SC and EU fee statuses, excluding PGDE)	**1,595.4**
Current HE students as at 28/05/2018 - count by Module attachment.	**1611.9**

Enrolments by fee status

The following tables provide a breakdown of enrolments by fee status, showing the number of enrolments from Scottish, International EU and Rest of UK students.

FE enrolments by Fee Status:

FEE_STATUS	ENRs
EU	164
International	35
Rest of UK (RUK)	8
RUK with overseas term time address	1
Scottish	4262
Grand Total	**4470**

HE FTE within the PPF target by Qualification and Fee Status:

Qualification Type	Scottish	EU	Grand Total
CertHE	6.2		6.2
CPD	2.8		2.8
DipHE	32.2	0.5	32.7
First Degree	777.7	38.8	816.5
HN Level	25.9		25.9
HNC Level	430.8	21.3	452.1
HND Level	228.3	19.4	247.7
ROA Level	3.8	24.2	28.0
Grand Total	**1507.6**	**104.3**	**1611.9**

All HE FTE by Qualification and Fee Status:

Qualification Type	Scottish	Scottish with overseas term time address	EU	EU with overseas term time address	Rest of the UK	UK non-Scots not living in Scotland in term time	International	Grand Total
CertHE	6.2							6.2
CPD	2.8							2.8
DipHE	32.2		0.5					32.7
First Degree	791.4		38.8		14.7		3.0	847.9
HN Level	25.9				0.7	0.0	0.0	26.6
HNC Level	430.8		21.3		1.8		0.5	454.4
HND Level	228.3		19.4		3.9			251.6
PGDE	35.0							35.0
Research Degrees	0.0		0.0		0.0			0.0
ROA Level	3.8		24.2				2.0	30.0
Taught Postgraduate	38.5	5.1	0.2	0.3	1.3	6.8	0.2	52.3
Grand Total	**1594.8**	**5.1**	**104.5**	**0.3**	**22.4**	**6.8**	**5.7**	**1739.5**

Roddy Henry
Depute Principal

University of the Highlands and Islands
Inverness College

Board of Management

Subject/Title:	Student Partnership Update
Author: [Name and Job title]	Lindsay Snodgrass, Head of Student Services
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	5th June 2018
Date Paper prepared:	28th May 2018
Brief Summary of the paper:	To provide an update on developments around student partnership
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:**:** - compliance - partnership services - risk management - strategic plan - new opportunity/change	*Strategic Plan -* Opportunity and growth in student life *To further embed the student voice to ensure its contribution to all aspects of college life; to create a lively community of staff and students; and develop further student participation in clubs, societies and other activities, and engagement with the wider community*
Resource implications:	No **If yes, please specify**:
Risk implications:	No **If yes, please specify:** Operational: Organisational:
Equality and Diversity implications:	No **If yes, please specify:**
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	

Status – [Non confidential]	Non confidential
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in "open" business* [Yes]	Yes

*If a paper should **not** be included within "open" business, please highlight below the reason.

Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (S33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court (S36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (S38)		Other (please give further details)	
For how long must the paper be withheld? (express either as the time which needs to pass or a condition which needs to be met.)			

Further guidance on application of the exclusions from Freedom of Information legislation is available via

http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/ScottishPublicAuthorities/ScottishPublicAuthorities.asp and

http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/web/FILES/Public_Interest_Test.pdf

Student Partnership

Executive summary

This provides an update for the committee on the progress made around student partnership and student engagement. Alongside continued progress with the formal Student Partnership Agreement, we have also been working on other developments in this area. We have two separate but connected strands –

- sparqs project – how we can engage students as partners to jointly evaluate what we do, and how well we do it. in line with the new How Good is our College (HGIOC) framework
- student experience project – engaging students as partners to broadly review the student experience; the Student Partnership Agreement; and the Learning Agreement

Background information

The College and HISA are working with sparqs to develop a practice guide for the college sector on how to engage students as partners in *How Good Is Our College?* An initial workshop was facilitated by sparqs in February and attended by 30 staff and students from across the college. The purpose of this was to shape the direction of the project by identifying good practice and priorities for development in both the *tools of student engagement* used in the college and the *topics in which students are engaged*.

The workshop also benefited from having valuable input from Education Scotland. Through further sessions between the college and HISA and with support from sparqs, 3 distinct themes were identified as worthy of further exploration:

Communication   **Roles**   **Evaluation**

CONSISTENCY
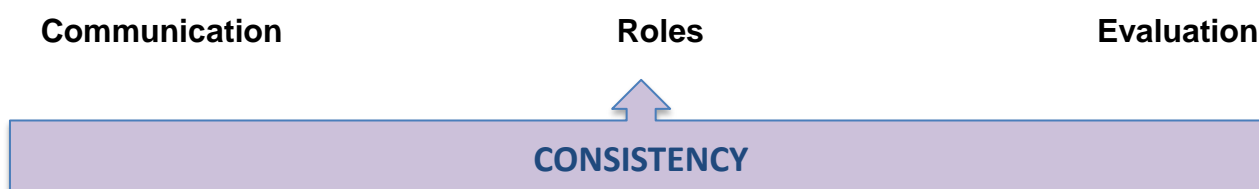
These themes were then honed into **five key inter-related areas** for further development:

1. **Course evaluation activity** – how do we involve students in evaluating their experience

2. **Course rep role** – are we clear on what we need from course reps; are reps clear on their role and the expectations of them; is their training effective; do they / we value their roles; how do we accredit their input

3. **Staff roles** – are clear on we need from staff in order to support student engagement (PATs); are PATs clear on their role and the expectations of them; are we clear on the opportunities for student engagement

4. **Course Committee Meetings** – how do we engage students as equal players in course team evaluation; how do we better engage students before, during and after course evaluation activity

5. **Surveys** – do we engage students in creating our surveys; do we see students as simply 'completers' of surveys; how do we involve students in the gathering and analysing data

A project plan spanning across the 5 key areas has since been devised. The actions within the plan will span into AY 18-19 and will lead to a longer term cultural shift in terms of how we engage students in jointly evaluating their experience and the work we do. It is envisaged that this project will conclude with publication of sector guidance in April 2019.

Running alongside the sparqs project has been the student experience project. A diverse group of 12 students across access, apprenticeship, degree and post graduate level have been looking at various aspects of the student experience. The merger with HISA has prompted us to consider the utility of the Student Partnership Agreements which the College and HISA separately have as well as the Learning Agreement. This group will help to run a workshop at staff conference on what they have worked on thus far.

Student Representation in 2018-19

Since the last committee we have successfully recruited our new HISA team for next session. All three posts were contested with ten candidates standing across these positions. New officers will be in post from 1st July:

Position	Elected	Contested by	Votes Polled
President	Andrew Bowie	4 candidates	360
Vice President Education	Feargus Murray	3 candidates	361
Vice President Activities and Welfare	Shawna Leigh Mackinnon	3 candidates	385

All posts being contested was a significant improvement on last year as was the turnout. This is a new structure from previous years reducing us to three posts but maintaining the same hours. The handover with the newly elected student officers in the run up to them taking office will be critical so as to train and upskill them about the quality processes they are expected be involved in. This will be done in partnership between the HISA President and the Quality Manager. HISA will play a key role next session in taking forward the various work streams which will come out of both the sparqs and student experience projects.

The College Welcome

Plans for inducting and enrolling our new cohort of students in August / September are well underway. Various enhancements are planned around themes which were identified during the course of this session as being growing challenges for us including:

- Safe use of social media
- Sexual harassment and equality
- Academic resilience and positive mental health

University of the Highlands and Islands
Inverness College

Board of Management

Subject/Title:	HISA End of Year Update
Author: [Name and Job title]	Gabbi Starr, Student President Kat Bateson, Student Association Co-Ordinator
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	5 June 2018
Date Paper prepared:	28th May '18
Brief Summary of the paper:	To provide the committee with a summary of HISA's activity throughout 2017-18
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:**:** • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change	*Strategic Plan -* Opportunity and growth in student life *To further embed the student voice to ensure its contribution to all aspects of college life; to create a lively community of staff and students; and develop further student participation in clubs, societies and other activities, and engagement with the wider community*
Resource implications:	No **If yes, please specify**:
Risk implications:	No **If yes, please specify:** Operational: Organisational:
Equality and Diversity implications:	No **If yes, please specify:**
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	

Status – [Non confidential]	
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in "open" business* [Yes]	

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Student Partnership

Executive summary

To update the committee on the work of HISA throughout academic year 2017-18

Background information

<u>**Local Progress**</u>

Inverness Merger

In July 2017, Inverness College Students' Association merged with HISA, and began operating under the name HISA Inverness. Over the course of the year, the association has been working to integrate fully all aspects of ICSA's previous work. Hours from one of the Student Association Co-Ordinator posts were also allocated to the HISA Inverness office at 0.5 FTE on site.

In January, the team also decided to refresh its paid officer structure, and opted to reduce the positions available to three from 4, while still maintaining the equivalent FTE. As a result, two Vice Presidents will now work 10 hours per week each, and the President will work 15 hours per week. Finance is predicted to be finish integration by the start of next academic year.

Events

<u>Freshers</u>

Freshers in 2017 saw over 90 businesses and charities attend the college to speak to students, and create a welcome to the year. Evaluation forms continued to produce high satisfaction, and this is one of HISA Inverness's most high profile events of the year. There was a further refreshers event held in February with over 30 stalls providing everything from information to free food samples.

For September 2018, HISA Inverness plans to expand the Freshers event to fill out more of the week. This will include a dedicated Clubs and Societies Fayre to increase student participation in social and sporting activities.

<u>Pink Day</u>

The Vice President Engagement held a Pink Day in the atrium, which included 'Pink Pong' and manicures from the Hair and Beauty students. This event raised awareness of breast cancer, as well as raising funds. The event took in £145.67 which was donated to Cancer Research UK.

<u>Self Esteem Workshop</u>

National charity Fixers came to the college to deliver workshops for young women on self esteem. This event was attended by approximately 10 students over a two hour session.

No Smoking Day

This year the team held their first ever No Smoking Day event as part of the bid for Healthy Body Healthy Mind awards. Students took over 50 promotional packets of mines, over 40 blowing bubbles, 30 savings tins and an estimated 70 students took part. Students were encouraged to take part in HISAs' Filter It Out campaign, aimed at reducing smoking by identifying triggers and adopting healthier alternative habits.

Projects

HGIOC Project

The How Good Is Our College project with the college and Sparqs has become one of HISA Inverness's biggest projects this year. Immediate outcomes from this project for HISA include:
- Reviewing internal class rep roles and meeting structures
- Plans to rewrite rep training complements to include staff in the delivery
- Renewed job focus for the Vice President Education Post

Officers elect have also attended consultations with Sparqs for the upcoming quality arrangements. They have also been involved in the college's student partnership project, and staff conference planning.

Transport

The Vice President Equality and President have been investigating transport issues at the college with specific focus on access and safety. As a result, HISA is currently attempting to make contact with Stagecoach bus to investigate the location of the bus stop which disabled students have raised concerns about. The President also took part in the atrium car collision simulation as the victim being lifted from the vehicle.

Engagement and Partnership in College Work

Officers have been continuing to participate in committees and boards as part of their role; however, we recognise that classes often conflict with meeting times. We are working to resolve this through timetable assessment before joining a committee, and extending working hours to allow for the meeting and its preparation time without reliant on TOIL usage.

Officers have also attended targeted intervention meetings, and have been working with the Principle on various student engagement and partnership projects. Furthermore, time has been dedicated to Healthy Body Healthy Mind, the student partnership project, events such as open evenings and residences engagement.

Clubs and Societies

This year saw a significant increase in the number of clubs and societies on campus, newly supported by the existing HISA Activities Co-Ordinator. Some key highlights include:

The Football (Men's and Women's) club has been competing at Scottish Student Sport (SSS), and the captain (who is also the Sports Officer) lead a team of students to the SSS finals in Edinburgh to compete.

The Drama Society held their first professional production at Eden Court 'The Grimm Tale of the Huntsman'. This was met with outstanding reviews in the Inverness Courier, and was a fantastic achievement for all students involved. Their handover document and fundraising efforts on the piece is being used as an example of good practice for other clubs and societies, and is available on request.

Volleyball competed for the first time at SSS, and Basketball returned to competing following a successful year in the 2016-17 men's Grampian league.

The International Adventure Society has led a successful and well received program of activities, supported by Laura Hillyard from the International Team.

Emerging societies have been established for:
Argentine Tango
Geography
Manga and Anime

SPA

While this project is explored further in another document, HISA would like to highlight that we will be undertaking a review of this piece of work with the college. This is in order to update the content and bring it in line with current best practice, as well as taking into account changes within the college to student engagement.

Class Reps

Recruitment

Recruitment has fallen slightly this year with just over 230 reps registered this year. Of these reps, around 40% took part in the Sparqs Introductory Level Class Rep Training. Considerations for GDPR will influence how recruitment takes place after the summer break, and we expect to be much more reliant on communication directly from academic staff.

Meetings

Meetings have garnered a steady attendance, with up to 30 students present up until April. We are also extremely grateful for the attendance of SMT and PDMs to resolve student queries on site.

<u>Review</u>

Over the Summer break we hope to review and renew:
- Class rep role descriptors
- Provision for returning/advanced class reps
- Training design and delivery
- Meeting agendas and content

Resource for 2018-19

This will be explained in detail in a separate report. This report will come as a late paper to the committee to allow the Partnership Council to take place on the 30th May 2018. We apologise for any inconvenience to committee members.

University of the Highlands and Islands
Inverness College

Board of Management

Subject/Title:	Quality Enhancement
Author: [Name and Job title]	Roddy Henry, Depute Principal
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	5 June 2018
Date Paper prepared:	25 May 2018
Brief Summary of the paper:	This paper provides a summary of quality enhancement and related activities taking place across the college, that relate to the remit of the committee.
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:**:** • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change	This paper links to the strategic plan, particularly in relation to the student experience and the curriculum.
Resource implications:	No
Risk implications:	No
Equality and Diversity implications:	No
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	n/a

Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-confidential
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in "open" business* [Yes/No]	Yes

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Quality Enhancement

Executive summary

The college maintains a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) which collates and monitors the range of actions taken to improve and enhance the college's provision. The actions are drawn from a number of activities and are informed by evidence from the college's ongoing quality monitoring and assurance activities.

This paper provides a summary of progress against two key aspects:

1. Actions to improve retention and attainment on programmes where they are low;
2. Actions to review and enhance self-evaluation and the effectiveness of actions for improvement.

A summary of the recent visit by Education Scotland inspectors, as part of their annual enhancement and scrutiny activities, is also provided. The committee paper on the end of year student survey provides further evidence of the quality of the student experience.

Background information

1. Improving retention and attainment on programmes where these are low

Table 1 provides a summary of withdrawal rates at this point in the year, by level and mode of study, compared with previous years and to the college sector benchmark.

Table 1: Student withdrawal rates at 24 May 2018

LEVEL_OF_STUDY	AC_YEAR	ENRs	EARLY WD %	FURTHER WD %	TOTAL WD %	SECTOR WD %
FEFT	2015/16	1366	8.71%	15.52%	**24.23%**	**25.5%**
	2016/17	1315	8.68%	13.40%	**22.08%**	**25.1%**
	2017/18	1255	8.69%	11.56%	**20.25%**	
FEPT	2015/16	3370	2.93%	6.34%	**9.27%**	**9.3%**
	2016/17	3135	1.97%	5.63%	**7.60%**	**10%**
	2017/18	3045	2.00%	3.67%	**5.51%**	
HEFT	2015/16	1366	4.69%	8.71%	**13.40%**	**17.2%**
	2016/17	1382	4.57%	5.80%	**10.37%**	**17.2%**
	2017/18	1477	3.99%	6.02%	**10.01%**	
HEPT	2015/16	971	2.37%	5.15%	**7.52%**	**9%**
	2016/17	1161	3.65%	4.60%	**8.25%**	**8.1%**
	2017/18	1041	2.31%	3.17%	**5.48%**	

Full-time FE (FTFE): early withdrawal (EW) rates are currently much the same as previous years and the latest sector benchmark. Further withdrawal (FW) rates have

improved year-on-year overall and were 3 points better than the sector benchmark in 2016-17. The current position suggests only a marginal potential further improvement in retention rates overall this year.

Part-time FE (PTFE): EW remain low and are 1 point better than the sector benchmark. FW rates have been in line with or just better than benchmark in the last two years and look on track to be so again this year.

Full-time HE (FTHE): EW rates are currently slightly better than last year and the latest college sector benchmark, which is based on HN awards only. FW rates improved last year and look to have been maintained this year.

Part-time HE (PTHE): these programmes are difficult to benchmark due to the mixed nature of HN and degree awards as well as structured and unstructured delivery. However, withdrawal rates are low overall and look to be on track to remain low this year.

Table 2 provides a summary of withdrawal rates for programme areas that were identified for improvement at the end of 2016-17. Some of these programmes are involved in the Targeted Intervention (TI) process: the Head of Curriculum will provide a verbal update on progress of all programmes involved in TI.

Table 2: update on programme areas identified for improvement in 2017-18

Programme/area involved in TI	*2016-17*		2017-18			
	Enr	*W/d @ year-end*	Enr	W/d to date	Sector W/d level	Diff
Art and Design (FE programmes)	65	21.5%	54	31.5%	23.8%	🟥
Care (FE programmes)	147	28.6%	154	27.9%	27.9%	🟧
Care (HND Care & Admin Practice)*	17	11.8%	18	11.2%	19.5%	🟩
Computing (FE programmes)	55	32.7%	44	22.6%	27.5%	🟩
Computing (HE programmes)*	61	11.4%	57	29.8%	17.6%	🟥
Engineering Craft (FE programmes)	193	24.8%	174	19.5%	22.4%	🟩
Hospitality (FE programmes)	51	37.2%	51	25.4%	28.1%	🟩
Hospitality (HE programmes)	34	38.2%	42	21.4%	22.0%	🟩
Social Sciences (FE programmes)	55	30.9%	44	31.9%	30.6%	🟥

*The issue with these programmes in 2016-17 was a high rate of partial success, ie; students completing the course but not achieving the award:
- HND Care & Admin Practice = 29% partial success in 2016-17
- HE computing programmes = 36% partial success in 2016-17

There are still significant issues with FE Art & Design programmes and with HE computing programmes, retention rates for the both having declined significantly this year. The NC Social Science programmes are showing no improvement on last year in terms of retention and FE Care programmes have still to show any significant improvement in retention overall: however, both reflect the current sector levels of

withdrawal in those subject areas. These areas are still involved in TI and further actions for improvement have been agreed for 2018-19.

FE computing and FE and HE hospitality programmes are all showing a marked improvement in retention overall. The programme teams have worked through the TI process, including engaging with external 'critical friends', to identify and test out actions for improvement.

2. Review and enhancement of evaluative activities

A review of our internal quality arrangements together with developments in the regional and external environments, have provided a useful context within which to review and consider our current and future approaches. The developments include the revised Education Scotland framework, the harmonisation of regional quality arrangements, the work with sparqs on student engagement and the college's involvement in the *College Improvement Project* (CIP)*.*

Programme and support team self-evaluation activities are being re-focussed to make them more interactive and engaging, and ensure they lead to effective actions for improvement. All managers, team leaders and Programme Co-ordinators are involved in 'evaluation for improvement' development sessions to review current arrangements and introduce a more focussed and collaborative approach to reflecting on evidence, identifying actions and then monitoring the impact of the actions closely.

Some new approaches will be introduced for the end of year evaluative activities. However, four curriculum teams are piloting a quite different approach, which will help inform further changes. The pilot will also inform regional discussions on harmonising approaches to self-evaluation.

3. Education Scotland visit Friday 18 May

The college HMI and one other HMI visited the college on Friday 18 May to conduct a series of meetings with staff and students. The meetings reflect the college's published Enhancement Plan and other key activities in relation to the Education Scotland quality framework. The meetings covered the following topics:

- Regional approaches to Quality Assurance and Enhancement
- Whole College Approach to Mental Health
- Evaluation for Improvement: approach to evaluation – internal and external
- Strategic approach with key external stakeholder
- Student Engagement Activity: student voice; partnership working
- Targeted Intervention Approaches: outcomes; continuous improvement – process and pilot review

The HMI engaged in useful discussion with staff and students, followed by a feedback session with the principal and members of the SMT. The feedback from the HMI was

very positive, and has helped inform ongoing reflection and review of our activities. The college is still waiting for the written feedback from the visit.

The guidance for writing the 2017-18 Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan (EREP) has been published and is available here:

http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Quality/College_evaluative_reports_supplementary_guidance_2017-18.pdf

The guidance acknowledges that it has not been possible to respond to the feedback on the first year of the new arrangements. Colleges are therefore asked to report on a sub-set of Quality Indicators this year and to provide an update on the EREP from 2016-17. The EREP for 2017-18, approved by the Board, is to be submitted for validation by 31 October 2018.

Roddy Henry
Depute Principal.

University of the Highlands and Islands
Inverness College

Board of Management

Subject/Title:	Research Report
Author: [Name and Job title]	Melanie Smith Head of Research Development
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	5 June 2018
Date Paper prepared:	27 May 2018
Brief Summary of the paper:	To report on research activity for the last quarter, and specifically to outline and explain research funding streams
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:**:** • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change	Strategic plan: research
Resource implications:	No **If yes, please specify**:
Risk implications:	No **If yes, please specify:** Operational: Organisational:
Equality and Diversity implications:	No **If yes, please specify:**
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	n/a

Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-confidential
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in "open" business* [Yes/No]	yes

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RESEARCH REPORT

This report summarises research activity in IC, and progress in the following key performance areas:

1. **Research Excellence Framework**
2. **Postgraduate researchers**
3. **Research – teaching linkages, including research and scholarship actions**
4. **Knowledge exchange and innovation**
5. **Funding income**

1. Research Excellence Framework

In the 2014 REF submission IC submitted 2.4 FTE (3 individuals into 3 Units of Assessment). On the basis of this submission, the Research Excellence Grant (REG) was £38,964 in 2015/16, increased to £59,367 in 2017/18. The REG for 2018/19 is yet to be clarified from UHI EO.

The research active staff scoping exercise is currently being undertaken across UHI. This has identified 12 individuals (10.6 FTE) in IC who will be included in the REF based on current activity and criteria. At the point of REF submission on 27 November 2020, it is probable that this figure will increase. This increase in FTE submitted to the REF since 2014, means that IC is on track to reach the target of 12 FTE submitted which was set following the last REF.

The main focus for research active staff is to ensure that REF outputs are of 3 and 4*. Staff have attended workshops to better understand how to write papers to maximise excellence outputs. Research active staff are strongly encouraged to attend a regular REF focused journal club to help support individuals in achieving these outputs.

2. Postgraduate Researchers

2017/18 has seen a marked increase in numbers of full time PGRs. From 4 registered in 16/17 to 9 registered in 17/18, with a further 2 to be registered before the end of this academic year. This is largely because of the significant funding from the ESIF secured by UHI. It is unlikely that UHI will benefit from this level of European funding in the future because of BREXIT. However, the timing for IC, and particularly the Rivers and Lochs Institute, has been particularly fortuitous given the stage of development and growth of the RLI, and the BIOMAG laboratory coming into full operation. Funding for PGR studentships has also be secured from Forest Research, Scottish Natural Heritage, River Boards and Trusts.

IC will be supervising a Carnegie Trust studentship (on the subject of Rewilding) from September 2018.

IC is also hosting an engineering studentship registered through UHI EO.

3. Research – Teaching Linkages

Masters by Research

In May 2018 two new MRes programmes were approved:
MRes Forestry
MRes Freshwater Science

These will be delivered as full Masters by Research projects. For 2019-20 the plan is to develop taught modules as part of the MRes in both of these specialist areas. The target market is international and work is already underway with the international officer to develop suitable international markets for MRes delivery with a taught component.

Research and Scholarship Scheme

Three projects were undertaken in 2017-18.
1. The hydraulics of step pool channels (working in collaboration with a river restoration company cbec who work with the RLI)
2. The other side of the mountain (an arts installation project)
3. The effect of tree age on the antibiotic properties of Scots Pine (a project furthering the investigations undertaken by an undergraduate student as part of their dissertation project with the aim of taking the work to publication).

The outcomes will be presented at the staff conference at the end of June.

4. Knowledge Exchange and Innovation

The government is channelling increasing levels of funding through innovation and KE, aimed at seeing more direct results and outputs from research into the economy. UHI has identified this is an area of potential weakness and challenge across the partnership, and a number of actions have been led by the VP Research and Impact to address this challenge. Notably, sector innovation groups have been established (IC is a member of three of these; tourism, aquaculture, water). The UHI Research Committee, has been reconstituted and is now the UHI Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee. Research groups need to be very well networked with industry partners in advance of calls coming out for proposals, so that they can respond quickly and with strong bids.

IC is already well networked in the forestry, water and tourism industries, and (for example) is developing innovation and KT bids with the whisky sector. However, this is an area of targeted growth for 18/19 as it is recognised that there is much more that can be achieved in KE and innovation.

5. Funding income

The sources of funding income are in the following areas:

Research Excellence Grant	£ 59,000
Studentships	£240,000
Grants	£164,000
Contracts	£200,000
TOTAL	**£663,000**

University of the Highlands and Islands
Inverness College

Board of Management

Subject/Title:	Stakeholder Engagement Review - update
Author: [Name and Job title]	Roddy Henry, Depute Principal
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	5 June 2018
Date Paper prepared:	25 May 2018
Brief Summary of the paper:	This paper provides a further update on the progress on the development and implementation of the stakeholder engagement review.
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:**:** • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change	This paper links to the strategic plan, particularly in relation to partnership services.
Resource implications:	No
Risk implications:	No
Equality and Diversity implications:	No
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	n/a

Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-confidential		
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in "open" business* [Yes/No]	Yes		

*If a paper should **not** be included within "open" business, please highlight below the reason.

Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (S33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court (S36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (S38)		Other (please give further details)	
For how long must the paper be withheld? (express either as the time which needs to pass or a condition which needs to be met.)			

Further guidance on application of the exclusions from Freedom of Information legislation is available via

http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/ScottishPublicAuthorities/ScottishPublicAuthorities.asp and

http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/web/FILES/Public_Interest_Test.pdf

Stakeholder Engagement Review – update

Executive summary

This paper provides a further update on the progress on the development and implementation of the stakeholder engagement review. The committee approved the approach to the review at the March 2018 meeting. An electronic survey tool containing five key questions will be used to gather stakeholder feedback on the value and quality of the college's interaction with them. The results will be presented on a 'heat map' at a college level.

Main body of information

The pilot survey will be launched in June and will run for two weeks. The survey will be managed centrally by the Quality Unit using BOS survey software. Managers will make contact with their stakeholders to alert them to the survey and the rationale – a common narrative will be provided to support this – and provide a link to the survey.

Timeline:

Action	Planned date	Who?
Submit contact details of key stakeholders to Quality email. To include name and email address as a minimum.	4 May 2018	All Curriculum and Support Managers
Survey administration: questions and contact details into BOS	18 May 2018	Quality
Contact key stakeholders to raise awareness of survey	w/c 28 May 2018	All Curriculum and Support Managers
Survey opens	4 June	Quality
Survey closes	15 June	Quality
Headline analysis	w/c 18 June	Quality

At the time of writing, over 1,000 key stakeholder contacts have been identified across all teams.

Roddy Henry
Depute Principal.

University of the Highlands and Islands
Inverness College

Board of Management

Subject/Title:	Corporate Parenting Report 2016 – March 2018
Author: [Name and Job title]	Lindsay Snodgrass, Head of Student Services
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	28th May '18
Date Paper prepared:	5th June '18
Brief Summary of the paper:	To provide an update of developments around student partnership
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:** • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change	*Strategic Plan –* To further develop our accessible and inclusive support for students to enable all to achieve their potential
Resource implications:	No **If yes, please specify**:
Risk implications:	No **If yes, please specify:** Operational: Organisational:
Equality and Diversity implications:	No **If yes, please specify:**
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	

Status – [Non confidential]	
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in "open" business* [Yes]	

*If a paper should **not** be included within "open" business, please highlight below the reason.

Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (S33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court (S36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (S38)		Other (please give further details)	
For how long must the paper be withheld? (express either as the time which needs to pass or a condition which needs to be met.)			

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Corporate Parenting

Executive summary

The Scottish Government requested that all corporate parents publish a report by April 2018 to summarise the progress made since the publication of their Corporate Parenting Plan. The College published its Corporate Parenting Plan in October 2016 and since then has taken significant steps forward in the support provided to this disadvantaged group of students to reduce any barriers which individuals may face. We published our update report in April '18 which provides a summary of that progress; the impact of actions taken; and a flavour of our intended future priorities.

Background information

Since October 2016 the College have excelled in the work we do to support individuals who have care experience. The full report details this work but the below points provide a flavour for the type of support we provide which has which has been deemed as sector leading –

- Corporate Parenting Steering Group established to monitor and review progress and which has membership to include care experienced students and third sector agencies
- Strong partnership working with third sector agencies and schools to compliment other support which is available
- Wide engagement network established through membership of CHAMPS board; College Development Network and UHI Care Leavers Group
- Awareness raising embedded into new staff induction and ongoing staff development
- Dedicated named member of staff to support individuals from point of transition throughout the learner journey
- Positive declaration environment established and guaranteed interview
- Tailored approach to funding
- Tailored approach to accommodation in the residences
- Individuals flagged to Personal Academic Tutors on INSIGHT as potentially being in need of enhanced support
- Meal vouchers introduced

We have seen a positive impact from all of the good work being done in this area. The College delivers above the regional target set for the proportion of credits being delivered to care experienced individuals. Early withdrawal rates have fallen by 50% in 2017-18 compared with 2015-16 and successful outcomes for care experienced learners on Further and Higher Education programmes have improved over the last three years and are now above sector levels for this learner group. That said, we are very aware that, despite these positive indicators, successful outcomes for care experienced individuals remain significantly lower than the outcomes for the whole college population so continued work is required to reduce this inequity.

START TOMORROW TODAY

Corporate Parenting Plan Report for 2016 – March 2018
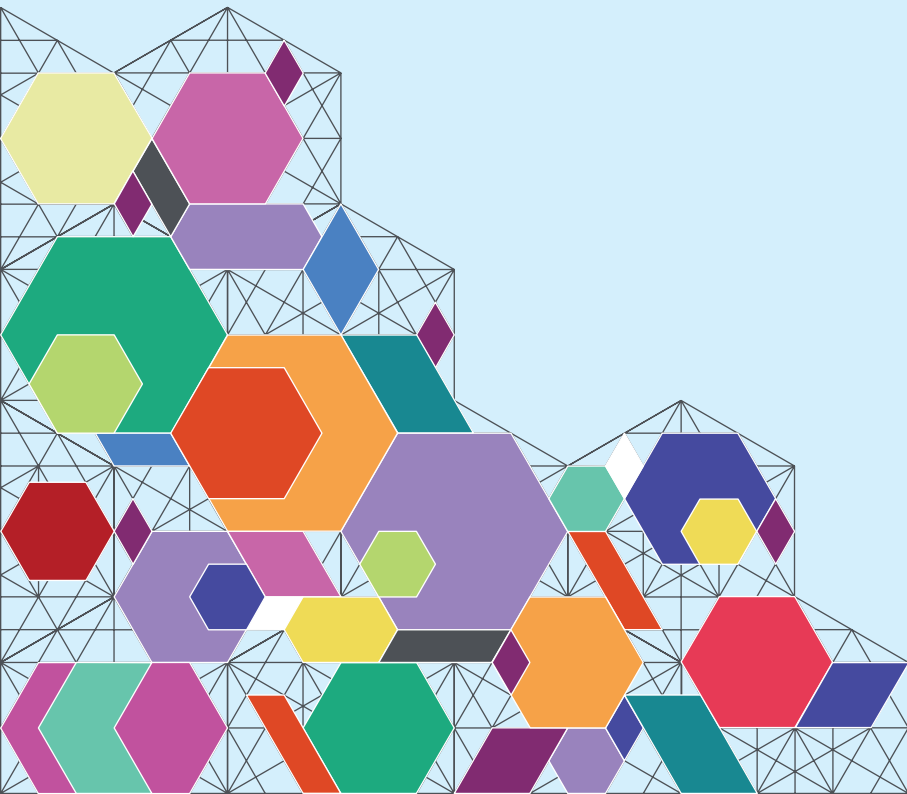
Introduction

Inverness College UHI is defined as a Corporate Parent under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. Corporate Parenting is defined as:

"An organisation's performance of actions necessary to uphold the rights and secure the wellbeing of a looked after child or care leaver, and through which their physical, emotional, spiritual, social and educational development is promoted, from infancy though to adulthood. In other words, corporate parenting is about certain organisations listening to the needs, fears and wishes of children and young people, and being proactive and determined in their collective efforts to meet them" (Scottish Government, 2015).

At present many care experienced young people have some of the poorest personal outcomes of any group in Scotland. Low levels of educational engagement and achievement feed into high levels of poverty, homelessness and poor mental health (Meltzer, 2004). They can often experience multiple barriers to education such as lack of funding, disruptive schooling and an unstable home environment.

Inverness College UHI published its first Corporate Parenting Plan in October 2016 after extensive consultation and collaboration with third sector agencies, a range of other Corporate Parents and care experienced young people. Since then significant progress has been made against our action plan.

This report details our work over the period since the publication of our plan to March 2018, the impact that this has had on care experienced students and our priorities for the future.

1. Management and delivery of plan/outcomes

Inverness College UHI is committed to ensuring care experienced young people are encouraged and assisted to apply for Further and Higher education and are fully supported during their learner journey. We strive for continuous enhancement of the support we provide and many of our initiatives have been recognised as sector leading.

A Corporate Parenting Steering Group has been established which is composed of college senior management, operational managers, transition co-ordinator, academic staff, third sector agencies working with care experienced young people and care experienced students. The remit of the group is to monitor and review the implementation of our Corporate Parenting Plan, ensuring that actions are met within timescales and that the actions are evaluated with regard to positive impact on the student experience. The group reports into several committees – Student Support Committee, Equality and Diversity Committee and to the Board of Management.

We have ensured that our plan compliments provision from other groups and that opportunity for joint funding of initiatives is available through ongoing discussions with other Corporate Parents through the CHAMPS board, partners from College Development Network and with other academic partners through the University of Highlands and Islands (UHI) Care Leavers Group.

2. Staff awareness

The college ensures that all staff are aware of the challenges facing care-experienced students and of their role and responsibilities as a Corporate Parent. Corporate Parenting has become an integral part of new staff induction enabling all staff to have information at an early stage of their employment. This is consolidated by interactive training during staff development days and with information on the staff intranet.

In partnership with Who Cares? Scotland and our care experienced students, UHI developed an online Corporate Parenting training module, which will be made mandatory for all staff at the start of the next academic year, 2018-19. This will continue to help us consolidate staff awareness around the challenges faced by care - experienced young people and our collective responsibilities as a Corporate Parent.

3. Raising aspirations and pre-entry outreach

Inverness College UHI has a dedicated, named member of staff who meets with third sector agencies, schools and individual care experienced students at an early stage to support their transition to college. The Transition Co-ordinator role enables the College to raise awareness of Further and Higher Education opportunities and the support available to help raise the aspirations of care leavers. This member of staff continues to be the main contact for care-experienced students, ensuring continuity of support throughout the student's learner journey.

Our Transition Co-ordinator arranges a series of transition days where future students can visit the college, meet with curriculum and support staff and become more comfortable and confident in the college environment prior to becoming a student.

Details of the support available to care experienced students is detailed on our website https://www.inverness.uhi.ac.uk/students/student-support/care-leavers Leaflets with information about support and opportunities for care-experienced young people are widely disseminated to organisations working with this group to help encourage greater participation in Further and Higher Education.

The Transition Co-ordinator in partnership with our careers and employability staff work with our current care experienced students to raise awareness of opportunities for educational progression and/or employment to help secure positive destinations.

4. Identification of applicants that are care experienced

We encourage declaration at pre-entry and application stage through information on our website and prospectus and through early contact at school 16 plus meetings, and third sector agency meetings which we are invited to. To ensure that we can share information we have Data Sharing agreements with the main relevant agencies, with schools and with social work.

To help ensure that we capture all care-experienced students, and have the opportunity to support them, we have changed the wording on the declaration

statement on the application form, helping to clarify who should tick the box. We also have measures in place to help students declare at any stage of their journey e.g. at interview, during funding discussions, during interviews with their personal academic tutor (PAT).

5. Application

Students who declare on their application that they are care-experienced are flagged on the data management system. In February 2016, we introduced contextualised admissions, guaranteeing that all care-experienced applicants are invited to interview.

6. Pre-entry

All students who have declared care experiences on their application are contacted prior to the start of their course to welcome them to the institution; outline the services available to support them; and to offer a meeting with our Transition Co-ordinator.

Accessing funding and providing the information required is often a hurdle for care-experienced students. Additional support is available to help with the completion of forms and flexibility is given with regard to any documentation required. Funding applications are prioritised by our Student Funding Team to ensure finance is available from the earliest point possible.

Our Halls of Residence give preferential status to all care experienced students and provide 365-day contracts for them to ensure they do not have to leave the accommodation during the summer period when most students vacate and go home. We collaborate with through care and after care services and local authorities regarding any financial support for accommodation.

7. On course support

Students who have declared care experienced status are offered an initial meeting with the Transition Co-ordinator. At this meeting, a co-ordinated support plan is created with the student. This enables students to be directed to appropriate support for their needs whilst having one individual who is their key point of contact and who takes responsibility for any support being put in place. Any additional support needs are considered for education, wellbeing support, and funding support.
Care-experienced students are also flagged on our internal INSIGHT system which closely monitors student attendance and progress on a weekly basis. The flagging system ensures that their PAT is aware of their situation, the additional challenges they may face and the higher risk they may face of withdrawing. The flagging of care - experienced students allows the PAT to signpost individuals and give additional support where required. We have a referral system in place where all curriculum staff can refer students to different support services ensuring that any problems/ challenges are dealt with timeously. Experience has shown that timely intervention allows better resolution and helps with retention and attainment.

The Transition Co-ordinator offers meetings with care-experienced students at key periods throughout the year – at the start of the course, before Christmas, before exams and towards the end of their course. However, we also operate an 'open door' approach, which is made clear to the individuals.

During academic year 17/18, we have introduced coffee and chat sessions where care-experienced students can meet and share experiences. Once more established we hope to extend this by developing a peer mentoring / buddy system.

For further education students bursary is only paid on 100% attendance. We appreciate that due to challenges that care-experienced students face many of them may encounter attendance issues. We have therefore introduced a system where the Transition Co-ordinator can release bursary for care-experienced students in appropriate situations. We also introduced breakfast vouchers, extra print credit, and food bank vouchers to provide additional financial support to those students in financial hardship.

8. Monitoring of plan/outcomes

The Corporate Parenting action plan is continuously monitored and updated by the Transition Co-ordinator. The outcomes are evaluated in a number of ways such as student surveys, targeted focus groups and meetings with college staff, students and external partners. At a strategic level the Corporate Parenting Steering Group and the committees that it reports to oversee the plan and the outcomes.

The college data system allows us to track numbers of care leavers and their retention and achievement. Analysis of these figures also helps us to monitor the outcomes of our outcomes.

9. Impact

All of the work undertaken within our Corporate Parenting Plan has been with the aim of ensuring that care-experienced students have access to support at every stage of their learner journey.

Feedback from surveys and focus groups confirms that our care-experienced students feel well supported and value the impact and support given by the Transition Co-ordinator. External agencies have been surveyed to seek their views on the service we provide to the agencies and to care experienced young people. Again, responses showed appreciation of our named contact person and of the support provided.

We carefully monitor and analyse data in relation to trends in application, retention and success of care-experienced students. The proportion of credits delivered to care leavers has risen slightly over three years and is around 1 point higher than the regional target for 2017-18. We are also pleased to report that the success rates for care-experienced learners on Further and Higher Education programmes have improved over the last three years and are now above sector levels for this learner group. Retention has also improved over the period e.g. early withdrawal rates have fallen by 50% in 2017/18 compared to 2015/16. Despite these positive indicators, we recognise that as a group, successful outcomes for care-experienced students

remain significantly lower than outcomes for the whole college population and we will continue to work to reduce this attainment gap.

10. Future priorities

Our continued objective is to encourage and inspire greater numbers of care - experienced young people not only to enrol onto our courses but also to ensure that they have access to all of the support they require to accomplish their academic and personal goals.

To help meet this objective we will continue to work with partners to focus on helping to reduce the financial, emotional and social barriers facing care-experienced students.

In the coming academic year, 2018-19, we will produce a range of materials to help raise the aspirations of care experienced school pupils in Highland to include local case studies, videos and web based materials. It is expected that these materials will help to increase the number of care experienced young people applying for Further and Higher Education over the next three years.

We will work to strengthen peer networks within the college environment to give care-experienced students the opportunity to share challenges and solutions.

We will also include progression and careers support into our co-ordinated support plans helping students to progress to higher levels of study or into employment.

University of the Highlands and Islands
Inverness College

Board of Management

Subject/Title:	Curriculum Update
Author: [Name and Job title]	Gill Berkeley Head of Curriculum
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	5 June 2018
Date Paper prepared:	May 28th 2018
Brief Summary of the paper:	This paper is to highlight developments that are being taken within the curriculum aligned with the strategic aims and objectives of Inverness UHI.
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:**:** • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change	Strategic plan – opportunity and growth in curriculum
Resource implications:	Yes / No **If yes, please specify**:
Risk implications:	Yes / No **If yes, please specify:** Operational: Organisational:
Equality and Diversity implications:	Yes/No **If yes, please specify:**
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	

Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-confidential	
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in "open" business* [Yes/No]	Yes	

*If a paper should **not** be included within "open" business, please highlight below the reason.			
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (S33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court (S36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (S38)		Other (please give further details)	
For how long must the paper be withheld? (express either as the time which needs to pass or a condition which needs to be met.)			

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Curriculum Report

Executive summary

This paper is to highlight developments that are being taken within the review of the curriculum aligned with the strategic aims and objectives of Inverness UHI. (Appendix 1)

Background information

When undertaking the review and updating the curriculum, it is important to ensure that this takes place in line with our strategic aim which is "to offer a progressive curriculum that is valued by our students, employers and the communities that we serve, and it is delivered in a variety of ways to make it accessible to all." To do this the curriculum is updated taking into consideration a holistic approach and considers the connections between subjects, teaching methods, engagement with stakeholders and all aspects of learning that create a learner's educational experience.

The Programme and Development Managers (PDMs) led by the Head of Curriculum continue to develop the curriculum within their areas using curriculum mapping which is the process of diagramming a curriculum to identify and address academic gaps, redundancies of courses, and misalignments for purposes of improving the overall coherence of a course of study to provide a coherent and comprehensive structure for our learners as exemplified in the prospectus.. In addition to respond robustly but with agility to commercial requests the approval procedure now contains a process for non-accredited, attendance only programmes that are delivered by experienced staff. Any process of approval involves a staged approach overseen by APDC which is chaired by the Head of Curriculum and/or UHI approval process. Prior to delivery of any new provision there requires to be approval by SMT.

Over the past five years, the aim has been to increase the number of Higher Education students and this has been achieved as the activity has increased by 30% within Inverness College UHI. The UHI partnership as a whole has now achieved its funded numbers so there are no more opportunities for funded growth therefore attention requires to now be focussed on
   a) ensuring the curriculum that is delivered is efficient and cost effective
   b) retiring curriculum that is no longer relevant
   c) opportunities for international recruitment

The Partnership Planning Forum (PPF) held a Strategic Event in April to discuss how the partnership as a whole attends to the review of the HE curriculum to ensure that the process includes the retirement of HE curricula that were no longer fit for purpose and involved a workshop was held on attracting international students.

The following new programmes have successfully gone through the approvals process during 2017-18

Level	Title	Rationale
FE	Level 6 Sports Studies Scheme	To make the delivery more effective and to be able to work with local sports clubs and facilities
FE	MA including the SVQ Trees and Timber	In response to industry requests
FE	Skillsbuilder 3	Additional activity to provide a pathway for students
FE	NEBOSH Construction	In response to industry requests
FE	National Qualifications in Computing with Web Design SCQF 5 National Qualifications in Computing with Cyber Security SCQF 6	Replacement for existing programmes that were requiring updating to maintain currency with industry
FE	GJ3F 46 Diploma in Technical Theatre Operations	In response to industry requests
FE	MA Customer Service Level 2 and 3	In response to industry requests
FE	NPA Beekeeping	In response to stakeholder requests
FE	MA Accounting	In response to industry requests
FE	IMI MOT Tester Training	In response to industry requests
HE	SVQ 4 Social Services and Healthcare, SCQF level 9	In response to industry requests
HE	HNC Electrical Engineering	In response to industry requests
HE	PDA Forestry Operations	In response to industry requests
HE	High Impact Presentation Skills Innovation & Creative Thinking Skills Developing an Innovative Business	Modules for use by CREATE as a post graduate award on a single module or PGCE
HE	Graduate level apprenticeship in civil engineering	Created in response to industry and SDS
HE	BSc (Hons) Optometry	Industry response
HE	BA Outdoor Education	Missing from our curriculum map
Commercial	Data Protection Awareness Depression Awareness Intro to fitness training Business Waste Disposal Leadership towards Management	Delivered on a commercial basis

Appendix 1.

Strategic Objectives

1. **To deliver a curriculum that is responsive to employer needs and the aspirations of the communities we serve, while stimulating new demand through the innovation and application of research**

2. **To provide our economy with a skilled and qualified workforce that supports local and regional growth and encourages inward investment**

3. **To ensure that our courses and the reach of our delivery make a difference to the life chances of the people in our most deprived or remote communities, and of those that face the greatest challenges**

4. **To strengthen progression routes through the entirety of our curriculum, identifying access and exit points and enabling progression through further education, higher education and postgraduate study**

5. **To ensure our curriculum equips all of our students with the attributes and essential skills that are valued by employers and communities and that will support their success in learning, life and work.**

University of the Highlands and Islands
Inverness College

Subject/Title:	Risk Register Annual Review
Author: [Name and Job title]	Roddy Henry, Depute Principal
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	5 June 2018
Date Paper prepared:	25 May 2018
Brief Summary of the paper:	This paper provides the committee with a summary of the risks on the college's Risk Register that relate to learning and teaching and the remit of the committee.
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:**:** • compliance • partnership services • risk management • strategic plan • new opportunity/change	This paper relates to risk management of the .
Resource implications:	No
Risk implications:	No
Equality and Diversity implications:	No
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	n/a

Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-confidential
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in "open" business* [Yes/No]	Yes

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Risk Register Annual Review

Executive summary

This paper provides the committee with a summary of the risks on the college's Risk Register that relate to learning and teaching and the remit of the committee. The committee is asked to review the risks and their residual score.

The college maintains a Risk Register that is now in line with the overall UHI Risk Register. The risks are reviewed periodically through the committee of the college's SMT.

Main body of information

The risks relating to learning and teaching are shown below. For ease of reference, only the residual risk score is shown, ie: the score reached after actions to minimise the risk are considered.

Roddy Henry
Depute Principal

Risk Description	Causes	Impacts/Evidence	Owner	Actions to minimise risk in place	Residual Likelihood	Residual Impact	Residual Risk	
College fails to maintain improvement in performance against national targets and outcomes	Staff recruitment; staff training; student recruitment; lack of staff buy in to targets and outcomes.	Reputational damage; partners fail to support in College development; SFC intervention.	Depute Principal	Implement targeted intervention and internal review of learning and teaching processes. Comprehensive Quality Enhancement Plan in place, informed by thorough evaluation of all relevant data, monitored regularly through college committee structure.

Further training to enhance staff skills in monitoring and evaluating quality of provision and identifying appropriate actions for improvement (June 2018). | 2-Unlikely | 4-Major | 8 | 2 |
| College does not achieve allocated HE student number targets. | Failure to recruit sufficient students due to various factors such as: over ambitious PPF target, poor marketing, curriculum gaps, poor NSS result, poor relationship with schools etc | Reduction of college income from UHI, regional student number target at risk resulting in possible clawback to SFC from UHI in year or reduction in future years grant. | Depute Principal | Rigorous curriculum planning process in place, proactive development of school/college relationships, proactive development of relationships with employers, excellent quality management processes, systematic monitoring of applications through to enrolment. | 3-Possible | 3-Significant | 9 | 2 |

College does not achieve allocated FE Credit targets.	Failure to recruit sufficient students due to various factors such as: reduction in school leaver numbers, curriculum that lacks relevance to local economy, curriculum gaps, ineffective marketing and engagement with local schools/employers	Reduction of college income from UHI, regional student number target at risk resulting in possible clawback to SFC from UHI in year or reduction in future years grant.	Depute Principal	Rigorous curriculum planning process in place, proactive development of school/college relationships, proactive development of relationships with employers, excellent quality management processes, systematic monitoring of applications through to enrolment.	2-Unlikely	3-Significant	6	2

| Academic quality is sub standard | Difficulty recruiting and retaining high calibre staff. Conditions and terms of employment are not competitive with limited scope for career progression; quality enhancement policies and processes are ineffective; student engagement is weak; performance management systems are ineffective. | Poor performance in quality monitoring/assurance reviews. Loss of staff to competitor institutions. Poor attainment levels, high level of withdrawal and poor retention, loss of income, damage to reputation. | Principal | Achievement and maintenance of IiP Gold reflecting organisational commitment to staff, development and maintenance of attractive recognition and reward systems, alignment with national pay bargaining, investment in CPD and staff development, not least support for advanced degree study, development of research and scholarship scheme, encouragement of staff ERASMUS exchange participation. Effective, rigorous quality management systems, systematic monitoring and reporting on PI trends and external verification processes. Effective staff induction and effective observation of learning and teaching. Maintenance of higher levels of formal teacher training certification. Development of research teaching linkages, promotion of conference attendance and speaking. Excellent employer engagement. Formal monitoring of quality of the student experience through the Learning and Teaching Committee of the Board of | 2-Unlikely | 3-Significant | 6 | 2 |

				Management. Implementation of the Progressive Academic Structure.				

Poor Student Experience	No student union provision, restricted space avaiable for students to interact socially our of college hours, inability to create a student community feel.	Poor performance in national student satisfaction surveys; difficulty in recruiting students; Risk to core income streams.	Principal	Partnership approach in place to enhance the student experience evidenced by the Student Partnership Agreement, multi-faceted approach to student engagement and student feedback. Student feedback scores, trends and themes monitored systematically and inform action planning. Regional lobbying for capital funds to support the development of a students' union facility.	2-Unlikely	2-Minor	4	2
Research outputs are sub standard	Inability to fund remission to enable the publication of sufficient quality papers and upload to PURE; loss of opportunity to develop strong RTL; loss of key staff; lack of funding; terms and conditions of employment are not comparable with competitor organisations; impact of Brexit on access to European projects.	Damage to reputation. Brexit. Poor performance in next REF. Inability to retain staff and research teams. Reduced income; negative impact on recruitment.	Head of Research Development	Significant college annual investment in research to support development of research institutes and research embedded in the curriculum. Research and scholarship fund established to encourage further staff engagement in the research agenda. Support for staff through staff development fund to attend and speak at conferences. Dedicated research posts created. Proactive targeting of grant funding to support research activity. Staff encouraged to seek financial support for activity through relevant available UHI funds.	3-Possible	2-Minor	6	2

Inverness College

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

Student Support

May 2018

LEVEL OF ASSURANCE	
Design	Operational Effectiveness
Substantial	Substantial

BDO

CONTENTS

REPORT STATUS	
Auditors:	Adam Brown
Dates work performed:	16th April – 30th April 2018
Draft report issued:	14th May 2018
Final report issued:	23rd May 2018

DISTRIBUTION LIST	
Lindsay Snodgrass	Head of Student Services
Roddy Henry	Depute Principal
Fiona Mustarde	Director of Finance
Members of the Audit Committee	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

LEVEL OF ASSURANCE (SEE APPENDIX II FOR DEFINITIONS)		
Design	🟢	There is a sound system of internal control designed to achieve system objectives.
Effectiveness	🟢	The controls that are in place are being consistently applied.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS (SEE APPENDIX II)	
High 🔺	
Medium 🟧	
Low 🟢	1
Total number of recommendations: 1	

OVERVIEW

Background

As part of the 2017-18 Internal Audit Plan, it was agreed that Internal Audit would assess the key controls in place in relation to the provision of student support services within Inverness College ("the College").

The Student Services team is led by the Head of Student Services and consists of the following five departments, which are based at the College and provide a range of support functions that are made available to its students.

1. The Access and Progression (A&P) department is led by the A&P Manager, and consists of four Guidance and Progression Officers, a Wellbeing Officer, Counselling Officer, School Link and Transitions Co-ordinator and two Student Engagement Officers. This department provides support through Guidance, Wellbeing, Counselling, Schools Transition and Careers Advice services.

2. The Additional Support team consists of an Additional Support Manager and two Learning Support Assistants who carry out assessment of needs for individual students and oversee any required support measures being put in place.

3. The Front of House team consists of the Team Leader and 10 Administrators. This team directs students with queries to the most appropriate support team and also supports the curriculum teams in various ways.

4. The Admissions and Student Funding Team consists of the Team Leader and seven Officers. This team process all course applications and funding applications and assist with funding queries.

5. The Library and Learning Resource Centre team consists of the Team Leader, four Officers, a Learning Technologist and Skillzone Officer. The team provides Library Services at the Inverness Campus as well study skills workshops for classes and a drop in support service around study skills.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

Roles and responsibilities are formally documented within job descriptions for each role involved in providing support functions throughout the college, including Guidance Officers, Learning Support Assistants and the Transition Officer.

The Inverness branch of the Highland and Island Student Association (HISA) acts as a forum for students to discuss issues. The Student Association supports students in disciplinary meetings, refers students to the most appropriate support staff when required and attends committees to provide student views as well as regular meetings with the Senior Management Team to provide feedback from students.

The majority of students are based at the Inverness campus and the remaining students are based at the Scottish School of Forestry in Balloch and the Falcon Centre in Aviemore, in addition to those students learning remotely. The College's support functions are promoted via a number of forums. Each of the functions are detailed on the College's website, which outlines the services provided to students by each team. Students can access information on support functions on Blackboard, a virtual learning environment and course management system used by the College. The College also makes use of prospectus, booklets, leaflets and posters to advertise student support functions which indicate where students can receive further information.

There are a number of policies and procedures relevant to the support services provided by Student Services. For example, the Admissions Policy and Procedure outlines the College's commitment to removing barriers to participation, and its policy of performing a needs assessment for those students who have disclosed that they are care experienced or require additional support. The Additional Support Needs Policy and Procedure outlines the methods used to provide support to students through a Personal Learning Support Plan.

All students are provided with the opportunity to complete feedback surveys. The surveys include: the National Students Survey, which is completed by final year undergraduates; the Early Experience Survey, which is completed by all students; and the Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (SSES), which is facilitated by the College and provided to all students for completion. Links to the surveys are sent to all students' email accounts, and are advertised on TV screens throughout the College. The SSES survey is benchmarked against a number of other Colleges in Scotland.

The Access and Inclusion Strategy outlines the College's approach to ensuring that all students have equal access and learning support, and outlines course completion targets for students within specific learning groups such as Disabled, Carers, SIMD 10, Care Experience and Price Group 5.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There are several plans encompassing student support in operation at the College. These include the Quality Improvement Plan, which collates information from sources such as student questionnaires and outlines actions for improvement. The Corporate Parenting Plan details the work that the College intends to perform to ensure that care experienced students are supported during their studies. Departmental self assessments are utilised to develop plans and targets based upon feedback from sources such as surveys, complaints, in addition to internal and external reviews. Progress against action plans is reported to various committees including the Operational Managers Group, the Student Support Committee and the Learning and Teaching Committee and to students via "you said, we did" posters and emails.

Scope and Approach

The scope of this review was to assess whether:

- The College is providing an appropriate range of support services to its students;

- Support services are accessible by all students;

- Clear roles and responsibilities are in place in relation to support services;

- Clear policies and procedures are in place in relation to support services;

- Clear plans and targets are in place in relation to student services;

- Effective performance management arrangements are in place in relation to student services;

- Feedback on support services is obtained and effective actions are taken to address any issues arising from the feedback.

Our approach included the review of key documentation in relation to these areas, enquiries with key staff to assess whether appropriate controls are in place, and sample testing to confirm these controls are operating effectively.

Good Practice

A number of areas of good practice were noted during the review including, but not limited to:

1) _Advertisement of Services at Campus_ - The College is clearly communicating support services to its students through a number of forums including the College's website, prospectus, brochures, leaflets and posters.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2) _Roles and Responsibilities_ – Roles and responsibilities of key staff members involved in the provision of student support services are clearly defined within organisational charts and job descriptions.

3) _Effective Plans_ – A Quality Enhancement Plan has been developed which collates feedback from sources such as student questionnaires and outlines actions for improvement.

4) _Self-Evaluation Reports_ – Self Evaluation reports, which are produced by the Student Support team, record and analyse student feedback. The team has developed an action plan to address areas highlighted in the feedback.

5) _Feedback to Students_ - The College utilises "You Said, We Did" posters, feedback through Student Rep Council and displays within the College grounds to provide feedback to students on the actions being taken by the College.

6) _Personal Academic Tutors_ - The College ensures that each student has a Personal Academic Tutor, whom is responsible for understanding the support needs of students and directing students to services offered by the college.

7) _Use of INSIGHT_ - The INSIGHT Attendance and Progress Monitoring Procedure outlines the College's approach to supporting student attendance, progress and attainment, and identifies care experienced students, students from a deprived postcode, student carers, and disabled students, for close monitoring.

Key Findings

Notwithstanding the elements of good practice noted above we have found some areas where a further improvement could be made:

- _Provision of Services to all campuses_- Whilst the majority of the College's students are based at the Inverness campus, some students are based at the Scottish School of Forestry in Balloch and the Falcon Centre in Aviemore. There are also students learning remotely. There is not a member of the Student Services team based at the School of Forestry.

  The College provides introductory courses at the Falcon Centre to inform students of the support services available, however students need to utilise the services provided at the Inverness campus if required.

Conclusion

At this stage, we can provide substantial assurance over the design and operational effectiveness of the controls in place in relation to the student support arrangements in place at Inverness College. We recommend management consider the noted control improvement to develop the current arrangements, and ensure they operate consistently across the College.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RISKS REVIEWED GIVING RISE TO NO FINDINGS OF A HIGH OR MEDIUM SIGNIFICANCE
☑ The College may not be providing the appropriate range of support services to its students.
☑ Support services may not be accessible by all students.
☑ There may not be clearly defined roles and responsibilities in place in relation to student support services.
☑ There may not be clearly defined policies and procedures in place in relation to student support services.
☑ There may not be appropriate plans, targets and performance monitoring in place in relation to student support services.
☑ There may not be mechanisms in place to gather feedback on the quality and range of support services offered.
☑ Effective action may not be taken to address issues arising from student feedback on support services.

DETAILED FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Support services may not be accessible by all students;			
Ref.	**Finding**	**Sig.**	**Recommendation**
1	**Provision of services to all campuses** The Student Services team consists of five departments which provide a range of support functions that are made available to all students. Whilst the majority of the College's students are based at the Inverness campus, some students are based at the Scottish School of Forestry in Balloch and the Falcon Centre in Aviemore. There are also students learning remotely. There is not a member of the Student Services team based at the School of Forestry. The College provides introductory courses at the Falcon Centre to inform students of the support services available, however students need to utilise the services provided at the Inverness campus if required. We recognise that a member of staff has previously been based at the Scottish School of Forestry to provide support services, and that management relocated the resource to Inverness due to lack of utilisation, however there is a risk that support services may not be accessible by all students.	🟢	We recommend that the College consults with students to determine whether the level of support services accessible to students based at the Scottish School of Forestry and the Falcon Centre is sufficient. We further recommend that the utilisation of services by students from these centres is regularly monitored, in order to keep demand under review.
MANAGEMENT RESPONSE		**RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE**	
AGREED: This will be performed as part of our assessment of what support services are required at SSF and how we make best use of resource at the start of the new academic session.		*Responsible Officer: Head of Student Services* *Implementation Date: 30th September 2018*	

OBSERVATIONS

1. Availability of Support Staff

The 2016/17 student survey results highlighted a decrease of 13% in student satisfaction of "Guidance". Management indicated that the decrease could have been due to a lack of staff resource to assist in supporting an increase in the number of students requiring mental health support, and an increase in student waiting times for support as a result. The college has however since implemented a "whole-college approach" to mental health issues which was captured in this years Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan, as validated by Education Scotland.

2. Guidance Policy

The Guidance Policy sets out the College's commitment to provision of guidance and wellbeing services to enquirers and students. Whilst the policy outlines processes satisfactorily, this was last updated in 2015 and there is an opportunity to evidence regular review of key policies and procedures to ensure that these are not outdated. This is currently under review.

3. Provision of Benchmarking for Feedback Results

The SSES survey is benchmarked against other Colleges in Scotland. A number of UK educational institutions utilise the service of external organisations, such as QDP Services, for obtaining benchmarking information on other surveys. There is an opportunity for Inverness College to obtain similar benchmarking information on the other surveys completed by students.

APPENDIX I – STAFF INTERVIEWED & CONSULTED

NAME	JOB TITLE
Lindsay Snodgrass	Head of Student Services
Evelyn Campbell	Access and Progression Manager
Cat Bateson	Student Engagement Co-ordinator
Gabbi Starr	HISA Inverness President

NAME	JOB TITLE
Liz Cook	Quality Manager
Carol Hart	Library and LRC Team Leader
Roddy Henry	Depute Principal
Sheree Grant	Admissions and Student Funding Team Leader

BDO LLP appreciates the time provided by all the individuals involved in this review and would like to thank them for their assistance and cooperation.

APPENDIX II – DEFINITIONS

LEVEL OF ASSURANCE	DESIGN of internal control framework		OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS of internal controls	
	Findings from review	**Design Opinion**	**Findings from review**	**Effectiveness Opinion**
Substantial (green circle)	Appropriate procedures and controls in place to mitigate the key risks.	There is a sound system of internal control designed to achieve system objectives.	No, or only minor, exceptions found in testing of the procedures and controls.	The controls that are in place are being consistently applied.
Moderate (blue square)	In the main there are appropriate procedures and controls in place to mitigate the key risks reviewed albeit with some that are not fully effective.	Generally a sound system of internal control designed to achieve system objectives with some exceptions.	A small number of exceptions found in testing of the procedures and controls.	Evidence of non compliance with some controls, that may put some of the system objectives at risk.
Limited (orange octagon)	A number of significant gaps identified in the procedures and controls in key areas. Where practical, efforts should be made to address in-year.	System of internal controls is weakened with system objectives at risk of not being achieved.	A number of reoccurring exceptions found in testing of the procedures and controls. Where practical, efforts should be made to address in-year.	Non-compliance with key procedures and controls places the system objectives at risk.
No (red triangle)	For all risk areas there are significant gaps in the procedures and controls. Failure to address in-year affects the quality of the organisation's overall internal control framework.	Poor system of internal control.	Due to absence of effective controls and procedures, no reliance can be placed on their operation. Failure to address in-year affects the quality of the organisation's overall internal control framework.	Non compliance and/or compliance with inadequate controls.

Recommendation Significance	
High (red triangle)	A weakness where there is substantial risk of loss, fraud, impropriety, poor value for money, or failure to achieve organisational objectives. Such risk could lead to an adverse impact on the business. Remedial action must be taken urgently.
Medium (orange square)	A weakness in control which, although not fundamental, relates to shortcomings which expose individual business systems to a less immediate level of threatening risk or poor value for money. Such a risk could impact on operational objectives and should be of concern to senior management and requires prompt specific action.
Low (green circle)	Areas that individually have no significant impact, but where management would benefit from improved controls and/or have the opportunity to achieve greater effectiveness and/or efficiency.

APPENDIX III – TERMS OF REFERENCE

KEY RISKS

Based upon the risk assessment undertaken, discussions with management, and our collective audit knowledge and understanding the key risks associated with the area under review are:

- The College may not be providing the appropriate range of support services to its students;
- Support services may not be accessible by all students;
- There may not be clearly defined roles and responsibilities in place in relation to student support services;
- There may not be clearly defined policies and procedures in place in relation to student support services;
- There may not be appropriate plans, targets and performance monitoring in place in relation to student support services;
- There may not be mechanisms in place to gather feedback on the quality and range of support services offered;
- Effective action may not be taken to address issues arising from student feedback on support services.

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The scope of this review will be to assess whether:

- The College is providing an appropriate range of support services to its students;
- Support services are accessible by all students;
- Clear roles and responsibilities are in place in relation to support services;
- Clear policies and procedures are in place in relation to support services;
- Clear plans and targets are in place in relation to student services;
- Effective performance management arrangements are in place in relation to student services;
- Feedback on support services is obtained and effective actions are taken to address any issues arising from the feedback.

However, Internal Audit will bring to the attention of management any points relating to other areas that come to their attention during the course of the audit. We assume for the purposes of estimating the number of days of audit work that there is one control environment, and that we will be providing assurance over controls in this environment. If this is not the case, our estimate of audit days may not be accurate.

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Inverness College

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT – Partnership Working

April 2018

LEVEL OF ASSURANCE	
Design	Operational Effectiveness
Substantial	Substantial

BDO

CONTENTS

REPORT STATUS	
Auditors:	Adam Brown
Dates work performed:	12th March – 21st March 2018
Draft report issued:	13th April 2018
Final report issued:	**15th May 2018**

DISTRIBUTION LIST	
Chris O'Neil	Principal
Roddy Henry	Depute Principal
Georgie Parker	Director of Business Development
Members of the Audit Committee	

Restrictions of use

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

LEVEL OF ASSURANCE (SEE APPENDIX II FOR DEFINITIONS)	
Design	🟢 There is a sound system of internal control designed to achieve system objectives.
Effectiveness	🟢 The controls that are in place are being consistently applied.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS (SEE APPENDIX II)	
High	🔺
Medium	🟧
Low	🟢 2
Total number of recommendations: 2	

OVERVIEW

Background

The purpose of this review was to provide management and the Audit Committee with assurance on whether Inverness College UHI ("the College") has effective arrangements in place to strategically manage key relationships and to ensure common understanding of aims, roles and responsibilities, and effective partnership working.

The College's Strategic Plan for 2017-2020 highlights the benefits of and requirement to build and strengthen its partnerships. The College invited key staff and contacts from key partners to input to the formation of the Strategic Plan at a 'Context Setting Event' including: Skills Development Scotland (SDS), Local Schools (Culloden Academy), Highland and Island Enterprise (HIE), Scottish Council for Development and Industry (SCDI), Scottish Funding Council (SFC), Inverness Chamber of Commerce, and Highland Council.

The Strategic Plan shares common themes with those of its key partners including: endorsing Inverness and the Highlands as a destination to live, study and work; developing students' full potential both academically and socially; creating engagement within the community; and providing the Highland economy with a skilled and qualified workforce to support growth and investment.

The College assigns an account manager for each key partner organisation from the Business Solution Team to act as a key contact and ensure that the partnership is working effectively. The Business Solutions Team is headed by the Director of Business Development, and consists of a Training Contract Team Leader, two Business Solution Coordinators, a Business Development Officer, and a Business Development Advisor. Roles and responsibilities of College staff in relation to the management of key partnerships are documented within the job descriptions of the account managers.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There is a dedicated "Schools Team" which acts as the primary contact for Head Teachers and Guidance Teachers from 17 local secondary schools in the Inverness area and Highland region. Meetings are held with Head and Guidance teachers at least every six months, where curriculum, strategic, and academic matters are discussed, ensuring an active dialogue is maintained with local schools.

The College shares its campus with HIE, a key partner of the college. Partnership working with HIE has further strengthened because of this, with increased communication between the two organisations. HIE and Inverness College are both members of the Inverness Campus Partnership Forum which consists of representatives from HIE, the College, and other tenants who meet on-campus to discuss its operation and planned expansion. Within the prior academic year the College became a core member of the local Community Planning Partnership (CPP), which involves key local public and third sector organisations and community groups working together to plan, resource, and provide services to improve equality across Inverness and its locality.

Employers and other partners are invited to attend Curriculum Advisory Groups by the College. These groups provide an opportunity for the local and national employers and bodies to influence and comment upon the curriculum design and evaluation that the College is providing. Several of these partners, such as Morrison Construction, offer workplace visits, work experience, or participation in Modern and Foundation Apprenticeship schemes. The College also offers training to local employers, such as Tulloch Homes and ScotRail, in areas such as enhancing computer skills.

As the College is a member of the UHI partnership of colleges and institutions the College holds and attends numerous regular meetings with partner colleges and the UHI Executive Office (UHI EO). A key forum within the partnership is the Partnership Council, comprising of principals from the Academic Partners that make up UHI, the principal and senior staff from UHI EO and staff and student representatives. The Partnership Council meets on a monthly basis to discuss planning, development and operational matters within UHI. The Highland Senior Phase Strategy Group is another key forum where local UHI partners (Inverness, North Highland and West Highland Colleges), Highland Council, and local school leaders discuss the planned school-college activity and progression and transition of their pupils to college and university through a range of provision including online Highers, Apprenticeships and Degree options.

Feedback from partners is provided through various methods including through discussion at meetings facilitated by the College and partners and through employer feedback forms. If any weaknesses are noted through these discussions, remedial action is agreed upon.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

Scope and Approach

The scope of this review was to assess whether:

- Inverness College's plans are aligned with the plans of key partners, such as schools, the Highland Council, HIE, SDS, employers, CPP, third-sector and community organisations and other UHI partners;

- Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined within each partnership;

- Communication arrangements with partners are managed effectively;

- Feedback mechanisms have been established to ensure there is oversight of how the partnership is working; and

- Where weaknesses in a partnership are identified, corrective action is taken.

Our approach included the review of key documentation in relation to these areas, enquiries with key staff to assess whether appropriate controls are in place, and sample testing to confirm these controls are operating effectively.

Good Practice

A number of areas of good practice were noted during the review including, but not limited to:

1) *Strategic Plan Context Setting Event and Alignment of Strategic Plan* - It was noted that key partners were involved in the formation of the Strategic Plan through attendance at an event to assess commonalties within partner strategies, and that the plan shares numerous common aims and objectives with its key partners.

2) *Assigning Key Contacts for Employers and Schools* – The College has assigned key Account Managers within the Business Solutions Team for managing relationships with employers and local agencies, and formed a dedicated Schools Team to aid communication and strengthen the partnership relationship with local schools.

3) *Regular Meetings* - There is Inverness College representation at regular meetings held with key partners including Highland Council, HIE, CPP, Schools, UHI Partners and employers. There is a well managed, clear, reciprocal dialogue observable between the College and its key partners.

4) *Employer Feedback Process* – Feedback from employers is obtained through utilising the UK government's Employer Survey Questionnaire.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

Key Findings

Notwithstanding the elements of good practice noted above we have found some areas where a further improvement could be made:

1) *Formalised Feedback Process* - Feedback from partners is provided through various methods including through discussion at meetings facilitated by the College and partners, and employer feedback forms. However, there is currently no formalised documented feedback mechanism in place for non-employer partners.

2) *Defined Roles and Responsibilities* – The College has the opportunity to further strengthen the definition of roles and responsibilities within the partnership with Highland Council.

Conclusion

At this stage, we can provide substantial assurance over the design and operational effectiveness of the controls in place in relation to Partnership Working. We recommend management implement the noted control improvements to develop the current arrangements, and ensure they operate consistently across the College.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RISKS REVIEWED GIVING RISE TO NO FINDINGS OF A HIGH OR MEDIUM SIGNIFICANCE
☑ Inverness College's plans may not be aligned with the plans of key partners, such as schools, the Highland Council, HIE, SDS, employers, CPP, third-sector and community organisations and other UHI partners.
☑ Roles and responsibilities within key partnerships may not be clearly defined.
☑ Communication with key partners may not be managed effectively.
☑ Feedback mechanisms from partners may not be established or may indicate weaknesses in the management of the relationship which are not addressed.

DETAILED FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Feedback mechanisms from partners may not be established or may indicate weaknesses in the management of the relationship which are not addressed.				

Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation	
1	**Formalised Feedback Process** Ensuring that feedback is obtained within a partnership is key to ensuring a successful ongoing relationship. Feedback from partners is provided through various methods including through discussion at meetings facilitated by the College and partners, and employer feedback forms. We recognise that the Depute Principal is in the process of creating an annual stakeholder engagement review process to obtain feedback from organisations that receive a service or provision from the College, or work in collaboration with the College. However, there is currently no formalised documented feedback mechanism in place for non-employer partners. There is a risk that partners feedback outwith of employers is not being collated and effectively analysed.	🟢	We recommend that the College issue a questionnaire on an annual basis to all key partners to assess the management of the partnership.	

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE	RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE
AGREED: The Stakeholder Survey has been approved by the Board's Learning and Teaching Committee and is currently being finalised for use before the end of this academic year.	*Responsible Officer: Depute Principal* *Implementation Date: 29th June 2018*

DETAILED FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Roles and responsibilities within key partnerships may not be clearly defined.			
Ref.	**Finding**	**Sig.**	**Recommendation**
2	**Defined Roles and Responsibilities** Roles and responsibilities of College staff in relation to the management of some key partnerships are documented within the job descriptions of the account managers of the Business Solutions Team. Partnership agreements are in place for several partners which clearly document role and responsibilities of Inverness College and its partners. However, we found that there is currently no partnership agreement in place with the Highland Council, and local schools as a result. There is a risk that the key responsibilities between the Highland Council and the college have not been clearly defined.	●	We recommend that the College should seek a partnership agreement with the Highland Council which clearly defines roles and responsibilities.
MANAGEMENT RESPONSE		**RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE**	
AGREED: The college, along with the two other Academic Partners in Highland Region, has formed a Strategic Group with Highland Council education department. The development of a partnership agreement has been agreed as one of the key activities of the group. As such the recommendation has been completed.		*Responsible Officer: Depute Principal* *Implementation Date: Completed*	

APPENDIX I – STAFF INTERVIEWED

NAME	JOB TITLE
Roddy Henry	Depute Principal
Georgie Parker	Director of Business Development
Evelyn Campbell	Access and Progression Manager

NAME	JOB TITLE
Lorraine Andrews	Senior Contracts Co-ordinator
Lindsay Snodgrass	Head of Student Services

BDO LLP appreciates the time provided by all the individuals involved in this review and would like to thank them for their assistance and cooperation.

APPENDIX II – DEFINITIONS

LEVEL OF ASSURANCE	DESIGN of internal control framework		OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS of internal controls	
	Findings from review	Design Opinion	Findings from review	Effectiveness Opinion
Substantial 🟢	Appropriate procedures and controls in place to mitigate the key risks.	There is a sound system of internal control designed to achieve system objectives.	No, or only minor, exceptions found in testing of the procedures and controls.	The controls that are in place are being consistently applied.
Moderate 🟦	In the main there are appropriate procedures and controls in place to mitigate the key risks reviewed albeit with some that are not fully effective.	Generally a sound system of internal control designed to achieve system objectives with some exceptions.	A small number of exceptions found in testing of the procedures and controls.	Evidence of non compliance with some controls, that may put some of the system objectives at risk.
Limited 🟧	A number of significant gaps identified in the procedures and controls in key areas. Where practical, efforts should be made to address in-year.	System of internal controls is weakened with system objectives at risk of not being achieved.	A number of reoccurring exceptions found in testing of the procedures and controls. Where practical, efforts should be made to address in-year.	Non-compliance with key procedures and controls places the system objectives at risk.
No 🔺	For all risk areas there are significant gaps in the procedures and controls. Failure to address in-year affects the quality of the organisation's overall internal control framework.	Poor system of internal control.	Due to absence of effective controls and procedures, no reliance can be placed on their operation. Failure to address in-year affects the quality of the organisation's overall internal control framework.	Non compliance and/or compliance with inadequate controls.

Recommendation Significance	
High 🔺	A weakness where there is substantial risk of loss, fraud, impropriety, poor value for money, or failure to achieve organisational objectives. Such risk could lead to an adverse impact on the business. Remedial action must be taken urgently.
Medium 🟧	A weakness in control which, although not fundamental, relates to shortcomings which expose individual business systems to a less immediate level of threatening risk or poor value for money. Such a risk could impact on operational objectives and should be of concern to senior management and requires prompt specific action.
Low 🟢	Areas that individually have no significant impact, but where management would benefit from improved controls and/or have the opportunity to achieve greater effectiveness and/or efficiency.

APPENDIX III – TERMS OF REFERENCE

KEY RISKS

Based upon the risk assessment undertaken, discussions with management, and our collective audit knowledge and understanding the key risks associated with the area under review are:

- Inverness College's plans may not be aligned with the plans of key partners, such as schools, the Highland Council, HIE, SDS, employers, CPP, third-sector and community organisations and other UHI partners;
- Roles and responsibilities within key partnerships may not be clearly defined;
- Communication with key partners may not be managed effectively;
- Feedback mechanisms from partners may not be established or may indicate weaknesses in the management of the relationship which are not addressed.

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The scope of this review will be to assess whether:

- Inverness College's plans are aligned with the plans of key partners, such as schools, the Highland Council, HIE, SDS, employers, CPP, third-sector and community organisations and other UHI partners;
- Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined within each partnership;
- Communication arrangements with partners are managed effectively;
- Feedback mechanisms have been established to ensure there is oversight of how the partnership is working; and
- Where weaknesses in a partnership are identified, corrective action is taken.

However, Internal Audit will bring to the attention of management any points relating to other areas that come to their attention during the course of the audit. We assume for the purposes of estimating the number of days of audit work that there is one control environment, and that we will be providing assurance over controls in this environment. If this is not the case, our estimate of audit days may not be accurate.

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University of the Highlands and Islands
Inverness College

Board of Management

Subject/Title:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee Self Evaluation and Committee Chair evaluation
Author: [Name and Job title]	Fiona Ambrose, Board Secretary
Meeting:	Learning, Teaching and Research Committee
Meeting Date:	5 June 2018
Date Paper prepared:	28 May 2018
Brief Summary of the paper:	Annual Learning, Teaching and Research committee self-evaluation exercise and annual evaluation of the Chair
Action requested: [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	The Committee is asked to collectively complete the committee self-evaluation exercise and when the Chair leaves the meeting, to complete the evaluation of the Chair.
Link to Strategy: Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:**:** - compliance - partnership services - risk management - strategic plan - new opportunity/change	Compliance with Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges.
Resource implications:	No
Risk implications:	No Operational:
Equality and Diversity implications:	N/A
Consultation: [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	

Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-Confidential	
Freedom of Information Can this paper be included in "open" business* [Yes/No]	Yes	

*If a paper should **not** be included within "open" business, please highlight below the reason.

Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (S33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court (S36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (S38)		Other (please give further details)	
For how long must the paper be withheld? (express either as the time which needs to pass or a condition which needs to be met.)			

Further guidance on application of the exclusions from Freedom of Information legislation is available via

http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/ScottishPublicAuthorities/ScottishPublicAuthorities.asp and

http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/web/FILES/Public_Interest_Test.pdf

Learning Teaching and Research Committee Evaluation (to be completed by the L,T & R committee collectively).

Date: _____

Good Practice	Yes	No	N/A	Comments/Action
Composition, Establishment and Duties of the Committee				
Does the Committee meet regularly in accordance with the Board Standing Orders?				
Does the Committee consistently have a quorum?				
Do all Committee members attend meetings regularly?				
Does the Committee have enough members?				
Does at least one of the Committee members have a background relevant to the remit of the Committee?				
Have new Committee members received all necessary, including mandatory training?				
Does the Committee report regularly to the Board?				

Good Practice	Yes	No	N/A	Comments/Action
Terms of reference				
Does the Committee have written terms of reference?				
Do the terms of reference include all aspects of the Committee's role?				
Does the membership of the Committee need to be changed?				
Are the terms of reference adopted by the full Board and reviewed annually?				

Good Practice	Yes	No	N/A	Comments/Action
Compliance with the Law and Regulations				
Does the Committee have a mechanism to keep it aware of topical legal and regulatory issues?				

Good Practice	Yes	No	N/A	Comments/Action
Internal Control				
Does the Committee monitor to ensure that risk is controlled?				
Does the Committee regularly review relevant strategic plans?				
Does the Committee consider the level of detail and information it receives appropriate?				
Are appropriate internal performance measures monitored by the Committee?				
Is the Committee addressing all matters delegated to it by the Board and under its terms of reference?				

Good Practice	Yes	No	N/A	Comments/Action
Administrative arrangements				
Does the Committee have an independent secretary?				
Are Committee papers distributed in sufficient time for members to give them due consideration?				
Are Committee meetings scheduled prior to important decisions on specific matters being made?				
Is the timing of Committee meetings discussed with all involved?				

University of the Highlands and Islands
Inverness College

Evaluation of Learning, Teaching and Research Committee Chair

Chair being evaluated: ………………………**SARAH BURTON**…………………………………

Circle to indicate
← ——— Tendency ——— →

Keeps members on topic and to the agenda	1	2	3	4	5	6		Tends to criticise the ideas and values of members
Summarises discussions and decisions impartially and confirms action points	1	2	3	4	5	6		Tends to force ideas on to the group
Spots likely problems early and states them in a constructive way	1	2	3	4	5	6		Makes decisions without consulting the group or despite the group's views
Suggests solutions	1	2	3	4	5	6		Leaves decisions 'hanging'
Ensures adequate time is given to the different areas of the agenda	1	2	3	4	5	6		Talks too much and gets too involved
Facilitates the expression of all views and opinions	1	2	3	4	5	6		Allows individuals to dominate discussion
Communicates information to Board members	1	2	3	4	5	6		Fails to inform Board members of important information
Supports individual Board members	1	2	3	4	5	6		Is too distant or directing

Comments

Completed by Learning and Teaching Committee Members:

Date:……………………………………..

T: 0300 244 4000
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Mike Cantlay
Chair
Scottish Funding Council
Donaldson House
97 Haymarket Terrace
Edinburgh
EH12 5HD

4 April 2018

Dear Mr Cantlay,

SCOTTISH FUNDING COUNCIL – LETTER OF GUIDANCE 2018-19

Introduction

1.   Following the publication of our Programme for Government (PfG), 'A Plan for Scotland' in September 2017 and the agreement of the 2018-19 Scottish Government Budget, I am writing to you to set out my expectations of the Scottish Funding Council and my strategic priorities for the Scottish Government's investment in the further and higher education sectors until the end of March 2019. More detail around this can be found in Annex A.

Strategic context

2.   Education remains this Government's defining mission and, as the national strategic body for funding teaching, learning and research in our colleges and universities, the Scottish Funding Council plays a crucial role in supporting our drive to achieve excellence and equity across the education and skills landscape. It is also at the heart of our ambition to align our enterprise and skills agencies behind a common purpose and vision which secures improved outcomes for all our learners, drives inclusive economic growth and improves productivity.

3.   It is my intention that the SFC will undertake its operational and strategic planning in line with the Strategic Board's Strategic Plan once it is developed, and in the meantime be attentive to the emerging themes and priorities of the Board as it develops that Plan and to contribute to the staffing resource of the new Analytical Unit. Of considerable significance to that aim is the requirement for SFC to plan and work collaboratively with the other Enterprise and Skills agencies, with the Scottish Government and more widely as required to support the Strategic Board's aims.

4.   In 2018-19, I therefore look to the SFC to make decisions that ensure the funds provided to it by the Scottish Government are used to drive sustainable growth, deliver the priorities detailed in this letter and achieve the outcomes set out in its plans for 2018-19.

5.   When I wrote to you in October, I set out my expectations and ambitions for the 2018-19 Outcome Agreements, in particular my desire to see that process intensified with the aim of providing a clearer line of sight between SG investment and the delivery of desired outcomes. That intensification must continue and progress further. I welcome the work that has been done with the sectors to date and look to you to build on this in 2018-19 by continuing to set ambitious targets, encouraging engagement; improving transparency and accountability, and driving improvement through the funding you allocate to colleges and universities.

6.   For 2018-19, I will be focusing on the key themes of equality and fairness across our further and higher education sectors. The Scottish Government, SFC and colleges and universities must strive to provide leadership on ensuring people are treated fairly, with respect and can access opportunities regardless of background or personal circumstances. Work to drive forward implementation of the recommendations from the Commission on Widening Access (CoWA) is vital to this and I also look to the SFC to demonstrate leadership and drive improvements in key areas such as student welfare, gender equality and the living wage.

7.   2018 is the Year of Young People and is celebrating the very best of Scotland and its young people. The Year has been co-designed with young people themselves and the SFC should actively seek to work in partnership with other partners, including schools, teachers, local authorities, Youth Organisations, Education Scotland and young people themselves to ensure young people have a platform to have their views heard and acted upon, and that they will have a key role in the development and delivery of activities ensuring an inclusive approach is taken throughout the Year and beyond, creating a lasting legacy.

Scottish Funding Council Budget 2018-19

8.   In what has been a tight financial settlement for public services across Scotland, I am pleased to have been able to provide cash increases for 2018-19 to both the college and university sectors. This clearly demonstrates our commitment.

9.   The Scottish Government's budget for 2018-19 includes the planned funding for colleges and universities and administration funding for the SFC set out in the table below. As normal, transfers in and out of the budget will be detailed in the Spring and Autumn Budget Revisions, published each year and subject to Parliamentary scrutiny.

Financial Year 2018-19	£m
Higher Education Resource	1,024.9
Higher Education Capital	81.3 (including £40m Financial Transactions)
College Resource	588.2
College Capital	76.7
College NPD Expenditure	29.3
SFC Administration	7.5

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Conclusion

10.   In conclusion, I trust that you will find this letter helpful in carrying forward your planning and activity for 2018-19. I am confident that the SFC will rise to the challenges it faces during the coming year and this Government very much values the important work that the SFC carries out in helping to deliver this Government's purpose. I look forward to that support continuing as the Council drives forward its important work in meeting our priorities to ensure excellence and equity in our education system and playing a key role in Scotland's inclusive economic growth.

Yours sincerely,

SHIRLEY-ANNE SOMERVILLE

Copies:

John Kemp, Interim Chief Executive, Scottish Funding Council
James Dornan MSP, Convener, Scottish Parliament Education and Skills Committee
Ken Milroy, Chair, Colleges Scotland
Shona Struthers, Chief Executive, Colleges Scotland
Liz McIntyre, Chair, College Principals Group
Professor Andrea Nolan, Convener, Universities Scotland
Alastair Sim, Director, Universities Scotland
Sally Loudon, Chief Executive, COSLA
Gayle Gorman, Chief Executive, Education Scotland
Damien Yeates, Chief Executive, Skills Development Scotland
Grahame Smith, General Secretary, Scottish Trades Union Congress
Mary Senior, Scottish Official, University and College Union
Larry Flanagan, General Secretary, Educational Institute of Scotland
Dave Prentis, General Secretary, UNISON
Pat Rafferty, Regional Secretary, UNITE Scotland
Gary Smith, Secretary, GMB Scotland
Luke Humberstone, President, NUS Scotland
Paul Lewis, Interim Chief Executive, Scottish Enterprise
Charlotte Wright, Chief Executive, Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Nora Senior, Chair, Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board
Russel Griggs, Chair, South of Scotland Economic Partnership
Gerald McLaughlin, Chief Executive, NHS Health Scotland

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ANNEX A
SECTION 1: SFC's contribution to Scottish Government priorities

SG strategic priority

SFC's role in contributing to effective delivery of the key aims of the Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board.

SFC strategic outcome: High quality teaching and learning

Skills Alignment

1.   As reflected in our Economic and Labour Market Strategies, developing the skills of Scotland's current and future workforce is central to improving productivity, supporting the Scottish Government's focus on inclusive and sustainable economic growth. The Enterprise and Skills Review concluded that the impact of our investment in skills would be enhanced by increasing the planning and alignment between the SFC and SDS, so that this investment better reflects the needs of employers and the economy. I want the SFC to continue working with my officials and with SDS to deliver the Skills Alignment workstream as set out in the *Enterprise and Skills Review Report on Phase 2: Skills Alignment,* with a specific focus in 2018-19 on:

-   **Working with SDS to establish a single demand and provision planning cycle** that takes into account the planning cycle of colleges, universities and training providers. This supports the expectation, set out in the above report, that the SFC and SDS will jointly develop: an evidence-based skills demand assessment proposal that identifies skills demand at national, regional and sector levels, and where gaps exist in possible priority occupations, qualification levels and skills pathways; and a resultant coherent, provision plan for skills investment at regional, occupational and qualification levels. Both the demand assessment and the provision plan should be developed with industry and institutional engagement, with SFC and SDS working actively with relevant providers to build institutional capacity and capability.

-   **Enhancing the use of information on labour market demand and providers' capacity** across SFC and SDS. This on-going improvement from 2018-19 should support the enhanced use of this information to better and more clearly inform Outcome Agreements and SDS contracting processes.

-   **Better aligning the work of the relevant parts of SFC and SDS**. This will ensure a seamless approach to developing and implementing skills provision planning, Outcome Agreements and SDS contracting.

-   **Joint recruitment of a Director of Skills Alignment** and planning supported by the establishment of a supporting core team and wider virtual team drawn from SFC and SDS. The establishment of this post and the supporting team is a vital enabler to delivery of the above and Skills Alignment more widely given the post's responsibility for progressing Skills Alignment.

2.   These actions directly support the implementation and delivery of the Skills Alignment workstream and the 5 step model that underpins it. Implementation of this approach will inform ongoing consideration of the most effective balance of our skills investment to maximise returns in terms of productivity and labour market inclusion and avoid duplication of effort and funding.

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Apprenticeships

3.   There is an increasingly important role for colleges and universities in supporting the expansion, enhancement and diversification of the apprenticeship family, as crucial components of Scotland's skills offer.

4.   I expect SFC and SDS to work together to ensure that colleges and universities play their vital role in expanding apprenticeships at every level. I expect the SFC and the institutions it funds to work effectively in delivering these ambitions, recognising the value of more diversified work based learning pathways into employment. Our targets for this year are 28,000 Modern Apprenticeships and as part of this 887 Graduate Apprenticeships; and 2,600 Foundation Apprenticeships.

SG strategic priority

High quality learning in a system which is seamlessly connected for the learner.

SFC strategic outcome: High quality teaching and learning – success in and progression from learning

STEM

5.   Developing Scotland's STEM talent and capability is key to the Government's aim of generating inclusive and sustainable economic growth and to realising our ambitions to place our economy at the forefront of the technological frontier. The STEM Strategy for Education and Training aims to support people to develop their STEM skills throughout their lives, to grow STEM literacy and drive inclusive economic growth. This includes enabling learners to develop specialist STEM skills to gain employment in the growing STEM sectors.

6.   The Strategy highlights the SFC as a key partner in delivery of the Strategy, helping to build a high-quality, responsive STEM offering in both the further and higher education sectors and promoting the Strategy's themes of excellence, equity, inspiration and connection. We expect the SFC to deliver designated actions within the Strategy, working with partners and to contribute to the governance arrangements for the Strategy through its representation on the STEM Strategy Implementation Group, and through the official-level Action Group.

Digital

7.   The digital skills gap in Scotland is widening and is a significant challenge across the economy and at all stages of the skills pipeline. Therefore it is now a critical policy priority to improve Scotland's digital skills to enable inclusive growth. I expect the SFC to work with the further and higher education system and public and private partners to emphasise the necessity of improved digital skills development across all subject areas for both students and teaching staff and to greatly enhance industry links, so that the system responds effectively and quickly to the evolving digital skills requirements across all sectors. Furthermore, I would like the SFC, through their representation on the Digital Skills Partnership, to consider opportunities to enhance FE/HE provision of digital skills.

<u>Screen</u>

8.   The screen sector remains a priority sector for Scottish Government. I note and welcome the SFC's funding for – and active support of - the Creative Media Network, alongside a number of other investments designed to meet the emerging needs of the Creative Industries. This will help the screen sector to engage constructively and productively with a wide range of colleges and universities in Scotland in order to fully harness our large and diverse indigenous talent pool. The SFC should continue to collaborate with Creative Scotland and its partner agencies to establish the dedicated Screen Unit, play a full part in its governance and work to fulfil its shared strategy. I expect the establishment of the Screen Unit in 2018-19 to result in closer and stronger collaborative working by the SFC with agency partners so that public sector investment and resources drive growth more effectively in our television and film sectors.

<u>Veterans</u>

9.   I expect you to respond to the recommendations made by the Scottish Veterans Commissioner by working with the Veterans Employability Strategic Group and SCQF, to address how qualifications gained in the Armed Forces can be translated and mapped and might be better utilised and understood.

SG strategic priority

Access to further and higher education for people from the widest range of backgrounds.

SFC strategic outcome: High quality teaching and learning – access to learning

<u>Access and Learning</u>

10.   Access to university for people of all ages from the widest range of backgrounds remains a key priority of the Scottish Government. Our aim is to build on the recommendations made by the Commission on Widening Access in order to implement the Scottish Government priorities on fair access; including our ambition that every child, no matter their background or circumstances, has an equal chance of going to university by 2030. Therefore ensuring continued progress, at pace, on implementation is very important.

11.   The establishment of the Access Delivery Group in August 2017 is an important step forward in helping us to achieve that. Within that Group I expect the SFC to lead by example, clearly demonstrating its own contribution, as a Lead Delivery Partner, to the delivery of the recommendations made by the Commission on Widening Access. More generally I expect the SFC to actively drive forward this agenda, in respect of articulation in particular, demonstrating both leadership and innovation, and working collaboratively with relevant key stakeholders from across the whole education sector to facilitate real change.

12.   I welcome the SFC's continued support, through Outcome Agreements, to ensure that the priority for those widening access places added to the system over recent years is given to those living in SIMD20 areas. I expect the SFC to ensure Scotland's colleges and universities make further significant progress towards the targets set by the Commission which should be reflected clearly in Outcome Agreements.

13.   I have been clear that our work on access must go beyond entry to higher education to include improved retention and outcomes for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. As set out in my letter to you of 18 October regarding the 2018/19 Outcome Agreement Guidance, I expect these areas to be reflected in the Outcome Agreement Guidance and national measures going forward.

Review of Student Support

14.   The Independent Review of Student Support published its findings in November 2017. As work progresses in considering implementation of the Review's recommendations, the SFC should support the delivery of this work, working closely with Scottish Government and the Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS). At the forefront of all considerations should be the need to ensure students from the poorest backgrounds receive the support they require to succeed in their studies.

15.   SFC should support the Governments considerations of the recommendations of the independent review including making improvements to attendance criteria for college students.

Equally Safe in Higher and Further Education

16.   In 2014, and refreshed in 2016, the Scottish Government published the Equally Safe Strategy. This document, co-authored by COSLA, sets out the Scottish Government's commitment to prevent and eradicate all forms violence against women and girls. (http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0049/00498256.pdf)

17.   Universities and colleges are well placed to play a pivotal role in supporting efforts to tackle violence against women in Scotland and they have a responsibility for providing a safe environment for students and staff. I welcome the commitment that has been shown by universities and colleges, including their support for and engagement with, the Equally Safe in Further and Higher Education Working Group.

18.   I expect institutions to adopt a gendered analysis in their approach to this issue, and working with students and staff, assess their own policies and practices against the forthcoming Equally Safe in Higher Education Toolkit, to create safer places of learning for everyone. Institutions should not delay in considering their own policies and practices, identify where gaps exist, and develop a framework for developing an effective, strategic and collaborative approach to preventing gender based violence on campuses. This includes putting in place reporting systems, and data capture arrangements. Importantly, support arrangements should be developed to meet the needs and diversity of survivors, whilst also supporting their continuing engagement at university or college.

19.   I look to the SFC to work in partnership with the sectors to agree an initial plan for how they intend to adopt and work with the Toolkit, including adaptation of the Toolkit for colleges. Thereafter, to report annually on universities and colleges' progress on this, reflecting this in the annual Outcome Agreement process; and to ensure that their work with the Toolkit is reflected in the forthcoming institutional Gender Action Plans.

Student Mental Health and Wellbeing

20.   University and college campuses should be transformative places where students not only achieve academically but flourish and where their well-being is supported and nurtured. Universities and colleges should, in partnership with student associations, other pastoral

care providers and NHS Scotland, have in place a range of support services that are sensitive to the varying needs of all students, that identify mental health difficulties early and provide appropriate support to meet these.

21.   I would expect all universities and colleges to develop a strategy for mental health and work with NUS Scotland and their local student association to develop a Student Mental Health Agreement.   The SFC, through its reporting mechanisms with universities and colleges, should ensure that these arrangements are in place and are effective.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

22.   With the move to core Outcome Agreement teaching funds of £1.455m of Strategic Funds (previously used to fund ESOL delivery with Community Planning Partnerships), the SFC should ensure colleges continue to involve Community Planning Partnerships in the planning and delivery of ESOL. This will include identifying and agreeing with Partnerships the most appropriate agents in this delivery that reflects the needs and type of demand being identified from ESOL learners within their regions.

23.   The SFC should work with Education Scotland to evaluate how well colleges and their respective Community Planning partners are working together to meet the needs of ESOL learners.

SG strategic priority

The highest standards of teaching, governance and financial accountability in colleges.

SFC strategic outcome: SFC will invest in, and support, the development of high-performing colleges and universities with modern, transparent and accountable governance arrangements.

Scotland's colleges

24.   Scotland's Colleges are at the heart of our ambitions to deliver inclusive economic growth in Scotland and I am grateful to the SFC and colleges for their efforts in continuing to deliver our commitment to deliver 116,000 full-time equivalent places. Building on the successes of the sector in responding to the needs of young people, to learners of all ages and to the local and national labour markets, I wish the college sector to continue to develop its culture of improvement and for there to be a clear line of sight between your investment in colleges and their contribution to the delivery of our national priorities.

25.   Through the national college improvement project, we wish colleges to be supported to deliver local improvements with the aim of improving retention and raising attainment to the benefit of all learners. This approach to improvement should build upon the learning from the pilot year of the revised quality arrangements implemented by the SFC, Education Scotland and colleges themselves. I look to the SFC to play a full part in the ongoing development and wider application of this work, which I am looking to progress with pace in 2018-19.

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<u>Financial reporting and long-term planning</u>

26.   The SFC, the Scottish Government and its partners in the sector should continue to work together to create a financially stable national college sector which delivers for all students. The SFC should work with the sector to agree the assumptions for the 2018 Financial Forecast Return Call for Information on key long-term planning assumptions that underpin the forecasts covering the period ending Academic Year 2022-23.

<u>National bargaining</u>

27.   National Bargaining is a key strategic priority for the college sector and we will continue to work closely with you on the associated costs as negotiations progress during 2018/19. We also welcome the enhanced role the SFC will play in national bargaining to improve transparency in relation to the validation of financial and operational information. The SFC should ensure proposals and draft costings from joint secretaries are received at least 2 weeks before any negotiating meeting, to allow time for the data to be validated and agreed in advance of any discussion taking place. The SFC will have the final say on the validation of the data and therefore on the associated financial implications.

28.   The SFC should also ensure that colleges include the cost of harmonising staff-pay, terms and conditions in their financial plans as part of the long-term planning described in paragraph 26.

<u>Arm's Length Foundations</u>

29.   I would welcome advice from the SFC on how the sector might best continue to use Arm's Length Foundations to assist with long term financial planning and future investment decisions.

<u>Regional Strategic Bodies</u>

30.   The SFC should continue to support all three Regional Strategic Bodies (RSBs) to support long-term planning for colleges in their region; and ensure that each regional board has robust arrangements in place to discharge its duty to monitor its performance, support high-standards of governance and that of any colleges assigned to it. This should include advice to Ministers on the scope for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the RSBs.

<u>Good governance</u>

31.   Effective governance is fundamental in supporting colleges in the performance of their day-to-day operations. I expect the SFC to continue to work with the Good Governance Steering Group and the Scottish Government to take forward the recommendations from the Good Governance Task Group and also to ensure colleges continue to comply with the principles detailed in the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges.

<u>Gender balance on boards</u>

32.   Building on my key themes of equality and fairness, the SFC should take a leading role in supporting board appointments across college regions which reflect the diverse nature of the communities which they serve, and meet the Government's objective set for public boards that 50% of their non-executive members are women by the end of 2022. The SFC should work with Colleges Development Network to develop innovative approaches to chair and board member recruitment which supports succession planning and diversity.

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<u>Senior Level Pay</u>

33.   The SFC should encourage senior figures within the college sector to demonstrate restraint in their own pay settlements. While Public Sector Pay Policy does not apply directly to colleges, the SFC's Financial Memorandum state that colleges must have regard to Public Sector Pay Policy. Therefore, setting pay arrangements for senior staff must ensure value for money, affordability and sustainability in the longer term.

<u>Living Wage</u>

34.   The Real Living Wage Initiative is an important part of the Scottish Government fair work agenda and I would ask the SFC to encourage further progress to be made across the college (and university) sector. I expect all colleges to demonstrate progress towards achieving Living Wage Accreditation. Paying the living wage and becoming accredited not only treats people more fairly, it benefits the economy and sends a positive signal about the organisation into the wider community.

<u>Flexible Workforce Development Fund (FWDF)</u>

35.   I expect the SFC to continue to work closely with the Scottish Government in delivering this year's Programme for Government commitment on the Flexible Workforce Development Fund (FWDF) in 2018-19. That will include drawing on the lessons of the FWDF pilot to put in place arrangements for the up-skilling and reskilling of the existing workforce. There will be £10m to support the FWDF in 2018-19, with the SFC continuing to contribute £6m from its existing baseline, and a further £4m being provided by the Scottish Government through in-year transfers.

<u>Capital investment and estates strategy</u>

36.   Further to the completion of the national College Estate Condition Survey, the SFC should use this as a basis to prioritise future capital investment in the college estate, including new build, refurbishment, upgrading and maintenance. Future capital investment requirements in the college estate should be underpinned by fully transparent guidance and engagement with the sector. The SFC should also continue to work closely with the Scottish Government to develop clear guidance on the disposal of assets within the college sector.

37.   Capital investment should also consider and support the clear and ambitious targets set in the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 and I expect the SFC to continue to support the sector in reduction of its carbon footprint. Through the development of the Scottish Energy Efficiency Programme and the delivery of the Low Carbon Universities Fund, the SFC has a unique opportunity to share learning across the sectors.

SG strategic priority

Colleges working in partnership

SFC strategic outcome: SFC will take a leadership role in creating a high-performing system of learning in Scotland, which is strongly connected and coherent for learners

Developing the Young Workforce and Employer Engagement

38.   Colleges have a central role to play in growing the provision of vocational pathways in the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence and I look to the SFC to drive acceleration of collaboration and growth in provision. Through active and effective partnership working between school, colleges and employers, the SFC should help to ensure all young people have access to good quality work-related learning and a range of vocational pathways at a range of appropriate SCQF levels (including introductory/ taster courses) in addition to provision at level 5 and above.

Collective and collaborative leadership in college sector

39.   Collaborative leadership (not just between colleges but between colleges and their partners) is needed at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement. The SFC should support this collective approach by working with Colleges Scotland and the Colleges Development Network to embed equity and excellence across the sector.

Early Learning and Childcare (ELC)

40.   The expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) is a key policy for the Scottish Government. Building on the increase in provision of training places over the previous academic year, a further increase in provision to support the expansion is sought for the 18/19 academic year. Specifically, we are seeking to train an additional 1,813 new starts for HNC college and university (through UHI) courses to train at practitioner level in the sector. We are also seeking an additional 490 places (245 FTEs) at managerial level. Those should be split between 388 BA Childhood Practice places (194 FTE) at universities and 102 PDA places (51 FTE) at colleges. These figures have been adjusted to account for withdrawal rates, as discussed with SFC colleagues. My officials will continue to discuss how best to establish a process through which progress against targets can be monitored throughout the year.

41.   The SFC's support in ensuring this crucial evidence is available throughout the year is greatly appreciated. Providing flexibility in how and when courses are delivered for the sector will assist in ensuring those wishing to change career have the ability to train in a way that fits around their lives. Exploring greater flexibility in delivery of courses to widen the training options available, in particular for career changers, will be important in the coming year. I am grateful that you continue to work with colleagues from the Directorate for Children and Families, contributing to a number of cross sector fora to progress this policy and, in particular, with development and implementation of the ELC Workforce Delivery Plan. Finally on ELC, I welcome your on-going support in building a diverse workforce to support the expansion of ELC, including recruitment of more males, those from minority ethnic groups and those with disabilities.

FE Strategic Futures

42.   The FE Strategic Futures Group presents an opportunity for long-term partnership between the SFC, the Scottish Government and the sector as we work together to create a financially stable national college sector which maximises its potential and delivers for students. The SFC should play a full role in the development of this newly established group and should use the group to promote and secure the success of Scotland's colleges and to deliver on the strategic ambitions of the Scottish Government.

SG strategic priority

Quality learning and good governance in universities

SFC strategic outcome: SFC will invest in, and support, the development of high-performing colleges and universities with modern, transparent and accountable governance arrangements

HE Capital

43.   Gaining an understanding of the costs of maintaining a fit for purpose higher education estate is vital to the effective use of capital funds. The work that has been undertaken thus far by the SFC to create an evidence base which sets out the sector's year-on-year life-cycle maintenance needs is a key part of this.

44.   This information, in conjunction with discussions between the SFC, the university sector and Scottish Government officials, should continue with a view to exploring ways in which the use of Capital funds could be more effectively aligned with strategic priorities both for this year and in the future.

HE Strategic Futures

45.   The SFC has continued to engage with the Scottish Government to develop a positive outcome for the higher education sector in the 2018/19 budget. While funding and efficiencies remain an important element of the Strategic Futures Group, the Scottish Government will continue to work with the SFC and the sector, using this Group as a conduit, to discuss wider issues that affect delivery and service provision. The SFC has a crucial role in the continued development and improvement of this long-term partnership working and in ensuring maximum value for our public investment.

Quality assurance

46.   In the context of the changing regulatory framework in England, the SFC should continue to work to protect, as far as possible, the interests of the Scottish University Sector. In respect of the Teaching Excellence Framework, I would like to reaffirm the view of Scottish Ministers that the existing Quality Enhancement Framework approach to quality assurance in Scotland remains the key determinant of assessing the provision of quality learning in Scottish universities. The SFC should therefore work with the Scottish Government and sector partners to mitigate the impact on quality assurance in Scotland of expected changes to the UK Quality Code.

Higher Education Governance

47.   I look to the SFC to ensure that higher education institutions are taking the action necessary to ensure that their governing instruments are amended as necessary to enable them to meet the requirements of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 in line with the timescales set out in the commencement regulations. Alongside this, the SFC must give careful consideration to the revised Scottish Code of Good HE Governance in the context of the 2016 Act and its duty under the Post 16 Education (Scotland) Act 2013 to

require institutions to comply with any principles of governance which appear to the Council to constitute good practice in relation to higher education institutions.

And, in line with the approach set out for colleges, and the importance this Government places on the principles of the Public Sector Pay Policy, I welcome the SFC's undertaking to work with the Higher Education sector to support more transparent governance arrangements, particularly in relation to decisions on remuneration at senior levels.

48.   I am aware of, and welcome, the progress that many institutions have already made towards gender balance on their boards and, where there are imbalances, of the steps being taken by the institutions to address these. I wish to see rapid progress made by our higher education institutions in addressing imbalances in gender representation on Boards and also in their senior ranks. It is important that institutions reflect the wide diversity within Scotland's society and the student population that they serve.

49.   The SFC should work with Scottish Government and the sector to develop arrangements for reporting against the requirements of the Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018, in line with guidance which will be consulted on and developed over the coming months. It is intended that these arrangements will avoid duplication as far as possible. The SFC should also ensure that institutions highlight how they are proactively promoting gender balance on their Boards and at senior levels and all activity towards achieving these outcomes through their Outcome Agreement or Gender Action Plan.

SG strategic priority

Internationally competitive and impactful research

SFC strategic outcome: World-leading research

Europe and International

50.   Relationships with other countries support the quality and diversity of Scotland's further education, higher education and research through the development of collaborative partnerships, the sharing of best practice and the ability to attract students and staff from a wide range of backgrounds and with valuable skills. This includes relationships within the European Union and further afield.

51.   The withdrawal of the UK from the EU has the potential to have a significant impact on our colleges and universities and their ability to continue to attract talented students and staff, as well as European programme funding. Scottish Ministers firmly believe that the best outcome is to maintain our existing relationship with the EU and that, if that is not possible, we must stay in the single market and customs union.

52.   Scotland as part of the UK remains a member of the European Union and so remains eligible to apply to participate in European programmes. The agreement between the UK Government and the EU (December 2017) suggests that eligibility to participate should continue until 2020.

53.   I look to the SFC to continue to work with the sector and partners through Connected Scotland, the emerging 'Scotland is Now' nation branding strategy and other partnerships to identify opportunities to communicate that our colleges and universities remain open to

students and academics from across the world and committed to teaching, research and mobility collaborations with our European and international partners.

Core Research budget

54.   I welcome the increase in the level of Research Excellence Grant (REG), Research Postgraduate Grant (RPG) and University Innovation Fund (UIF) in AY 2018-19. I expect the Funding Council to ensure that this is used to maintain world-leading research and innovation in our universities.

SG strategic priority

Effective knowledge exchange and innovation between universities and colleges and industry.

SFC strategic outcome: Greater innovation in the economy

Innovation and entrepreneurism

55.   The Scottish Government published the CAN DO Innovation Action Plan in January 2017. Our universities have a pivotal role in driving up levels of business innovation by making the best use of university knowledge (and as outlined in Objective 4 of the Action Plan). I expect the SFC to work closely with the sector to use the University Innovation Fund to drive increasing engagement with businesses in support of the Action Plan.

56.   I welcome the progress that has been made to implement the second phase of the Innovation Centre programme, building on the success of the first phase and the recommendations of the Reid Review. It is important that this is a true partnership endeavour reflecting the ethos of the Enterprise and Skills Review, with SFC working in partnership with Scottish Enterprise and Highlands & Islands Enterprise to ensure the second phase appraisal process is proportional and progressed at pace while ensuring due diligence. I look to the SFC to continue to ensure that the recommendations of the Reid Review are fully reflected in the second phase of the programme to ensure long term economic outcomes are delivered across sectors.

57.   The SFC should continue to encourage an enhanced involvement for colleges in the Innovation Centre Programme. This should include the on-going development of the College Innovation Fund through FUTUREquipped and the College Innovation Accelerator Fund (CIAF) providing colleges with resource to release their internal capacity to engage more fully in the innovation support ecosystem for Scotland's businesses.

58.   Our universities and colleges play a key role in supporting an entrepreneurial culture in Scotland. It is key to ensuring that students are exposed to entrepreneurial thinking so that they develop an understanding that an entrepreneurial journey is possible and beneficial throughout their life and work. To this end, I look to the SFC to drive acceleration of work between the sector and partners within the framework of the CAN DO Innovation Action Plan.

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<u>Industrial Strategy and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)</u>

59.   It is important that the UK Industrial Strategy and the emerging UKRI deliver for the whole of the UK including Scotland. I look to the SFC to support universities in collaborations with businesses and other partners across Scotland to maximise the emerging opportunities, including levering in additional UK competitive funding for research and innovation in Scotland. I also expect the SFC to collaborate with Research England and the other funding bodies on shared UK-wide projects, such as the research infrastructure roadmap and next Research Excellence Framework.

SECTION 2: SFC's operations, governance, collaboration with partners and your role in advising Government on policy and strategy

SG strategic priority: SFC operating as a highly effective public body.

A. INVESTMENT DECISIONS AND FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

<u>Strategic Funds</u>

60.   Having funds available to invest in Further and Higher Education projects which contribute to meeting Scottish Government strategic objectives is something that I welcome and would like to see continue. In line with the Audit Scotland commentary, I would stress the importance I attach to ensuring that projects prioritised for funding are clearly linked to Scottish Government strategic objectives. As part of this, I would expect the SFC to continue to examine currently-funded projects with a view to assessing their consistency with Scottish Government strategic objectives. I am also keen for the SFC to adopt an approach to the use of Strategic Funds where funded projects set out a pathway to becoming self-sustaining where appropriate.

<u>European Structural Funds</u>

61.   In collaboration with Skills Development Scotland and colleges, I expect the SFC to continue to maximise the opportunities available through the current European Funding programme, paying particular attention to your responsibility to comply with regulations and audit procedures.

62.   Between April 2018 and March 2019, the SFC will continue to manage its European Structural Fund programmes (ESF). ESF activity is delivered by colleges in addition to SFC core activity. In collaboration with SDS, the SFC will deliver its component of the Developing Scotland's Workforce (DSW) programme. This programme will be delivered pan Scotland and will focus on higher level skills to meet regional demand by providing courses linked to Scotland's Smart Specialisation sectors and key growth sectors in Scotland.

<u>Long-term financial planning</u>

63.   I look to the SFC to advise Ministers on the long term financial needs of the sectors, taking account of demography, significant financial pressures and options for greater efficiencies and cost savings.

<u>Financial transactions</u>

64.   The SFC has been allocated £40m of financial transactions to support capital activity in the university sector. I expect the SFC to work collaboratively with the sector to determine the most effective way in which these can be used.

<u>NPD expenditure,</u>

65.   The budget allocated to the SFC also includes £29.3m to cover College NPD expenditure. I expect the SFC to use this funding to cover the unitary charge payments required for college NPD projects in 2018-19.

<u>Financial monitoring and reporting</u>

66.   The SFC will submit accurate reports and claims in relation to all programmes which they fund as per agreements established between the SFC and individual Scottish Government policy areas.

67.   The SFC should continue to focus on ensuring the quality and robustness of financial reporting from the colleges sector and ensure effective, timely and efficient handling of any challenges which may arise.

B.   GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

<u>Gender balance</u>

68.   The Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Bill has been passed by the Scottish Parliament and I welcome the objective set for public boards, including the SFC, that 50% of their non-executive members are women by the end of 2022, and for steps to be taken to encourage women to apply to become non-executive members of public boards. This is a key priority and I set out earlier in this letter (paragraphs 32 and 49) my expectations and ambitions for the SFC's work with the sectors.

<u>Building organisational capacity and capability to improve outcomes</u>

69.   The SFC Board and its Committees will continue to play a key role in 2018-19 by providing scrutiny, challenge and oversight of the organisation's activities and delivery of the strategic objectives set by Ministers. I am grateful for the significant contribution Board Members make both individually and collectively and look to the SFC to ensure that their induction, talent development and succession planning arrangements continue to support Members, enabling them to contribute fully during their time on the SFC Board.

70.   The SFC senior team and board should continue to engage closely with the Scottish Government's Sponsor Team to develop a package of measures aimed at improving collaboration between the two organisations, based upon a shared understanding of respective roles and responsibilities and making the best possible use of your cumulative knowledge, expertise and networks. I would welcome a regular update from the Chair on this activity, which I am keen to support and consider of critical importance.

71.   In a time of increasing financial pressures, your Interim Chief Executive's role as Accountable Officer for public funds granted to colleges and universities remains a crucial one. I expect you, and your Board, to (i) make full use of the powers available to you to lever maximum impact from Government investment and (ii) ensure no ambiguity across either

sector about the importance of absolute compliance with the terms and conditions of grant set out in the SFC's Financial Memorandum. In this context, I welcome your engagement with Scottish Government officials to create a Framework Document.

Production of statistics, reporting and performance management

72.   Statistical reporting on the performance of the HE and FE sectors continues to be an important function. The Office for Statistics Regulation has recently updated the Code of Practice for Statistics which gives new guidance on ensuing trustworthiness, quality and value of the statistics you produce and to ensure they serve the public.

73.   To meet the high standards set out in this new code, you should identify and create a range of continuous improvements to your methods, processes and outputs. This should also include a staff development plan where all SFC staff should be aware of the requirements under the new code. Our Chief Statistician, who is responsible for adhering to the Code of Practice for Statistics, will be able to provide advice and guidance to support improvements in the production of statistics.

C.   ADVISING GOVERNMENT ON POLICY AND STRATEGY COLLABORATION

74.   I am grateful to the SFC for the valuable advice and guidance they provide to Government's policy development and for the expertise and challenge that your contribution injects. Your knowledge and input are an essential and influential part of our decision making process and I will look to you to continue and build on this in 2018-19, particularly as we look to progress our thinking in key policy areas including the learner journey and implementation of the student support review.

SPECIFIC REQUESTS OF PUBLIC BODIES

Issue	Further information	Basis of request
Community Planning	We expect those public bodies that will be subject to statutory community planning duties under Part 2 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 to work with other partner bodies and communities within **Community Planning Partnerships** to identify, resource and manage effective delivery of shared priority outcomes for their localities. Other public bodies should consider and take reasonable steps to pursue opportunities for partnership working with other bodies, including local authorities, wherever this can support your respective business objectives.	Page 13 of the PfG; the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015
Digital services	Digital technology is a powerful enabler for improving public services and driving down the costs of delivery. We expect public bodies to deliver against Scotland's Digital Future: Delivery of Public Services by ensuring that digital transformation is embedded within your business strategy and corporate plan. In developing your digital public services, you should consider opportunities to support or benefit from the development of Scotland's national digital ecosystem. If you wish to assess the digital maturity of your organisation, develop business cases/procurements for digital services, or source expert digital staff, please contact the Central Government Digital Transformation Service. Such business change can be challenging and we therefore expect all bodies to make effective use of the Central Government ICT Project and Programme Assurance Framework.	Page 28 of the PfG; Scotland's Digital Future: Delivery of Public Services
Diversity on boards	Most public bodies with boards have signed up to the commitment – ***50:50 by 2020*** – to improve diversity on boards including working towards gender balance on boards by 2020. As of April 2017 listed public authorities are required to publish the gender composition of their boards and to produce succession plans to increase the diversity of their boards by virtue of The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2016. Guidance to support listed public authorities to implement the new duty will be developed by the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the Scottish Government. In addition, the new regulations also amend the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 by lowering the threshold for a listed public authority to report their gender pay gap and publish equal statements etc. from those authorities with more than 150 employees to those with more than 20 employees. You are encouraged to take positive action to support and enable greater diversity of Ministerial appointments, through: • taking an active role in succession planning, and providing advice to Ministers about the board's membership needs, both for new and re-appointments; • ensuring that suggested criteria for the selection of new board members meet the needs of the body, are unbiased and are not unnecessarily restrictive; • taking action both during and between board member recruitment exercises to attract the broadest range of candidates to the work of the board; • providing mentoring, shadowing and training opportunities for potential board members; and • considering the role of nominations committees.	Page 35 of the PfG
Equality	Public bodies are reminded of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) contained within the Equality Act 2010. Those bodies that are listed within the Scottish specific equality duties are legally required to: • report on progress in mainstreaming the PSED in to the main business of the organisation; • set, every 4 years, equality outcomes and report on progress every 2 years. We would expect to see within the business plans of the listed body's clear links to their equality outcomes; • impact assess new and revised policies and practices as well as making arrangements for reviewing existing policies and practices; • gather and use and publish employee information;	Public Sector Equality Duty within the Equality Act 2010 and the Scottish specific equality duties

	• publish gender gap information (race and disability also from 2017) and an equal pay statement; and • consider adding equality award criteria and contract considerations into procurement exercises.	
Living Wage	Public bodies are encouraged to become **Accredited Living Wage Employers**, paying the **Living Wage** to their employees and people involved in delivering public contracts. We published **statutory guidance** for public bodies on how workforce-related matters, including the Living Wage, may be taken into account in public procurement processes.	Page 37 of the PfG
Young Workforce	You have a vital role to play in working with us to implement the Scottish Government's youth employment strategy, Developing the Young Workforce, for example, by recruiting and training young people, working towards achieving the Investors in Young People gold standard and engaging with the education system to provide development opportunities for young people. Development of procurement policies that encourage more employers to contribute to the development of Scotland's young people.	Cabinet Secretary for Fair Work, Skills and Training's letter to public bodies of 15 December 2014
Fair work	You will know that the Government previously commissioned the **Working Together Review** to examine progressive workplace policies and published a **formal response** in August 2015 We asked you to have regard to that report and the recommendation that public bodies should report publicly on their approach to industrial relations and its impact on workplace and workforce matters. A key part of the response was the establishment of the independent **Fair Work Convention**, who published their blueprint for fair work in Scotland in March 2016.	Page 37 of the PfG; Working Together Review: Progressive Workplace Policies in Scotland
Low Carbon sector and combating climate change	We look to all public bodies to help realise the significant opportunity for growing the **low carbon sector** both through leadership and directly through reduction of energy demand and integration of low carbon and renewable heat and energy technologies across estates. More generally, we expect our public bodies to lead by example in **combating climate change** and making a valuable contribution towards achieving our ambitious emission reduction target of 80% by 2050. 2017/18 will mark the third year of mandatory reporting from 180 listed public bodies on compliance with climate change duties. The mandatory reports for 2017/18 are due to be submitted to SG by 30 Nov 2018. Reporting advice, tools, guidance and training are available from the Sustainable Scotland Network (SSN).	Pages 30-31 of the PfG; policy proposal to bring into force a public body duties reporting requirement under sections 46 and 96 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009
Efficiency	Although not explicitly mentioned in the Programme for Government, **we continue to expect every public body to deliver efficiency savings of at least 3% per annum** and to report publicly on the actions undertaken and the results achieved.	Efficient Government section of SG website

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March 2018

Dear John

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT SCOTLAND – GUIDANCE 2018-19

Introduction

1. Following the publication of our Programme for Government (PfG), 'A Plan for Scotland', I am writing to you to outline the strategic priorities I would wish to set for Skills Development Scotland (SDS) until the end of March 2019. More detail around this can be found at **Annex A**.

Enterprise and Skills Review

2. It is my intention that SDS will undertake its operational and strategic planning in line with the Strategic Board's Strategic Plan once it is developed, and in the meantime be attentive to the emerging themes and priorities of the Board as it develops that Plan. Of considerable significance to that aim is the requirement for SDS to plan and work collaboratively with the other Enterprise and Skills agencies, with SG and more widely as required to support the Strategic Board's aims.

Strategic Context

3. Skills Development Scotland sits in a critical position in support of both the Scottish Government's overarching ambition of inclusive, sustainable growth for Scotland and its defining mission of education. Contributing to the development of a skilled and productive workforce in Scotland, both now and in the future, is a central contribution to the Government's strategic vision for Scotland.

4. SDS has a decade long record of delivery and innovation of which it can and should be proud. As we look forward to an ever evolving and increasingly uncertain economic environment the need for that focus on delivery and innovation becomes increasingly important. So too does the need to collaborate with the Government, other agencies and the widest range of stakeholders. We cannot unlock the opportunities of the future and respond to some very disruptive challenges by working in isolation or through only superficial collaboration.

5. The formation of the new Strategic Board following the Enterprise and Skills Review provides an opportunity to build a new approach to enterprise and skills support for Scotland. This is an opportunity to work across boundaries and to deepen alignment and innovative practices at a level we haven't seen before. This will rely on collective leadership across the agencies and strong partnership with Government.

6. SDS has responded positively to the conclusions of the Review and has made a distinctive and important contribution to the work to establish the new Strategic Board. In the year ahead I look to SDS to be part of the formation of a new collective leadership which drives progress and isn't constrained by the institutional interests of partner agencies. This will take place against a backdrop of significant change for SDS at board level. I understand this will be a challenging period for the organisation. However I expect the transition to genuine collaborative leadership with partners to remain at the forefront of the organisation's strategic focus throughout the year.

7. Learners and employers have been and must continue to be a key focus for SDS. Maintaining and enhancing confidence in the stability and quality of outcomes delivered by Scotland's skills system must be a priority for SDS working in partnership with the Scottish Funding Council and others. While we must always be open minded about change to the services provided to learners and employers, we must maintain a clear and consistent focus on the outcomes we are seeking to achieve through those services.

8. Looking back over the past decade SDS has made a significant contribution in terms of the development of the apprenticeship pathway and in response to the post-recessionary challenge of youth unemployment. In many ways this success has been characterised by a responsive approach to rapidly shifting labour market conditions. Looking forward to the next decade we can anticipate different labour market challenges even if we cannot realistically forecast what they will be and when they will occur. The Government will continue to respond to the challenges that emerge and that means priorities will evolve. I look to SDS to continue to adapt in response and will support the organisation to do so.

9. Skills Development Scotland plays a pivotal role in assessing, developing and delivering the skills needs of a wide range of Scottish Government priorities. I expect you to build on your current valuable contribution to those priorities by continuing to work in collaboration with partners, including those at local, regional and national levels, to unlock opportunities and creating the future capacity required within Scotland's skills system.

10. We recognise there is a need for our investment in skills and enterprise to help create a workforce which can compete effectively in an increasingly competitive global economy. The importance of industry leadership in determining current and future skills needs cannot be overstated. This must be a system wide approach. We look to SDS to continue to work with the Scottish Funding Council on skills alignment, harnessing the energies of industry leaders in transforming our approach.

11. The significance of providing young people with improved career management skills and the information required to make informed choices about their future learning and careers is fundamental. Your work to date on careers education in schools has been critically important. However, by its very nature, developing and delivering careers education within the context of a changing labour market is a continual process of improvement and I look to SDS to continue to prioritise this work.

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12. Building on the expanded reach of its all-age careers services, SDS has a critical role to play in working with partners to support the development of a more aligned and integrated approach to employability support in Scotland particularly on Work Able Scotland which SDS continues to deliver on Ministers' behalf. SDS should also look to support and promote Fair Start Scotland through My World of Work and other channels.

13. We recognise the need to rebalance the nation's skills provision, with greater emphasis on, and recognition of the value of, work based and technical learning options. I ask you to continue your partnership work to developing work based and technical learning pathways, providing more and better learning opportunities for Scotland's young people.

14. My expectations are reflected in the following high level strategic priorities for SDS:

   • **Skilled and Productive Workforce:** Ensure that the provision of skills and training is geared towards the current and future needs of individuals and employers.
   • **Fair Work:** Support employers to grow, through the promotion of management practices that encourage the creation of sustainable and productive jobs.
   • **High Employment and Low Unemployment:** Delivering on employment support to provide an integrated system, which provides equality of opportunity to access work to ensure everyone is able to maximise their potential.
   • **Equal Opportunities:** Place equality and diversity at the very heart of SDS activity to drive forward change that will make an enduring difference. In particular make a contribution to the delivery of the Governments ambition of halving the disability employment gap. SDS should continue to persure the aims of the MA Equality Action Plan.
   • **Collaborative Working:** An enhanced culture of collaborative working with enterprise and skills agencies and other stakeholders.
   • **High performing public body:** SDS operates as a highly effective public body working collaboratively with others to maximise its impact on individuals, society and the economy.

15. This letter sets out these strategic priorities in further detail and I ask that your Operating Plan for 2018-19 determines how you will contribute to these priorities in the year ahead. With the establishment of the Strategic Board following the Enterprise and Skills Review, I would look to SDS to align with the specific priorities identified by the board and the new governance structures and performance framework as they emerge.

Skills Development Scotland Budget 2018-19

16. In what has been a tight financial settlement for public services across Scotland, I am pleased that I have been able to secure an uplift in SDS's budget that reflects the government's priorities. I welcome SDS's approach to working openly with officials to better understand and consider the prioritisation and maximisation of opportunities within the confines of this settlement.

17. SDS's budget allocation for 2018-19, to support delivery of our priorities on inclusive and sustainable economic growth is set out in the table below (these figures are subject to Parliamentary approval). This is confirmed in your budget allocation and monitoring letter issued in March 2018. Any in-year transfers, both in or out of the budget, will be detailed at

the Autumn and Spring Budget Revisions, published each year and subject to Parliamentary scrutiny.

Skills Development Scotland	2018-19 Budget
Grant - in - Aid	£193.3m

18. Looking ahead to future years I expect SDS to enage with Scottish Government on budgets at both ministerial and official level well ahead of the new apprenticeship contracting periods.

Conclusion

19. In conclusion, I hope that you will find this letter helpful in carrying forward your business planning for 2018-19. I am confident that SDS will rise to meet the challenges it faces during the coming year and this Government very much values the important work that SDS carries out in helping to deliver the Government's Purpose. I look forward to that support continuing as the Board drives forward its important work in meeting our priorities to create a prosperous nation with more jobs, fair work and a dynamic sustainable and inclusive economy.

SDS's Contribution to Scottish Government Priorities

SG Strategic priority
Skilled and Productive Workforce: Ensure that the provision of skills and training is geared towards the current and future needs of individuals and employers.

SDS Outcome
Employers are better able to recruit the right people with the right skills at the right time.

Skills Alignment

1. As reflected in our Economic and Labour Market Strategies, developing the skills of Scotland's current and future workforce is central to improving productivity, supporting the Scottish Government's focus on inclusive and sustainable economic growth. The Enterprise and Skills Review concluded that the impact of our investment in skills would be enhanced by increasing the planning and alignment between SDS and SFC, so that this investment better reflects the needs of employers and the economy. I want SDS to continue working with my officials and with SFC to deliver the Skills Alignment workstream, as set out in the *Enterprise and Skills Review Report on Phase 2: Skills Alignment*, with a specific focus in 2018/19 to advance the early work on:

    - ***Establishing a single demand and provision planning cycle with SFC*** that takes into account the planning cycle of colleges, universities and training providers. This supports the expectation, set out in the *Enterprise and Skills Review Report on Phase 2: Skills Alignment,* that SDS and SFC will jointly develop: an evidence-based skills demand assessment proposal that identifies skills demand at national, regional and sector levels, and where gaps exist in possible priority occupations, qualification levels and skills pathways; and a resultant a coherent provision plan for skills investment at regional, occupational and qualification levels. Both the demand assessment and the provision plan should be developed with industry and institutional engagement, with SDS and SFC working actively with relevant providers to build institutional capacity and capability.

    - ***Enhancing the use of information on labour market demand and providers' capacity across SDS and SFC.*** This on-going improvement from 2018/19 should support the enhanced use of this information to better and more clearly inform Outcomes Agreements and SDS contracting processes.

    - ***Better aligning the work of the relevant parts of SDS and SFC.*** *This will ensure a seamless approach to developing and implementing skills provision planning, Outcome Agreements and SDS contracting.*

    - ***Joint recruitment with SFC of a Director of Skills Alignment and Planning, supported by the establishment of a supporting core team and wider virtual team, drawn from SDS and SFC.*** The establishment of this post and the supporting teams is a vital enabler to delivery of the above and Skills Alignment more widely, given the post's responsibility for progressing Skills Alignment.

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2. These actions directly support the implementation and delivery of the Skills Alignment workstream and the 5 step model that underpins it (see high level diagram - annex B). Implementation of this approach will inform on-going consideration of the most effective balance of our skills investment to maximise returns in terms of productivity and labour market inclusion and avoid duplication of effort and funding.

3. As this new approach develops, we ask SDS to continue to:

- Extend and strengthen Regional Skills Assessments by identifying the range of available equality data that might be used to further enhance skills intelligence.
- Implement existing, and potential new sectoral SIP action plans.
- Consider how equality impact assessments and specific equality actions are most effectively integrated into the SIP / RSIP development process.
- Place a focus on existing and future growth sectors, including those with STEM occupations and other Scottish Government requirements, e.g. digital, rural, early learning & childcare, film & TV etc.
- Collaborate with Creative Scotland and its partner agencies to establish the dedicated Screen Unit, play a full part in its governance and work to fulfil its shared strategy. I expect the establishment of the Screen Unit in 2018-19 to result in closer and stronger collaborative working by SDS with agency partners so that public sector investment and resources drive growth more effectively in our television and film sectors.
- Contribute to the **STEM Strategy for Education and Training** by delivering SDS designated actions and by implementing SDS' own STEM strategy. SDS will contribute to the governance arrangements for the Strategy through its continued representation on the STEM Strategy Implementation Group, and through the official-level Action Group.
- Implement existing **Regional skills investment plans** (RSIPs) which are playing a key role in integrating skills investment at local level.
- Work with a range of partners on the development and delivery of the strategic approach to rural economic development and related skills support.
- Work with enterprise and skills agency partners to ensure that skills requirements are reflected in **City and Growth Deal** infrastructure and other development proposals.
- Develop an evidence base that allows us to better understand the links between skills investment, productivity and inclusive growth via the high performing inclusive growth framework.
- Increasingly bring their skills plans and evidence base to the fore in supporting the development of SG policies and strategies, including the delivery of skills related Ministerial commitments.

SDS Outcome
People have the right skills and confidence to secure good work, progress in their careers and achieve their potential

Learner pathways and the learner journey

4. Scotland needs an efficient, effective and adaptable skills and learning system that allows learners to prosper and supports industry with the required skills. Our ambition is to create a world-class skills infrastructure for work-based learning, providing a coherent pathway of

opportunity from school, post-school and into employment, with a clear and flexible choice of learning pathways, complementing the more traditional academic pathways and allowing learners to move between and progress through alternative routes.

5. We also wish to simplify the learner journey and welcome SDS' continued involvement in the learner journey project and its future implementation.

6. In terms of pathways, we look to SDS to continue its work to expand work-based learning options, including:

- Fully involving employers, including SAAB, in advising the appropriate balance of pathways within the apprenticeship family that will provide the technical and meta skills that drive economic growth.
- Continued expansion of Foundation, Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships (detailed further below).
- Ensuring professional and quality standards are embedded across the apprenticeship family.
- Supporting initiatives to ensure that prior learning is recognised across all skills pathways to avoid duplication.
- Effectively promoting all available pathway opportunities to learners, raising awareness and understanding while shaping attitudes towards work-based learning options.

Our expectations of SDS in the management and delivery of the apprenticeship family are detailed below.

The Apprenticeship Family

7. The commissioning of apprenticeships will be informed by the new 5-step skills alignment model. This should lead to improved alignment of SDS and SFC planning cycles and enhanced use of evidence to inform commissioning with training providers (Steps 1 and 2). The commissioning process and the monitoring and performance management of training providers (Steps 3 and 4) will also be shaped by the new approach, alongside SFC commissioning and funding of colleges and universities.

8. We ask SDS to work with SFC in ensuring that apprenticeship funding in FE and HE is clearly understood.

Modern Apprenticeships

9. Modern Apprenticeships (MAs) are well established and critical to our Youth Employment and Economic strategies. Apprenticeships deliver against our dual aims of supporting economic growth and addressing youth unemployment. They support growth and STEM sectors while providing real employment opportunities for young people and taking account of demographic change and employer demand.

- SDS should provide at least 28,000 new Modern Apprenticeship starts including up to 887 Graduate Apprenticeships in 2018/19, as we continue our managed expansion towards 30,000 new starts per year by 2020/21. This is with a view to establishing Graduate Apprenticeships as a significant and sustainable offer. My officials will work closely with SDS to develop further expansion plans in line with available resources.

- As before, the majority of places should to be allocated to young people aged 16-24 across all sectors, including key and supporting sectors and with a particular focus on 16-19 year olds.
- Across 16-24 year olds, priority should continue to be given to higher level frameworks (SCQF 6 and above) and to those in STEM occupations.
- In response to industry need SDS should increase the focus on the offer of MA opportunities for those aged 25+, in key and supporting sectors.
- Consideration should be given to how, within the parameters of public procurement legislation, the MA contracting process could be adapted to facilitate the development of a stronger and higher quality training provider supply chain.
- Continue to offer an open and transparent commissioning process for National Training Programmes and apprenticeships.
- Continue to provide additional funding for remote rural apprenticeships in line with Scottish Governance guidance.
- Provide support to public sector organisations able to access apprenticeship funding through initiatives such as, but not limited to, continuation and on-going development of the Public Sector Network, to promote the up-take of apprenticeships in the public sector.
- Promote and provide enhanced contribution rates for disabled people and those with experience of care up to the age of 29.
- Continuing to consider (with SG) what other mechanisms may be necessary to achieve aims of the MA Equality Action Plan.

10. Within the context of the Government's strategic commitment to Fair Work I would look to SDS to continue to work with trade unions, employers and other partners to ensure Modern Apprentices are aware of collectively bargained pay rates for individual sectors where these exist. More generally I would look to SDS to consider mechanisms to embed the different dimensions of the Fair Work framework. Specificially I expect SDS to work with Scottish Governemnt officials and other partners on the work started in 2017 on Modern Apprenticeship pay.

Foundation Apprenticeships

11. In response to the Scottish Government's Youth Employment Strategy, Developing the Young Workforce, SDS is playing a key role in developing new apprenticeship pathways. In partnership with schools, colleges and employers you have expanded the apprenticeship family to incorporate Foundation Apprenticeships, offering young people more pathways to gain valuable work experience and enter sustainable employment.

12. It is important that SDS continues to ensure Foundation Apprenticeships are available across an expanding range of frameworks and in every local authority area in Scotland. In 2018/19, SDS should support 2,600 young people to start a Foundation Apprenticeship, up from 346 starts during 2016/17 and 1,245 in 2017/18. This will support progress toward my commitment to support at least 5,000 new Foundation Apprenticeships starts for young people in academic year 2019/2020, with a view to establishing Foundation Apprenticeships' as a significant and sustainable offer in the senior phase. My officials will work closely with SDS to develop further expansion plans in line with available resources.

We expect SDS to continue monitoring and reporting on the progress of the pathfinder cohorts and to conduct a formative evaluation to capture learning from the pathfinders to inform Foundation Apprenticeships delivery for the current and future cohorts. Longer term,

we recognise that the evaluation of Foundation Apprenticeships will be incorporated into the apprenticeship evaluation framework that you have developed in conjunction with the OECD.

13. Based on learning from the early pathfinders and formative evaluation, you should continue to collaborate with the SG and other partners to review the design and delivery models for Foundation Apprenticeships to ensure that these maximise learner success. Specifically, you should ensure that where learners choose to leave school prior to completion of their Foundation Apprenticeships, all successfully completed units are SQA certified.

14. You should also work with Education Scotland, SQA, schools and colleges, to ensure that pathways into Foundation Apprenticeships exist in all schools and regions, building and extending existing good practice. SDS should work with Education Scotland to establish appropriate mechanisms to evaluate the effectiveness of these and all vocational education delivery in the senior phase of Scottish schools.

15. In addition, we ask SDS to work with SAAB to consider the development of new work based learning offers, including Foundation Apprenticeships, at appropriate levels, to expand the inclusivity of work-based learning as a viable component of and an alternative to traditional academic education.

16. SDS should work in partnership with the DYW National Group (and DYW Regional Groups), business organisations Education Scotland, colleges and local authorities work together to secure employer engagement in schools in driving the growth of Foundation Apprenticeships.

Graduate Apprenticeships

17. We ask that SDS continues to grow Graduate Apprenticeship opportunities (with a target of up to 887 in 2018/19). This will involve continuing to develop frameworks and to support delivery partners in taking forward Graduate Apprenticeships programmes. We look to SDS to work with all universities, exploring new, innovative and cost effective ways of delivering Graduate Apprenticeships and to work responsively with partners as interest in new frameworks emerge.

Early Learning and Childcare

18. The expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) is a key policy for the Scottish Government. It is anticipated that up to 11,000 additional staff need to be recruited and trained for the ELC sector by August 2020. We look to SDS to continue their work supporting this growth sector.

19. Specifically, we ask that SDS continue to increase the number of ELC Modern Apprenticeships, by 10% year on year (subject to demand), as previously agreed, and to develop and pilot a Graduate Apprenticeship for the sector. The increase in financial contributions for modern apprenticeships within SDS resources is most welcome. However, we would be grateful for your assistance in considering what specific support could be given to career changers (over 25s) and those in rural areas. Ensuring that these groups have access to training opportunities will be important in assisting us to meet the workforce requirements of the ELC expansion.

20. I am grateful that you continue to work with colleagues from the Directorate for Children and Families, contributing to a number of cross sector forums to progress this policy, in particular, steering the sector's Skills Investment Plan (SIP), and in the development and implementation of the ELC Workforce Delivery Plan.

21. I also welcome your on-going support in improving the diversity of the ELC workforce by raising the profile and attractiveness of the sector and embedding developing a diverse workforce as a cross cutting theme in all work.

Equalities and evaluation

22. Across the apprenticeship family, SDS should:
- Continue to develop the evaluation of apprenticeship long term outcomes (ALTO) in order to assess the impact on productivity and inclusive growth.
- Continue to focus on increasing the number of disabled people; ethnic minority groups and care leavers entering Modern Apprenticeships and to tackle apprenticeship areas where there are gender imbalances, as outlined in the Equality Action Plan (EAP) for Modern Apprenticeships
- Going forward, progress plans to extend the EAP to the newer elements of the apprenticeship family.

Promoting work-based learning

23. Supporting the creation of a world class work-based learning system in Scotland will require changes in long held views and practices of different types of educational experience, and it is vital that SDS continues to engage with key influencers, including teachers, parents and employers, to contribute to system change.

24. The Centre for Work-Based Learning will be a conduit for policy influence and we anticipate that the research output from the centre will be used to influence the skills and learning system. We urge SDS to consolidate the partnership for the Centre for Work-Based Learning in taking forward a programme of work that will position the Centre as an influential voice in the development of work-based learning in Scotland.

25. The PhD programme, initiated by SDS, will also be an important part of a high quality research programme that will also be influential for the policy and practice of work-based learning in Scotland.

26. In addition, to help facilitate system change, SDS should expand the content and reach of its digital service, www.apprenticeships.scot. In the year ahead, we ask SDS to introduce an online account that will enable apprentices to more readily access support and track their progression through their learning journey.

Apprenticeship Governance

27. A new apprenticeship governance and engagement structure was put in place during 2016/17, to better align and articulate industry demand in apprenticeship design and development, and provide a robust structure to oversee the evolution of the broader apprenticeship family. The Scottish Apprenticeship Advisory Board (SAAB) sits at the heart of this and is designed to give employers and industry a leading role in developing the future of apprenticeships in Scotland. SDS should continue to provide administrative support to SAAB and be responsible for the National Occupational Standards (NOS) on behalf of the Devolved Administrations.

28. In the year ahead, I ask SDS to work with SAAB groups and stakeholders, as follows:

- Through the SAAB Standards and Frameworks group, SDS should continue to work with partners to develop and maintain a future standards architecture to underpin work based learning in Scotland, including the framework approvals process.
- Working with the Employer Equalities group, I ask SDS to support the development and implementation of their work plan to contribute to improved representation of all groups within apprenticeships, with particular focus on those identified in the Youth Employment Strategy. The group's work to advise employers on inclusive workplace practices, recruitment and employee retention practices is also welcomed. I ask SDS, along with the Scottish Government and other stakeholders including SAAB, to explore how the experience of pregnant women and young mothers in accessing, participating in and completing national training programmes might be improved. I also ask that SDS discuss with my officials the most appropriate means of promoting EHRC advice to employers on supporting pregnancy and maternity in the workplace, within the context of other SDS support for business and current resources.
- I also expect SDS to take account of the views of the Employer Engagement group in the development of its work plan. This group should continue to work with SDS to ensure fitness for purpose of apprenticeships.scot, act as ambassadors for apprenticeships and endorse the development of the Apprenticeship Engagement Group.
- The new Apprentice Engagement Group, reporting into the Employer Engagement Group, will play an ambassadorial and consultative role in promoting and raising awareness of apprenticeships and their benefits, engaging with parents and helping to shape the information, advice and guidance provided through careers services.

Career information, advice and guidance

29. The decisions young people make as they journey towards and into work must be informed by high quality, early advice on sustainable labour market opportunities and the range of appropriate educational and training options available. The **Career Education Standard** 3-18 sets out how we expect this to be achieved.

30. SDS has already made significant changes to its service offer in schools to meet these expectations, including support for capacity building of teachers in P5-P7, **transition** support for P7/S1 pupils and support to make **subject choices** in S2/S3, all supported by complementary digital content on **My World of Work**. I expect SDS to continue working with education partners to ensure alignment of career management skills development and the CES with the school curriculum and to support capacity building for teachers and practitioners. This will include embedding learning from the on-going programme of **Education Scotland CIAG reviews**.

31. Our Developing Young Workforce **Youth Employment Strategy** underlines our commitment to ensuring all our young people, regardless of their challenges, have fair access to the employment, learning or training opportunities available to them. At the heart of this is the successful delivery of the **Opportunities for All** (OFA) commitment for 16-19 year olds and increasing the numbers of young people up to the age of 24 making successful transitions into learning, training and work.

32. SDS is central to the re-engagement of unemployed young people, particularly those aged 16-19 (and up to 26th birthday for those with care experience). SDS should continue to

embed and continuously improve its 'Next Steps' services to meet the needs of those requiring support to make a successful and sustained post-school transition, ensuring that this aligns with other delivery partners.

33. SDS is also contributing to specific improvements identified in the Learner Journey review.

34. SDS should continue to work with DYW Regional Groups to develop Marketplace, providing teacher access to offers for pupils and further developing this functionality to allow young people (Nextsteps, college, secondary and primary) direct access.

35. SDS should develop a qualifications calculator which can be housed on the veterans landing page on MyWoW to help armed forces leavers translate their military qualifications into civilian/open market equivalents.

Data Sharing and the Participation Measure

36. SDS is central to our ability to report on the success of the OFA policy. SDS' maintenance of the **shared dataset** and management of multi-partner data sharing through the **16+ Data Hub** allows tracking and monitoring of young peoples' transitions to ensure resources and services are appropriately developed and targeted at individuals with the greatest need.

37. I expect SDS to continue its work with strategic partners to continue to track, publish and promote the post-16 Participation Measure. This is now the key measure in Scotland Performs for tracking the proportion of young people in learning, training or work.

38. I also expect SDS to work with my officials and partners to further improve the quality of the shared dataset through data sharing with HMRC (employment status) and third sector organisations. The scope to expand the data set to include all 16-24 year olds should also be investigated.

39. Furthermore, SDS should look to increase the flexibility of the management information system underpinning the shared dataset (CSS) to provide partners and stakeholders with direct and more flexible access in order to maintain and make best use of the data held, in line with GDPR guidelines.

Redundancy support

40. For those individuals facing redundancy, the continued support through our **Partnership Action for Continuing Employment** (PACE) initiative remains critical. As in previous years, we remain committed to continuous improvement in the PACE programme and of particular interest in the year ahead is improved reporting and tracking of the destinations and outcomes of those individuals who have received PACE support, where it is possible to do so. My officials will continue to liaise with PACE Partners during 2018/19 to monitor the demand for PACE and the scale, nature and quality of PACE services to help inform the future development and delivery of PACE support.

41. As the lead delivery partner for PACE, SDS should continue to work with the Scottish Government and PACE Partners to identify ways to increase the 'reach' of PACE activity and support for individuals facing redundancy situations. SDS will also be expected to contribute to any taskforces/bodies that are set up in response to economic shocks.

42. Linked to this, SDS should continue to deliver the **Transition Training Fund** (TTF), providing support to those who face losing their jobs in the oil and gas sector to transition into other roles in the sector or other energy and manufacturing opportunities. With funding

of £12m over three years (2016-2019), TTF offers grants to individuals to support redeployment through retraining or further education, procured training and provide support to special projects.

43. I also expect SDS to continue supporting redundant Modern Apprentices back into an apprenticeship or alternative positive opportunity. As part of this, SDS will continue to manage the **Adopt an Apprentice** initiative, offering £2,000 to employers who take on redundant apprentices, rising to £5,000 for employers taking on a redundant apprentice in the oil and gas sector.

SG Strategic priority
FAIR WORK: Support employers to grow, through the promotion of business models that encourage the creation of sustainable and productive jobs.

SDS Outcome
Employers have high performing, highly productive, fair and equal workplaces

Employer engagement

44. At a strategic level, engaging with employers remains critical in driving fundamental change in our skills system. We expect SDS to contribute to this through the Scottish Apprenticeship Advisory Board (SAAB), offering full support for its administrative structures.

45. With the support and guidance of SAAB, we look to SDS to engage with employers to promote the importance of, and manage demand for the recruitment of apprentices.

46. As part of this, we expect SDS to continue to assist us in articulating a strong case around the benefits of employing and developing young people – informing the choices they make, preparing them for the workplace and supporting them into work.   I expect SDS to continue to work with my officials to promote **Investors in Young People** (IiYP) and to contribute to the on-going work of the industry-led DYW Regional and National Groups to ensure the involvement of employers in shaping education.

47. We anticipate that **Marketplace**, the online digital platform to further encourage and improve engagement between employers and education, will be rolled out across DYW Regional Groups to increase the number of schools that are actively engaging with employers. Through direct technical improvement of the platform, provision of skills investment planning data and national LMI, you will support continuing development of this platform. In addition to the development of Marketplace, SDS should work together with DYW regional groups and Founders 4 Schools to develop a joined-up approach to reporting across both of the systems.

48. I also expect SDS to raise awareness of the financial incentives and advisory help available to companies to invest in the recruitment and development of young people, including HM Forces Early Service Leavers. I ask SDS to place emphasis on the benefits of recruiting and supporting a **diverse workforce**, articulating the case for employing and developing young people with the greatest barriers to employment, and raising awareness of the available support. As part of this, SDS should raise the profile of the **Carer Positive** scheme with employers to increase awareness of the benefits of recruiting a young carer.

49. As well as engaging with employers to determine industry skills needs, SDS also has a key role in helping employers meet their more immediate skills and training needs. To support this, SDS should continue to work with Re:markable (previously Investors in People Scotland) to deliver the **Skills for Growth Programme**.

50. Building on the recommendations of the Fair Work Convention, I ask that SDS works with partners to develop the evidence base on fair work to inform policy and practice, and uses its relationships with businesses and wider organisations, and its own role as an exemplar, to promote and enhance better working practices in Scotland, as set out in the Fair Work Framework, thereby supporting inclusive and sustainable economic growth. I ask that SDS applies Fair Work principles outlined in the Fair Work Framework, within its own organisation and with its own staff. This should also include active promotion of the **Living Wage** and **Scottish Business Pledge**.

51. Together with SE, HIE and other partners, SDS should develop a joint improvement programme to deliver a cohesive system of business support across the agencies and key partners (including innovation, exporting, skills) differentiated across regions.

52. To support your engagement with employers, I ask that you continue to maintain **Our Skillsforce** as the digital channel for provision of advice and information to employers on the support available from SDS and partners. Alongside this, I also ask SDS to continue collaborating with Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Business Gateway to develop a shared CRM to support alignment of your activity. I encourage SDS to work with my officials and partners on the Digital Business Enablement, as detailed further in paragraph 77.

53. SDS should also provide support for account managers from the other agencies to enhance their understanding of the skills services offered through SDS.

SG strategic priority
EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES – Place equality and diversity at the very heart of SDS activity to drive forward change that will make an enduring difference

SDS Outcome
Increased equality of opportunity for all.

54. Our economic strategy hinges on the principle that sustainable economic growth and reducing long term inequalities are complementary objectives. We aim to create a society that promotes inclusive growth and provides economic opportunities through a fair and equal jobs market.

55. SDS is already demonstrating its commitment to encouraging greater levels of participation from under-represented groups in our skills programmes. Across all of the areas of SDS' work, I would like to see a continuing focus on tackling inequality and improving access to its programmes.

56. Your Equalities Action Plan (EAP) for Modern Apprenticeships in Scotland, published in 2015, set out a series of actions and targets. Progress is already being achieved in some areas, and I expect SDS to continue monitoring and reporting on progress against the EAP and against the outcomes identified in your Equality and Diversity Mainstreaming Report[1].

57. I recognise that some of the equality challenges identified in the EAP reflects deep seated issues in the labour market and wider society and that it will take time to achieve significant change. However, I also believe that the MA and wider work-based learning programme has a key contribution to make in achieving that change.

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[1] In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty contained within the Equality Act 2010

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

58. SDS should also continue to collaborate with the SFC, Education Scotland and other strategic partners in delivering respective gender action plans to achieve the recommendations of DYW relating to gender imbalance in apprenticeships and colleges.

59. SDS also has a significant contribution to make in tackling inequality:

- Fairer Scotland for Disabled People Delivery Plan – This government has a stated ambition of halving the disability employment gap and I would expect SDS to contribute to the delivery of this through the Fairer Scotland for Disabled People Delivery Plan and the SDS Modern Apprenticeship Equality Action Plan.

- I ask you to continue to take into account related government initiatives, including in relation to the Race Equality Framework, Race Equality Action Plan.

- As a Statutory Community Justice partner, I expect SDS to continue to work closely with the other partners to promote and communicate better understanding of, and access to, our existing services for **those individuals going through the criminal justice system or with an offending history**, to shape and support the delivery of the new model for community justice in all Local Authority areas.

- We are committed to improving the education and employment outcomes of those with **experience of the care system**. I am encouraged by the commitments in your Corporate Parenting Plan and expect you to report on progress for the period 2015-18 and publish a new 2018-2021 plan during the year.

- You have been recognised as a **Carer Positive** Engaged Employer and should consider how best to promote the benefits of recruiting Young Carers under the Carer Positive scheme across the breadth of SDS activity

- I also expect you to continue to respond to the recommendations of the Scottish Veterans Commissioner in addressing the particular needs of **ex-service men and women**, when seeking to transition from Service to civilian life to gain a fulfilling second career and for wider support in getting veterans into work.

- I ask SDS to work with individuals and employers to address employment inequalities, discrimination and barriers. This includes working in partnership with Government and other agencies to ensure that employment opportunities for women and people from ethnic minority backgrounds are increased, the causes of pay gaps are tackled and progress is made towards reducing, by at least half, the employment gap between disabled people and the rest of the working age population.

- We welcome SDS supporting the aims of Scotland's Energy Efficiency Programme (SEEP) through participation in its skills short life working group and we will work with SDS to build on this and take forward actions for its implementation. This working group is specifically looking at the skills, capacity and quality assurance requirements of SEEP in the short, medium and longer term.

- SDS should also consider the recommendations stemming from the British Sign Language National Plan 2017-23 with regard to the accessibility of SDS services.

SG strategic priority
HIGH EMPLOYMENT AND LOW UNEMPLOYMENT: Delivering against the devolution of contracted employment support to provide an integrated and aligned system, which provides equality of opportunity to access work and coordinated support to ensure everyone is able to maximise their potential

SDS Outcomes

People have the right skills and confidence to secure good work, progress in their careers and achieve their potential

Increased equality of opportunity for all.

<u>Employability support</u>

60. SDS has worked collaboratively with SG officials and providers to develop the policy and delivery model for the transitional Work Able Scotland (WAS) programme, for individuals with a health condition, who want to work, but require support to move into sustained employment.

61. During 2018/19 SDS focus should move to managing the remaining customers through the service, working with Providers in order to convert starts into job outcomes, whilst continuing to record and share performance and outcome data in line with the reporting requirements agreed by the WAS Delivery Assurance Group. SDS should also work with my officials to support the joint evaluation of the transitional employability service.

62. Building on the expanded reach of its career services, SDS plays a critical role in supporting the further development of employability skills for those who need additional support to make successful transitions in their learner and employee journey. The training programmes managed by SDS make an important contribution to aligning individual aspirations with the needs of employers and the wider economy:

- The **Employability Fund** - through its contracted providers SDS will deliver 9,000 training starts for unemployed people of all ages in 2018/19, commissioned with local partners to align customer need with local labour market demand.
- The **Certificate of Work Readiness** – I encourage SDS to continue working with employers, training providers and other partners to increase the uptake of CWR as a positive route for young people to demonstrate readiness for starting work. I would also encourage SDS to consider the suitability of further development of the CWR.
- The **National Third Sector Fund** – I expect SDS to continue to work with third sector and social enterprises in Scotland to develop and deliver the Social Enterprise and Third Sector Challenge Fund. I expect SDS to ensure that the support offered through this fund adds value to existing interventions and maximises the opportunities available through ESF.
- **SERI** – I ask SDS to continue to work with local authorities in the administration and delivery of Scotland's Employer Recruitment Incentive (SERI), offering support to up to 550 individuals, with the greatest barriers to employment, to obtain and remain in sustainable employment (including MAs).
- **Open Doors** – If appropriate I ask SDS to continue to support the delivery of in-work support for the most disadvantaged that may be offered by the Open Doors Consortium. Fair Work and Skills officials will continue to work with Open Doors and will seek my approval before any grant offer is issued. If a grant relationship is established transfers of the agreed level of finance will be agreed separately.
- **Individual Training Accounts** - provide a flexible training option for those who are unemployed and for those in low paid, low skilled jobs, helping to address in-work poverty. In the year ahead I expect SDS to support up to 18,500 new training places

and to review programme outcomes in line with a commitment to continuous improvement in programme delivery.

- The Scottish Government is placing a renewed focus on adult literacy and numeracy. To support this, I ask that SDS maintains the current '**Big Plus**' presence on My World of Work and also works with my officials to contribute to their thinking around future campaigns

SG Strategic priority
Collaborative Working: An enhanced culture of collaborative working with enterprise and skills agencies and other stakeholders.

SDS Outcome
SDS works alongside partners and others to achieve the Scottish Government's expectation of hard alignment across the enterprise and skills agencies.

Relationships with other partners

63. I look to SDS to continue to work with other stakeholders including local authorities, colleges and other training providers. Where possible, SDS should draw on other enterprise and skills agencies' expertise and networks to achieve more productive relationships.

64. In developing and delivering the services described in this letter, SDS works with a wide range of partners locally, regionally and nationally and, many of which have been referenced earlier. Closer partnership working is critical to delivering better and more cost-effective services and I welcome SDS' continued commitment to such an approach, as set out in your Corporate Plan.

65. Operationally, I expect SDS as a named statutory partner in community planning to continue to work closely with Community Planning Partnerships[2] in the development and delivery of their collaboratively agreed Local Outcomes Improvement Plans and locality plans and SFC for college outcome agreements, in co-commissioning the Employability Fund and in the delivery of SERI and other partners who are able to assist them in improving outcomes and reducing inequalities. SDS should make use of the opportunities afforded by collaborative working with Community Planning Partnerships to pursue its own outcome responsibilities, and in how it reflects collaboratively agreed priorities in its own work.

66. In delivering CIAG, SDS should also continue working closely with schools, teachers, local authorities and Education Scotland and via the Curriculum for Excellence Management Board to implement our DYW recommendations in schools and should help develop and be responsive to output from the 15-24 Learner Journey Review in relation to CIAG. As noted earlier, I also expect SDS to collaborate with community justice partners, corporate parents and other stakeholders to drive improvement and better outcomes for groups with identified disadvantage.

SG Strategic priority
High performing public body: SDS operates as a highly effective public body working collaboratively with others to maximise its impact on individuals, society and the economy

SDS Outcome
SDS is an employer of choice, an exemplar of fair work and internationally recognised for excellence, innovation and customer-focus

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[2] In line with statutory community planning duties under Part 2 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015

67. To provide the planning, data and analytical support the new Strategic Board will need, a new analytical unit will function as part of a wider, distributed system that will include agency boards, regional partnerships and others. I expect SDS to be supportive of exploring options to contribute to the staffing of this unit. Through the Analytical Co-ordination Group, SDS is already contributing effectively to the unit's initial work plan and I ask SDS to continue working with my officials and agency colleagues to create strategic level insight, and provide planning and analytical capacity to enable the new board to deliver a strategic plan, with a single set of outcomes, and to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this plan in delivering sustainable and inclusive growth.

68. I expect SDS to be able to report on its delivery and programme outcomes, across all of its activities, including the EAP commitments stemming from the Youth Employment Strategy, and in doing so, to demonstrate alignment with and progress against relevant performance frameworks, including for the purposes of the Strategic Board.

69. I also expect SDS to continue **managing data and statistics** in line with guidance for official statistics, providing continued assurance to the public on the robustness of programme data. This will include continued collaboration with my officials, when publishing statistics on work-based learning and employability programmes and the Participation Measure.

70. As part of its data management processes, SDS should aim for **continuous improvement** in reporting in key areas. SDS should also continue to deliver high level public reporting of TTF.

71. The Scottish Government values **high quality and wide-ranging research** conducted, and feedback gathered, by SDS about the services they deliver. Within the context of the analytical work stream described above, I ask SDS to continue a programme of customer research and project evaluation, sharing these findings as appropriate with Scottish Government and other partners, to inform improvements in service delivery.

72. SDS should also continue its joint work with my officials to secure HMRC data to progress the long term educational outcomes project (LEO) and implement the Apprenticeships Long Term Outcomes (ALTO) framework, both of which will provide important insights for the learner journey review and the skills alignment model.

73. In addition, I encourage SDS to work with the recently established Centre for Work Based Learning to develop new programmes of research to support the development and delivery of high quality work-based learning and to challenge current thinking, perceptions and attitudes of individuals, parents, teachers and employers. I understand that research will take place across four identified streams of activity:

- **Futures**: understanding the skills, knowledge and capability required by industry and the labour market of the future.
- **Impact**: measuring the impact of apprenticeships on the economy and society.
- **Learner Journey**: designing and building an effective work-based learning system.
- **Influencing change**: engaging and changing the system for learners and employers by working with a broad range of stakeholders, and Scottish Government policy makers.

74. In close partnership with Education Scotland, you should continue to develop and improve quality assurance processes in relation to the quality of the off-the-job training elements of MAs and the delivery of CIAG services. I expect these quality assurance mechanisms to be robust, fit for purpose and proportionate. They should ensure value for money and clearly inform and support continuous service improvement, both by SDS and, where appropriate, by other partners involved in the overall delivery of MAs and CIAG.

2018 Year of Young People

75. In line with the Aims and Objectives of the 2018 Year of Young People, SDS should actively seek to work in partnership with other partners, including schools, teachers, local authorities, Youth Organisations, Education Scotland and young people themselves to ensure young people have a platform to have their views heard and acted upon, and that they will have a key role in the development and delivery of activities ensuring an inclusive approach is taken throughout the Year and beyond, creating a lasting legacy

Leaders, Innovators and Exemplar Employers

76. Ministers have been clear that public bodies should lead the way in Fair Work, ensuring access to work that offers effective voice, opportunity, respect, fulfilment and security of employment. SDS is an accredited Living Wage (LW) employer and I ask you to build on this by encouraging the employers you engage with to become LW accredited employers. I welcome the emphasis on this in SDS' Corporate Plan. I also expect SDS to maintain its accreditation as both a Living Wage employer and an Investor in Young People and improve and reinforce equality and diversity among Board Members[3].

Digital Enablement

77. I ask SDS to continue managing and developing the shared Enterprise IS service between SDS, HIE and SE, ensuring that these agencies have access to the digital technology that supports effective customer delivery and delivers the best possible information solutions that support performance management and decision-taking. This type of shared service is critical to achieving the aims of the enterprise and skills review. Areas of focus should include the joint employer CRM system and continued collaboration and alignment of employer-facing digital services, with delivery of a web service during 2018/19.

78. SDS should continue to explore shared services with existing partners and should investigate and develop new public sector partnerships.

79. Digital transformation and enablement continues to influence how we deliver public services. We ask SDS to continue to develop and integrate customer-responsive systems across its operations – internally and for customer facing services. This approach works to understand user requirements and provide them with appropriate information to meet their needs, making services more user-specific friendly.

80. With an expanding digital offer and greater reliance on digital networks, it is important that our public agencies have effective cyber resilience measures in place. Digital networks make it possible to provide innovative and integrated public services that deliver to those in most need and promote growth. It is, however, crucial that cyber risk is planned and budgeted for when providing these services. This will help to keep citizens confident in accessing digital public services. In November 2017, we published our Public Sector Action

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[3] In line with The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2016

Plan, following the release of our Cyber Resilience Strategy for Scotland[4] in 2015. We ask that SDS take appropriate steps to implement the plan, in line with the timelines set.

Carbon Management

81. We expect our public bodies to lead by example in combating climate change and making a valuable contribution towards achieving our ambitious emission reduction target of 80% by 2050. There is now a duty, under sections 46 and 96 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, for public bodies to submit annual reports on compliance with climate change duties.

Spending Review

82. We will continue to work with SDS during the 2018/19 spending review and in subsequent years, liaising with the Executive Team when appropriate.

83. We continue to expect all public bodies to deliver efficiency savings, to be reinvested back into the business, of at least 3% during 2018/19, in line with our efficiency targets and the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010).

European Funding

84. In collaboration with the SFC and other partners, I expect SDS to continue to maximise the opportunities available through the current European Funding programme, paying particular attention to your responsibility to comply with regulations and audit procedures.

85. Between April 2018 and March 2019 SDS will continue to manage its European Social Fund (ESF) programme. SDS is one of two lead partners (the other SFC) funded to deliver a Strategic Intervention (SI) for the Developing Scotland's Workforce (DSW) priority of the ESF programme. The SDS SI supports a programme of activity to develop and expand delivery of the new Foundation and Graduate Apprenticeships and deliver and expand Modern Apprenticeships. This programme of work is being delivered pan Scotland and designed to deliver higher level skills (EC ISCED Level 3 and above) to meet employer national and regional demand aligned to Scotland's Smart Specialisation sectors and key growth sectors in Scotland.

JOHN SWINNEY
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

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[4] Safe, Secure and Prosperous: A Cyber Resilience Strategy for Scotland: http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0048/00489206.pdf

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Jamie Hepburn, Minister for Employability and Training
Keith Brown, Cabinet Secretary for the Economy, Jobs and Fair Work
Paul Wheelhouse, Minister for Business, Innovation and Energy
James Dornan, Convener to the Education and Skills Committee
Roz Thomson, Clerk to the Education and Skills Committee
Gordon Lindhurst, Convener to the Economy, Jobs and Fair Work Committee
Alison Walker, Clerk to the Economy, Jobs and Fair Work Committee,
Nora Senior – Chair, Enterprise & Skills Strategic Board
COSLA: Sally Loudon, Chief Executive
SE: Paul Lewis, Chief Executive (Acting); Bob Keiller, Chair
HIE: Charlotte Wright, Chief Executive; Lorne Crerar, Chair
SFC: Dr John Kemp, Chief Executive (Acting); Mike Cantlay, Chair
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Colleges Scotland: Shona Struthers, Chief Executive
STUC: Grahame Smith, Secretary General
SCVO: Anna Fowlie, Chief Executive
Education Scotland: Gayle Gorman, Chief Executive
SQA: Dr Janet Brown, Chief Executive
SCQF: Aileen Ponton, Chief Executive
Scottish Training Federation: Stuart McKenna, Chief Executive; Stuart Leitch, Chair
Federation of Small Businesses: Andy Willox OBE, Scottish Policy Convener
CBI – Scotland: Tracy Black, Director for Scotland
ADES: Maureen McKenna President; John Stodter General Secretary
Visit Scotland: Malcolm Roughead, Chief Executive; Lord Thurso, Chair
Russel Griggs, Chair, South of Scotland Economic Partnership

Issue	Further information	Basis of request
Community Planning	We expect those public bodies that will be subject to statutory community planning duties under Part 2 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 to work with other partner bodies and communities within **Community Planning Partnerships** to identify, resource and manage effective delivery of shared priority outcomes for their localities. Other public bodies should consider and take reasonable steps to pursue opportunities for partnership working with other bodies, including local authorities, wherever this can support your respective business objectives.	Page 13 of the PfG; the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015
Digital services	Digital technology is a powerful enabler for improving public services and driving down the costs of delivery. We expect public bodies to deliver against Scotland's Digital Future: Delivery of Public Services by ensuring that digital transformation is embedded within your business strategy and corporate plan. In developing your digital public services, you should consider opportunities to support or benefit from the development of Scotland's national digital ecosystem. If you wish to assess the digital maturity of your organisation, develop business cases/procurements for digital services, or source expert digital staff, please contact the Central Government Digital Transformation Service. Such business change can be challenging and we therefore expect all bodies to make effective use of the Central Government ICT Project and Programme Assurance Framework.	Page 28 of the PfG; Scotland's Digital Future: Delivery of Public Services
Diversity on boards	Most public bodies with boards have signed up to the commitment – *50:50 by 2020* – to improve diversity on boards including working towards gender balance on boards by 2020. As of April 2017 listed public authorities are required to publish the gender composition of their boards and to produce succession plans to increase the diversity of their boards by virtue of The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2016. Guidance to support listed public authorities to implement the new duty will be developed by the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the Scottish Government. In addition, the new regulations also amend the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 by lowering the threshold for a listed public authority to report their gender pay gap and publish equal statements etc. from those authorities with more than 150 employees to those with more than 20 employees. You are encouraged to take positive action to support and enable greater diversity of Ministerial appointments, through: • taking an active role in succession planning, and providing advice to Ministers about the board's membership needs, both for new and re-appointments; • ensuring that suggested criteria for the selection of new board members meet the needs of the body, are unbiased and are not unnecessarily restrictive; • taking action both during and between board member recruitment exercises to attract the broadest range of candidates to the work of the board; • providing mentoring, shadowing and training opportunities for potential board members; and • considering the role of nominations committees.	Page 35 of the PfG
Equality	Public bodies are reminded of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) contained within the Equality Act 2010. Those bodies that are listed within the Scottish specific equality duties are legally required to: • report on progress in mainstreaming the PSED in to the main business of the organisation; • set, every 4 years, equality outcomes and report on progress every 2 years. We would expect to see within the business plans of the listed bodies clear links to their equality outcomes; • impact assess new and revised policies and practices as well as making	Public Sector Equality Duty within the Equality Act 2010 and the Scottish specific equality duties

	arrangements for reviewing existing policies and practices; • gather and use and publish employee information; • publish gender gap information (race and disability also from 2017) and an equal pay statement; and • consider adding equality award criteria and contract considerations into procurement exercises.	
Living Wage	Public bodies are encouraged to become **Accredited Living Wage Employers**, paying the **Living Wage** to their employees and people involved in delivering public contracts. We published **statutory guidance** for public bodies on how workforce-related matters, including the Living Wage, may be taken into account in public procurement processes.	Page 37 of the PfG
Young Workforce	You have a vital role to play in working with us to implement the Scottish Government's youth employment strategy, Developing the Young Workforce, for example, by recruiting and training young people, working towards achieving the Investors in Young People gold standard and engaging with the education system to provide development opportunities for young people. Development of procurement policies that encourage more employers to contribute to the development of Scotland's young people.	Cabinet Secretary for Fair Work, Skills and Training's letter to public bodies of 15 December 2014
Fair work	You will know that the Government previously commissioned the **Working Together Review** to examine progressive workplace policies and published a **formal response** in August 2015 We asked you to have regard to that report and the recommendation that public bodies should report publicly on their approach to industrial relations and its impact on workplace and workforce matters. A key part of the response was the establishment of the independent **Fair Work Convention**, who published their blueprint for fair work in Scotland in March 2016.	Page 37 of the PfG; Working Together Review: Progressive Workplace Policies in Scotland
Low Carbon sector and combating climate change	We look to all public bodies to help realise the significant opportunity for growing the **low carbon sector** both through leadership and directly through reduction of energy demand and integration of low carbon and renewable heat and energy technologies across estates. More generally, we expect our public bodies to lead by example in **combating climate change** and making a valuable contribution towards achieving our ambitious emission reduction target of 80% by 2050. 2017/18 will mark the third year of mandatory reporting from 180 listed public bodies on compliance with climate change duties. The mandatory reports for 2017/18 are due to be submitted to SG by 30 Nov 2018. Reporting advice, tools, guidance and training are available from the Sustainable Scotland Network (SSN).	Pages 30-31 of the PfG; policy proposal to bring into force a public body duties reporting requirement under sections 46 and 96 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009
Efficiency	Although not explicitly mentioned in the Programme for Government, **we continue to expect every public body to deliver efficiency savings of at least 3% per annum** and to report publicly on the actions undertaken and the results achieved.	Efficient Government section of SG website

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