West College Scotland
LEARNING, TEACHING AND QUALITY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 25 May 2022 via the Teams link circulated by the Secretary

AGENDA

General Business

1. Apologies
2. Declarations of Interests
3. Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 23 February 2022   Enclosed
    .1 Actions from the minutes   Enclosed

4. Matters arising from the Minutes
    (and not otherwise on the agenda)

Main Items for Discussion and/or Approval

5. Students Association Report   Verbal Report   AMcG

6. Student PIs 2020-21   Paper 6   CMac

7. Student Experience and Feedback 2021-22   Verbal Report   CMac

8. Corporate Parenting   Paper 8   IFS

9. Student Safeguarding and Wellbeing   Paper 9   IFS

10. Student Credit Activity 2021-22 & predictions 22-23   Paper 10   StG

11. Reappointment of Co-opted member   Paper 11   MN

12. Internal Audit Report – Digital Strategy   Paper 12   StG

13. Internal Audit Report – Student Recruitment Paper 13   StG

Items for Information

14. ELT Update   Paper 14   StG

15. Quality Standards Committee Minutes   Paper 15   CMac

16. Any Other Business
    a) LTQC meeting dates for 2022/23   Paper 16a   MN

17. Date Next Meeting:
    Wednesday 26 October 2022 at 4pm

Minutes: Wednesday 23 February 2022.

Present: Gordon Hunt (in the Chair), Liz Connolly, Fiona McKerrell, Ruth Binks, Abbie McGrath, Mark Gillan, Mark Hamilton.

Attending: Stephanie Graham (Vice Principal Educational Leadership), Iain Forster-Smith (Director of Student Services and Communities), Jackie McLellan (Head of Care), Sara Rae (Assistant Principal Enterprise and Skills), Nathan Tyler (Director of Communications, Policy and Engagement), Shirley Gordon (Secretary to the Board).

Apologies: Mark Newlands, Waiyin Hatton (Chair of the Board).

LM454   WELCOME
The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies.

LM455   DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS
The standing declarations of interests of members, as available on the Register of Interests on the College website, were noted as current. There were no specific interests declared with regard to the items on the agenda for the meeting.

LM456   MINUTES
The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 8 December 2021 were approved.

LM457   ACTIONS FROM THE MINUTES
The Committee noted the actions from the minutes, and it was agreed those completed could now be removed.

LM458   MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES
There were no matters arising not otherwise covered on the agenda.

LM459   STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (SA) UPDATE
Abbie McGrath (SA President) outlined the varied workload of the Students Association over recent months particularly in liaison with students, lecturers / guidance lecturers and the College Executive and highlighted campaigns and events coming up later in 2022. She reported that students were enjoying attending College campuses since the pandemic restrictions had eased.

The Committee commended the SA for its proactive approach and planning of such an exciting range of activities. In relation to National Walking Month in May 2022 and the campaign for students to walk 5k a day for 30 days, it was suggested that staff may also enjoy participating and Ms McGrath would liaise directly with Nathan Tyler about advertising this to staff to join in and support.

The Chair thanked the Students Association President for progressing the work of the Association and the update was noted.

LM460   WCS CARE ACADEMY
Jackie McLellan delivered a presentation outlining the work of the College Care Academy. She addressed the current staffing recruitment and retention challenges faced by the care sector and summarised the variety of courses (full-time, part-time, distance learning and work-based qualifications) that the Care Academy offered. All were designed to enable people to either gain employment in the care sector or develop their current skills, knowledge, and practice.

Ms McLellen led the Committee through the detail of the Apprenticeship Pathways, Care Skills Passport and Leading Care Awards as provided from both the West Dunbartonshire Care Academy and Inverclyde West Care Academy and she noted the student numbers available on each as well as the portfolio of skills / knowledge / course content covered (some mandatory, some optional).

In developing this approach, the Development Funding team had worked with several other colleges and local partners particularly in both Local Authority areas. This had been hugely beneficial in building relationships and in the development of bespoke courses including flexible delivery models, courses aligned to organisations' induction programmes and exploring opportunities of guaranteed job interviews for 6 months.

The Committee was delighted to note the innovative approach taken in the delivery of the courses within the Care Academy and the following points were noted:

- The availability of the courses / opportunities was being widely advertised and the College Communications Team was widening its campaign to attract and retain students. As well as that advertising, information sessions had been scheduled.
- The courses were ready to be accessed and all materials had been finalised.
- Although the project was complex with lots of moving parts, the College had been ambitious to maximise the needs of local communities, partners, and the wider region. As a result of that, excellent partnership working had been created and a great platform built on which to grow.
- The project was aligned to the College's strategic values and direction and gave visibility to its commitment to help support communities, local organisations, and the care sector as a whole.

The Committee thanked Jackie for the update and considered it to be an exciting ambitious project that challenged and opened new possibilities for different ways of teaching and working creating opportunities for students and staff to take ownership over their working in ways that had not been possible before.

The Learning Teaching and Quality Committee noted and discussed the delivery of the College Care Academy.

LM461 CURRICULUM STRATEGY PROGRESS UPDATE
The Vice Principal Educational Leadership provided a high-level summary of progress to date on the objectives of the 2021-26 Curriculum Strategy.

Ms Graham led the Committee through the Strategy's key objectives explaining that these were embedded in the autumn Curriculum Planning and Review process, requiring individual curriculum sectors to assess their curriculum against the Strategy's objectives and identify their actions to contribute to the Strategy overall. Integrating into the CPR process that way helped ensure awareness and understanding of the Strategy direction.

The Committee noted that the Educational Leadership Team had produced an Action Plan for year one which had been added to Pentana to enable ongoing monitoring and although some progress on actions had been made, the context in the College had delayed progress and delivery dates had been adjusted accordingly.

The Committee discussed the context impacting on Strategy delivery to date and members were impressed with the key actions and progress made this session against key objectives. Although some initial action target dates had needed to be revised in-year, members noted that overall progress would not be impacted. Due to the timing of curriculum planning however, the Committee agreed that a strong focus needed to be

maintained to ensure the 2022-23 curriculum was developed in line with the Strategy direction.

The Committee discussed the update in detail with the following points / suggestions raised:

- The financial deficit this session (and the financial challenges for next session) were influencing curriculum decision-making and driving more efficiencies in delivery. Financial efficiency was part of the Curriculum Strategy but would take a higher priority due to the financial context of the College.
- At this point in Curriculum planning for 2022-23, more efficient delivery, better student recruitment, credit and income generation were the highest priorities. In recognition of that and ensuring quality remained a priority, the Educational Leadership Team was leading sessions focusing on high quality learning and teaching and ensuring that the fundamentals of the student experience and developing staff skills in teaching remained a focus.
- Recognition that more needed to be done in the 2022/23 curriculum in the development of more flexible and blended delivery models to ensure a more strategic planned approach to varying course start times and 'chunking' adaptations rather than as a reaction to under recruitment. Ms Graham explained "chunking" adding that the aim was to work creatively to provide guidance and support to all students to achieve a more tailored personalised approach to their learning and needs.
- Student finance availability and restrictions for part-time study would impact on some options for students to build learning from smaller chunks of learning and the sector was engaging nationally to ensure a full understanding of some of the barriers and unintended consequences of the economy and students. It was suggested that the College also liaise with its Local Authority partners particularly around any implications for students and council tax payments.
- Three meta skills were selected as a key focus for both staff and students for 2021-22 namely adapting, collaborating and critical thinking.
- A focus on the College gathering better data on all its associated course costings and any overlaps in course delivery would help understand decision-making and financial viability and sustainably going forward and the Power BI project to improve data analysis would aid decision making for the curriculum.

The Learning Teaching and Quality Committee noted and discussed the information contained within the report.

LM462   **CURRICULUM PLANNING AND OUTPUTS FROM THE CPR**
The Vice Principal Educational Leadership provided a high-level summary of the 2021 Curriculum Planning & Review (CPR) focus and outcomes.

Ms Graham explained that the annual Curriculum Planning and Review (CPR) focus was amended to bring it in line with the key objectives in the Curriculum Strategy. Documentation was completed by Sectors prior to individual November meetings led by the Educational Leadership Team with the Heads and CQLs for each Sector. She added that discussions in these meetings varied depending on the Sector and priorities. Rather than follow the same agenda for each meeting this year, the ELT decided on key topics in advance for each Sector to focus on the more critical areas for change or challenges in each curriculum.

The Committee noted the key drivers for curriculum change and common themes raised and discussed the capacity and barriers for change as well as new courses and amended curriculum with the following points / suggestions raised:

- Members were hugely impressed by the thoroughness and proactiveness in responding to changes and challenges. Course offering was continually adapted in terms of the way courses were taught and assessed. There had been increased staff collaboration due to Covid in both delivery and assessment and the Covid adaptations to assessment processes had helped focus staff on the key course aims. Courses had been adapted internally to better suit student needs and there was a clear skills development focus, although still work to do to make Meta skills more explicit for students.

- Student demand was not always in line with the SDS Regional Skills Assessments (RSA) identified job openings and low student numbers were impacting on the viability of some more specialised courses. The experience of delivering elements of courses online was enabling a cross-campus course offering in a few areas. There was further potential for more elements of courses to be delivered cross-campus, whilst practical parts were taught on separate campuses, enabling the retention of some specialist courses with lower numbers.

- As discussed earlier, progress had been made in varying course start times and offering shorter courses to build qualifications but there was still more work to do in that area. As well as recognising the need to offer courses in a more flexible way, there was also a recognition that some full-time courses may no longer suit the market and offering alternative apprentice provision may be a better option if recruitment trends were to match industry needs.

- Staff across the College would continue to support Scottish Government policy on greening of the economy in the communities that the College served. The College goal was to equip members of the workforce with the skills required for transition to net zero. The College also aimed to encourage young people into areas of work that were high-skilled, well remunerated and could reduce the environmental impacts of the industries in which they worked.

The Committee was hugely encouraged by all the innovative and creative ways that were being explored to ensure the College was being as agile and flexible as it could be to adapt to meet the challenges of the environment.

The Learning Teaching and Quality Committee noted and discussed the information contained within the report.

LM463   UPDATE FROM EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM (ELT)
The Vice Principal Educational Leadership's report updated the Committee on developments in the following key areas since the last meeting:

- Student recruitment.
- Credit generation.
- Enterprise and skills.
- Schools – including the school-college Partnerships Curriculum offer review.

The Committee discussed the update with the following points / suggestions raised:

- Members were delighted to note that the 3 applications to the UK Community Renewal Fund (CRF) had been successful (two of which had been discussed at length as minuted at LM460). Ms Graham explained that an announcement delay meant that initial project timelines outlined for delivery had to be shifted and shortened with projects now having to be delivered in 6 months with completion in June 2022. Although that would be a challenge, the College was working with all partners to achieve it and ultimately maximise benefits for local communities and the region at an economically challenging time. The Committee commended that approach.

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- Student retention from August start courses had not been good this session with an increase in students leaving FE courses before Christmas and an increase in HE compared to last session. Other Colleges were reporting a similar situation and an analysis of reasons for withdrawal showed a higher number leaving for financial reasons and for employment as well as an increase in those leaving for health reasons, including mental health.
- Sector VPs had submitted a request to the SFC to consider further credit flexibility this session and Ms Graham explained the detail of the request an outcome of which was awaited.

The report was noted.

LM464   QUALITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Committee **noted** the 18 November 2021 and 3 February 2022 minutes from the meetings of the Quality Standards Committee.

LM465   ANY OTHER BUSINESS
- No other business items were raised.
- Date of next meeting - Wednesday 25 May 2022 at 4pm.

Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee: Actions from the Minutes

Date of Meeting	Min Ref	Matter for Action	Responsible Person	Action Taken	Timescale (where applicable)
6 Oct 2021	LM433 and LM434	Add some examples of personal student stories to showcase success - suggested that links be added to the Student Performance 2020-21, Feedback and External Review report highlighting positive outcomes. To celebrate success, a community outcome summary report be done to illustrate the impacts realised locally with staff, students, communities, and businesses to give that visibility. That would be an excellent opportunity to showcase the fantastic activities within the College to support College ambitions, support the business community and meet student needs.	S Graham		Consider at a future meeting.
11 Nov 2020	LM382	**Update from Educational Leadership Team (ELT)** - in respect of the 2019/20 External Verification (EV) Unsuccessful Visits, the Assistant Principal Performance	C MacNab		Future meeting after External Verification activity has taken place – Included within the Quality themed meeting in the Autumn.

		and Skills agreed in future reports to include more detail and data about Unsuccessful Visits.			
From 9 July 2020 **FGPC**	FPM339	**Student Digital Poverty Procurement Approval Request - e**valuate by the Digital Strategy Group and feedback on its effectiveness to be provided to the Committee at a later date.	S Graham	Previously the responsibility of FGPC – but the evaluation falls under the remit of the LTQC so transferred to its Action List.	Future Meeting TBC when evaluation has taken place.

Meeting	Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee
Date	25th May 2022
Location	Via MS Teams
Title of Paper	College Performance Indicators
Presenter	Cathy MacNab
Recommendation to members	For information and discussion
Appendix Attached	None

Purpose:

To update Committee members on SFC College Sector student outcome Performance Indicators 2020-21

College Performance Indicators 2020-21 (sfc.ac.uk)

Executive Summary

The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) externally publish college sector benchmark Performance Indicator Reports based on audited submission of college internal statistical data. This enables national reporting on the success of funded students in attaining their qualification aim for an enrolled programme. The data set also provides a tool for comparing and contrasting success levels across different colleges and regions and supports sharing of practices that produce positive success outcomes for students. This paper presents a summary of the 2021-21 PIs for WCS incorporating national sector comparisons.

The COVID pandemic continued to impact on student attainment outcomes throughout 2020-21, depending on regional tiers and lockdown restrictions imposed within local areas. WCS had a high level of campus closure and restrictions, negatively impacting on large numbers of students who required practical assignments and work placement for course completion. Engagement levels remained high in most curriculum areas as staff delivered knowledge and theory elements of courses online. High proportions of students from the 10% most deprived areas in Scotland, coupled with increasing levels of mental health declarations and, at times, with the highest national pandemic levels, resulted in a delicate balancing act of supporting students in their learning journey while maintaining educational standards.

Overall, students on most courses continued to participate, despite the challenges in undertaking course activity and qualification completion. Success outcomes and student retention on FE full time and HE part time provision, exceeded sector benchmark performance. We recognise that there is room for improvement in achieving closer to sector success rates for HE full time students and some part time provision at FE level, which was significantly impacted by the pandemic conditions, notably in relation to work placement elements on courses such a Care, Construction and other practically based subjects. Partial success rates increased in some areas – while students remained engaged in college learning they did not attain the qualification aim.

Introduction

The college sector Performance Indicators (PIs) are published annually by the SFC. The 2020-21 PIs were made public on 26th April 2021 together with the National PI Tool which provides trend statistics and enables benchmarking comparisons within and across colleges.

A Technical Appendix explains how PIs are calculated and provides detail on the meaning of each of the published measures. Note: The 2020-21 AY was impacted by the ongoing COVID pandemic. Full consideration should be given to these exceptional circumstances and direct comparisons between 2019-20 and 2020-21 and earlier years should not be made without due consideration of the context.

References made to FE level outcomes are indicative of course provision up to and including SCQF Level 6, while HE refers to SCQF Level 7 and above. The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) provide an interactive framework for qualification comparative purposes across levels.

College delivery of qualifications in the context of the pandemic:

As a result of the pandemic, almost all teaching and learning moved online for much of the session 2020-21, with only small groups of vocational students on campus to undertake practical activity. Our aim was to support students to continue to engage with their learning and support students to attain their qualification aim.

WCS provided remote access to health and wellbeing support for students, rapid response digital device distribution and a wide range of CPD for teaching staff to facilitate online learning. The College Enabling Services department co-ordinated and delivered academic support online to over 1000 students.

Curriculum teams adapted assessments, modified course delivery schedules and redesigned teaching materials with the help of the Learning Innovation team. A range of online staff support resources was shared through the Virtual Learning Hub and website access to the Centre for Online Learning and Teaching (CoLT).

Performance Indicators and Analysis

1. Full Time FE (SCQF Levels 2-6)

Table 1.1. WCS Trend data

Year	Enrolled	Success	Partial Success	Withdrawn	Scotland Success
18-19	4,346	67.9%	10.5%	21.5%	69.8%
19-20	4,293	66.8%	13.0%	20.2%	72.4%
20-21	3,635	66.7%	10.5%	22.7%	72.1

- The numbers of students enrolled in 2020-21 full time FE programmes fell by 15% from the previous session. This was offset in part by an increase in some part time FE provision as a result of curriculum changes to shorter, sharper learning delivery modes.
- Our student success rate for 2021-21 remained similar to the previous session, despite continuous disruption to learning caused by the COVID pandemic. Our internal analysis indicates that this was achieved through effective and quick response to the move to online learning.
- Withdrawal rates for students on FT FE courses rose by 2.5% to 22.7%. This was 5% lower than the Scotland average figure of 27.7%.

Table 1.2. WCS FT FE student success rates sector comparison (larger regional colleges)

FE FT	Completed Successful	Partial Success	Withdrawal	Total
Dundee and Angus College	73.6%	0.1%	26.3%	2,978
Borders College	69.6%	5.4%	25.0%	817
Forth Valley College	67.9%	8.7%	23.4%	1,665
West College Scotland	66.7%	10.5%	22.7%	3,635
Newbattle College	66.0%	15.1%	18.9%	53
Glasgow Clyde College	63.9%	11.5%	24.7%	2,924
City of Glasgow	61.6%	10.7%	27.7%	2,791
SCOTLAND	61.3%	11.0%	27.7%	41,989
South Lanarkshire College	60.7%	16.3%	23.0%	1,033
West Lothain College	60.3%	9.4%	30.4%	1,107
Dumfries and Galloway College	59.0%	7.8%	33.2%	817
Ayrshire College	58.5%	10.6%	30.9%	3,225
New College Lanarkshire	58.2%	12.2%	29.5%	3,309
Glasgow Kelvin College	57.5%	11.9%	30.6%	1,864
North East Scotland College	56.7%	18.9%	24.3%	3,750
Edinburgh College	56.5%	10.6%	32.9%	3,951
Fife College	52.7%	12.0%	35.3%	3,398

2. Part Time FE (SCQF Levels 2-6)

Table 2.1 WCS Trend data

Year	Enrolled	Success	Partial Success	Withdrawn	Scotland Success
18-19	12,578	76.1%	15.6%	8.3%	79.7%
19-20	11,665	76.6%	15.3%	8.0%	78.0%
20-21	12,097	69.9%	17.9%	12.2%	76.3%

- Overall, success rates for student on part time FE programmes fell by 6.7%, compared with a sector decrease of 1.7% for the same period.
- Part Time provision is categorised by the number of hours of delivery, Outcomes are illustrated in Table 2.2. below.
- Part time courses lasting 160 up to 320 hours had the highest rates of partial success and withdrawal rates across all categories. Success rates for this category fell far short of the sector average (57.4% WCS with the Sector at 70.1%)
- Many other shorter part time courses were negatively impacted by COVID restrictions because of the practical nature of vocational content and inability to access work placement activity and will be closely monitored as campus activity returns to normal.

Table 2.2 FE PT course length comparisons

FE Part Time Course length	Enrolled	Success	Partial Success	Withdrawals	Scotland Success
under 10 hours					
2019-20	750	99.6%	0.4%	0.0%	
2020-21	1056	93.7%	6.2%	0.0%	92.7%
10 up to 40 hours					
2019-20	865	90.4%	7.7%	1.8%	
2020-21	698	93.4%	6.6%	0.0%	92.0%
40 up to 80 hours					
2019-20	2637	71.5%	19.8%	8.7%	
2020-21	1143	69.7%	19.5%	10.8%	83.9%
80 up to 160 hours					
2019-20	2738	84.2%	9.3%	6.5%	
2020-21	3610	71.7%	18.6%	9.8%	74.9%
160 up to 320 hours					
2019-20	3300	69.7%	18.3%	12.0%	
2020-21	4255	57.4%	23.1%	19.5%	70.1%
320 hours up to FT					
2019-20	1375	67.0%	24.4%	8.6%	
2020-21	1335	74.4%	13.0%	12.7%	73.1%

3. Full Time HE (SCQF Levels 7-10)

Table 3.1 WCS Trend Data

Year	Enrolled	Success	Partial Success	Withdrawn	Scotland Success
18-19	4,346	67.9%	10.5%	21.5%	69.8%
19-20	4,293	66.8%	13.0%	20.2%	72.4%
20-21	3,635	66.7%	10.5%	22.7%	72.1

- Success rates on HE Full Time programmes remained consistent with the previous session.
- Compared with the previous session 2019-20, withdrawal rates for 2021-22 increased slightly by 2.5%and partial success decreased by 2.5% to 10.5%.
- An ongoing trend of lower than sector success outcomes on HE level full-time courses has continued for 2020-21 and remains a focus for action leading to improvement.

4. Part Time HE (SCQF Levels 7-10)

Table 4.1. WCS Trend data

Year	Enrolled	Success	Partial Success	Withdrawn	Scotland Success
18-19	615	80.3%	11.2%	8.5%	78.9%
19-20	571	73.2%	19.4%	7.4%	78.2%
20-21	707	85.3%	11.5%	3.3%	81.3%

- Part Time HE success rates, at 85.3%, were 4% above sector average for 2021-22 and were 12-1% above 2019-20 when the success rate had dipped to 73.2%.
- The numbers of students retained on HE PT programmes improved. The theory content of many HE Part time courses is easier to deliver remotely, and students generally are more able to engage in independent online learning, resulting in improved success.
- Students who were impacted by lockdown in 2019-20 returned on a part time basis to successfully complete HN level qualifications in session 2020-21.

5. Outcomes for Key Groups of students

WCS strives to widen access and give people of all ages and backgrounds opportunities to improve their life chances and career prospects. Students from the 10% postcodes with the highest levels of multiple deprivation (SIMD 10) continue to have low trend rates of success in attaining their qualification, as do care experienced students in the West region. Analysis of withdrawal rates highlighted personal caring and financial pressures as key reasons for withdrawing from programmes, while it is also clear that the same pressures apply to those staying on course and trying to complete.

Table 5.1. Success rates for Key Groups of students

Success rates for Key Groups of students	2019-20	2020-21	Scotland Success
Courses 160 Hours to Full Time			
10% Most deprived postcode areas	62.2%	60.6%	67.0%
Ethnic minority	70.8%	70.9%	72.0%
Disability	60%	60.4%	65.7%
Care Experienced	47.6%	53.8%	59.6%

Table 5.2 Withdrawal rates for Key Groups of students

Withdrawal rates for Key Groups of students	2020-21	Scotland WD rate
Courses 160 Hours to Full Time		
10% Most deprived postcode areas	22.8%	24.1%
Ethnic minority	17.0%	17.8%
Disability	21.9%	22.1%
Care Experienced	24.7%	25.9%

Care Experienced Students:

The SFC Widening Access Report 15 May 2022 highlights the growing number of care-experienced students and those who are combining study with caring responsibilities. This group was specifically impacted by lockdown restrictions due to other personal commitments and financial struggles. In Scotland, 57% of students with caring responsibilities are aged 25 or over. WCS strives to widen access and give people of all ages and backgrounds opportunities to improve their life chances and career prospects.

Table 5.3. below summarises outcomes of WCS care experienced students against the national picture. We enrolled 842 care experienced students across our programmes with over half attaining their qualification aim in 2020-21. Successful outcomes were 2.7% lower than across Scotland. Our withdrawal rate was slightly lower than the national benchmark indicating that we retained student engagement with their studies, while 21.5% of those continuing their education did not complete their full qualification.

Table 5.3. Special Interest Group - Care Experienced and Age Profiles

2020-21		Enrolled	Success	Partial Success	Withdrawn
WCS	Care Experienced	842	53.8%	21.5%	24.7%
Scotland	Care Experienced	7541	56.5%	17.6%	25.9%
WCS	Age 25–40-year-olds	3574	64.6%	15.6%	19.7%
	Age 41 and Over	1573	63.6%	17.2%	19.2%
Scotland	Age 25–40-year-olds	30000	73.5%	8.7%	17.8%
	Age 41 and Over	10993	76.0%	9.1%	14.9%

6. College Actions to improve student outcomes

The College remains committed to improving student outcomes through a series of measures including

- Regular PI monitoring at sector and curriculum team level through course evaluation process (Preparing for Portfolio Review) and Curriculum Planning and Review (CPR)
- Targeting ICT support and device distribution to align to specific course and individual needs
- Supporting ongoing action planning and monitoring through developing Power BI data access
- Using Intervention and Improvement Plans (IIPs) to focus on areas where student outcomes are low
- Increasing rigour around course Approvals and Re-Approvals Procedures
- A new Corporate Parenting Plan seeks to address specific concerns around care experienced students with positive actions such as providing a named person contact for each individual and closer links with Enabling Services department staff to provide personal learning plans that support academic performance.

[End]

TITLE: **CORPORATE PARENTING ACTION PLAN 2022-25**

Background: The following information has been provided to show activity and developments in the Corporate Parenting activity and support at West College Scotland over academic year 2021/22

The report highlights:

• new West College Scotland Corporate Parenting Action Plan 2022-25

• the continued demand across student support with 726 Care Experienced students engaged with our Student Advisory team

• a further 373 students engaging with our Student Advisory team across, Young Carers, Estranged and Veterans

Action: The Committee is invited to consider the College performance, activity and development of the new Corporate Parenting Action Plan 2022–25.

Lead: Iain Forster-Smith, Assistant Principal Student Life and Skills

Date: 25 May 2022

Status: Open

Executive Summary

At West College Scotland we take great pride in supporting all our students. We are launching our new Action Plan to support our Care Experienced students. We've created this new Action Plan to guarantee that we continue to grow as a Corporate Parent while also fulfilling our legal obligations. To assure our commitment to Care Experiences students, the action plan will be evaluated and updated on a regular basis.

As a Corporate Parent the College seeks to continue to provide a safe and inclusive environment for all. We take our responsibilities as Corporate Parents very seriously, and we have the resources in place to promote and support these persons' health and wellbeing. All of this guarantees that students have every opportunity to reach their full potential and go forward in their lives.

This plan was co-designed in partnership with our Care Experienced students.

Our Care Experience students are introduced to their named contact within the Student Advisory team during application stage. As soon as it is recognised the student is Care Experience or comes under any other vulnerable category the assigned staff members makes immediate contact to ensure they have the correct help and support they need. This is to ensure that they have the right help and support before their course starts. They are guided through all application stages including any funding that they may be entitled to.

- 29% of students are from Clydebank Campus, 23% of students are from Greenock campuses, 47% of students are from Paisley campus
- For our Care Experienced students who have sought support from the Student Advisory the following data can be reported
    - Withdrawals - 155 students (21.3%)
    - Continuing study with WCS – 250 students (34%)
    - Progressing to university – 35 students (5%)
    - Referral to other agents – 99 students (14%)

As part of growing initiatives to support other groups of vulnerable groups our name contact support has been extended to the following student groups, totalling an additional 373 students receiving direct 1-2-1 support from the team:

- Young carers
- Armed forces
- Estranged

End.

Corporate Parenting Action Plan 2022-2025

WEST COLLEGE SCOTLAND

Contents

Introduction

West College Scotland is proud to be a Corporate Parent. Enhanced support arrangements are in place for anyone with lived experienced of being in care at any time in their life ('care experienced) and while it is a great privilege to work with each individual, it is also a significant responsibility which we take seriously as a College.

Our Corporate Parenting Plan outlines both existing support practice and our ambition to ensure we complete our role to the best of our abilities for our care experienced students - potential, current and in the future.

At WCS we support inclusion and opportunities for all, our College plays a key role in supporting our local communities, providing educational and training opportunities across different subject areas with full-time, part-time,

evening and distance-learning options available from access to degree level. Our curriculum supports success and progression, enabling all our students to reach their full potential.

We also work collaboratively across the tertiary education sector, industry partners, other Colleges, and Scotland's Corporate Parents to widen access and promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), guided by our EDI Statement of Fairness, Opportunity and Respect.

West College Scotland's Corporate Parenting Plan sets out how we aim to ensure everyone opportunity for thrive and have success is achieved for our care experienced students from across our region.

Challenges for Care Experienced People

Studies have shown that care experienced people are more likely to become vulnerable to a range of socio/economic disadvantages including offending behaviour and health problems which significantly reduce life chances and opportunities.

For example:

- Around 40% of young people in custody report that they have been in care however, it is widely acknowledged that this statistic is likely to be significantly understated.

- Educational outcomes for care experienced people are poor compared with their non-care experienced peers. For example, in 2019/20 64% of all school leavers had 1 or more qualification at

SCQF level 6 or better, whereas only 14% of school leavers that were care experienced in the same period had qualifications at that level.

- Care experienced young people are less likely to be in positive destinations nine months after leaving school. Figures from 2019-20 show that only 75% of school leavers that were care experienced were in positive destinations. This is compared to 92% of all school leavers.

- Care experienced young people are more likely to be unemployed nine months after leaving school. 22% of school leavers who were care experienced in 2019/20 were unemployed, compared to 7% of their non-care experienced peers.

Formal statistics on statutory homelessness state that 6% of local authority homelessness applications in Scotland between 2019-20 were from people who have been previously looked after by a local authority at some point, with 1,196 being homeless in 2019-20. This figure relies on self-declaration and does not include those who are sofa-surfing, or in unsuitable accommodation. Practitioners estimate this number could be as high as 30-50%.

The role of the College

West College Scotland is a Corporate Parent as defined by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. As Corporate Parents the College recognises we have specific responsibilities for our care experienced students during their time at college.

We must ensure that the support and opportunities provided by any parent to their children are offered by the College to students who have experienced care. Although the Act refers to care experienced people up to the age of 26, our Corporate Parent Plan is targeted at supporting all our care experienced students regardless of age.

Section 58 of the Act outlines six statutory duties for Corporate Parents which include:

- **Alert:** to be alert to matters which, or which might, adversely affect the wellbeing of a care experienced individual.

- **Assess:** to assess the needs of care experienced young people for any services or support provided.

- **Promote:** to promote the interests of this group of young people.

- **Opportunities:** to seek to provide care experienced young people with opportunities to promote their wellbeing.

- **Access:** to take appropriate action to ensure care experienced young people can access opportunities and make use of services available to them.

- **Improve:** to review, evaluate and improve our practice and procedures to Corporate Parenting.

As a Corporate Parent the College is committed to working towards the National Ambition and Vision set by the Scottish Funding Council 'for there to be no difference in the outcomes of care experienced learners' comparative to their peers'. The College promise is to provide an environment where an individual's needs are met at all stages of their student journey to enable each person to become confident, responsible and an effective member of their community. We recognise that we are unable replicate some aspects of 'family' life, but there are many steps we can take to ensure our care experienced students feel genuinely supported during their time College.

To help ensure everyone has a common understanding of what wellbeing means, The Scottish Government describe wellbeing using eight indicators. The eight wellbeing indicators are commonly referred to by their initial letters - SHANARRI. The College uses the SHANARRI indicators to ensure that our Care Experienced people at College are provided with equality of opportunity to achieve their potential, realise their talents, ambitions and become successful.

Our Care Experienced Students

West College Scotland works closely with our care experienced students and partner agencies to provide relevant, person-centred support.

We understand students find transition from school, work or unemployment stressful, but for those without family support this can be a real challenge particularly moving on from a care environment to independent living.

To support transition, we first need to identify our CE students. We also work closely with our specialist partners MCR Pathways, Quarriers, Kibble, Throughcare and Aftercare Services, Skills Development Scotland and Leaving Care Services to both support students referred by these agencies and to help us develop services and support relevant to the needs of care experienced students.

We have a named Student Advisor identified on our website who works with our partners and care experienced students to help identify transition issues.
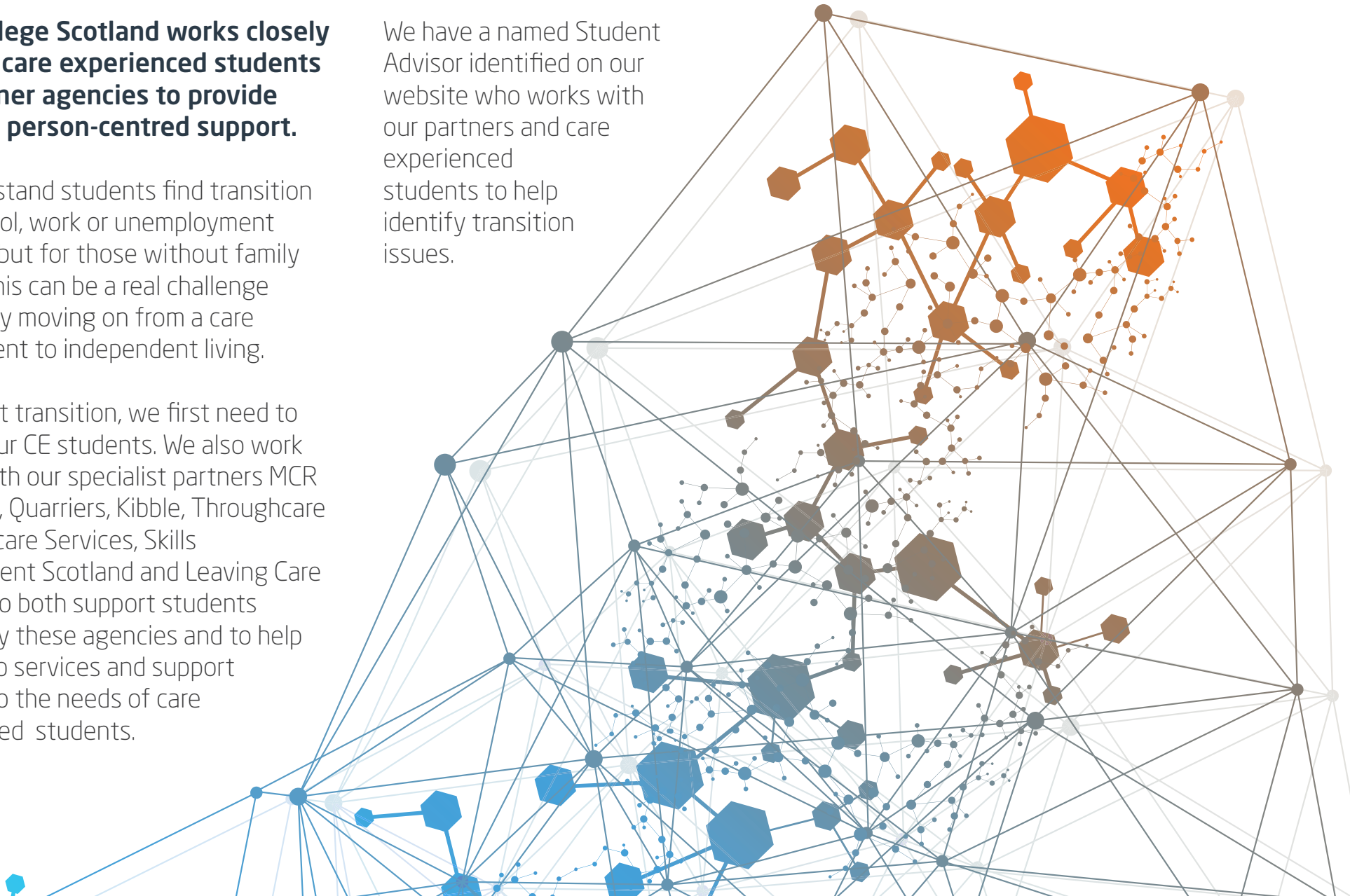
Partners

The College works closely with our partner agency and local authorities across the West Region and is represented on a number of Corporate Parent Forums which provide an opportunity to network and share good practice with other Corporate Parents.

Working closely with our local authority partners, we aim to support young vulnerable school leavers into positive destinations, including college.
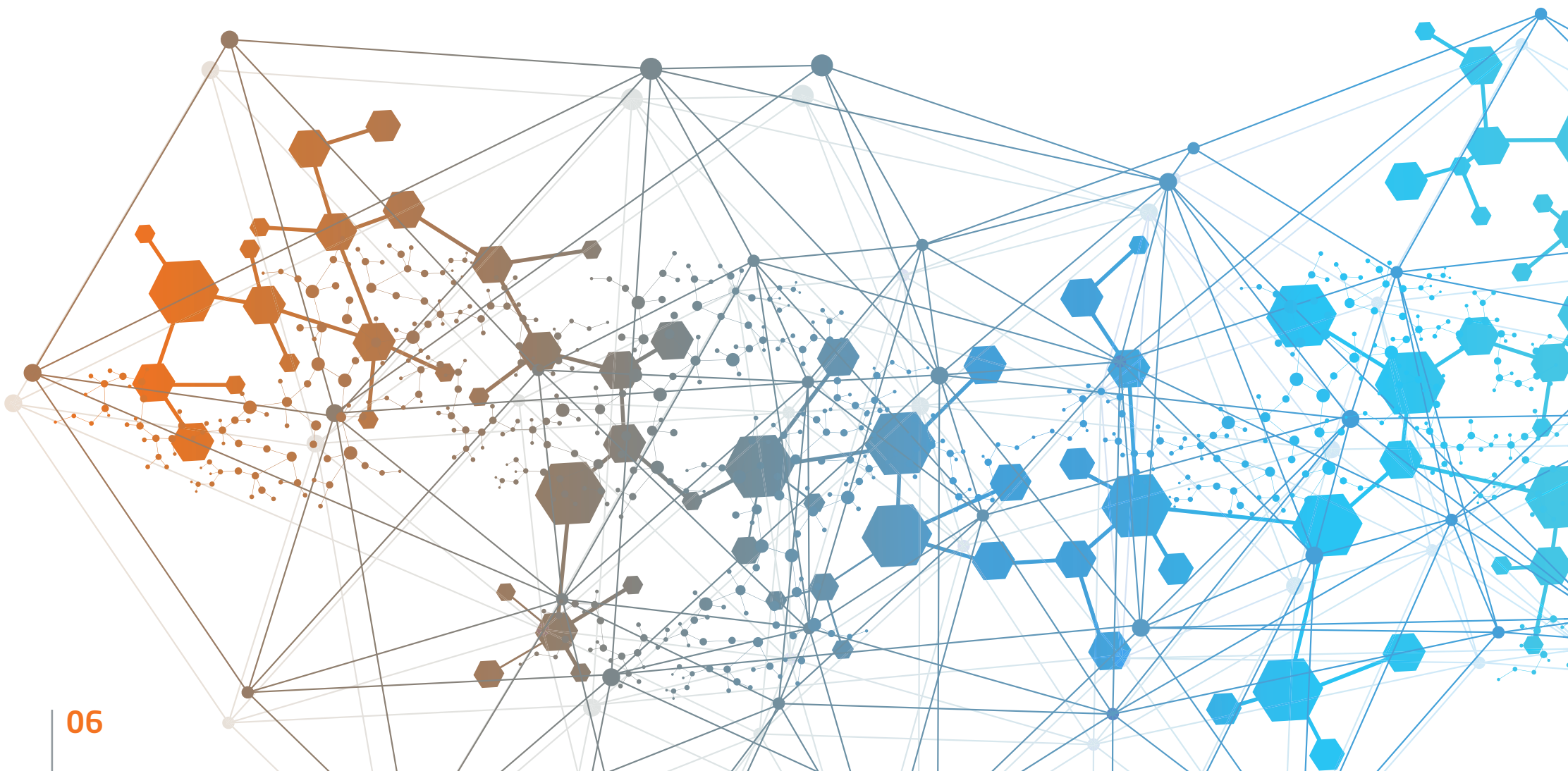
We are active participants in the West of Scotland Care FE & HE Experienced, Estranged and Carer Forum which brings named contacts for Care Experienced students at universities and colleges across west and central Scotland together.

West College Scotland contributes to the College Development Network forum for Access and Inclusion, a national College sector steering group that includes information and developments regarding Corporate Parenting.
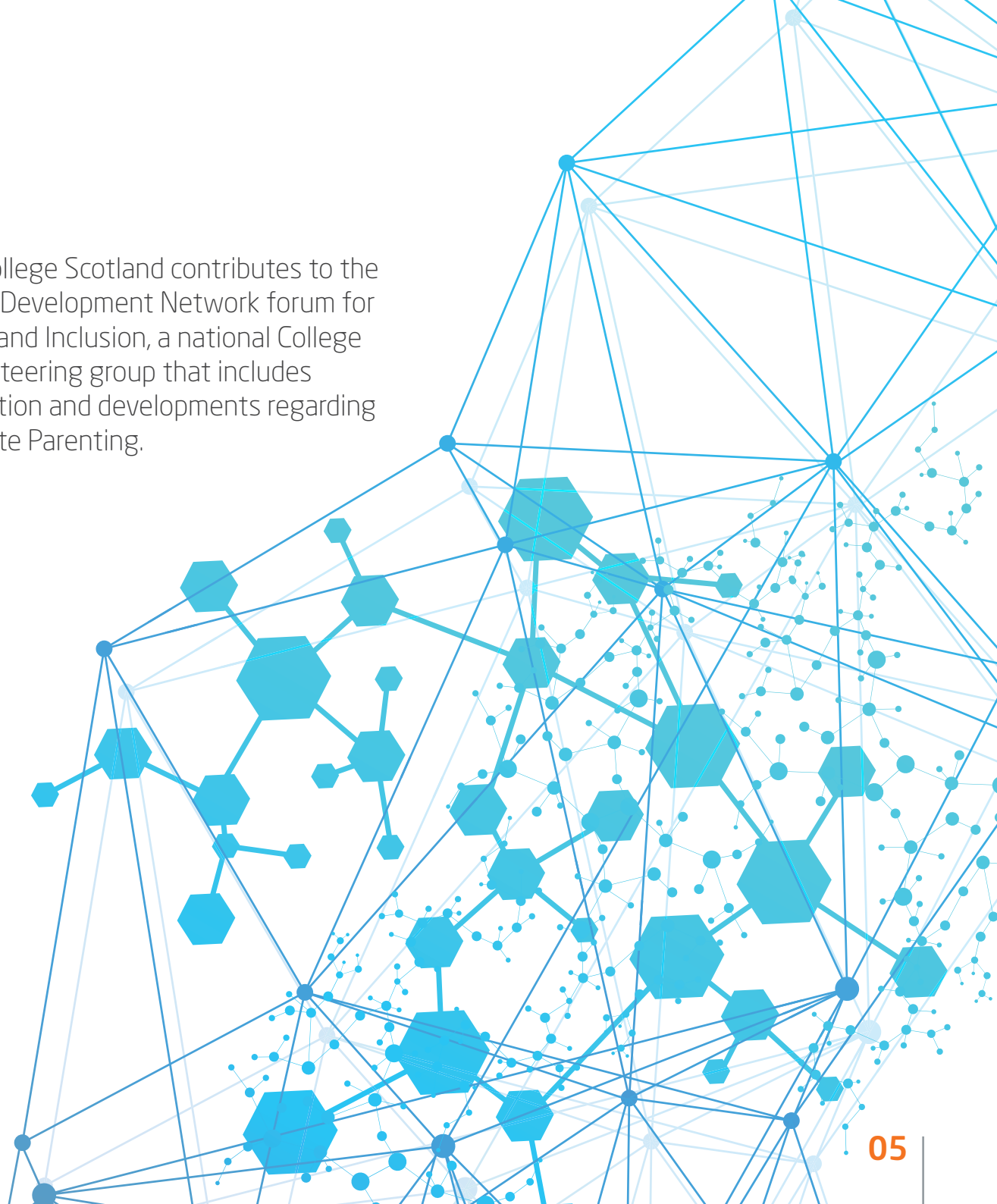
Action Plan 2022-2025

Our Action Plan was developed with our Care Experienced students. The plan focuses on Section 58 of the Children and Young People's (Scotland) Act 2014 and outlines our continued actions 2022-2025. This is a working document and is updated annually.

	1	Be alert to matters which, or which might, adversely affect the wellbeing of a Care Experienced individual.		
Point	**Aim**	**Actions**	**Lead**	**Target date**
1.1	Be alert to developments within the sector	Continued membership within and attendance at local and national groups aimed at sharing good practice in regards to care experienced students. Continue to seek guidance from relevant organisations, such as Who Cares? Scotland and CELCIS. Attend and be active in local and national organisations, boards and conferences to actively participate in discussions/decisions	Student Advisory Services Student Advisory Services/Student Life Manager / Head of Student Services	Continuous and ongoing
1.2	Raise awareness of the college role as a corporate parent across college	Introduction of a Board of Management and Senior Management Team awareness raising training – refreshed every 3 years. Introduction of mandatory online corporate parenting training module as part of all-staff integration. Completion rates are monitored and reported to LTQC annually. Deliver in-person training to front of house staff and frontline staff. Deliver in-person training to Heads of Sector and Curriculum Leads.	Organisational Development/ Assistant Principal Student Life	December 2022 then all actions are ongoing

1 Be alert to matters which, or which might, adversely affect the wellbeing of a Care Experienced individual.

Point	Aim	Actions	Lead	Target date
1.3	Identify curriculum areas with high numbers of care experienced students and provide targeted support to curriculum staff	Proactively engage with Curriculum staff to outline support routes for care experienced students where clusters exist. The Inclusive College programme will embed inclusive practice within Learning and Teaching providing tools and knowledge to effectively support care experienced students within the classroom, with increased and dedicated wrap around support in enabling services	Student Advisory Services Enabling Services	October 2022 September 2022
1.4	Increase care experienced student engagement with support services by 25%.	Engage students in Preparation for College pre-entry activities. Develop a newsletter and online materials targeted at care experienced students.	Student Advisory Services/ Students' Association	March 2023

2   To assess the needs of Care Experienced students for any services or support provided.

Point	Aim	Actions	Lead	Target date
2.1	Ensure that College internal referral procedures are clear to all staff involved in support and learning and teaching to ensure that care experienced students are provided with early and responsive support.	Priority Group Referral Procedures (includes flag at application and enrolment stage) are followed by up by Student Advisory Services. Sectors are alerted to these procedures and have access to information and resources. Creation of an annual Preparation for College event for care experienced offer holders and their carers prior to courses starting provides an opportunity to attend information groups for induction to College services; complete outstanding funding applications and enrolment forms; and engage with support services. Participant feedback will inform development of future sessions.	Admissions/ Student Advisory Services/ Enabling Services/ Sectors Student Advisory Services/ Students' Association	Annually August 2022 then ongoing
2.2	External partnership working with other CPs supports the individual student and helps develop services (including social workers, local councils, local schools and guidance teachers).	Support care experienced students to secure continuity of appropriate accommodation throughout the calendar year not only term-time and supporting care experienced students into their own tenancy. Build a strong working partnership with MCR Pathways and other supporting agencies, introducing support early in application process to engage them with services. Strengthen referral routes for school pupils working	Student Advisory Services	Annually Ongoing September 2023

2 To assess the needs of Care Experienced students for any services or support provided.

Point	Aim	Actions	Lead	Target date
2.3	The College provides professional, dedicated support for all care experienced students.	Care experienced students are provided with an enhanced rate of Bursary.	Student Funding	These elements are continuous and ongoing.
		Care experienced students have a named student advisor dedicated to their support needs. This is enhanced by partnership working with such agencies as Local Authorities, MCR Pathways and other external agents.	Student Advisory Services	
		Care experienced student attendance is tracked to identify issues and offer early support.		
		Care experienced students are directly contacted with information on additional support, services and opportunities which may be relevant to them.	Enabling Services/Skills Development Scotland	January 2023
		In AY 2022/23 care experienced students will be provided enhanced levels of careers guidance and advice using our partners to help guide and support. Numbers engaging in employability workshops will be reported as will numbers articulating to University		Annually
		Care experienced students are provided with enhanced levels of learning support.		Termly
		Report on student withdrawals who are care experienced on a term by term basis to the Educational Leadership Team (ELT)	Student Advisory Services	Ongoing
		Care experienced students are considered in development of the College's Health Working Lives Activity.	Students' Association	

3 To promote the interests of this group of students.

Point	Aim	Actions	Lead	Target date
3.1	The College is a place where the interests of care experienced students are taken fully into account	Celebrate the success of care experienced students through College communications including social media.	Marketing and Comms	Annually
		Promote key dates such as Care Week, Care Day, Care Experienced History month, Become to staff and students.	Marketing and Comms /Student Advisory Services/ Students' Association	Annually
		Approach journalism and radio departments to promote care experience related articles, and features.	Marketing and Comms /Students' Association	Annually

4

To seek to provide Care Experienced students with opportunities to promote their wellbeing.

Point	Aim	Actions	Lead	Target date
4.1	Increase number of care experienced people making a successful transition from school to college.	Analyse application data to identify schools where care experienced students apply from, to target them early with outreach support.	School Liaison Support/Student Advisory Services	May 2022 and ongoing
		Establish clear routes for transition with partner organisations to support a warm handover for care experienced students.	Student Advisory Services	Continuous and ongoing
		Increase number of offer holders engaging in Preparation for College activities to aid affiliation and increase conversion rates/early retention for this group.	Student Advisory Services	Annually
		Conversion rates are reported on annually.	Admissions/ Student Advisory Services	Annually
4.2	Support the wellbeing of care experienced students exiting the college.	Increase number of care experienced students engaging with Careers Advisor for exit support to support a positive destination.	Student Advisory Services	June 2023
		Offer financial support to those while seeking/ applying for Universal Credit.		These are ongoing and continuous.
		Work with external agents to reduce risk of care experienced Students becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).		Annually
		Report on number of withdrawn students who are care experienced and report on annually to create actions for improvement.		Annually

5 To take appropriate action to ensure Care Experienced students can access opportunities and make use of services available to them.

Point	Aim	Actions	Lead	Target date
5.1	Ensure that care experienced students are aware of local, regional and national support available.	Work with external partners to ensure a network of support is available for this group e.g. Quarriers Life Coaching initiative.	Student Advisory Services	Annually
		Continue to identify appropriate referrals for care experienced students to engage with external partners that will improve retention to care experienced students at risk of withdrawal.	Student Advisory Services	Annually
		Work with partner universities to support students moving from College to University.	Students' Association/ Student Advisory Services	Ongoing
5.2	Ensure that care experienced students are aware of and have access to local health services and entitlements.	Ensure care experienced students are registered with their local health centre and if not, signpost to nearest service.	Student Advisory Services	Annually
		Create online resources with links and signposting to various health and wellbeing services including college services.	Student Advisory Services	Annually
		Plan and develop activities, which highlight safety in relation to social media, drugs and alcohol, which may have been missed at school or from family guidance.	Student Wellbeing team	December 2022

6 Collaborate with other Corporate Parents when exercising their corporate responsibilities.

Point	Aim	Actions	Lead	Target date
6.1	Ensure that care experienced students are aware of and have access to local health services and entitlements.	Engage in feedback from partner organisations including CELCIS and Who Cares? Scotland to facilitate continuing improvement in support for this group.	Student Advisory Services	Ongoing
6.2	Provide opportunities for partner agencies to work collaboratively with the college to support either individual care experienced students or a group of care experienced people.	Provide opportunities to work with individuals or groups of students, in line with college policies and procedures. Support outreach work of partner agencies.	Student Advisory Services	Ongoing

7 To continually review, evaluate and improve our practice and procedures to Corporate Parenting

Point	Aim	Actions	Lead	Target date
7.1	Ensure college policies take account of and support the success of care experienced students.	Review the process for Equality Impact Assessment to include care-experienced individuals. Include within the EQIA guidance.	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager	December 2022
		As an employer, include information for care experienced people in recruitment to highlight support available to this group.	Human Resources	June 2023
		WCS currently has no specific widening access policy in operation within the College for special interest groups applying to mainstream programmes, consideration to be taken and a working group created to review whether we create a reserved place scheme, fast-track (priority) applications and reduced entry requirement for care experienced applicants, as well as summer schools to support transition to college and this to reflect all special interest groups.	AP Student Life and Skills/ Assistant Principal Performance and Skills/Head of Student Services/ EDI Manager/Students' Association	December 2022

# 7 To continually review, evaluate and improve our practice and procedures to Corporate Parenting

Point	Aim	Actions	Lead	Target date
7.2	Monitor and report conversation rates, retention and success indicators to ensure that Pls for this group are on track.	Report to SMT and BoM and Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Committee annually. Benchmark college performance with national average. Benchmark care experienced student performance with non care experienced student performance across a range of indicators.	Assistant Principal Student Life and Skills	Annually
7.3	Publish results	Publish the results for care-experienced students in the College Annual Report to include: % applications declaring care-experience. % success on course. % withdrawal % destinations	Assistant Principal Performance and Skills/ Assistant Principal Student Life and Skills	Annually
7.4	Engage with care experienced students to review this action plan.	Engage care experienced students in focus groups to review operational actions connected to this action plan.	Head of Quality	Annually

Monitoring and Reporting

In accordance with section 60 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act we will produce our full Corporate Parenting Report annually in July of each year.

Reports will outline the commitments we have made and will outline further actions up to 2025.

The College is fully committed to its duties towards Care Experienced Young People and understands that Ministers will require the College to report on progress. In this regard the College will ensure that progress is monitored and recorded.
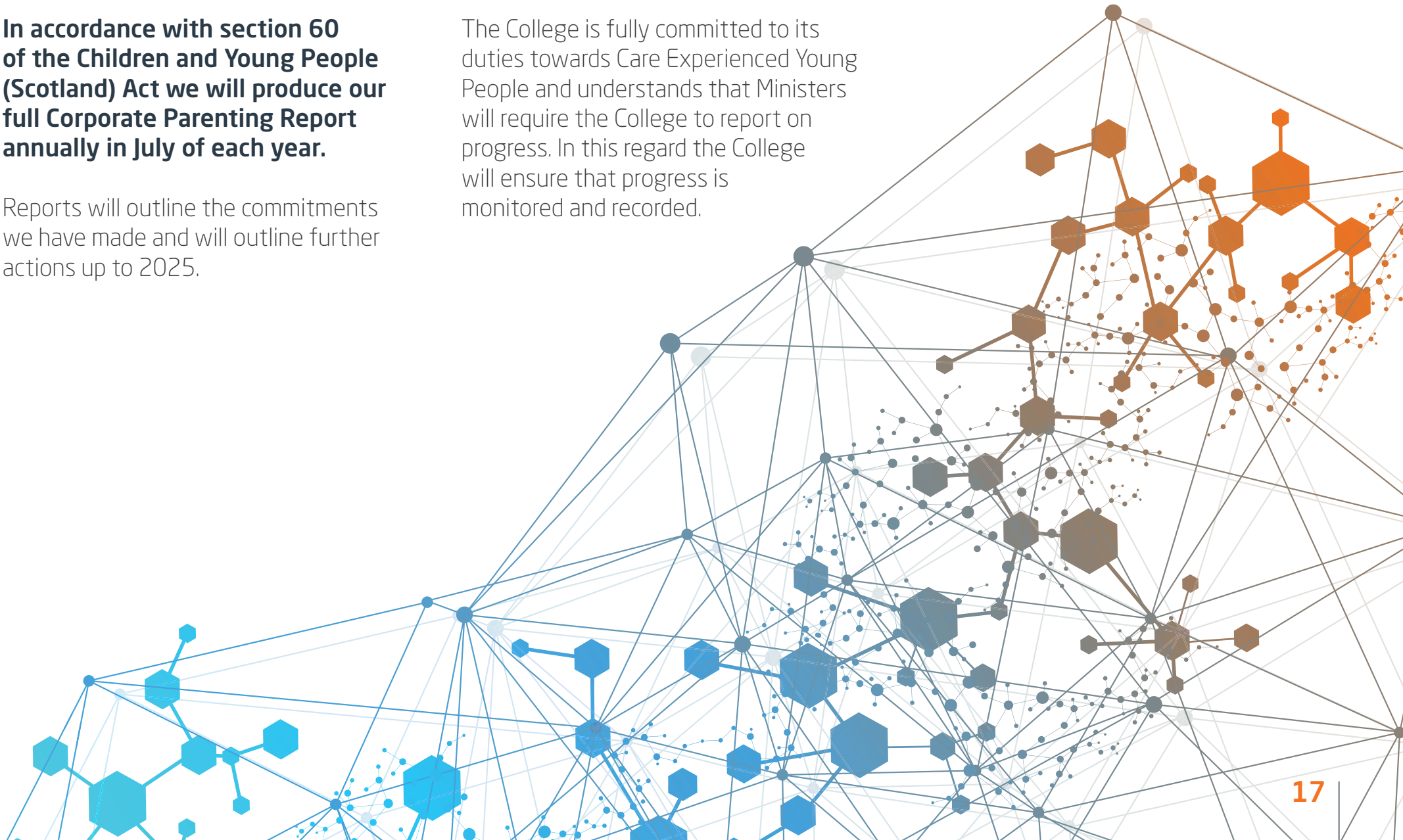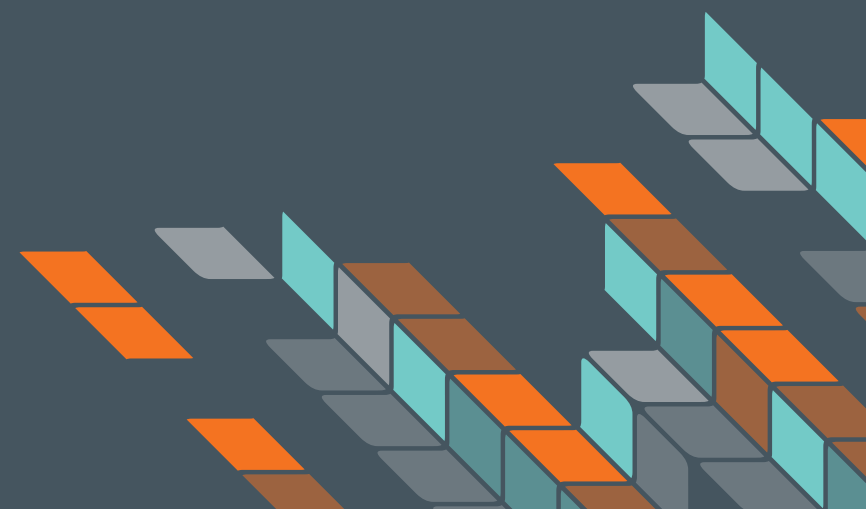
TITLE: **SAFEGUARDING AND STUDENT WELLBEING**

Background: The following information has been provided to show activity and developments in the Safeguarding and Student Wellbeing support at West College Scotland over academic year 2021/22

The report highlights:

 • management information supporting long term College objectives and developments in this area

• the continued increase in demand across student support activity with nearly 2655 student interactions across the services available

• Range of support given to students across the College

• Concerns around maintaining services beyond academic year 2022/23 due removal of funding from Scottish Funding Council

Action: The Committee is invited to consider the College performance, activity and development in this area and note funding constraints moving beyond 2022/23.

Lead: Iain Forster-Smith, Assistant Principal Student Life and Skills

Date: 25 May 2022

Status: Open

Executive Summary

Due to the long-lasting pandemic situation, it is recognised the negative effect COVID-19 has had on a person's mental health and negative affect this can have to engage in day-to-day life. The teams that support our student community through Safeguarding, Counselling and Wellbeing have seen a continued increase in support required.

Throughout academic year 2021/22 we have seen a significant increase in access to our support services across the College from academic year 2020/21:

- 200% increase in Safeguarding referrals
- 151% increase in uptake of wellbeing support offered
- 1703 counselling appointments offered with 1347 appointments attended

The College has been able to provide the high level of support due to several key financial support funds from the Scottish Funding Council:

- In 2018 the government Programme for Government the Scottish Government committed to "providing more than 80 additional counsellors in Further and Higher Education over the next four years", with an investment of around £20 million – for West College Scotland this has allowed us to increase our Counselling service from 1.75 FTE to 5.01 FTE over the past 3 years. Funding will be removed after academic year 2022/23
- For academic year 2021/22 the Scottish Government provided an additional £4.4 million for the college sector to further support student and staff mental health and wellbeing, resulting in an increase in budget of £403,000 for the College. This funding will not continue beyond this academic year
- Funding allocation commitments have confirmed to ensure continuation of services into academic year 2022/23

Support Services Update

Safeguarding

The role of the Safeguarding team is to respond quickly and effectively to concerns raised by staff and to implement the Safeguarding Procedures. Members of the Safeguarding team do not have responsibility or authority to investigate reported incidents and should not get overly involved with incidents. A Safeguarding report is recorded as either a concern over an individual or reporting a specific incident that has occurred.

- 74% reported cases are concerns, 26% reported cases are around a specific incident
- 34% of cases are from Clydebank Campus, 27% of cases are from Greenock campuses, 35% of cases are from Paisley campus
- Creative & Digital Industries (26%), Learner Development and Maths (14%), Science, Social Sciences and Sports (12%) have the largest referrals to the Safeguarding team
- Least referrals are from Care (6%) and Construction & Building Services (2%)
- 37% of reported incidents confirmed the student felt suicidal

Time4U Counselling

TIME 4 U is our free, confidential, professional Counselling Service available to all current students at West College Scotland. The service offers one-to-one counselling sessions with a team of qualified and experienced counsellors. All our counsellors are registered with BACP / BABCP. The team have

continued to deliver this service as a hybrid model during 2021/22 with support being in person on campus and through online channels.

This is the first full academic year where we have had a full complement of staff and accurate recording of students engaged in this service.

- Gender of students
  - 67% female
  - 27% male
  - 3% transgender female
  - 3% transgender male
- 46% of cases are from Clydebank Campus, 26% of cases are from Greenock campuses, 28% of cases are from Paisley campus
- Majority of students fell in the age 16-25 category, but an overall spread was present.
- Most referrals came from Maths, Science, Social sciences, and Sport and Creative and Digital Industries
- Least referrals came from Engineering and Construction & Building Services

Wellbeing

The Wellbeing Team has seen a significant increase in the number of referrals to the service in this past academic year. This is largely attributed to the pandemic; however other factors have played a part including the growth of the wellbeing staff team (from 1 advisor to 3, from additional funding) as well as increased promotion of the service. The presence of wellbeing staff on campus has allowed for issues to be addressed promptly when they arise, and more students are making the first steps to get support for themselves.

The most common presenting issue is anxiety which no doubt could be attributed to the world in which we have been living over the past two years. The wellbeing team continue to use a range of strategies to support students including the offering of a safe, confidential space to talk through issues as well as connecting students to relevant third-party agencies and continued practice in our CALM Curriculum and mindfulness. Whilst many students require only one initial appointment, many have tapped into the service intermittently throughout the year, with others attending on a weekly/fortnightly basis.

In the next academic year, the wellbeing service plan to continue the growth of this provision with drop in cafes returning, new proactive wellbeing activities, and the development of suitable wellbeing areas in each campus.

- Gender of students
  - 53% female
  - 47% male
- 33% of cases are from Clydebank Campus, 19% of cases are from Greenock campuses, 48% of cases are from Paisley campus
- Age group of students access the Wellbeing services
  - 16-25 – 72%
  - 26-35 – 12%
  - 36-45 – 9%
  - 46-55 – 7%
  - 56 and over – 0%

Funding and continued service

Through the additional funding received for both counselling and wellbeing support we have been able to continue the same level offer into academic year 2022/23.

Moving forward we will need to rationalise how the service level is maintained with potential loss of funding to support the activity.

Next steps for the College and our over arching approach to student wellbeing are:

- Investment from remaining wellbeing funds in enhanced online and out of hours student support
- Launch of the College's new Wellbeing Strategy – RISE to support ongoing development long term stability of service:
    - READY to learn, study and work in a comfortable environment while developing personal resilience for college and beyond
    - IN TOUCH with their own health and wellbeing, recognising the necessity of seeking help when confronting challenges, and encouraging others to do the same
    - SUPPORTED to feel safe, secure and strong enough to embrace college and working life and enjoy their successes
    - EMPOWERED and energised to engage in excellent education and career opportunities while maintaining positive mental health
- Continued review of services to ensure level of support in demanding area can continue beyond 2022/23

End.

WEST COLLEGE SCOTLAND

Meeting	Learning Teaching and Quality
Date	25th May 2022
Location	MS Teams
Title of Paper	Student Credit Activity 2021-22 and predictions for 2022-23
Presented By	Stephanie Graham
Recommendation to Members	For information
Appendix Attached	No

PURPOSE

To provide LTQ with a high-level summary of predicted student activity and credit generation for 2021-22, credit criteria and current student applications for 2022-23.

1. Student Activity 2021-22

We will achieve our core credit target but continue to have a predicted gap in our overall credit outturn figure for 2021-22. The overall 2021-22 credit target includes FAs, deferral and ESF activity.

The shortfall predicted at the last LTQ meeting has increased following higher early withdrawal of Winter Start students and lower than expected recruitment for spring courses and Preparation for College courses. We continue to work to address the gap but industrial action is also impacting on some credit generating provision. Our demand for online learning courses continues to be healthy however and we continue to also provide our students with some additional learning opportunities to aid their progression, where appropriate and within SFC recent flexibility credit criteria.

We have been in discussions with SFC regarding the financial impact of a shortfall. SFC are working with a number of colleges in this situation and SFC flexibilities will reduce the financial impact of the shortfall for 2021-22.

2. Student recruitment 2021-22

Our applications for 2022-23 full-time August courses opened on 25 January. Our overall applications continue to be down on last session and this is a situation shared with other colleges across Scotland. We currently have a 18% reduction in applicants on this time last year, with the largest reduction in Greenock. Care is significantly down in all campuses, as well as

Engineering in Paisley and Greenock. However, Hairdressing, Beauty and Hospitality are more comparable to last session, although last session saw a significant drop from previous years for these curriculum areas and was likely due to COVID. The most healthy applications are for Construction courses on all campuses and application numbers are reasonable in Learner Development.

There is a 'addressing the recruitment crisis' approach currently, focusing on targeted marketing. This approach is led by senior staff and Heads, along with Marketing staff. We also continue to encourage curriculum areas to progress applications as soon as possible, although there has been a delay in scheduling interviews in a few areas due to industrial action.

3. Credit Generation 2022-23

We await our final SFC credit allocation but our indicative total allocation for 2022-23 is 157,235 credits. This includes 1,309 credits allocated for FAs. We are already aware from disappointing school FA recruitment that this allocation will not be fully achieved but at this point the financial implications of this have not been clarified or whether FA credits can be used for other provision. We have seen an increase in demand for other School College partnership courses.

Our overall credit allocation is a welcome reduction on this session and at present, despite the reduction in applications, our curriculum planning spreadsheet shows that we should just achieve our target. This is based on including anticipated SFC additional flexibilities in line with this session – i.e. additional credits to support students with COVID disrupted learning and for HE guidance. The final SFC credit guidance is not yet published but I have seen an advanced copy which has been very helpful for planning. I have also had the opportunity to work with some other VPs and provide Sector feedback to SFC on the draft.

Should further classes be removed due to lack of viable numbers or August enrolment not be in line with current predictions, we could still face challenges in achieving credits next session. Our approaches to marketing, managing applications, supporting progressing students and communicating with prospective students before enrolment is therefore critical.

1. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
Our credit gap for 2021-22 will have financial implications.

2. STUDENT EXPERIENCE
There are no particular student implications in this update

3. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS
There are no particular Human Resource implications in this update

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications in this update

5. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS
There are no particular reputational implications in this update

6. COMMUNITY/PARTNERSHIP IMPACT
There are no particular community/partnership implications in this update

7. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS
There are no particular equalities implications in this update

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS
There are no particular environmental implications in this update

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RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is requested to:

Note the information contained within this report and seek any clarification as required.

Meeting	LTQC
Date	25 May 2022
Location	MS Teams/physical location
Title of Paper	Reappointment of Co-opted member – Mark Hamilton
Presented By	Mark Newlands
Recommendation to Members	Approval
Appendix Attached	No

PURPOSE

Note that the tenure of co-opted member, Mark Hamilton, expires on 31 October 2022. As such, the Chair of the Committee will request that Mark be reappointed for a further one-year term (1 November 2022 to 31 October 2023) and will present this for approval to the Board meeting scheduled for Monday 13 June 2022.

- FOR INFORMATION - The next meeting of the LTQC is Wednesday 26 October 2022 (Board meeting thereafter for approval is Monday 12 December 2022) so, due to timescales and Mark's term ending on 31 October 2022, the Committee is requested to consider this matter now.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1. Mark has served as a co-opted member on the LTQC for 3 one-year terms:

- 1.11.19 – 31.10.20
- 1.11.20 – 31.10.21
- 1.11.21 – 31.10.22

in accordance with the LTQC remit Section 2 which states "*The Committee is empowered to co-opt additional members, subject to approval by the Nominations Committee. Such members will normally be appointed for one year, will be subject to annual review, and may be re-appointed annually up to a maximum of 8 years*".

2.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

2.1   There are no financial implications in this report.

3.   STUDENT EXPERIENCE

3.1   There are no student experience implications associated with this report.

4.   HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

4.1   There are no human resources implications associated with this report.

5.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1   There are no legal implications in this report.

6.   REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1   There are no reputational implications associated with this report.

7.   COMMUNITY/PARTNERSHIP IMPACT

7.1   There are no community implications associated with this report.

8.   EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.1   There are no equality implications associated with this report.

9.   ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

9.1   There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to note that the:

- Tenure of co-opted member, Mark Hamilton, expires on 31 October 2022.
- Chair of the Committee will request that Mark be reappointed for a further one year, 1 November 2022 to 31 October 2023, and will ask the Board of Management to approve this at the Board meeting scheduled for Monday 13 June 2022.

WEST COLLEGE SCOTLAND

Meeting	Learning Teaching and Quality Committee
Date	Wednesday 25 May 2022
Location	MS Teams
Title of Paper	Internal Audit Report – Digital Strategy
Presented By	Stephanie Graham
Recommendation to Members	The Committee is asked to consider and note the contents of the Internal Audit Report – Digital Strategy.
Appendix Attached	Yes **12a** - Audit Committee Cover Paper from 2 March 2022 meeting. **12b** - Internal Audit Report – Digital Strategy

PURPOSE

The Committee is asked to consider and note the contents of the Internal Audit Report – Digital Strategy that was presented to the Audit Committee's 2 March 2022 meeting. It was agreed as per Paragraph 2.5 of the cover paper that it would be presented to the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee for consideration.

Paragraph 1g of the LTQC remit states:

"To monitor and advise the Board on the progress in delivering the College's Digital Strategy".

WEST COLLEGE SCOTLAND

Meeting	Audit Committee
Date	1 December 2021
Location	MS Teams
Title of Paper	Internal Audit Report – Digital Strategy
Presented By	Stephen Pringle Wylie & Bisset
Recommendation to Members	Consideration
Appendix Attached	Yes 06(a) – Internal Audit Report – Digital Strategy

PURPOSE

As part of the 2021-22 Internal Audit Plan, Wylie & Bisset conducted a review to assess whether there was an appropriate internal governance structure in place that ensures that IT related projects, initiatives and requests are aligned with the Digital Strategy. The review also considered whether appropriate KPIs and key risk indicators are in place to measure and report progress of the Digital Strategy and associated risks. In addition, they reviewed the level of skilled resources to deliver the key elements of the Digital Strategy as well as the monitoring and reporting arrangements in place.

The paper is presented in line with West College Scotland Audit Committee Terms of Reference:

'*To agree the Internal Audit Plan and review the Internal Audit Annual Report*'

The paper is submitted *For Consideration*.

1.   BACKGROUND

1.1   Wylie & Bisset, as the appointed internal auditors of the College, conducted a review to assess whether there was an appropriate internal governance structure in place that ensures that IT related projects, initiatives and requests are aligned with the Digital Strategy. The review also considered whether appropriate KPIs and key risk indicators are in place to measure and report progress of the Digital Strategy and associated risks. In addition, they reviewed the level of skilled resources to deliver the key elements of the Digital Strategy as well as the monitoring and reporting arrangements in place.

1.2   The assignment formed part of the 2021-22 Annual Internal Audit Plan.

2.   FURTHER DETAIL ON THE REPORT TOPIC

2.1   The scope of the review can be found on page 2 and was agreed by the College prior to the commencement of the audit.

2.2   The overall audit report assurance level is SUBSTANTIAL with the conclusion being:

'We can provide a substantial level of assurance over the College's Digital Strategy. We found that there was a process in place which enabled IT related projects, initiatives, and requests to be aligned with the Digital Strategy. We can also confirm that reporting arrangements in place were appropriate and that there was sufficient skills and expertise on the Digital Strategy groups. We have raised 1 recommendation around the KPIs which are used to measure the achievement of the Digital Strategies objectives / priorities. We have raised 7 good practice points from our review.'

2.3   The College has accepted the one medium recommendation which relates to the inclusion of measurable KPIs for each of the Digital Strategy objectives. Work is already underway to address this recommendation as part of the wider College Digital Strategy Group.

2.4   On page 12 of the report are highlighted seven areas of good practice which shows the work that has been done to date to embed the Digital Strategy into College operations including the comment the *'The revised Digital Strategy 2022 to 2026 is robust and gives a clear view of the journey the College has been on and the need for the revised Strategy.'*

Next Steps

2.5   The report will be presented to the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee for consideration and the recommendation will be added to the Rolling Audit Action Plan. The College Assurance Map will be updated to show the outcome of this audit work.

3.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1   The report highlights the continued need to invest in the College IT infrastructure if the objectives of the Digital Strategy are to be delivered.

4.   STUDENT EXPERIENCE

4.1   A failure to deliver on the Digital Strategy objectives will have a direct impact on the student experience. The monitoring of the delivery of the strategic objectives' will be key to ensure that where early intervention is required, that action is taken.

5.   HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

5.1   The Strategy highlights the requirement for ongoing staff training requirements. For the Strategy objectives to be fully realised, the College will require to continue to invest in digital training for all staff.

6.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1   There are no further legal implications in this paper to those listed above.

7.   REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1   Should the objectives of the Digital Strategy not be delivered the reputational damage to the College could be severe. The College requires to stay at the forefront of technological changes in order to be competitive and seen as the College of choice.

8.   COMMUNITY/PARTNERSHIP IMPACT

8.1   There are no community implications associated with this paper.

9.   EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1   There are no equality implications associated with this paper.

10. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no environmental implications associated with this paper.

RECOMMENDATION

The Audit Committee is requested to consider and note the contents of the report.

West College Scotland

Internal Audit 2021-22

Digital Strategy
February 2022

Overall Conclusion
Substantial

Overview

Purpose of review

We assessed whether there was an appropriate internal governance structure in place that ensures that IT related projects, initiatives and requests are aligned with the Digital Strategy. Our review also considered whether appropriate KPIs and Key Risk Indicators are in place to measure and report progress of the Digital Strategy and associated risks. We also reviewed the level of skilled resources to deliver the key elements of the Digital Strategy as well as the monitoring and reporting arrangements in place.

This assignment forms part of our Annual Internal Audit Plan for 2021/22.

Scope of review

Our objectives for this review were to ensure:

➢ The internal governance structure is appropriate to ensure IT related projects/initiatives and requests are aligned with the Digital Strategy.

➢ There is sufficient and robust reporting on the implementation and progress of the Digital Strategy and related projects/initiatives, including reporting on achievement of key performance indications (KPIs) and Key risk indicators, to enable informed decisions to be made.

➢ The College have appropriate resources in place to enable them to deliver the Digital Strategy.

➢ The College has considered future business needs to ensure that the current Digital Strategy and associated projects will have sufficient flexibility to meet these needs and any future developments or legislative changes.

➢ The Digital Strategy takes cognisance of the College's Corporate Plan/Strategy and links into the IT Strategy and other Strategies (e.g., Finance and HR etc.) of the College.

Limitation of scope

There were no limitations of scope.

Background Information

Digital Strategy

The first Digital Strategy was implemented at pace in addressing the challenges the College suddenly faced because of the global pandemic. Given the recent change in emphasis, with a return to pre pandemic operations, it was considered appropriate to update the Digital Strategy. The updated Digital Strategy was presented to the Senior Management Team (SMT) in November 2021. From there it was presented to the Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee in December 2021 for their consideration and comment. The updated Digital Strategy is being presented to the February 2022 Board for their consideration, comment, and approval.
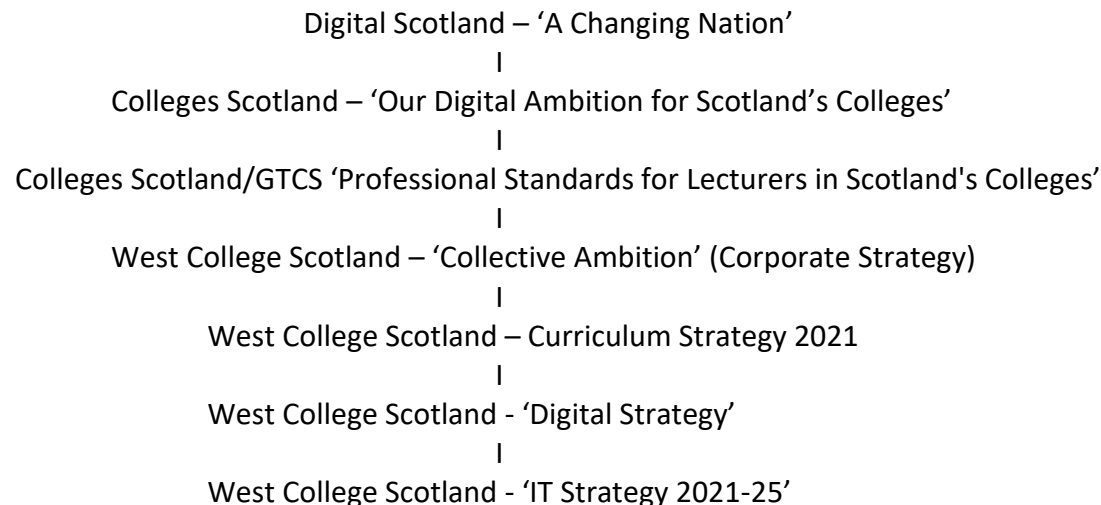
The updated Digital Strategy states it *"….is a roadmap which outlines the needs of our students, our staff and our College if we are to operate successfully in the digital world, and what tools and approaches are required in order to thrive in it. The Digital Strategy is intended to **enable our success** in a fast-moving world; **using data** to become better informed; **delivering inspirational learning** through positively exploiting the potential of new and emerging technologies; and **developing the skills base** of our students and our staff."*

The Digital Strategy includes the following:
1. Introduction
2. College Strategic Priorities
3. Background and Operating Context
4. Digital Drivers and External Trends
5. Contextual Information
6. Our Digital Culture
7. Our Digital Principles
8. Our Digital Strategic Aims and Objectives
9. Defining the Digital Strategic Aims and Objectives

10. Programmes and Projects

11. People Planning

12. Performance Management, Reporting and Governance

13. Appendix:
- Background Papers
- Glossary of Terms and further Definitions
- College Development Network Baseline Lecturer Digital Capabilities
- College Development Network Baseline Support Staff Digital Capabilities

The hierarchy that the College's Digital Strategy sits in, takes cognisance of, and aligns with is as follows:

Digital Scotland – 'A Changing Nation'
|
Colleges Scotland – 'Our Digital Ambition for Scotland's Colleges'
|
Colleges Scotland/GTCS 'Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges'
|
West College Scotland – 'Collective Ambition' (Corporate Strategy)
|
West College Scotland – Curriculum Strategy 2021
|
West College Scotland - 'Digital Strategy'
|
West College Scotland - 'IT Strategy 2021-25'

As can be seen from the above, the Digital strategy has been aligned with the College's Corporate and Curriculum Strategies. The IT Strategy is also aligned to the Digital Strategy.

The Digital Strategy has expected outcomes which are being used as the KPIs. The KPIs are included on the 6 tables within the "Defining the Strategic Aims and Objectives" section of the Strategy. From our review of these we found them to be rather subjective with no real measurable outcome. It would be difficult to fully assess whether the actions put in place are achieving what is required of them. ***We have raised a recommendation around this – see section 2 recommendation 1 for further details.***

The achievement of the Digital Strategy will be tracked and monitored via the Pentana system. The objectives from the Digital Strategy have been included on the Pentana system. Those assigned the action for these objectives are set up as the owner. A timescale is recorded in Pentana for the completion of the action. When this timescale is due, the owner is alerted to this via an automatic email from the Pentana system. They will continue to receive these automatic emails until they go into Pentana and update the action with the current status. If required, they can set another timescale. In this way the action can be tracked. Reports can be produced from the Pentana system in respect of these actions. At the time of our audit visit, the person responsible for setting up the Digital Strategy in Pentana was in the process of updating this for the new objectives in the updated Digital Strategy.

Internal Governance of Projects

The internal governance for projects is as follows:

- The projects/initiatives are raised at the Senior Management Team (SMT) meetings as a recommendation seeking their approval to progress these projects/initiatives.
- If approval is given, the Project Action Group (PAG) or Workstream is established and the PAG will scope out the work for the project/initiative. These define the project, aims, objectives, linkage to the College's Corporate Strategy, remit, membership, expected outcome and timescales.
- This is then taken back to the SMT for their further consideration and approval of the project/initiative to go ahead.

The project/initiative papers are distributed to SMT members a week in advance of the meeting, which enables them to have fully considered the project/initiative being submitted to them. The SMT will also consider wider interdependencies and cross College opportunities/risks. At this stage, the SMT will consider how the proposed project/initiative will impact other areas of the College including the work of the Digital Strategy Group.

We were informed that the College is in the process of reviewing the internal governance of projects. This will include the creation of a Project Board and standardised templates to be used for scoping project work. This will be discussed by the SMT at its meeting on the 2nd week in February 2022. If this is put in place, this will further strengthen the internal governance arrangements for projects at the College.

Sufficient and Robust Reporting

The Digital Strategy reporting structure is as follows:
- The Digital Strategy Core members group meets officially monthly.
- The SMT - meet fortnightly and receive reports from the Digital Strategy Core Group monthly.
- The Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee - meet quarterly and receive quarterly updates on the progress made against the Digital Strategy.
- The Board - meet quarterly. They receive the minutes of the LTQ Committee which includes the updates to the Digital Strategy.

The Chair of the Digital Strategy Core Group updates the SMT at the meeting following the Digital Strategy Core Group meeting.

An update report is presented to the Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee (this is a Board Committee) at each of its quarterly meetings. In this way the members are kept up to date on the progress with the Digital Strategy. The update reports presented to the Learning Teaching & Quality Committee are also presented to the Board on a quarterly basis.

The Digital workstream Leads provided a verbal update to the Digital Strategy Core Group. The Chair of the Digital Strategy Core Group reported this update back to the SMT as part of her Digital update report.

Appropriate Resources

The College set up 2 main groups to take forward the Digital Strategy, namely:
- The Core Digital Strategy Group
- The General Digital Strategy Group

The Core Digital Strategy Group is the decision-making and oversight Group with the meetings and decisions from this Group being reported in a formal way. This Group are responsible for progressing all aims and objectives of the Digital Strategy.   The Core Digital Strategy Group includes representation from the curriculum, finance, ICT, Quality, HR, Marketing, Learning Technologies and Stakeholder Experience. The Core Digital Strategy Group is chaired by the Assistant Principal, who has been given responsibility of overseeing and taking forward the Digital Strategy. This Group is augmented with 25 other members who can be called upon as and when required.

The specific purpose of the Core Digital Strategy Group is to:
1. Undertake an annual review of the Digital Strategy objectives to ensure these are consistent with the Corporate Strategy and digital/technology environment and to report this to the Board of Management.
2. Review the Digital Strategy business cases to ensure that these are consistent with the College's strategic objectives and will deliver value for money.
3. Approve the annual Digital Strategy operational/action plan and to have oversight of its delivery with appropriate action being taken to ensure the objectives are fulfilled.
4. Have oversight of the benefits realised from the Digital Strategy initiatives.
5. Have management and control of people and financial resources.
6. Provide regular updates to the College's Senior Management Team.

The General Digital Strategy Group is a wider group of approximately 44 staff, the purpose of this was to obtain staff views on activities etc. Those on this group are from both teaching and support staff and from all levels within the College. This Group was less formal with it being more a forum where continuous professional dialogue, sharing information and good practice took place. Any questions could also be raised in this forum.

Between 2019 to December 2021, the Core Digital Strategy Group set up 12 digital workstreams to take forward the work of the 2019 Digital Strategy and the Covid-19 Emergency Plan.

Microsoft Teams
Within Microsoft Teams a Core Digital Strategy Group was set up as well as a General Digital Strategy Group.

The General Group Teams site is used for posts, questions, responses to questions, advice, good practice etc. It was set up to provide staff with a place to get immediate communications and advice/answers to queries. The "ask the expert" section of the virtual hub directs the questions asked to the General Group site for the 44 staff members to consider and provide a response. Files can also be uploaded onto the General Teams site, thus top tips and guidelines can be shared amongst the group. This is an informal site for staff to share knowledge etc.

The Core Group is more formal and includes posts and files. The files are where all the information is stored.

Future Proofing the Digital Strategy

The revised Digital Strategy has an action plan for the next 3 years. This looks at aligning cross discipline activity, working with others to ensure their planning meets the needs of the wider drivers and aligns accordingly. The Digital Strategy will be continuously reviewed with annual reviews in alignment with the ambitions outlined across the 3-year plan.

The members of the Digital Strategy Groups sit on a variety of external forums and networks including Microsoft, Jisc, Voc Tech, Association of Learning Technology, Colleges Scotland, and the Scottish Funding Council. This provides them with an insight into the latest thinking and developments which they will use to inform the Digital Strategy and to ensure that the Digital Strategy and other wider projects impacting on it takes cognisance of this knowledge and future developments.

Other Organisations

From our review of the digital transformation work done at some of our other public sector organisations we found that most of these are at the same stage as the College. Some have managed to react to Covid-19 but are now in the process of considering how they take what they have learnt through that period and align this with their goals and aims going forward. Most have an IT Strategy, but this has not been fully developed into a Digital Strategy.

From our review we found that what these other organisations have in place is similar to what the College is considering, e.g., cloud based etc. We found that there was nothing from the other organisations which the College had not included in its revised Digital Strategy.

Work Undertaken

In line with our objectives, we undertook the following work:

Objective 1: The internal governance structure is appropriate to ensure IT related projects/initiatives and requests are aligned with the Digital Strategy.

- o We discussed the current internal governance arrangements in place in respect of IT related projects/initiatives and requests to establish if this is appropriate to ensure that these projects are aligned with the Digital Strategy.
- o We obtained and reviewed the College's Digital Strategy to ensure that this was robust, had been approved by the Board and has been communicated to all key personnel. We considered the content and objectives of other public sector organisation's Digital Strategy and compare these with the College's to ensure that the College has not omitted any significant elements and/or KPIs.

Objective 2: There is sufficient and robust reporting on the implementation and progress of the Digital Strategy and related projects/initiatives, including reporting on achievement of key performance indications (KPIs) and key risk indicators, to enable informed decisions to be made.

- o We discussed the reporting process and what is provided to the Senior Management and the Board in relation to the Digital Strategy and related IT projects. We assessed this to ensure this is appropriate, frequently provided and received on a timely basis. We obtained copies of these reports presented together with minutes of meetings and assessed whether there is appropriate discussion and challenge on the implementation and progress of the Digital Strategy initiatives.
- o We established the KPIs and key risk indicators in place and assessed these to ensure that these are appropriate, SMART and are challenging but achievable. We established and assessed how these are reported to Senior Management and the Board, including any self-assessment exercises undertaken. *We have raised a recommendation in respect of the KPIs – see section 2 recommendation 1 for further details.*

Objective 3: The College has appropriate resources in place to enable them to deliver the Digital Strategy.

- o We obtained the structure chart of those involved with the Digital Strategy and those responsible for delivering the Strategy.
- o We assessed whether there is an appropriate level of skills and resources available to deliver on the Digital Strategy.
- o We considered what plans are in place to enable and monitor the projects linked to the delivery of the Digital Strategy.

Objective 4: The College has considered future business needs to ensure that the current Digital Strategy and associated projects will have sufficient flexibility to meet these needs and any future developments or legislative changes.

o   We established whether the College, when developing its Digital Strategy, considered the future business needs, development, and potential legislative changes. We ensured that cognisance of this was included in the Digital Strategy.

o   We considered how those involved with the development and implementation of the Digital Strategy ensure that it is still appropriate in light of any new developments internally or externally.

Objective 5: The Digital Strategy takes cognisance of the College's Corporate Plan/Strategy and links into the IT Strategy and other operational plans (e.g., Finance and HR etc.) of the College.

o   We discussed the mechanism used to ensure that the Digital Strategy reflects the College's Business Plan objectives and the objectives of other strategies.

o   We obtained the College's Business Plan and other strategies and assessed their content to ensure these have been appropriately reflected within the Digital Strategy.

Conclusion

Overall conclusion

Overall Conclusion: Substantial
We can provide a substantial level of assurance over the College's Digital Strategy. We found that there was a process in place which enabled IT related projects, initiatives, and requests to be aligned with the Digital Strategy. We can also confirm that reporting arrangements in place were appropriate and that there was sufficient skills and expertise on the Digital Strategy groups. We have raised 1 recommendation around the KPIs which are used to measure the achievement of the Digital Strategies objectives/priorities. We have raised 7 good practice points from our review.

Summary of recommendations

Grading of recommendations				
	High	**Medium**	**Low**	**Total**
Digital Strategy	0	1	0	1

As can be seen from the above table there were no recommendations made which we have given a grading of high.

Areas of good practice

The following is a list of areas where the College is operating effectively and following good practice.	
1.	The revised Digital Strategy 2022 to 2026 is robust and gives a clear view of the journey the College has been on and the need for the revised Strategy.
2.	The reporting structure in place is robust with the SMT, the Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee and the Board being kept up to date with the progress made on the implementation of the Digital Strategy.
3.	The resourcing of the oversight and implementation of the College's Digital Strategy is a cross-College solution with 2 main Digital Strategy Groups being set up. The Digital Strategy Core Group established 12 workstreams to take forward the implementation of the Digital Strategy. The 12 workstreams had representation from across the College.
4.	The Digital Strategy Core Group ensure that any activities/projects it is undertaking are fit for purpose and future proofed by being members of various forums and networks, including JISC and Microsoft, which provide them with an insight into future developments in IT and Digital resources. This enables them to undertake horizon scanning to ensure that what they are doing now will not be redundant in a year's time.
5.	From our review of the revised Digital Strategy, the College's Business Plan, the IT Strategy, and the Curriculum Strategy we found that there is a clear link between each of these strategies. The Digital Strategy takes cognisance of the College's Business Plan in that one of the objectives of the Business Plan is Digital.
6.	The Digital Strategy Core Group uses the College's Pentana system to track and monitor the progress made against the objectives and actions of the Digital Strategy. This enables them to see immediately the percentage completion for each of the objectives/actions. This also shows any objectives/actions which are beyond the set deadline. This can be investigated further by the Digital Strategy Core Group members to assess what requires to be done to get the objective/action back on track for completion.

The following is a list of areas where the College is operating effectively and following good practice.

7.	From our review we can confirm that the internal governance for IT related (and other) projects/initiatives and requests is adequate and enables these to be aligned with the Digital Strategy. All projects/initiatives must be approved by the Senior Management Team which has representatives from across the College, including those who are responsible for the Digital Strategy. As such they can highlight any potential issues or conflicts with the Digital Strategy at an early stage. This helps ensure that all projects/initiatives are aligned with the Digital Strategy where necessary. The College has established a new process to follow for initiating projects, which includes having a Project Board for each project. This will strengthen the internal governance of projects further.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)			
Ref.	Finding and Risk	Grade	Recommendation
1.	There are a set of KPIs contained within the Strategy however in several cases these are not measurable KPIs. To assess the success of the Strategy the College should ensure a robust set of KPIs are in place which are SMART and enable achievement to be clearly measured. There is a risk that achievement of the objectives is not fully measured, and the successful implementation of the stated objectives is not fully recognised due to the way in which these are currently measured.	**Medium**	We recommend that the College devise KPIs which are SMART and have definitive outcomes which can be measured.
Management response		Responsibility and implementation date	
The College recognises that the identification and measurement of KPIs going forward with the refreshed Strategy will be enhanced and will build on the College's growing digital maturity. SMART KPIs will be set against each of the actions within the Strategy for years 1-3 and will be recorded and achievement monitored via the Pentana System.		*Responsible Officer:* Assistant Principal: Creativity and Skills *Implementation Date:* 31 December 2022	

The table below details the actual dates for our fieldwork and the reporting on the audit area under review. The timescales set out below will enable us to present our final report at the next Audit Committee meeting.

Audit stage	Date
Fieldwork start	17 January 2022
Closing meeting	2 February 2022
Draft report issued	4 February 2022
Receipt of management responses	15 February 2022
Final report issued	15 February 2022
Audit Committee	2 March 2022
Number of audit days	6

We detail below our staff who undertook the review together with the College's staff we spoke to during our review.

Wylie & Bisset LLP			
Partner	Graham Gillespie	Partner	graham.gillespie@wyliebisset.com
Senior Manager	Stephen Pringle	Senior Internal Audit Manager	stephen.pringle@wyliebisset.com
Supervisor	Audrey Cowan	Internal Audit Supervisor	audrey.cowan@wyliebisset.com

West College Scotland			
Key Contacts	Angela Pignatelli	Assistant Principal	Angela.Pignatelli@wcs.ac.uk
	Brian Stobbs	Head of IT	Brain.Stobbs@wcs.ac.uk
	Martin Joyce	Director of Infrastructure	Martin.Joyce@wcs.ac.uk
	Vivienne Mulholland	Head of Finance	Vivienne.Mulholland@wcs.ac.uk
	Sara Rae	Assistant Principal	Sara.Rae@wcs.ac.uk
	Emma Hanna	eLearning Team Leader	Emma.Hanna@wcs.ac.uk
	Gary McIntyre	Organisational Development Manager	Gray.McIntyre@wcs.ac.uk
	Paul Ferguson	Organisational and Development Manager	Paul.Ferguson@wcs.ac.uk
	Kate Carroll	Marketing and PR Executive	Kate.Carroll@wcs.ac.uk
	Robin Chandler	Stakeholder Experience Co-ordinator	Robin.Chandler@wcs.ac.uk
	Christine McGowan	Planning and Improvement Officer	Christine.Mcgowan@wcs.ac.uk
	Gillian Gray	Development Funding Executive	Gillian.Gray@wcs.ac.uk
	Paul McLaughlin	Head of Creative & Digital Industries	Paul.Mclaughlin@wcs.ac.uk

	We also spoke to some Curriculum Quality Leads, Curriculum Executive Leads, and some digital enthusiasts and ambassadors.
Wylie & Bisset appreciates the time provided by all the individuals involved in this review and would like to thank them for their assistance and co-operation.	

APPENDICES

For each area of review, we assign a level of assurance in accordance with the following classification:

Assurance	Classification
Strong	Controls satisfactory, no major weaknesses found, no or only minor recommendations identified.
Substantial	Controls largely satisfactory although some weaknesses identified, recommendations for improvement made.
Weak	Controls unsatisfactory and major systems weaknesses identified that require to be addressed immediately.
No	No or very limited controls in place leaving the system open to significant error or abuse, recommendations made require to be implemented immediately.

For each recommendation we assign a grading either as High, Medium, or Low priority depending on the degree of risk assessed as outlined below:

Grading	Classification
High	Major weakness that we consider needs to be brought to the attention of the Audit Committee and addressed by senior management of the College as a matter of urgency.
Medium	Significant issue or weakness which should be addressed by the College as soon as possible.
Low	Minor issue or weakness reported where management may wish to consider our recommendation.

Purpose of review

We will assess whether there is an appropriate internal governance structure in place that ensures that IT related projects, initiatives and requests are aligned with the Digital Strategy. Our review will also consider whether appropriate KPIs and Key Risk Indicators are in place to measure and report progress of the Digital Strategy and associated risks. We will also review the level of skilled resources to deliver the key elements of the Digital Strategy as well as the monitoring and reporting arrangements in place.

This assignment forms part of our Annual Internal Audit Plan for 2021/22.

Scope of review

Our objectives for this review are to ensure:

➢   The internal governance structure is appropriate to ensure IT related projects/initiatives and requests are aligned with the Digital Strategy.

➢   There are sufficient and robust reporting on the implementation and progress of the Digital Strategy and related projects/initiatives, including reporting on achievement of key performance indications (KPIs) and Key risk indicators, to enable informed decisions to be made.

➢   The College have appropriate resources in place to enable them to deliver the Digital Strategy.

➢   The College has considered future business needs to ensure that the current Digital Strategy and associated projects will have sufficient flexibility to meet these needs and any future developments or legislative changes.

➢   The Digital Strategy takes cognisance of the College's Corporate Plan/Strategy and links into the IT Strategy and other Strategies (e.g., Finance and HR etc.) of the College.

Limitation of scope

There are no limitations of scope.

Audit approach

Our approach to the review will be:

- We will discuss with the relevant personnel the current internal governance arrangement in place in respect of IT related projects/initiatives and requests to establish is this is appropriate to ensure that these projects are aligned with the Digital Strategy.
- We shall obtain and review the Digital Strategy to ensure that this is robust, has been approved by the Board and has been communicated to all key personnel.
- We shall establish and evaluate how the Digital Strategy is being implemented in practice.
- We shall consider the processes in place to take forward the Digital Strategy initiatives into practical projects and actions.
- We shall consider the content and objectives of other public sector organisation's Digital Strategy and compare these with the College's to ensure that the College has not omitted any significant elements and/or KPIs.
- We shall discuss with key personnel the reporting process and what is provided to the Senior Management and the Board in relation to the Digital Strategy and related IT projects. We shall assess this to ensure this is appropriate, frequently provided and received on a timely basis. We shall obtain copies of any reports presented together with minutes of meetings to assess whether there is appropriate discussion and challenge on the implementation and progress of the Digital Strategy initiatives.
- We shall establish the KPIs and key risk indicators in place and assess these to ensure that these are appropriate, SMART and are challenging but achievable. We shall establish and assess how these are reported to Senior Management and the Board, including any self-assessment exercises undertaken.
- We shall obtain the structure chart of those involved with the Digital Strategy and those responsible for delivering the Strategy. We shall assess whether there is an appropriate level of skills and resources available to delivery on the Digital Strategy. We shall consider what plans are in place to enable and monitor the projects linked to the delivery of the Digital Strategy.
- We shall establish whether the College, when developing its Digital Strategy, considered the future business needs, development, and potential legislative changes. We shall ensure that if this was done, that cognisance of this was included in the Digital Strategy.
- We shall consider how those involved with the development and implementation of the Digital Strategy ensure that it is still appropriate in light of any new developments internally or externally.
- We will discuss the mechanism used to ensure that the Digital Strategy reflects the College's Business Plan objectives and the objectives of other operational plans. We shall obtain the College's Business Plan and other operational plans and assess their content to ensure this has been

appropriately reflected within the Digital Strategy.

Potential key risks

The potential key risks associated with the area under review are:

➢ If the College does not have appropriate internal governance structures in place there is a risk that IT related projects/initiatives and requests may not be aligned with the Digital Strategy, which could result in inappropriate use of funds.

➢ The reporting to Senior Management and the Board on the implementation and progress of the Digital Strategy and related projects/initiatives is not sufficient nor robust, which would lead to inappropriate decisions being made or inappropriate IT projects being undertaken.

➢ If the College does have the appropriate level of resources in place, there is a risk that it will not be able to deliver the Digital Strategy, or some projects may not be delivered on budget and to deadline due to lack of resources.

➢ The College has not "future proofed" its Digital Strategy and associated projects resulting in these being unable to support future business needs and developments.

➢ If the Digital Strategy does not take cognisance of the College's Corporate Plan/Strategy and other functional strategies, there is a risk that the Digital Strategy will deliver inappropriate and redundant projects.

WEST COLLEGE SCOTLAND

Meeting	Learning Teaching and Quality Committee
Date	Wednesday 25 May 2022
Location	MS Teams
Title of Paper	Internal Audit Report – Student Recruitment
Presented By	Stephanie Graham
Recommendation to Members	The Committee is asked to consider and note the contents of the Internal Audit Report – Student Recruitment.
Appendix Attached	Yes **13a** - Audit Committee Cover Paper from 26 May 2022 meeting. **13b** - Internal Audit Report – Student Recruitment

PURPOSE

The Committee is asked to consider and note the contents of the Internal Audit Report – Student Recruitment that will presented to the Audit Committee's 26 May 2022 meeting. It was agreed as per Paragraph 2.5 of the cover paper that it would be presented to the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee for consideration.

WEST COLLEGE SCOTLAND

Meeting	Audit Committee
Date	26 May 2022
Location	MS Teams
Title of Paper	Internal Audit Report – Student Recruitment
Presented By	Stephen Pringle Wylie & Bisset
Recommendation to Members	Consideration
Appendix Attached	Yes 09(a) – Internal Audit Report – Student Recruitment

PURPOSE

As part of the 2021-22 Internal Audit Plan, Wylie & Bisset conducted an assignment to review of the arrangements in place surrounding student recruitment. The review considered the suitability of the arrangements for gaining information in relation to courses, access to support, and course enrolment, to ensure that the student experience is effective. The work also reviewed the suitability of the policies and procedures in place surrounding student recruitment

The paper is presented in line with West College Scotland Audit Committee Terms of Reference:

'*To agree the Internal Audit Plan and review the Internal Audit Annual Report*'

The paper is submitted *For Consideration*.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Wylie & Bisset, as the appointed internal auditors of the College, Conducted an assignment to review of the arrangements in place surrounding student recruitment. The review considered the suitability of the arrangements for gaining information in relation to courses, access to support, and course enrolment, to ensure that the student experience is effective. It also reviewed the suitability of the policies and procedures in place surrounding student recruitment

1.2 The assignment formed part of the 2021-22 Annual Internal Audit Plan.

2. FURTHER DETAIL ON THE REPORT TOPIC

2.1 The scope of the review can be found on page 2 and was agreed by the College prior to the commencement of the audit.

2.2 The overall audit report assurance level is SUBSTANTIAL with the conclusion being:

'We can provide a substantial level of assurance over the College's student recruitment process. We acknowledge that this is an area that the College are reviewing and in the process of improving at present. We have raised 5 recommendations, 3 of which have been graded as medium and 2 as low grade. It should be noted that the main themes of our findings were:
- *Overarching policies and procedures;*
- *Communications with applicants/students;*
- *System capabilities and functionality; and*
- *Standard practices across both sectors and campuses.*

We have also raised 4 good practice points.'

2.3 The report does highlight several areas of good practice (see page 11 of the report).

2.4 The report makes five recommendations, which the College has accepted, with three being medium and two being categorised as low. As the report noted the number of recommendations is slightly lower than the number recommended at similar institutions.

Next Steps

2.5 The report will be presented to the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee for consideration and the recommendations will be added to the Rolling Audit Action Plan for monitoring purposes.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no financial implications associated with this paper.

4. STUDENT EXPERIENCE

4.1 There are no student experience implications associated with this paper.

5. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no human resource implications associated with this paper.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no legal implications associated with this paper.

7. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no reputational implications associated with this paper.

8. COMMUNITY/PARTNERSHIP IMPACT

8.1 There are no community implications associated with this paper.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no equality implications associated with this paper.

10. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no environmental implications associated with this paper.

RECOMMENDATION

The Audit Committee is requested to consider and note the contents of the report.

West College Scotland

Internal Audit 2021-22

Student Recruitment
April 2022

Overall Conclusion
Substantial

The matters raised in this report came to our attention during the course of our audit and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all weaknesses that exist or all improvements that might be made.

This report has been prepared solely for West College Scotland's individual use and should not be quoted in whole or in part without prior written consent. No responsibility to any third party is accepted as the report has not been prepared, and is not intended, for any third party.

We emphasise that the responsibility for a sound system of internal control rests with management and work performed by internal audit should not be relied upon to identify all system weaknesses that may exist. Neither should internal audit be relied upon to identify all circumstances of fraud or irregularity should there be any although our audit procedures are designed so that any material irregularity has a reasonable probability of discovery. Every sound system of control may not be proof against collusive fraud. Internal audit procedures are designed to focus on areas that are considered to be of greatest risk and significance.

Overview

Purpose of review

We undertook a review of the arrangements in place surrounding student recruitment. Our review considered the suitability of the arrangements for gaining information in relation to courses, access to support, and course enrolment, to ensure that the student experience is effective. We also reviewed the suitability of the policies and procedures in place surrounding student recruitment.

This assignment forms part of our 2021/22 Annual Internal Audit Plan.

Scope of review

Our objectives for this review were to ensure:

➢   The College has robust policies and procedures in place surrounding student recruitment.

➢   The College has robust mechanisms in place with clear links between application, interview, acceptance, and enrolment to ensure it manages student recruitment and enrolment in an efficient and effective manner.

➢   Responsibility for student recruitment is clearly defined throughout the College.

➢   The arrangements in place for gaining information in relation to courses, and access to support is well communicated and easily accessible by potential students.

➢   The College has sufficient, generic as well as targeted marketing campaigns to raise the awareness of its courses, support, and facilities to potential students.

➢   Methods of feedback (for both staff and students) are in place at the College regarding the recruitment process which contribute to the evaluation process.

Limitation of scope

There are no limitations of scope.

Background Information

Policies and Procedures

The following personnel within the College are involved with the recruitment process (from application to enrolment):

➢ Marketing and Communications staff;
➢ Student Advisory Services;
➢ Faculty Administration;
➢ Curriculum and Quality Leaders (CQLs); and
➢ Management Information staff.

During our audit work we were provided with limited overarching documented policies and procedures. We found that there was no overarching framework or policy and procedures relating to the recruitment process from the application stage through to the enrolment stage. As a result of this we found that the practices used by staff varied from sector to sector and from campus to campus. **We have raised a recommendation around the development of an overarching policy and procedure – see section 3, recommendation 2 for further details.**

Current Arrangements

An on-line UNIT-e application form is completed by the applicant. Staff within the Student Advisory Services are available to assist the applicant complete the form should this be required. The application is put on hold for 2 days to allow EU residency checks to be carried out by the Student Advisory Services staff.

The curriculum administration staff receive a daily application report, which details the applications to be actioned. There are a variety of ways the daily report is actioned depending on the sector and campus, these are:

a) Curriculum Administration Staff Review and Make an Offer

The curriculum administration staff will review the application and check that the applicant meets the entry requirement criteria for the course and have uploaded a personal statement (where required). If all criteria have been met and the Sector permits this, the curriculum administration staff can make an offer to the applicant. This will generally be a conditional offer.

b) Curriculum Administration Staff Review and Short List for Interview

The curriculum administration staff will review the application and pass those that meet the entry requirements and have provided a personal statement (where applicable) to the sector Curriculum Quality Leader (CQL) for them to review and decide whether the applicant should be invited for an interview.

The interviews should be scheduled and recorded via the UNIT-e system. We found that not all sectors are using the UNIT-e system for this purpose.   Spreadsheets tend to be used to schedule interviews, with these being passed to the CQLs to update when the interview has taken place and the outcome is known. The curriculum administration staff will manually enter the outcomes from the spreadsheets into the UNIT-e system.

c) CQL Review and Make the Offer

The CQL is passed all applications received for their courses. The CQL will review and decide who meets the entry criteria and who should therefore either be offered a place or be invited in for an interview. The same spreadsheet process as that noted at (b) above is used for scheduling and recording the outcome of the interviews.

We have raised a recommendation around the standardisation of practices across all sectors and campuses – see section 3, recommendation 1 for further details.

Recruitment Process System

The College uses the following system to administer its recruitment process:

- Courses are available on the College's website which is hosted by an external partner (Frame Ltd).
- Applications are made through the College's website which links directly to the Online Services section of the UNIT-e system.
- Both the College website and Online Services systems have been "skinned" to make them look the same.

From our review of the status codes used in the recruitment process, we found that the College originally had over 100 codes. These were reduced to 66, however from review of these we are of the opinion that these can be reduced further. From our work at our other college clients, we have found that they tend to have between 15 to 20 recruitment status codes in use to move the status of the application through the recruitment process. **We have raised a recommendation in relation to this – see section 3, recommendation 4 for further details.**

From our review of the recording of interview outcomes, we found that these were manually input to the UNIT-e system by the curriculum administration staff. When questioned, the curriculum administration staff did not think it was possible to upload the information on the spreadsheet to the UNIT-e system. From our work at other college clients, we found that either the Tutor/Curriculum Leader would input the outcome of their interviews directly into the UNIT-e system or there would be an upload of the outcomes to the UNIT-e system. **We have raised a recommendation around this – see section 3, recommendation 3 for further details.**

Reporting

As part of our audit, we asked for a report to show the following:
- time taken to process applications;
- time taken from interview to issuing an offer;
- time taken to accept an offer once made; and
- the number of enrolments who have accepted an offer and enrolled on the course.

We were informed that the system does not have an audit trail of the recruitment journey.

From our review we found that there was not one report which captures the full journey, i.e., from enquiry through to starting a course. At present there is no report which can be run to show the enquiries which have turned into an application. There are reports which can be run to show enquires and expression of interest but none to show whether these have been transferred to an application. The College does monitor application numbers; however, this tends to be by total numbers processed which could include duplicate applications from the same applicant. **(We have raised a recommendation around this – see section 3, recommendation 3 for details)**.

Communication with Applicant

The main methods for the College to keep in contact with the applicant is via email and will in certain circumstances issue offer letters via the post.

The College also keeps in contact with the applicant in the following ways:
- ➢ Acknowledgement of application email.
- ➢ Interview time and date email.
- ➢ Keep warm email – these are normally issued towards the end of June each year.
- ➢ Offer made email – these include a link to accept the offer. This also has a link to an induction session, which the potential students must attend. This is normally done from mid-way through July.
- ➢ Information sessions at each campus – these take place at the start of August.
- ➢ Induction days – these take place mid-way through mid-August to the second last week in August.
- ➢ Enrolment – a link to the enrolment process is provided at induction.

From the above it can be seen that the most contact with the potential student takes place between the end of June and the start of their course in August.

From our work at our other college clients, we found that they also include the following contact with potential students:
- Open days/evenings. These are generally done in person, however due to the Covid-19 restrictions these had to be done virtually.
- Information, Advice and Guidance events. These are generally done in person but due to Covid-19 restrictions these have been done remotely.
- Contact centre events – These involve representatives from the curriculum, school liaison, marketing, student services, MIS, and finance. There is also a duty manager who is either a Head of School or a Vice Principal in attendance for these events. The purpose of these is to provide advice and information on the courses, support available and facilities at the College. The students are also provided with start of term information, i.e., start date, timetable, and induction etc.
- Enrolment days/evenings. These are to enrol students onto their course. During the Covid-19 restrictions this face-to-face option was still offered, albeit in a reduced and socially distanced format.
- Live chat facility on organisation website. This enables potential students and/or students to speak to a member of staff as they browse the website or complete an application or enrolment form etc.

Some Sectors of the College invite the applicants who have accepted an offer into the College to get more information on the course and to complete the necessary paperwork for any PPE required and to start the process for any disclosures required as part of their course. This does not happen in every Sector and for every course.

Within recommendation 2 we have included a comment around the communication with applicants/potential students and the methods employed for this.

We also reviewed the College's website as part of our audit and found that although some amendments have been made to this since our External Communications audit in April 2021, the website is still not as dynamic as what we have seen at other colleges. **We have raised an observation around this point.**

Feedback

In September 2021 the College ran sessions with all the CQLs to obtain their view on the student recruitment process and to highlight issues and potential improvements. From these sessions feedback was gathered with the College working through this to assess where potential improvements could be made.

For the winter start courses, the College set up a pilot to carry out the application process in a different way from how this it was previously carried out. This involved the applicant being given the option to search through a 'thematic grouping' as an alternative to searching for a specific course or campus. The aim of this pilot was to ensure that the College is able to capture all applicants in a timely way and to have all applicants given a college offer on to a course, even if this is not the course they originally showed interest in. This would be done by the staff matching the applicant's qualifications and interests with curriculum areas and courses.

At the time of our audit visit, the feedback from this pilot process had not been fully considered prior to the August 2022 application process commencing. The College are still considering the outcome from the pilot to assess whether amendment to the recruitment process can be made going forward.

The College also undertakes a student survey of the recruitment process each year with any issues being highlighted and work done to mitigate issues raised.

From our review we noted that the College does not routinely contact those applicants who have accepted an offer but who do not enrol. **We have raised a recommendation around this – see section 3, recommendation 5 for further details.**

From our discussion with the Student Union President, we found that she had no issues with the recruitment and application process at the College. Her own experience was good. She also confirmed that no students had complained to her about the process. Overall, she thought the process was straightforward and easy to follow.

Work Undertaken

In line with our objectives, we undertook the following work:

Objective 1: The College has robust policies and procedures in place surrounding student recruitment.
- ➢ We obtained and reviewed any policies and procedures in respect of the recruitment process at the College.
- ➢ We evaluated these to ensure that these are robust and fit for purpose. **We have raised a recommendation in relation to this – see section 3, recommendation 2 for further details.**
- ➢ We established whether the College has a process map detailing the student's recruitment journey.

Objective 2: The College has robust mechanisms in place with clear links between application, interview, acceptance, and enrolment to ensure it manages student recruitment and enrolment in an efficient and effective manner.
- ➢ We discussed, with key personnel, the current recruitment process from application stage to enrolment. **We have raised 3 recommendations in relation to this – see section 3, recommendations 1, 3 and 4 for further details.**
- ➢ We assessed whether this was robust and fit for purpose with sufficient contact between the College and the potential student during the period. **See section 3, recommendations 2 for further details.**
- ➢ We considered whether this is in line with what we have seen at our other college clients.

Objective 3: Responsibility for student recruitment is clearly defined throughout the College.
- ➢ We established those involved and responsible for the student recruitment process.
- ➢ We established whether the roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood by staff and potential students.

Objective 4: The arrangements in place for gaining information in relation to courses, and access to support is well communicated and easily accessible by potential students.
- ➢ We discussed the arrangements in place for gaining information in relation to courses and access to support.
- ➢ We assessed this to ascertain whether this is well communicated and easily accessible by potential students.
- ➢ We reviewed the website and other mediums to ensure that the information contained within these in relation to course information and support is accurate and well communicated to potential students.

Objective 5: The College has sufficient, generic as well as targeted marketing campaigns to raise the awareness of its courses, support, and facilities to potential students.
- ➢ We discussed the marketing campaigns the College runs to advertise and raise awareness of its courses.
- ➢ We evaluated these to assess whether these are having the desired impact on student recruitment.
- ➢ We also assessed how the College monitors the success of these campaigns.

Objective 6: Methods of feedback (for both staff and students) are in place at the College regarding the recruitment process which contribute to the evaluation process.
- ➢ We discussed the methods of feedback used by the College to assess its recruitment process. **We have raised a recommendation in relation to this – see section 3, recommendation 5 for further details.**
- ➢ We obtained and assessed the available feedback.
- ➢ We established and assessed how this feedback shapes the future recruitment process.
- ➢ We assessed whether the College has a recruitment debrief prior to the start of the new recruitment year to ensure that it is learning from lessons learnt from the previous year's recruitment process.

Conclusion

Overall conclusion

Overall Conclusion: Substantial
We can provide a substantial level of assurance over the College's student recruitment process. We acknowledge that this is an area that the College are reviewing and in the process of improving at present. We have raised 5 recommendations, 3 of which have been graded as medium and 2 as low grade. It should be noted that the main themes of our findings were: • Overarching policies and procedures; • Communications with applicants/students; • System capabilities and functionality; and • Standard practices across both sectors and campuses.   We have also raised 4 good practice points.

Summary of recommendations

Grading of recommendations				
	High	**Medium**	**Low**	**Total**
Student Recruitment	0	3	2	5

As can be seen from the above table there were no recommendations made which we have given a grading of high.

Areas of good practice

The following is a list of areas where the College is operating effectively and following good practice.	
1.	The College undertakes a survey each year on the recruitment and enrolment process, with the findings from this informing the next year's recruitment and enrolment.
2.	The Marketing Department have a programme of recruitment campaigns which takes place between February and August each year. This employs a variety of mediums to advertise and promote the College.
3.	The Marketing and Communications Department evaluate their campaigns via a question included in the application form to ascertain how the applicant heard of the College. They also undertake a student communications survey to assess the main methods of communication the students use.
4.	The Senior Management Team have been given media training to enable them to speak about education to the media, i.e., to be interviewed or give a statement on camera. It is hoped that by giving the SMT the tools and training to enable them to speak on camera, the profile of the College will be raised.

We include for your reference comparative benchmarking data of the number and ranking of recommendations made for audits of a similar nature in the most recently finished internal audit year.

Student Recruitment

Benchmarking				
	High	**Medium**	**Low**	**Total**
Average number of recommendations in similar audits	0	4	2	6
Number of recommendations at West College Scotland	0	3	2	5

From the table above it can be seen that the College has a lower number of recommendations compared to those colleges it has been benchmarked against.

Standard Practice Across Sectors and Campuses			
Ref.	Finding and Risk	Grade	Recommendation
1.	There should be a standard process across the Sectors and campuses for short listing of applications and the recording of the interview process. From our review we found that at present the Curriculum Administration seems to be done by campus rather than sector. Some of the sectors have different ways of operating depending on the campus they are based. As a result of this an applicant could be offered an interview or place on the same course but located at the different campuses. The Curriculum Administration staff within each campus do not always know what courses are full at the different campuses. We also found that there was no standard process across the Sectors and campuses for processing applications. In some sectors/campuses the Curriculum Administration review all applications to ensure these meet the entrance criteria, with the Curriculum Administration able to make an offer to the applicant if they meet the criteria (this is for	**Medium**	We recommend that a standard practice is put in place across all Sectors and campuses. This should include a standard process for short listing applications as well as all Sectors using the UNIT-e system to record interviews. We also recommend that the Curriculum Administration is done on a Sector basis irrespective of which campus the course is being offered. This would allow the applicant to be offered the most appropriate location for them. It would also enable one interview to be undertaken for the same course in the different campuses.

	those applications which do not require an interview). For other Sectors/campuses it is the Curriculum Quality Leaders (CQLs) who do this task. There is a risk that the application process is not the most efficient and effective due to the different ways of doing things between sectors and campuses. There is also a risk that some sectors may be in competition with the same sector in different campuses.	
Management response		**Responsibility and implementation date**
The College accepts the recommendation and is currently reviewing the shortlisting and recording of interview process. The aim of the review is to ensure a standard practice is adopted across all Sectors irrespective of which campus undertakes the work.		*Responsible Officer:* Vice Principal Educational Leadership *Implementation Date:* 31 October 2022

Overarching Policy and Procedure

Ref.	Finding and Risk	Grade	Recommendation
2.	There should be an overarching procedure which captures the process from application to enrolment. This will ensure that all the staff involved in the process will be aware of their role and how these fit into the process. This will also help identify any issues with the process in place and how this will impact on other departments and staff within the process. From our review we found that there were some documented procedures/guidance in respect of certain aspects of the application to enrolment process. We found that there was not an overarching set of procedures which documented the whole process from application to enrolment. There is a potential for staff not to fully realise how their part of the process impacts on another part of the process. We also found that there are no documented timescales for each part of the process to be completed. This could result in inefficient processes being put in place.	**Medium**	We recommend that the College produce an overarching set of procedures which encompass the whole applications to enrolment process. In this way everyone involved in the process will be made aware of their role and how it fits into the overall process. These should also include: • documented timeframes for each step of the process; • the medium by which the College corresponds with the applicants/students (SMS messaging, MyDays etc); and • the frequency of communications with applicants/students. We also recommend that the College consider preparing a process map for the whole recruitment process from application to enrolment.

	There is a risk that the College's applications and enrolment arrangements are not efficient or effective which could result in a loss of students. There is also a risk that staff are not aware of how their actions will impact on other parts of the applications and enrolment process.		
Management response		**Responsibility and implementation date**
Based upon the output from the current review, the College will produce a Recruitment Procedure. The procedure will include a recruitment process map which will show indicative timeframes for each step of the process.		*Responsible Officer:* Vice Principal Educational Leadership *Implementation Date:* 31 October 2022

Capability, Functionality and Use of the System			
Ref.	Finding and Risk	Grade	Recommendation
3.	There should be a way for the College to monitor the time taken for the applicant to complete the application journey through to enrolment to assess where the backlog and pressure points are, if any. We requested a report to show time taken from application to complete the recruitment journey but were informed that the system does not have an audit trail of the journey of each step as this would require to be taken each time an applicant's status is changed. We were provided with a report showing the date the application was received and the date of the last update to the status. We were also informed that there is not a College wide standard practice for interviews and that not all Sectors use the UNIT-e system to record the interviews. Thus, the information for interviews to issuing an offer could not be provided. The College was also unable to provide a report on the time taken to accept an offer. When the interview has been completed and the outcome requires to be recorded this is manually entered into the UNIT-e system by the Curriculum Administration staff.	**Medium**	We recommend that the College review the capability and functionality of the system used to establish whether it would be able to provide an audit trail and reports on the time taken from the application being received through to interview, acceptance of an offer and enrolment. We also recommend that the College investigate whether the outcomes from the interviews can be uploaded directly to the UNIT-e system via the interview spreadsheet.

	There is a risk that long time lags are not being noticed or addressed due to the lack of reporting on these. There is also an increased risk of errors due to the way in which the interview outcomes are recorded in the UNIT-e system.	
Management response		**Responsibility and implementation date**
The College will review the UNIT-e system capabilities to assess whether: a) It can provide a time stamped audit trail and reports on the time taken from the application being received through to interview, acceptance of an offer and enrolment. b) The interview outcomes can be uploaded directly to the UNIT-e system via the interview spreadsheet or amend the input process to be done at source. The College has developed a PowerBI Management Information report which tracks the student progress from application to enrolment. This is a new report and will assist in monitoring and taking forward the implementation of this recommendation. The information is time stamped and holds data which can subsequently be built into the management reporting.		*Responsible Officer:* Vice Principal Educational Leadership *Implementation Date:* 31 October 2022

Number of Status Codes Used in the Application to Enrolment Process			
Ref.	Finding and Risk	Grade	Recommendation
4.	The status allocated to the stages of the application journey from application to enrolment should be sufficient for staff to know exactly at what stage the application is in the process. The number of statuses available for this purpose should be sufficient and succinct to ensure that staff are using the correct status code in a consistent manner. From our review of the status codes available for use in the process we found that the College had originally around 102 but these had been reduced to 66 as part of the January enrolment pilot. From our work at other colleges, we found that they tend to have a much lower number of status codes in use for each stage of the process. These range from between 15 to 20 codes, which is a more manageable number for staff to ensure that they are consistently using the same code. There is a risk that staff from across the College are not consistently using the same and/or code for the individual stages of the application journey.	**Low**	We recommend that the College consider reducing the number of status available for staff to use from the current level of 66 to a lower more manageable number.

Management response	Responsibility and implementation date
The College will review the recruitment status indicators with the aim to reduce the number from the current level of 66 to a lower more manageable number. The application tracking report referred to in recommendation (3) has indicated that the number of statuses can be reduced to five. The steps / statuses remain in the system but there is a project underway to consolidate these steps for greater efficiency and student experience.	*Responsible Officer:* Assistant Principal Student Life & Skills *Implementation Date:* 31 October 2022

Feedback			
Ref.	Finding and Risk	Grade	Recommendation
5.	There should be follow up exercises undertaken with those students who have applied but not enrolled at the College and those students who have enrolled but did not attend the College. This will help identify any issues in the process and help to alert the College to any potential trends in relation to students enrolling. From review and discussion with the Vice Principal and Assistant Principal we were informed that the College does not routinely contact those students who have accepted an offer but not enrolled or those who have enrolled but not attended the College. The College does undertake surveys of the students attending the College to obtain their feedback on their experience of the recruitment and enrolment process. From our review we found that for 2021/22 the Marketing Team undertook a survey of students who did not attend or who attended the College only briefly. Included in this was some students who had applied but did not enrol and those who	**Low**	We recommend that as part of the annual review of the recruitment, application and enrolment process, the College continues to undertake a follow up on any applicants who have applied but have not completed their application, did not enrol or who enrolled but did not attend. The results of this exercise should be used to inform any improvements to the current practices.

	enrolled but did not attend. This was a one-off exercise and is not routinely undertaken by the Marketing Team every year. There is a risk that there is insufficient follow up procedures for applicants that have not ultimately enrolled or started their course, with no process in place to determine lessons learnt from this to rectify in future years.	

Management response	Responsibility and implementation date
The College will undertake a review of the 2022-23 recruitment, application and enrolment process which will include the creation of an action plan. As part of the review a specific piece of work will be undertaken to get feedback from applicants who have applied but have not completed their application, did not enrol or who enrolled but did not attend. A report will be presented to the Senior Management Team along with the action plan. There are also withdrawal reasons being built into the new management information system reports which will allow staff to effectively review and analysis the data.	*Responsible Officer:* Vice Principal Educational Leadership *Implementation Date:* 31 January 2023

The following is a list of observations from our review	
1.	The public facing website is one of the main sources of information for potential students to the College, thus it should be easy to navigate and find the necessary information as well as containing sufficient information on the various courses and facilities to enable the applicant to make an informed decision. From our review of the public facing website, we found that some improvements had been made to this since our External Communications audit in April 2021. However, we found that this contains basic information about the course. From our work at other colleges, we have seen that their websites contain case studies and testimonials from past and present students about the courses and facilities at these colleges. This is a good way to provide additional information to potential applicants. As we have already raised a recommendation regarding the College's public facing website in our External Communications Report (April 2021), and that the College are still working on implementing this, we have not raised another recommendation in this report.

The table below details the actual dates for our fieldwork and the reporting on the audit area under review. The timescales set out below will enable us to present our final report at the next Audit Committee meeting.

Audit stage	Date
Fieldwork start	21 March 2022
Closing meeting	31 March 2022
Draft report issued	14 April 2022
Receipt of management responses	28 April 2022
Final report issued	5 May 2022
Audit Committee	18 May 2022
Number of audit days	5 days

We detail below our staff who undertook the review together with the College's staff we spoke to during our review.

Wylie & Bisset LLP			
Partner	Graham Gillespie	Partner	graham.gillespie@wyliebisset.com
Senior Manager	Stephen Pringle	Senior Internal Audit Manager	stephen.pringle@wyliebisset.com
Supervisor	Audrey Cowan	Internal Audit Supervisor	audrey.cowan@wyliebisset.com
Auditor	Cameron Dyer	Internal Auditor	cameron.dyer@wyliebisset.com

West College Scotland			
Key Contacts	Stephanie Graham	Vice Principal	stephanie.graham@wcs.ac.uk
	Iain Forster-Smith	Assistant Principal Student Life and Skills	iain.forster-smith@wcs.ac.uk
	Nathan Tyler	Director of Communications and Marketing	Nathan.tyler@wcs.ac.uk
	Fiona McLaren	Marketing and Publications Manager	fiona.mclaren@wcs.ac.uk
	We spoke to members of the Curriculum Administration Teams and Student Advisory Services.		

	We spoke to 2 CQLs and 2 Head of sector to get their input to the process.
	Wylie & Bisset appreciates the time provided by all the individuals involved in this review and would like to thank them for their assistance and co-operation.

APPENDICES

For each area of review, we assign a level of assurance in accordance with the following classification:

Assurance	Classification
Strong	Controls satisfactory, no major weaknesses found, no or only minor recommendations identified.
Substantial	Controls largely satisfactory although some weaknesses identified, recommendations for improvement made.
Weak	Controls unsatisfactory and major systems weaknesses identified that require to be addressed immediately.
No	No or very limited controls in place leaving the system open to significant error or abuse, recommendations made require to be implemented immediately.

For each recommendation we assign a grading either as High, Medium, or Low priority depending on the degree of risk assessed as outlined below:

Grading	Classification
High	Major weakness that we consider needs to be brought to the attention of the Audit Committee and addressed by Senior Management of the College as a matter of urgency.
Medium	Significant issue or weakness which should be addressed by the College as soon as possible.
Low	Minor issue or weakness reported where management may wish to consider our recommendation.

Purpose of review

We shall undertake a review of the arrangements in place surrounding student recruitment. Our review will consider the suitability of the arrangements for gaining information in relation to courses, access to support, and course enrolment to ensure that the student experience is effective. We will also review the suitability of the policies and procedures in place surrounding student recruitment.

This assignment forms part of our 2021/22 Annual Internal Audit Plan.

Scope of review

Our objectives for this review are to ensure:

➢ The College has robust policies and procedures in place surrounding student recruitment.

➢ The College has robust mechanisms in place with clear links between application, interview, acceptance, and enrolment to ensure it manages student recruitment and enrolment in an efficient and effective manner.

➢ Responsibility for student recruitment is clearly defined throughout the College.

➢ The arrangements in place for gaining information in relation to courses, and access to support is well communicated and easily accessible by potential students.

➢ The College has sufficient, generic as well as targeted marketing campaigns to raise the awareness of its courses, support, and facilities to potential students.

➢ Methods of feedback (for both staff and students) are in place at the College regarding the recruitment process which contribute to the evaluation process.

Limitation of scope

There are no limitations of scope.

Audit approach

Our approach to the review will be:

➢ Obtain and review any policies and procedures in respect of the recruitment process at the College. We shall evaluate these to ensure that these are robust and fit for purpose. We shall establish where the College has a process map detailing the student's recruitment journey.

➢ Discussion with key personnel the current recruitment process from application stage to enrolment. Assess whether this is robust and fit for purpose with sufficient contact between the College and the potential student during the period. We shall consider whether this is in line with what we have seen at our other college clients.

➢ Discussion with key personnel to establish those involved and responsible for the student recruitment process. We shall establish whether the roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood by staff and potential students.

➢ Discussion with key personnel to establish the arrangements in place for gaining information in relation to courses, and access to support. We shall assess this to ascertain whether this is well communicated and easily accessible by potential students. We shall sample test a sample of course information held on the website with that recorded in the course plans to make sure that the information on the website is accurate. We shall also review the website and other mediums to ensure that the information contained within these in relation to support is accurate and well communicated to potential students.

➢ We shall discuss the marketing campaigns the College runs to advertise and raise awareness of its courses. We shall evaluate these to assess whether these are having the desired impact on student recruitment. We shall also assess how the College monitors the success of these campaigns.

➢ We shall discuss the methods of feedback used by the College to assess its recruitment process. We shall obtain and assess the available feedback. We shall establish and assess how this feedback shapes the future recruitment process. We shall assess whether the College has a

recruitment debrief prior to the start of the new recruitment year to ensure that it is learning from lessons learnt from the previous year's recruitment process.

Potential key risks

The potential key risks associated with the area under review are:

➢ The College may have poor arrangements in place which can result in negative feedback, impacting future applications.

➢ The College does not have robust mechanisms in place with clear links between application, interview, acceptance, and enrolment which could result in the recruitment process not being managed in an efficient and effective manner. This could have an impact on the number of students recruited.

➢ There are no clear lines of accountability for student recruitment and responsibilities are not clearly defined which could result in staff being unclear in their roles and responsibilities which could have a negative impact of the student experience.

➢ The arrangements in place for gaining information in relation to courses, and access to support is not well communicated and is not easily accessible by potential students, which could result in the College losing potential students.

➢ The College's marketing campaigns are ineffective and to not raise the awareness of its courses, support, and facilities to potential students, which could result in poor recruitment figures.

➢ The College has ineffective measures in place for obtaining feedback from staff, students, and student representatives. This therefore reduces the opportunity to improve the service provided by the College.

WEST COLLEGE SCOTLAND

Meeting	Learning Teaching and Quality
Date	23rd February 2022
Location	MS Teams
Title of Paper	ELT update
Presented By	Stephanie Graham
Recommendation to Members	For information
Appendix Attached	No

PURPOSE

To provide LTQ with a high-level summary of items of note for areas covered by the Educational Leadership Team since the last meeting.

1. Staffing

Assistant Principal Rob Aitken retired at the end of April. A new Assistant Principal for Technology and Skills has been appointed. Dr Lee Coutts who currently works at Strathclyde University will start on 20th June.

Voluntary Severance was offered in a targeted way to two curriculum areas due to overstaffing. This resulted in a reduction in staffing in the Hairdressing, Beauty and Make Up Artistry Sector of 2 FTE.

A further College wide voluntary severance offer closed on 11th May and staff savings across teaching and support areas. In addition to this, some teaching staff relocations and retirements will make further savings. In order to facilitate VS and savings, staff have been exceptionally flexible in moving campuses or departments.

Following a pilot change to managing applications, a consultation is about to start into changes to our Curriculum Administration support. The proposal is for a team of Recruitment and Admissions Administrators who will work for Sectors in a cross-campus way rather than campus specific. Other Administration staff will be deployed to support curriculum administration through alignment with other staff departments.

2. Industrial Action by EIS

Current national industrial action by EIS continues to impact on our College to a greater extent than many other colleges. To date we have had 7 days of strike action. On the last day of action (17th May) there were 298 lecturers on strike and 167 working (we have 582 lecturers in total but many are part-time and not due to work on the day of the strike). There are 14 more days of strike planned, although 6 of these are when most of our lecturers will have started their summer holidays.

In addition to strikes, EIS are following a programme of 'action short of strike'. This action threatens to delay student marking and prevent student results being input into the College MIS system. We are working with other Colleges with high industrial action participation to consider mitigations and challenges to this action. We are also in discussions with our own EIS Branch Officials.

3. Estates adaptations to meet curriculum needs

Work is underway to create more workshop space in Clydebank to better meet the increase in Engineering apprentices and demand for Construction courses for 2022-23. This involves changes to the ground floor accommodation and the removal of staff workrooms to create teaching space. Staff are to be relocated into other spaces in the building.

In order to increase Construction capacity in Paisley, the canteen is being repurposed.   Alternative canteen facilities are being planned to suit the revised catering offer. At present these plans are being finalised.

4. Curriculum Planning

Plans are well underway for the 2022-23 curriculum. Significant efficiencies have been made in planned delivery through merging of classes for some delivery, cross campus delivery and utilising online learning.

Final draft timetables are due to be completed in the beginning of June. Curriculum delivery for next session is utilising the developments and successes of online delivery gained through the last two years, as well as planning increased campus activity to maximise student engagement and participation. The amount of on and off campus delivery will vary depending on curriculum and level of students. The model is curriculum and student need led. As an indication of plans, many areas are planning a 70% on campus 30% online patten of delivery for their full-time courses.

5. Enterprise and Skills

The UK Community Renewal Fund (CRF)

Since the beginning of the year, WCS have been working with a range of national and local partners and stakeholders to deliver four CRF projects (three of which, are led by us and one led by Inverclyde Council). Aligning with the aims of CRF -to develop local growth, target people most in need, support community renewal and contribute towards net zero- we have developed a suite of activity aimed at supporting local people in Inverclyde and West Dunbartonshire enter social care and sub-sectors of the marine economy; as well as build the skills and enterprise of local businesses.

Originally scheduled to be delivered by the end of June, the UK Government has extended implementation for all UK projects through to the end of the year. This will maximise our opportunity to deliver c.£1m of training and skills development to local jobseekers and businesses, through our Care Academy and Neptune project; incorporating marine engineering training and

upskilling, Activity Tourism, Digital Tourism support for local SMEs, Net Zero consultancy support and enterprise workshops for local people looking to start their own business.

WCS Erasmus Enterprise visit to Holland

6 Students from West College Scotland have travelled to South Holland for an entrepreneurial focused programme (Wednesday 11th May – Friday 27th May 2022), co-ordinated and managed by our partner in Enterprise- Young Enterprise Scotland (YES). The students and YES staff are visiting the Dutch Foundation of Innovation Welfare 2 Work, in Papendrecht, South Holland, Netherlands.

During the first week, WCS students have begun their 'Entrepreneurial Journey', where they have listened to some inspiring conversations from the founder and CEO -Pieter van Schie MA, and techniques to enhance their entrepreneurship goals. The students have also had the opportunity to pitch their ideas on how they can collaborate with fellow Dutch students and entrepreneurs and create and plan their own business concept. From this, WCS students -Astyn and Ainsley, have established the first official entrepreneurial partnership of the programme. On week 2, the group will visit The Hague and enterprise facilitator -Area 71; where WCS students will also partner up with successful entrepreneurs and collaborate on an assignment.

Enterprise Portfolio

The Development Funding team has been working with our enterprise partner- Young Enterprise Scotland (YES), to enhance the range of activities we can offer to students to develop their enterprise and entrepreneurial skills. The Bridge to Business Plus programme is being delivered in partnership with college faculties and includes dedicated support to our students. Students have also the opportunity to participate in enterprise challenges and competitions, including the Enterprise Initiative, Social Innovators Challenge and the development of Young Women In Business (Female Boss) programme.

Our aim is that our Bridge to Business Plus programme for WCS students, will complement our community enterprise project developed and funded by Community Renewal Fund. WCS 'Art of Enterprise' project is scheduled to begin mid- June, when 12 local people (from Inverclyde), with a good business idea, will receive expert entrepreneurial support and mentorship through a series of workshops. The project is to be delivered in partnership with Inverclyde Trust at the iconic Dutch Gable House in Greenock.

UK Government Turing Programme

Further to Brexit and the end of UK access to Erasmus mobilities programme, the UK Government has launched the Turing Scheme. The scheme will provide funding for UK organisations from the higher education, further

education, vocational education and training and schools sectors to offer their students, learners and pupils experiences to study or work abroad. The most recent application process for the Turing scheme closed on April 29th, and the Development Funding team worked with Business and Hospitality and Motor Vehicle departments to apply for funds for three separate visits, to Denmark and Cyprus, for 22 students accompanied by 4 staff. If successful, the college will receive £53,501 to support student visits from next Academic Year.

SDS Women into STEM
WCS continues to lead on our development project with Forth Valley College, Equate Scotland and a range of STEM employers. We will deliver SDS Equalities and Women into STEM Action Plan, benchmarking equalities outcomes across years and Scotland's college sector. In February and March, our project worked with 57 pupils from 9 schools (including 5 from West College region), to help them create STEM marketing media that would appeal to their peer group. We have received input from employers and stakeholders and feedback at our showcase event was very positive.
We also supported our project partner -Equate Scotland, to deliver insight sessions for 11 employers & 21 apprentices, from across Scotland. Further insight on how to improve the apprentice experience for young women has been captured in an employer survey of 14 companies. An Interim Report has been submitted to SDS and shared with stakeholders. This outlines delivery activity for the first year of the project

1. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**
   Voluntary Severance, staff realignment and curriculum change has contributed to budget savings.

2. **STUDENT EXPERIENCE**
   Industrial action continues to impact on many of our students. We continue to communicate with students and work to minimise disruption, where this is possible.

3. **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**
   Through voluntary severance and staff realignment, financial savings have been made for 2022-23. The Curriculum Administration realignment is designed to improve efficiencies and the impact of the Administration staff resource.

4. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**
   There are no legal implications in this update

5. **REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**
   There are no particular reputational implications in this update

6. COMMUNITY/PARTNERSHIP IMPACT
There are no particular community/partnership implications in this update

7. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS
There are no particular equalities implications in this update

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS
There are no particular environmental implications in this update

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RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is requested to:

Note the information contained within this report and seek any clarification as required.

Quality Standards Committee
03 February 2022
Via Microsoft Teams

WEST COLLEGE SCOTLAND

Present:

Cathy MacNab (Chair)	Assistant Principal
Abbie McGrath	Student Association President
Chris Haldane	Student Experience Co-ordinator
Fiona McKenzie	Head Learning Communities
Gary McIntyre	Organisational Development Manager
Isobel Lightbody	CQL Childhood Practice
Jackie McLellan	Head Care
Janise Maxwell	CEL Hairdressing & Make-up Artistry
Jim McAllister	Head Hospitality, Tourism, Languages & Business
Johanne Porter	Quality Standards Co-ordinator
John Redman	Head Quality & Professional Standards
Kirsty Kenney	Quality Standards Co-ordinator
Lesley Clark	Quality Standards Co-ordinator
Lorna Smith	TEL Social Science

Apologies:

Caroline Cullen	CEL Beauty
Fiona Goggins	Quality Assurance & Examinations Manager
Paul McLaughlin	Head Creative & Digital Industries
Robin Chandler	Stakeholder Experience Co-ordinator
Susan Carton	Lecturer Business
Suzanne Thompson	QEL Science

Item	Action	Responsibility
1	**Welcome and apologies**	
	C MacNab welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted as above. G McIntyre in attendance to provide an update on teaching staff professional standards and CPD. Gary will also be joining the committee as a member going forward.	
2	**Minute and actions arising from last meeting – 18 November 2021**	
	Actions noted as complete and minute approved without amendment.	
	Update on curriculum strategy to be added to the next agenda (5th May).	C MacNab
3	**Approvals for session 2021-2022**	
	J Redman talked through the list of approvals being sought, which had been uploaded to the QSC team site, and explained the reason behind each approval.	
	Approval by committee members was provided.	
	C MacNab requested detail of the SCQF level be included on the approval list going forward.	J Redman

Item	Action	Responsibility

4   **Awarding Body Update**

K Kenney gave a brief update on the preparations for Internal Quality Assurance Panels (IQAs). It was noted that several curriculum areas were returning to unit-by-unit styles of assessment, as we move back to post Covid 'business as normal'. Consequently, the number of IQA panels required may be less, as more awarding bodies return to direct external verification activities.

It is currently SQAs intention to go ahead with national examinations this year and revision support will be issued for learners in due course. If this changes, SQA will notify the College of the alternative arrangements.

F McKenzie enquired what the final date for SQA exams was, as this has an impact on inductions for school/college partnership courses. It was noted the final date is Wednesday 1st June 2022.

5   **Student Association Update**

A McGrath gave a brief update on themes / projects the Student Association is currently focused on. These included promoting LGBTQ month via social media; planned National Numeracy Day campaign; 5k a day communal event cross campus and with other Colleges.

Board member Gordon Hunt has kindly offered to mentor A McGrath and the Student Association. C MacNab commented that this was a great opportunity for development and thanked Gordon for the offer which is gratefully accepted.

6   **Future remit and structure of the Quality Standards Committee**

Members were asked to consider whether, or not, the current format of the QSC met its aims and provided appropriate coverage and reporting lines into the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee. C MacNab presented a suggestion for the establishment of two sub-groups (1. Learning Teaching and Assessment and 2. Equity), each of which would monitor the quality of Learning, Teaching and Assessment and separately, assuring Equity in the Student Experience. Members were of the view that there is already sufficient evidence of quality available through existing planning and evaluation processes, namely, CPR, Portfolio Review and Operational Planning. C MacNab will use this feedback for further discussion with colleagues in the Educational Leadership Team.   CMacNab

7   **Accessibility, EQIA and Course Design**
        Accessibility

C MacNab informed the committee that the Accessibility Project Action Group, set up in 2019/2020 to action changes required as part of the EU Directive on Accessibility, will be merging with the Digital Workstream. The Digital Workstream was set-up during the pandemic to address issues raised by the move to online learning, working from home, etc. The joint group will meet for the first time in late February. It is hoped this approach will help streamline activity.

Item	Action	Responsibility

Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

All teaching, learning and assessment materials must be reviewed to ensure that the needs of all students are anticipated and considered. An EQIA is already in place as part of the evidence provided for new course approvals. This now needs to include materials in more established courses. The Quality Department will issue an action plan of how this EQIA process will be embedded over the next three academic sessions.

J Redman

Skills Development of Students

Early consideration is taking place via a Skills Project Group, as to how the College can ensure adequate and relevant meta-skills are embedded in course design and delivery, and specifically how personalised skills development is recognised and articulated by students. The College Essential Skills Team are leading on this work and have engaged with the Scottish Government Improvement Hub who will support the project in a 'critical friend' capacity.

C MacNab

8   Teaching Staff Professional Standards and CPD

G McIntyre gave a brief update on GTCS registration. 262 staff have been invited to register with GTC during Phase One. GTC plan to commence Phase Two in April 2022, establishing a national pathway to registration for staff who do not hold a recognised teaching qualification.

It was noted that some of the 262 staff may already be registered with GTCs in a non-FE capacity and currently the College does not have a way of identifying this. GTCs are aware of the need to provide information on staff who have pre-established rights to registration due to holding different types of teaching qualifications and the Committee acknowledged how complex this issue is.

C MacNab advised that the Teaching in Colleges Today (TICT) qualification will now be offered at levels 7 and 8. Further information on enrolment and support for staff will be issued in due course.

It was noted that there are currently 25 members of staff going through TQFE with Aberdeen University.

As of February 2022, the College has 83 new members of staff on the new national teaching contract. This contract includes one extra hour (pro rate) for undertaking additional duties such as class cover and internal verification. An internal verification training module is in development to support an identified need in staff new to the College and will be rolled out before the end of this session.

J Redman

C MacNab informed the committee that more teaching observers are required to support increased numbers of staff undertaking accredited qualifications (TQFE, PDA and TiCT). Dr John Laird, our College HMIE, has offered to provide training in observation practice and in supporting post lesson professional dialogue. An offer will be made for promoted teaching staff to undertake this training as part of their ongoing professional development.

Item	Action	Responsibility

Item **Action** **Responsibility**

C Haldane raised the need for support to help staff with a more hybrid model of working. G McIntyre advised that a 'baseline standard' was being devised as part of My Conversations and will be issued once ready. C MacNab to take note and pass this suggestion to the Digital Workstream.

C MacNab

9 **Complaints Handling – staff training update**

The new online development of learning package for complaints handling is progressing well. There are two main drivers behind the training update. The first being as a result of the public sector revised complaints handling policy which requires all staff awareness training on complaints. The second driver is recognition of a need to ensure at a practical level, that all follow the procedure in dealing with a complaint. It is hoped this will help increase the speed at which complaints are dealt with and resolved, and also reduce the resource intensive burden of complaints that are escalated to investigation stage.

J Redman to feedback on progress at the next meeting.

J Redman

10 **Internal Verification Procedure**

J Redman advised that the committee's comments at the last meeting were taken on board and the draft procedure was amended. The procedure has now been finalised / approved and is available on the intranet.

11 **AOB**

Class Representative Unit E Identification Flag

A joint initiative between the Quality Department and the WCS Student Association is proposed to improve the capture and sharing of student representative details across the College campuses and departments. In order to capture live information on class reps centrally, a new 'tick' box on Unit E registers is being proposed. Course leaders will identify the nominated class rep and an automatic notification will be sent to the Student Association. It is hoped this will help to boost ongoing support for class reps and make sure contact is maintained to effectively capture student views.

Discussion ensued and it was agreed that J Redman would look at how information on progress is considered and communicated to CQLs and reps.

J Redman

Portfolio Review

C MacNab advised that portfolio review paperwork will have minimal change this session, with a continued focus on assuring and enhancing the quality of learning and teaching and assessment. It is hoped that all course evaluation activities will be closed off by all CQLs by the end of June 2022, pending final student outcome Performance Indicators being confirmed.

Members of the last Portfolio Review PAG will be approached shortly with some proposals.

C MacNab

14 **Date of Next Meeting**
- Thursday 5th May at 3pm via MS Teams

WEST COLLEGE SCOTLAND

Meeting	Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee
Date	25 May 2022
Location	MS Teams
Title of Paper	Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee - Dates of Meetings in 2022-23
Presented By	Mark Newlands, Chair
Recommendation to Members	The Committee is asked to consider and approve its dates of meetings in 2022-23.
Appendix Attached	No

PURPOSE
To consider and approve its dates of meetings in 2022-23.

1. **BACKGROUND**

1.1   The Committee is asked to consider and approve its 2022/23 meeting dates

At the Board meeting held on 21 March 2022, the Board approved its meeting dates for the 2022/23 session.   That let the standing committee chairs / senior officers consider a programme of dates for their respective committees and the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee meeting dates for 2022/23 have been agreed as follows:

- Wednesday 26 October 2022 – 4 till 6pm
- Wednesday 30 November 2022 – 4 till 6pm
- Wednesday 15 February 2023 – 4 till 6pm
- Wednesday 31 May 2023 – 4 till 6pm

2. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

2.1   There are no financial implications in this report.

3. **STUDENT EXPERIENCE**

3.1   There are no student experience implications associated with this report.

4.   HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

4.1   There are no human resources implications associated with this report.

5.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1   There are no legal implications in this report.

6.   REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1   There are no reputational implications associated with this report.

7.   COMMUNITY/PARTNERSHIP IMPACT

7.1   There are no community implications associated with this report.

8.   EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.1   There are no equality implications associated with this report.

9.   ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

9.1   There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is asked to consider and approve its dates of meetings in 2022-23.