

Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board

Self-Evaluation Report on Regional Effectiveness

69,000
learners



2,300
staff



£170m
expenditure



Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science Richard Lochhead meets with Glasgow College Region Board members and senior staff

“

It is clear that regional collaboration is reaping great results for Glasgow's students and colleges. The advantages of a regional approach are creating opportunities that benefit learners, their future employers and the city's economy as a whole. I look forward to working with GCRB to realise the government's ambitions for college education in Glasgow.

”

Richard Lochhead MSP



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Chair's Foreword

I am delighted to present this Regional Strategic Body self-evaluation report on regional effectiveness.

The Audit Scotland report '*Scotland's Colleges 2018*' recommended that the Scottish Government and Scottish Funding Council (SFC) should assess and publicly report on the extent to which Regional Strategic Boards are meeting the aims of regionalisation.

In Glasgow, we are progressing well towards achieving our ambition of being Scotland's most inclusive, responsive and effective regional college service. It is our pleasure to outline our significant progress in developing the capacity, structures and effective relationships needed to deliver the high quality and coherent college system that Glasgow and its learners deserve.



Janie McCusker, Chair of Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board



This self-evaluation report provides a review of the performance of the Glasgow College Region across three areas: regional planning and provision, regional performance and productivity, and regional partnerships and people. It evidences our work to use the powers and funding invested in us to build a consistent regional college provision, to align learning with jobs and Glasgow's economic growth, and to create wider access to life changing college education. Recent examples of our collective achievements include:

- working with the Glasgow colleges and regional stakeholders to develop Glasgow's first Regional Strategy for College Education;
- coordinating and delivering Regional Outcome Agreement goals, improving levels of learner attainment, successful progression into work or study, and access for learners from deprived postcodes and for those furthest from the labour market;
- increasing the alignment of skills training to employment needs, including significantly increasing the volume of childcare learning opportunities;
- improving business productivity through a regional approach to the Flexible Workforce Development Fund with more than 100 employers and nearly 5,000 employees successfully engaged in 2017/18;
- establishing a regional collaborative management structure, with Regional Leads for areas such as professional development, curriculum planning, student support, student data services and the Senior Phase;
- developing regional funding arrangements to align Glasgow's capital expenditure with areas of greatest regional need and to support regional efficiencies;
- initiating cross-region Board collaboration on issues such as risk management, GDPR, cyber-security and increasing diversity on boards; and
- implementing engagement structures which offer 'one door' access for our stakeholders.

And now, having built the governance, structures and collaborative culture that the college region needs, we are entering a more empowered and progressive phase during which our regional approach will impact even more positively on the lives of our learners, our colleges and on Glasgow's communities and economy.

Through our **2019-20 Programme of Action**, we will empower collaborative change, so that more Glasgow region residents succeed, achieve qualifications and improve their life chances. This second stage will intensify the impact of regionalisation; unlocking our collective potential and harnessing our combined strengths to realise our shared ambitions for Glasgow's learners, its colleges and for the city's future.

The Glasgow College Region represents just over one -fifth of all of Scotland's college education and I believe that GCRB, working closely with the Glasgow colleges, and supported by an appropriate level of funding, has the capacity and flexibility to contribute significantly to meeting the economic and social needs of Scotland's largest city region.

Our achievements are a direct result of committed collaboration between the GCRB, the colleges and all our stakeholders. On behalf of the Board, I'd like to thank all those who have contributed to our effective progress and all those who continue to work towards fulfilling our ambitions for Glasgow, its colleges and its learners.



Janie McCusker

GCRB Chair
May 2019



In 2017, Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board launched a five year Regional Strategic Plan for college education

Self-Evaluation of Effectiveness 1: Regional Planning and Provision

Relevant legislation:

- *Section 23E Regional strategic bodies: general duty*
- *Section 23F Regional strategic bodies: planning*
- *Section 23K Regional strategic bodies: improvement of economic and social well-being*
- *Section 23L Regional strategic body to have regard to particular matters*

Developing a Regional Strategic Plan for College Education

The Glasgow College Region has made significant progress in developing its strategic planning. Following extensive stakeholder consultation and input, in 2017 we launched a five year Regional Strategic Plan for College Education which will drive a regionally responsive curriculum that reacts effectively to changing economic and employment needs. Our strategy is:

- collaborative - informed and driven by the visions of employers, the Scottish Funding Council, Skills Development Scotland, Education Scotland, Glasgow City Council, the university sector, schools, and community groups.
- regional - building on our colleges' strengths and organises our services to address Glasgow's long-standing economic and social issues.
- ambitious – ensuring we make the biggest positive social and economic impact on life and lives in the Glasgow region.
- transformative - developed so that today's learners will be able to power our growing economy, reach their individual potential, and make valuable contributions to their communities.

Increased collaboration and coordination are at the heart of how we are delivering our strategy. Working more closely together, we are advancing an integrated regional curriculum, with each college offering a breadth and depth of inter-linked learning opportunities, developing skills, meeting the needs of employers and key industries, and supporting the growth of our regional economy. Our collective actions are intensifying our contribution to Glasgow's ambition to become the most productive major city economy in the UK.

Development Action:

The Board will place particular emphasis in its 2019-20 strategy session(s) on strengthening its shared strategic vision for the region

Source: 2019-20 GCRB Board Development Plan

Assessing Regional Needs

We have a wide range of mechanisms in place for establishing the needs of students and employers in our region. These include:

- consideration and review of reports on skills and employment demand at local, regional and national levels, including Regional Skills Assessments (RSAs), local authority and city region economic development strategies, national employment policy developments and research such as SPICe briefings;
- presentations at Regional Board and executive groupings on economic and social needs by leaders from bodies such as Skills Development Scotland, local authority Education Services, Education Scotland and the City-Region Skills Investment Group;
- participation in economic and skills planning bodies, such as the Glasgow City Partnership for Economic Growth and the City Region Skills and Employment Partnership;
- employer engagement activity at regional levels including engagement with employers, representative organisations, and the Chamber of Commerce;
- participation in regional Student Association groups and review of a range of regional and college student feedback information, including the national student satisfaction survey; and
- regular 'Regional Conversation' events focused on policy priorities and targeted at key internal and external stakeholders.

Development Action:

Continue to align our curriculum more closely to regional and national skills needs, with more of our delivery targeted at areas of employment growth

Source: 2019-20 Regional Programme of Action

Responding Coherently to Needs

The Glasgow region faces social, educational and economic challenges that must be addressed if the region and its residents are to fulfil their potential. Despite all the training and employment opportunities that the region offers, one third of Glasgow's households are still classed amongst Scotland's most deprived and a key priority of our strategy is to reach out to these households and widen access to life-changing college learning. Our new regional approach means that we can look at Glasgow's population as a whole, and collectively plan a provision that meets the needs of this city's complex, diverse and dynamic population. Without regional perspective and planning, we risk gaps in our provision and we risk the costs of wasted overlaps.

Through regional planning we have increased to almost 1/3, the volume of teaching activity delivered to learners residing in Scotland's 10% poorest neighbourhoods, directly tackling Glasgow's high levels of deprivation. In response to the higher than average levels of residents with low or no qualifications, we have increased the volume of our curriculum at Further Education levels.

Additionally, to bring colleges closer to people who are furthest from the labour market, we have increased the amount of learning we provide in community-based locations. These regional strategic shifts have been underpinned by college level Access and Inclusion strategies, enabling us to collectively respond more effectively to the many causes and effects of deprivation. Gender, age, ethnicity, health and disability, language, caring responsibilities and experience of being in care, all affect people's ability to access and benefit from education, and our systematic approach is allowing us to assess and address the scale and nature of these challenges and to work in partnership to help overcome them.



Jack Reidford, one of our Glasgow Region Foundation Apprentices

Development Actions:

Identify and tackle gender imbalances, increasing the minority gender share in each of the 10 largest and most imbalanced subject areas.

Establish a new proactive student support service for care experienced young people with the Action for Children charity, providing support beyond the college walls to learners who are most at risk of not completing their studies and of failing to meet their full potential.

Develop a joined-up and high-quality mental health and well-being service for students and staff which includes professionally-qualified Mental Health Services leadership capacity and an improved counselling offer.

Source: 2019-20 Regional Programme of Action

Delivering the Right Provision in the Right Place

To ensure the right provision in the right place across the region and that we make best possible use of colleges' resources and facilities, a five-year regional Curriculum and Estates plan was developed for 2015-2020.

This plan has provided a coherent framework for regional curriculum location changes, enabling us to reconfigure college activity levels and enhance the quality of the learning experience offered, maximising use of the newest accommodation and closing the poorest quality estate. An annual curriculum development cycle, aligned to Regional Outcome Agreement development activity, was established to underpin its implementation and delivery. In addition, a regional funding model was developed to provide a local funding methodology which responded more appropriately to the significant regional curriculum change. Significant outcomes from the 5-year plan include successfully transferring around 15,000 Credits of curriculum and related staff between the three colleges, aligning the curriculum more closely to identified economic demands, the closure of our poorest quality accommodation, and increasing provision in areas of greater deprivation and economic non-participation.

Annual college level targets set out within the Regional Outcome Agreement, continue ensure the right provision in the right place across the region, making best possible use of colleges' resources and facilities. This means that we can respond to regional skills needs with a regional provision – using colleges' specific and collective strengths – to create choices and opportunities for learners and employers and ensure our curriculum grows in line with the Glasgow region economy.

Development Action:

Create a new curriculum and resources plan for the Glasgow College Region, replacing the current 2015-2020 plan.

Source: 2019-20 Regional Programme of Action

Leading Skills Alignment

A core focus of our regional planning has been to deliver a regional curriculum and learning opportunities which meet employers' demands, supports inclusive economic growth, and provides learners with the qualifications and skills they need to build successful long-term careers.

To enable and support the planning of a regionally coherent curriculum which responds effectively to economic, employment and social needs, we have grouped regional curriculum activity into the following eight economic sectors:

- Administration, Financial & Business Services;
- Creative and Cultural Industries;
- Engineering, Construction & Manufacturing;
- Food, Drink, Tourism, Hospitality;
- Leisure Health, Care and Education;
- Land-Based Industries;

- Life and Chemical Sciences; and
- Transition and Supported Learning.

These groupings enable GCRB to evaluate the alignment of our skills training supply with employment and skills' needs, and based on these evaluations, to develop a curriculum plan which aligns to these identified needs.

Each year, GCRB leads a participative review of skills alignment and agrees Credit targets for these economic sector groupings both regionally and with the Glasgow colleges, to ensure that the curriculum continues to adapt and develop alignment with known economic, employment and social needs. Regional Curriculum Hubs corresponding to the above economic sectors have been established to support a partnership based approach to curriculum review activity. On an annual basis, Curriculum Hubs undertake evaluative reviews and consider each curriculum's areas alignment with regional economic and social needs, and the effectiveness of Glasgow region learners' journeys and outcomes.

The regional Curriculum Hubs have also worked to produce regional curriculum maps, which identify vocational progression pathways across the study options and employment opportunities within their economic sectors. Hub members have also developed common entry qualifications and a Regional Admissions Working Group of college admissions and guidance staff was established to support the development of a consistent approach to course applications.

Development Action:

Complete and report on our pilot to implement the 5-step skills planning model across Glasgow's skills training supply, delivered in partnership with Skills Development Scotland and the Scottish Funding Council.

Source: 2019-20 Regional Programme of Action

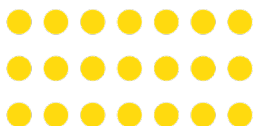
GCRB is also playing a lead role in improving skills alignment across the Glasgow City-Region, formed of eight local authority council areas. The grouping was established to secure one of the largest City Deals in the UK, with over £1 billion investment being made across the Glasgow City-Region in improved infrastructure, life sciences, business innovation and actions to tackle unemployment. To maximise the impact of this investment, GCRB has supported the development of a Skills Investment Plan for the City-Region. The final plan is accompanied by a set of actions for the first 12 months, and these incorporate specific contributions from the Glasgow College Regions, including:

- working with SDS to develop a 5-year Skills Training Plan for the Glasgow College Region;
- meeting Flexible Workforce Development Fund training targets for 2019-20;
- working with local authorities, to expand the number of Foundation Apprenticeships undertaken;
- increasing the number of people from disadvantaged backgrounds entering and completing qualifications;
- continuing to deliver enhanced levels of training in Early Education and Childcare;
- reviewing skills needs and the training offer for employment in the Tourism sector;
- delivering training opportunities which better meet the needs of the digital technology sector; and
- ensuring national funding arrangements take account of Glasgow City Region needs.

To support delivery of these actions, a city-region colleges group has been established with membership from across the West, Glasgow and Lanarkshire college regions, supported by GCRB, SFC and SDS.

GCRB's strategic ambitions are generally aligned well to the goals of the plan, and the plan has a strong focus on supporting inclusive economic growth and the importance of maximising the coherence and impact of the collective skills training provision within the region. GCRB are therefore integrating the Glasgow City-Region Skills Investment Plan into regional Board planning and funding considerations to support the Board in delivering the aims of the Skills Investment Plan.

“Glasgow Colleges’ Regional Board are a key member of the Glasgow City Region Skills and Employment Portfolio Group providing a much needed and valued college perspective in the implementation of the Regional Economic Strategy and Action plan. GCRB have been instrumental in the development of the Glasgow City Region Regional Skills Investment Plan and have also contributed to the review of the Regional Economic Strategy and production of revised draft actions and have helped to facilitate joint communication across three college regions. From a Glasgow City Region perspective, GCRB are a much valued key partner.”



Sandra Inrig
Senior Portfolio Development Officer (People)

Glasgow City Region

Exemplar Evaluation Evidence: Outcomes of Curriculum Hub Reviews of Skills Alignment (GCRB Regional Outcome Agreement 2018-19)



Cross cutting themes:

- The need to increase project based and interdisciplinary learning to support the transition to employment for college graduates
- A curriculum that is sufficiently agile to keep up with the key economic drivers for Glasgow and wider Scottish Government priorities
- The need to create an efficient learner journey from Senior Phase programme, College provision and then onwards to either further study or employment. This includes the range of FA's, GA's and Senior Phase programmes being offered.
- The need to tackle gender imbalances within sectors
- Harmonisation of entry requirements to ensure equity of access
- CPD for teaching staff to facilitate subject upskilling or new and innovative approaches for learning and teaching

Planning for Specific Provision

Regional planning and provision has ensured coherent and connected regional responses on specific provision, including:

- The development of **STEM provision** and pathways is a particular strategic priority for the Glasgow region's colleges. In 2016, Glasgow's colleges worked with the National Engineering Foundation (NEF) to develop individual college and regional STEM strategies. Our colleges are working with both employers and HE partners to develop efficient STEM pathways from school, through colleges and university, and on to employment. This is led and supported by a range of partners and complementary initiatives and builds on the success of early programmes such as the Engineering Scholarship. In 2019-20, we will publish a refreshed regional STEM strategy to increase further our contribution to the achievement of the Scottish Government's STEM Education and Training Strategy for Scotland.

Development Action:

Implement our refreshed regional STEM strategy and increase the proportion of learners undertaking STEM-related learning, ensuring our regional curriculum offer responds to the needs of the STEM economy.

Source: 2019-20 Regional Programme of Action

- Working with local authority partners, a **regional childcare expansion strategy** was developed to increase the volume, range and flexibility of college learning opportunities, to develop more online/blended learning approaches, to provide accelerated routes and staggered intakes across the calendar year and to align college training delivery to local authority childcare provision. Through our childcare expansion strategy, we have doubled the volume of childcare provision to meet the national policy objective of increasing the free childcare allowance from 600 hours to 1,140 hours by 2020.



A regional childcare expansion strategy was developed to meet the national objective of increasing free childcare

“*The councils, colleges and nurseries are working hard together to create an integrated training system to build a range of skills that the profession needs. Partnership will be a vital element in our success and the councils, Glasgow College Region and nurseries are already collaborating successfully to broaden the scale, and variety of their training and career development offer. Together we are building an early learning system that the Glasgow Region’s children, families and communities deserve.*”

Anne-Marie O'Donnell, Chief Executive of Glasgow City Council and Chair of Childcare Programme Board

“*It’s great to see that there won’t just be an increase in the volume of training available in the Glasgow College Region, but also an increase in the range and flexibility of college learning opportunities. We know that this will be crucial in enabling the sector to attract people from a wide range of backgrounds and circumstances into ELC careers.*”

Maree Todd, MSP and Minister for Childcare and Early Years

Development Action:

Increase the volume and range of childcare training opportunities, and develop new online learning resources, to deliver on the Scottish Government’s commitment to double the entitlement to free childcare.

Source: 2019-20 Regional Programme of Action

- In support of the priorities set out within Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy (Scottish Government, 2014), GCRB continues to prioritise the strengthening of vocational progression partnership activity with schools and employers. Our **Developing the Young Workforce plans** are enhancing the employment prospects of the young workforce, building on the strong school-college partnerships that already exist across the region.

Across the region, we work closely with local authority partners and engage with 46 secondary schools throughout Glasgow, East Dunbartonshire and East Renfrewshire. By strengthening partnerships between schools, colleges, training providers, employers, parents and young people themselves, we have widened the range of options and are supporting more young people in making the most appropriate choices for their futures.

A single regional prospectus of vocational study opportunities is developed annually for school pupils across Glasgow, and a coordinated timetable across all schools supports efficient and effective delivery. We also held a joint regional vocational options day for Glasgow schools to showcase study options at all three colleges to young people and their parents and guardians. The three colleges also collaborated on a single presentation all secondary school head teachers at three locations in

the city, which outlined ways in which the college service in Glasgow could help schools meet their obligations within the Developing the Young Workforce strategy.

Overall, in 2017-18 the Glasgow colleges delivered a 13% increase in the number of senior phase pupils studying at college on courses at SCQF levels 5 and above.

To support staff at schools and colleges to share and develop their understanding of their shared curriculum offer, new regional school/college CPD initiatives were established over the 2017-18 academic year. Working with local authority education services, teachers and guidance staff have been involved in professional dialogue through our “Informing the informer”, “Know your college” and “Classroom connections” initiatives.

“**Glasgow is delivering exactly what the government set out to achieve in Developing the Young Workforce. We want our schools and colleges to work together regionally to deliver a broad vocational curriculum matched to employers’ needs. Developing the Young Workforce is helping young people to build successful lives in Scotland’s growing economy.**”

Richard Lochhead, MSP, Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science

Development Action:

Increase the range and volume of high-quality senior phase vocational pathways to employment, improve attainment and provide more opportunities for school and college staff to share practice.

Source: 2019-20 Regional Programme of Action

- We offer, in partnership with Glasgow City Council Education Services, an **Enhanced Vocational Inclusion Programme (EVIP)** to around one hundred S3 and S4 school pupils. This ‘virtual school’ provides a curriculum delivered in college premises, and shared jointly by college staff who teach the vocational components and local authority staff who teach essential skills components. This has been very successful at including school pupils who otherwise wouldn’t attend school with excellent attendance and pass rates and it won the SQA Pride O’Worth Award at the 2018 SQA Star Awards for best overall educational initiative.
- We now deliver one of Scotland’s largest **Regional Foundation Apprenticeship programmes coordinated by a single regional team** with specialist school and employer engagement staff. Our regional approach to Foundation Apprenticeships generates wider access for learners to a greater range of vocational opportunities establishing positive career paths for school pupils. By working in unison, the three colleges are able to offer more choice to learners and better support for industry. A Foundation Apprenticeship Consortium and Board plans, coordinates and supports all FA delivery across Glasgow. The Board includes representation from the main local authority partners, SDS, and the Chamber of Commerce. This has been very successful in establishing FAs in Glasgow to over 450

- school pupils undertaking 11 frameworks and has helped to effectively promote FAs in schools, and run viable classes where colleges elect to lead in particular frameworks.

In 2019-20 we will expand our delivery of Foundation Apprenticeships to Senior Phase pupils through the delivery of new pilot Foundation Apprenticeships at levels 4, 5 and 6 across the three colleges, enabling senior phase learners to access new work-based learning courses with progression pathways to apprenticeships.



Development Action:

Expand our delivery of Foundation Apprenticeships to Senior Phase pupils, including to learners at SCQF levels 4 and 5 and those studying full-time at college, increasing the scale of work-based learning and helping to improve learners' attainment and successful progression to employment.

Source: 2019-20 Regional Programme of Action

- One of the main aims of the **Flexible Workforce Development Fund (FWDF)** is that it further strengthens colleges' engagement with industry. The region's work in delivering the FWDF has already expanded and intensified our colleges' connections with industry and is creating new opportunities, flexibility and expertise. Our colleges have developed and delivered courses in subjects and skills whose variety reflects the diversity of Glasgow's economy. Many of these skills are broadly transferable, such as: management; IT; customer service; human resources, accounts and; training. Others are more industry-specific and will build careers and capacity in our engineering,

health and social care, education, and hospitality sectors. Because our colleges are equipped and willing to develop bespoke courses, the region has also delivered specialist training in skills as varied as life drawing, fish mongering, and newsroom leadership. In total, in 2018-19 over 5,000 Glasgow employees took part in college training, strengthening their skills, productivity and potential.

Glasgow's economic strategy emphasises the importance of a cohesive approach to improving productivity. The Glasgow College Region's delivery of the Flexible Workforce Development Fund illustrates how collaboration and connections can lead to success. The shared vision and commitment of Glasgow's partners will continue to help improve the region's productivity and create more opportunities for Glasgow's people.

Councillor Susan Aitken, Leader of Glasgow City Council

Development Action:

Deliver an expanded Flexible Workforce Development programme for employers to fill skills gaps and develop new expertise that helps them to strengthen, grow and contribute more to our regional economy.

Source: 2019-20 Regional Programme of Action



Foundation Apprentices Natasha Cucask, Max Carnie and William Grantham meet Minister Jamie Hepburn

Exemplar Evaluation Evidence: Sharing Provision across the Three Colleges

The Foundation Apprenticeship in Creative and Digital Media is being delivered across Glasgow's three colleges to offer students the best collaborative approach to learning with expertise in key subjects and access to work placements with the industry's leading employers in Scotland.

Glasgow Kelvin College offered the Sound and Radio element of the course, City of Glasgow College focused on the Design and Animation part and Glasgow Clyde College on the Video and Journalism segment, with a strong focus on industry work placements in the second year of the course.

John Clarke is the Senior Curriculum Manager for Business and Creative Industries at Glasgow Kelvin College and the Lead for the Foundation Apprenticeship project.

John explained:

"Delivery of the Foundation Apprenticeship in Creative & Digital Media is shared between Glasgow Kelvin, Clyde and City colleges in an innovative partnership that, while not without its challenges, gives learners a taste of all three of Glasgow's colleges and access to a wide range of facilities, experiences and learning & teaching styles to enrich their learner journey and aid their choices for progression. The learners spend a teaching block at each of the Glasgow colleges, working on a different project in each. The projects are designed through integration of the units that make up the qualification to create a project-based, holistic and practical course that helps learners prepare for the workplace."

Student Max Carnie said:

"The Creative and Digital Media course was a real stepping stone for me, helping me to progress and decide what career path I wanted to take. The first year was mainly theory based, where we learned something different from each college, while the second year allowed us to gain practical experience with work placements. I was based at Scottish Enterprise, learning about marketing and gaining experience and skills, like photoshop and working with graphics. Next year, I will be studying a HND in Film and Television studies before hopefully moving into third year at Edinburgh Napier University."

Jamie Johnson, Lecturer – Creative Industries, City of Glasgow College, said:

"The benefits of collaborative working were clear. The course worked well and gave the students a broad overview of what is available to them studying in Glasgow. I am aware that DF Concerts and various other media businesses were involved in the placements and overall it has been a success, with some students being offered jobs after their placement."

Anne McMullen, Head of Curriculum, Media and Performing Arts, at Glasgow Clyde College, said:

"The idea of moving between three colleges allowed the students to experience a range of environments and learning and teaching skills, as well as helping develop social and life skills. One of the most attractive aspects of the Foundation Apprenticeship in Creative Design Media is that it offers a range of experiences, within media organisations, which would normally be difficult to access. The opportunity of employment with these organisations is the icing on the cake!"

Self-Evaluation of Effectiveness 2: Productivity and Performance

Relevant legislation:

- *Section 23G Performance monitoring*
- *23H Promotion of Council's credit and qualification framework*
- *Section 23I Efficiency studies: assigned colleges*

Adding Value through Regional Strategic Coherence

The Regional Board has worked in close partnership with the Glasgow colleges and regional stakeholders to build consensus on the strategic development of the region's college services and to strengthen the alignment between post-16 learning and jobs and growth. Through the development of a shared understanding of Glasgow's economic and social needs, GCRB has led the development of a strategic framework which allows the benefits of regionalisation to impact more deeply on college service delivery and improve experiences and outcomes for learners.

This strategic coherence adds value for the Scottish Government, Funding Council and stakeholders as it has ensured that college funding has been prioritised to delivering evidence-based, regional priorities, alongside providing scope to achieve cost-efficiencies through more efficient organisation of educational provision. Regional collaboration is making us more effective, delivering more joined up regional planning, and ensuring we respond coherently to regional needs, working in partnership to widen access and improve learner outcomes.

Our shared strategic focus also brings added value to learners by working to ensure they benefit from all of the opportunities provided of the full Glasgow region curriculum, and by providing a regionally consistent, high quality and supportive student experience. The success of the regional Foundation Apprenticeship programme illustrates the benefits to learners of a regional approach to college learning, as by working in unison at a regional level, we were able to offer more choice to learners, delivering more effective learner journeys with education partners, and providing better support for industry. We were also able to develop our own skills, curriculum and organisations to offer more responsive and effective learning options.

Our regional collaboration is already delivering significant impacts. For example:

- We have improved learner attainment levels to 75%, so that the region with the largest number of learners from disadvantaged backgrounds has an overall attainment rate above the national average.
- We now deliver almost 1/3 of all regional activity to learners residing in Scotland's 10% poorest neighbourhoods, addressing directly Glasgow's high levels of deprivation.
- In response to the higher than average levels of Glasgow region residents with low or no qualifications, we have increased the volume of curriculum at Further Education levels.
- To support an increase in participation from those further from the labour market, we have increased the amount of learning in community-based locations.

Regional curriculum planning avoids unnecessary competition between colleges and supports improved viability of cohort sizes. For example, in our regional Foundation Apprenticeship programme, where a framework is delivered by more than one college, a college is nominated to take the lead on that framework on behalf of the partnership and regional coordination supports more efficient service delivery and viable class sizes. Similarly, our Childcare Expansion plan organised delivery across the three colleges so that each college offered different modes and qualification types, avoiding duplication and increasing learner choice.

We are also leading action to improve vocational learning pathways across our regional curriculum. In parallel to, and in support of, the work of the Learner Journey Review, regional strategic objectives to widen Access and Learner Choice have been agreed. This includes providing learners with increased access to the course offers across the three Glasgow colleges and working to create seamless learner journeys, including across the Glasgow colleges through collaboration on areas such as admissions and student support.

These strategic aims build on previous work undertaken regionally to develop regional curriculum maps which provided a high-level, generalised picture of vocational progression pathways and study options across the region and which were well received by stakeholders, particularly local authority education services, parents and pupils.

Development Actions:

Build seamless pathways across the Glasgow region curriculum and create guaranteed articulation agreements which allow students on programmes at one Glasgow college to progress directly to programmes at the next level at another Glasgow college.

Develop digital curriculum maps which provide students and stakeholders with an overview of vocational progression pathways and study options across the three colleges, and which link to colleges' live curriculum offerings to give students a clear view of where a course sits within the regional curriculum and of the progression pathways available to them.

Source: 2019-20 Regional Programme of Action

Increasing the Impact of Our Investment in Skills Training

The primary purpose of the Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board is to plan and ensure delivery of a high quality curriculum which meets economic and social needs. It is therefore critical that the alignment of skills training supply to current and future employment demand is robustly considered, and that a responsive, coherent, and high quality regional curriculum is delivered and which evidences the impact of this public investment in skills training.

Each year, GCRB considers and agrees a Regional Outcome Agreement which responds coherently and efficiently to the most recent assessments of skills and employment demand. Over the course of the year the Board monitors implementation of this curriculum and the impact of regional college learning opportunities on the lives of our learners and the economic and social wellbeing of the Glasgow college region. Performance measures use all national indicators and in addition, regionally specific measures (such

as targets for economic sector or levels of study volumes) are set to monitor the effective alignment of training supply to economic and social demand.

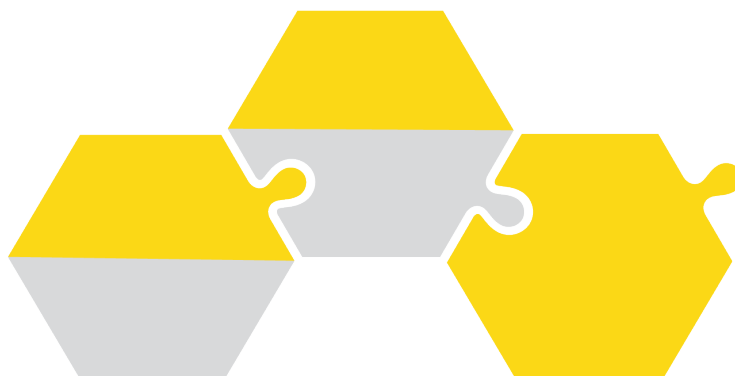
Performance data from 2017-18 teaching delivery provides substantial evidence of the positive impact of regional curriculum planning, with more of Glasgow's teaching grant invested in areas of greatest economic and social need, and stronger alignment and links between college delivery and industry needs, supporting inclusive economic growth.

In 2017-18, the Board targeted an increase in teaching activity related to Administration, Financial and Business Services in response to employment demand, with jobs in health, business services and retail accounting for more than one in every three jobs in the region. In response to this curriculum growth target, the Glasgow colleges collectively delivered an additional 1,500 Credits, a reallocation of approximately £320k learning and teaching grant to a priority area of regional skills training need.

There are increasing demands being placed on Glasgow's health and social care services due to changing regional demography, including a growing proportion of elderly residents, and as a result of changing patterns of demand for specific services such as childcare and mental health support. In response, in 2017-18 the Board set a growth target for Health and Care delivery levels, and the colleges delivered nearly 2,000 extra Health and Care Credits of skills training. This amounts to an additional investment of almost £400k of regional teaching funding, supporting the health and care service providers to respond effectively to significant changes in the social needs of the Glasgow region.

In terms specifically of our response to the Scottish Government commitment to double the entitlement to free childcare to 1,140 hours, the Board worked strategically to increase the volume, range and flexibility of college learning opportunities, to align college training delivery to local authority and private sector childcare provision, and to strengthen vocational pathways from school and other employment.

The scale and speed of this expansion has generated a need to develop the workforce at all levels; from new entrants to managers, and the region has developed a training pipeline to offer multiple entry points and flexible learning options for people at all stages of their careers, to ensure we have the right people with the right skills to sustain growth and develop excellence in our nurseries. The region exceeded its 2017-18 childcare growth target and the Board has set further stretching expansion targets for the year ahead. Taken together, this will mean that the region will have doubled the number of Childcare learning opportunities offered, with almost £1.5 million allocated by the Board to delivering professional childcare qualifications at SCQF levels 7 to 9.





Each of Glasgow's colleges were involved in childcare expansion plans

STEM-related employment forms a substantial element of the Glasgow Region economy, with significant and growing employment demand for science and engineering sectors, and the expansion of new industries such as stratified medicine and advanced manufacturing. In 2017, the Scottish Government published a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education and Training Strategy for Scotland, setting out a programme of actions for education and training providers to grow STEM literacy in society and drive inclusive economic growth in Scotland. To support this, in 2017-18 the region increased levels of STEM related activity for Senior Phase pupils, doubling the number of STEM related Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) starts, with over 100 Senior Phase pupils enrolled in 2017-18 on FAs in disciplines such as Civil Engineering, Digital Media, Engineering systems, Mechanical Engineering and Computing.

The Glasgow Economic Strategy: 2016-2023 aims to make Glasgow the most productive major city in the UK.

The Glasgow College's Regional Board has sought to support more employers to upskill their staff and improve business productivity through its implementation of the new Flexible Workforce Development Fund (FWDF).

A regional approach to planning and delivery of the FWDF has facilitated sharing of practice and a common approach to the application of the fund in Glasgow, and in its first year, the FWDF has made an increasing impact on the Glasgow college region's responsive, effective and career-building training provision.

To date and together, the three Glasgow colleges have delivered over £3 million worth of training to 255 businesses, with courses in subjects and skills whose variety reflects the diversity of Glasgow's economy. Many of these skills are broadly transferable, such as: management; IT; customer service; human resources, accounts and; training. Others are more industry-specific and will build careers and capacity in our engineering, health and social care, education, and hospitality sectors. Because our colleges are equipped and willing to develop bespoke courses, the region has also delivered specialist training in skills as varied as life drawing, fish mongering, and newsroom leadership.

Over 2017-18, more than 5,000 Glasgow employees upskilled through FWDF funded training increasing their productivity and potential.

Students are gaining valuable work experience in 'real world' situations



Development Action:

Continue to align our curriculum more closely to regional and national skills needs, with more of our delivery targeted at areas of employment growth.

Source: 2019-20 Regional Programme of Action

Supporting Efficient Services through Regional Collaboration

Regional collaboration is making us more effective, not just in terms of delivering joined up regional planning and responding coherently to regional needs, but also in terms of maximising efficiencies across the region and delivering more impact for the public funds invested in Glasgow.

Delivering Regional Efficiencies: Joint Procurement

A regional approach to procurement across the Glasgow colleges has delivered savings of over £1.5 million versus previous price paid. Procurement activity is carried out on a shared service basis by Advanced Procurement for Universities and Colleges (APUC), the sector's Centre of Procurement Expertise.

Additionally, procurement is being used to deliver community benefits and to ensure that public funds are being spent to benefit society in general. Some details of the responsible procurement activity carried out in Glasgow include:

- City of Glasgow College won the Herald diversity award last year. This award related to diversity in the public sector, Inclusive Procurement. The College were also highly commended last year at the ENEI awards – Innovative Procurement.
- Glasgow Clyde College have been leveraging their contracts and suppliers to secure work placements. These opportunities have been secured with Coffee Conscience, Sodexo and ISS. Students are gaining valuable work experience in ‘real world’ situations.
- Working in conjunction with the Glasgow Kelvin College Student Association and other internal stakeholders, the procurement resources for GKC assisted in the construction of Glasgow Kelvin Velocity, a cycle hub for use by students, staff and the community. Procurement were particularly effective in guiding the College towards sustainably sourced materials. The College won the prestigious award for sustainability at the education buildings Scotland 2018 awards.

“Undertaking regional procurement activity has brought significant efficiency savings with the Colleges on many occasions going to market as one, rather than singularly and separately, whilst also enabling them to benefit from increased economies of scale and leveraging collective spend.”

Angus Warren
Chief Executive

Advanced Procurement for Universities and Colleges

Establishing Shared Service Delivery: Joint Data Protection Services

In 2017-18 GCRB and the three Glasgow colleges also agreed to share a Data Protection Officer in response to new data protection regulations. This collaborative model enables all parties to address the risks posed by the new regulations by providing access to specialist expertise in an efficient way which supports the sharing of expertise at a regional and national level (including access to a national Head of Data Protection Services).

Allocating Funding

The progress and developments set out in this review are contingent on the Glasgow College Region receiving an appropriate level of regional funding. As GCRB shares similar responsibilities as a funding body as the SFC, we have prioritised participation in national developments of regional funding approaches. GCRB is working collaboratively with the SFC to support a fair and appropriate allocation of funds to the Glasgow College Region. In addition, by working in partnership with the SFC, we can ensure that the development of funding arrangements to the three colleges within the Glasgow Region is aligned and supportive of both local and national ambitions.

GCRB aims to ensure that the funding decisions it makes are fair, transparent, and underpinned by sound and consistently applied principles. The following funding principals have been agreed by the GCRB Board as a basis for its funding decisions:

- Funding decisions will support the achievement of regional goals and outcomes, and respond to regional curriculum needs;
- Funding decisions will consider issues of institutional and regional sustainability and balance competing demands, respecting and valuing assigned college contributions; and
- Funding decisions will be evidence-based and transparent.

GCRB works closely with the SFC and the assigned colleges in preparing its annual college funding proposals, and a representative from the GCRB executive is participating in the ongoing national review of sector funding.

Development Action:

Continue to align our expenditure more closely to our strategic ambitions and supported regional efficiencies, including through a regional approach to procurement.

Source: 2019-20 Regional Programme of Action



Moving to our second strategic stage of empowerment through our Regional Programme of Action for 2019-20

Monitoring and Improving Financial Sustainability

During the process of its establishment and gaining fully-operational fundable body status, the GCRB Board considered how the information from the regional colleges should be monitored and reported in a way which supports and ensures financial sustainability across the region's colleges.

An extensive set of regional monitoring and reporting arrangements have been developed, including:

Annual Report and Accounts - The colleges and GCRB prepare an Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31 July each year. These accounts are audited by the External Auditor and approved by the relevant Board. The following comprehensive documents are supplied by the colleges to GCRB:

- Signed Copy of the Audited Financial Statements
- Annual Report of the External Auditor
- Annual Report of the Audit Committee
- Annual Report of the Internal Auditor
- Board Report that accompanies the Annual Report and Accounts

Annual Accounts Return - Significant work is undertaken to prepare, audit and scrutinise this financial information and those tasked with this work include college executive officers, independent board members, independent auditors and executive officers of GCRB. The level of work undertaken enables GCRB to place a significant level of reliance upon these financial statements and accompanying documents.

Resource Returns - The Glasgow college region is part of the Central Government accounting and budgeting regime and subject to the same expenditure controls as SFC and other Government bodies. Colleges are allocated an annual resource expenditure budget and it is imperative that the net expenditure incurred in the financial year is within this Resource Departmental Expenditure limit (RDEL) or Capital Departmental Expenditure limit (CDEL). Therefore the colleges submit Resource Returns to GCRB enable the resource and capital budgets to be monitored. This information is in turn sent to the SFC and the HM Treasury for consolidation. Resource returns, of the individual colleges, are reviewed by the GCRB Finance and Resources Director Prior to submission to the SFC.

Cash Flow Returns - GCRB and the assigned colleges are classified as central government entities for the purposes of accounting and budgeting. It is GCRB's responsibility to allocate both cash and resource budgets to colleges in order to support the delivery of their Outcome Agreement contributions and to distribute cash on the basis of need. GCRB also monitors cash paid out against the overall financial year budget, spend against financial year resource budget and college sustainability.

Annual Budget Return/Financial Forecast Return - The colleges are required to submit an Annual Budget Return. The Annual Budget Return is populated with the budgeted income and expenditure for the following financial year. It is produced after the College Board has approved the annual budget and is used to inform the planned levels of RDEL and CDEL in the Resource Return.

Financial Forecast Return - In addition to the Annual Budget, the colleges prepare a Financial Forecast Return. This provides a forecast out-turn for the year just ending, a budget for the coming year and a forecast for the following five years. The Financial Forecasts are prepared on an annual basis using a set of

assumptions that are proposed by the SFC following consultation with the sector. The Annual Budget Returns, and Financial Forecast Returns, are supplied to GCRB for review by the Finance and Resources Director and this work provides a basis for GCRB to develop a regional Financial Forecast Return.

Student Support Funding – This is monitored via the FES return of student data and expenditure is subject to an annual audit. Reports on student support funding are provided to the Performance and Resources Committee.

Flexible Workforce Development Fund – Colleges supply a monitoring report to the GCRB Finance and Resources Director every two weeks. This information is consolidated into a regional return and submitted to the SFC. Reports on Flexible Workforce Development Fund have been provided to each meeting of the Performance and Resources Committee since the fund was launched in 2017.

Capital Funding – This is monitored by the GCRB Finance and Resources Director and a report provided to each meeting of the Performance and Resources Committee.

GCRB also provides a series of grant letters to the assigned colleges. The grant letters specify the funding to be provided and the financial responsibilities of the colleges. The letters also specify the requirements of any specific funding, including expectations around the achievement of regional strategic goals and priorities.

Certificate of Assurance - On an annual basis (April), the Principal of each assigned college provides a Certificate of Assurance to the Executive Director of GCRB. The Certificate of Assurance provides confirmation that the college (or GCRB) confirms that Accountable Officers have confidence in the systems of internal control that exist within the college/region. In particular it covers the following matters:

- risk management;
- the effectiveness of operations;
- the economical and efficient use of resources;
- compliance with applicable policies, procedures, laws and regulations;
- safeguards against losses, including those arising from fraud, irregularity or corruption; and
- the integrity and reliability of information and data.

The certificates of assurance process, including the completion and review of the Internal Control Checklists, is subject to review by the external auditors as part of their audit of the accounts. Internal auditors will also require access to these documents as part of their internal review of governance matters.

The Colleges and GCRB are also collaborating on a range of financial matters to enable the free flow of information and identification of risks. This includes a regional Sustainable Institutions Group which meets every two months and includes the Vice-Principals responsible for Finance within each college along with GCRB's Finance and Resources Director. The meetings provide the opportunity to discuss emerging financial issues that affect the region and identify areas of concern. Alongside this, Heads of Finance/Assistant Principals with direct responsibility for Finance from across the region Finance meet quarterly, and enable collaboration on operational finance matters, such as the preparation of consolidated accounts and the completion of the monitoring information outlined above. In addition, the Glasgow Region Procurement Team formed of representatives of the colleges meet with colleagues from APUC and the GCRB Finance and Resources Director on a quarterly basis. The purpose of the meeting is to monitor progress on the range of collaborative procurement activities within the Glasgow Region.

In summary, there is an extensive framework in place to monitor the financial performance of the assigned colleges and GCRB is able to place reliance upon these systems. GCRB's experience of working with the college finance teams has been very positive, with information provided in a timely manner and of a high standard. The flow of information, and strong internal relationships, provides confidence that this collaborative approach to financial management will continue to be mutually beneficial.

Development Action:

Strengthen institutional sustainability and long-term financial planning.

Source: 2019-20 Regional Programme of Action

Promoting the use of the credit and qualifications framework

Regional curriculum planning makes very good use of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). For example, regional monitoring includes analysis of delivery at each SCQF level to ensure that training supply is meeting identified employment or social needs. This analysis by SCQF enabled us to identify evidence of a training supply gap between volumes of training delivered at lower SCQF levels and the higher than average levels of residents with low or no qualifications. Based on this analysis, the Glasgow region therefore committed to collectively increasing the proportion of activity provided at SCQF levels 4 and 5 so that more learners could access college study learning opportunities and progress to higher level study.

Delivering Value for Money

Delivering value for money and best return on the public investment in the Glasgow College Region is a constant and significant priority for GCRB. Because of the diverse nature of the work of GCRB, and because much of the effectiveness of our funding is achieved through the assigned colleges, we have sought to embed Value for Money in our operations through a variety of routes:

- Integrating VfM principles within our planning, management, decision-making and review processes, particularly in regard to any project or decision with financial implications
- Using risk management to assess the financial risks
- Complying with relevant legislation and regulation
- Adopting good practice
- Being open and transparent and demonstrating that we are using resources in an economical, efficient and effective manner.
- Working with others to achieve Value for Money
- Communicating with staff and striving to ensure all staff are aware of the need to use GCRB resources in an economical, efficient and effective way, achieving Value for Money at all times
- Continuous improvement and learning from evaluation of past investment decisions

In practical terms, we take different approaches towards VfM in the use of our running costs budget (our operational budget) and our programme budget (our budget for funding the assigned colleges).

Value for Money in our use of GCRB's running-cost budget

We use a range of methods for assessing our performance in achieving VfM, including our use of internal audit, and indices of our overall efficiency as a public body (for example, our expenditure on running-costs as a percentage of programme funds).

It was recognised by that the establishment of regional boards would require additional expenditure, related principally to a small number of staff to ensure that the board could administer effectively the funding it received from the SFC. In 2012, the Scottish Government estimated that these costs would amount to £540,000 on an annual basis. The table below provides an overview of GCRB's running costs over the previous 5 years compared to the annual amount estimated by the Scottish Government.

15 months ending 31 July 2015	£279k	£675k
Year ending 31 July 2016	£270k	£540k
Year ending 31 July 2017	£322k	£540k
Year ending 31 July 2018	£438k	£540k
Year ending 31 July 2019 (Forecast)	£430k	£540k
Year ending 31 July 2020 (Budget)	£465k	£540k
Total	£2,204k	£3,375k

Over the period, the average cost of GCRB is £353k per annum compared to an estimate of £540k, which represents a cost of 35% less than the Scottish Government estimate.

“ ***GCRB's operating costs are significantly less than the indicative budget set by the Scottish Government when the GCRB was formed in 2014.*** ”

2017/18 Group Annual Audit Report to the Board and the Auditor General for Scotland,
Scott-Moncrieff, January 2019

GCRB has sought to minimise expenditure through utilisation of college functions (e.g. estates and ICT needs, Finance, HR, payroll services and marketing services). In addition, college staff acting as regional leads have created a 'virtual regional executive enabling GCRB to operate on a small complement of direct staffing (amounting to 3.8 FTE).

GCRB also seeks where appropriate to reduce the need for external advisors, and uses APUC shared procurement services when contracting services. GCRB also publishes details of our running-cost expenditure on the specific areas required by the Scottish Government.

Value for Money in our use of GCRB's programme funds

GCRB's programme funds budget will be around £120 million per annum (including Capital and Student Funding). The main mechanisms that we will use to promote, achieve and monitor VfM are:

Annex 2 to this paper provides a brief description of our approach to VfM in each of these areas. Financial Memoranda with the assigned colleges. Our financial memoranda requires the assigned colleges to achieve VfM, and be economical, efficient and effective in their use of public funding. We also require the assigned colleges to have a strategy for reviewing management's arrangements for securing VfM, and seek from audit processes a comprehensive appraisal of management's arrangements for achieving VfM.

- **Outcome Agreement process** - Our Outcome Agreement process is designed to establish clearly the outcomes expected from the Region in return for public funding. The targets set are deliberately ambitious to maximise the effectiveness of that funding.
- **Our funding methodologies** - Our funding methodologies are designed to achieve VfM and are reviewed periodically to ensure that they remain fit-for-purpose.
- **Efficient Government initiative** - Institutional Efficiency returns are reviewed by the GCRB Board on an annual basis.

The assigned colleges also have their own mechanisms for promoting, achieving and monitoring VfM, including the employment of professional procurement staff, sharing services, and the use of internal audit.

Strengthening Governance

GCRB has established extensive arrangements to ensure that corporate governance is exercised in accordance with the principles for good governance set out in the Financial Memorandum between the SFC and the GCRB and in the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges. The Board undertakes detailed evaluation of its performance and effectiveness on an annual basis and takes account of emerging recommendations in its annual development plan, in line with the Code of Good Governance and best practice guidance for the sector.

In 2017-18 GCRB undertook an externally-validated self-evaluation. The external assessor's report was positive and identified no major areas of concern. Ten recommendations contained in the report to improve Board effectiveness were incorporated into the 2018 Development Plan.

In May 2019, the Internal Auditor undertook a review to obtain reasonable assurance that the Regional Board's corporate governance processes are sufficiently developed to allow the organisation to meet the requirements set out in the updated Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges. The Internal Auditor reported an overall level of assurance of 'Good' with no weaknesses identified during the review.

The GCRB Board continues to develop its approach to risk and to seek to identify improvements to its risk management arrangements. A significant aspect of this developmental process is collaborative consideration of risks, and alongside formal GCRB Board meetings, quarterly meetings of regional Audit Committee Chairs are held. In addition, Regional Risk Management Workshops have been facilitated by the Internal Auditor to provide an opportunity for the GCRB Board to consider good practice and reach a consensus on the critical risks.

The most recent risk workshop was held on the 5th March 2019, with all Board members invited to attend. Following extensive discussion, the key conclusions arising from the meeting were:

- The consensus was the current approach is working well, with some small changes as appropriate.
- There was no need for changes to be made at the institutional level.
- Members were content that risk ownership was shared between the individual entities and the collective responsibilities of the region.

The GCRB Board considers its Risk Register at each meeting of the Board, and to support discussion, the Board has agreed that it will review in detail a number of risks at each meeting, in order that all risks will be reviewed in depth at least once per annum.



The Glasgow Colleges Regional Board includes representation from college Boards, staff and students

Development Action:

Promote gender equality and improved gender balance on the regional and college boards.

Source: 2019-20 Regional Programme of Action

Monitoring and Improving Performance

Attainment levels

In response to the development of the new quality arrangements for Scotland's colleges, '*How good is our college?*', GCRB has worked in close partnership with Education Scotland, the SFC and the Glasgow Colleges to develop arrangements within Glasgow which ensure college and regional evaluation and improvement actions are complementary and aligned. A high level schedule of quality activity within the Glasgow College Region has been developed and the GCRB executive participate in college level pre-endorsement meetings, with Education Scotland and the SFC providing consolidated reports to the Regional Board. This ensures that regional evaluation is informed by college level reviews and vice versa, and that areas of improvement identified at a regional level are included within relevant college plans.

In 2018 and 2019, the reports of the Glasgow colleges were reviewed and formally endorsed by SFC and Education Scotland and provided formal assurance that the three colleges are performing well across all elements of the national quality assessment framework, with no significant areas of weakness identified.

Raising levels of attainment and successful progression into employment or further study are core strategic priorities for the Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board. Our Seven Learning Priorities seek to ensure we provide

an education service which values personal development, and which builds the skills and knowledge required for everyone in Glasgow to share the benefits of economic growth.

The region has set stretching targets for increasing levels of student success, and in 2017-18 the region continued to improve both rates of attainment and for successful progression into work or study. In terms of achievement, three quarters of all learners who started college in Glasgow in 2017-18, successfully completed their course of study, a level of attainment which is higher than the Scottish norm and delivered in a context of significant local social and economic challenges. And in relation to positive post-course destinations, progression data shows that the levels for post course success have increased, with over 97% of leavers now progressing successfully into work or further study. Both of these performance measures demonstrate that that we are being successful in improving both our regional performance and our learners' lives and life chances.

Access to student funding can also play a significant role in supporting improved learner outcomes and in 2017-18, a new Regional Student Funding Forum was established to support consistent approaches to Learning Support Services across the region's colleges. The group includes Student Association participation and an initial priority for the group has been forming shared approaches to attendance monitoring in relation to payment of student bursaries, to mitigate potential student hardship and support improved retention.

Development Action:

Improve retention and attainment rates, including for people with protected characteristics and learners from the 10% most deprived postcode areas.

Source: 2019-20 Regional Programme of Action

Widening access

Whilst opportunities in Glasgow are immense, there are significant social, educational and economic challenges that must be addressed if the region and its residents are to fulfil their potential. In particular, many Glaswegians have low or no qualifications and are unemployed or stuck in poorly paid jobs with in-work poverty a growing issue. A powerful college education addresses many of these issues and the Regional Board is committed to engaging with those people who are furthest from the labour market; helping them overcome barriers to learning and to succeed in college, work and life, and driving inclusive growth.

Widening access to life-changing college learning is a central aim of the new Glasgow Region Strategic Plan for College Education, and to deliver on this, the Board targeted an increase in teaching activity delivered to learners residing in Scotland's 10% poorest neighbourhoods, and to learners with low or no qualifications. In 2017-18, the region succeeded in exceeding both of the growth targets related to this, with £24m funding allocated to learners from our most deprived neighbourhoods (equating to nearly one third of all teaching activity), and approximately £45m funding allocated to learners with low or no qualifications (over one half of all teaching activity).

In addition to increasing access to college learning opportunities, GCRB also led the development of an innovative new articulation programme which will offer Glasgow's college learners from priority widening access groups, an opportunity to progress with advanced standing to one of Scotland's most highly regarded universities. Building on a shared track record of delivering highly successful widening access work, the blended model of delivery will allow college learners to complete an HNC at college, alongside undertaking access-orientated Year 1 studies on the university campus. Our partnership delivery model will ensure seamless and supported progression routes which maximise potential for learner success, and offer flexible pathways to further study.

Our regional Embracing Diversity Competition encouraged students from across the college region to reflect on what Equality, Diversity and Inclusion means to them. Students across the region were asked to use their creativity and learning to communicate the values of fairness, opportunity and respect, with the winning entries emphasising the scope and diversity of learning in Glasgow's colleges.



Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board reviewing work at our Regional Diversity competition

Development Action:

Widen access and increase participation in college learning by residents from deprived postcodes, care leavers, disabled learners and those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, so that all Glasgow's learners can be part of inclusive economic growth.

Source: 2019-20 Regional Programme of Action

Exemplar Evaluation Evidence: Developing a Needs-Based Approach to Capital Funding

GCRB developed needs-based, capital funding arrangements which both ensured that capital expenditure was directed at areas of greatest regional need, and also that regional efficiencies were identified through joint procurement and delivery of cross-college projects. This replaced national formula-based approaches with funding criteria which prioritised regional needs and ambitions. The three Glasgow colleges engaged with the new process to ensure that more than £2 million of regional capital expenditure was strategically aligned to areas of greatest regional need, with collaborative procurement and implementation providing improved value for money and impact.

These examples illustrate how our approach aligned funding to strategic priorities and maximised opportunities for efficiency:

- Supporting Glasgow Colleges' Regional STEM Strategy, and its ambition to strengthen and create capacity in key areas of economic importance, with a £427,000 investment in a regional centre for STEM innovation and excellence.

Joanna Campbell, Vice Principal, Student Experience said: ***"This regional investment represents a commitment to excellence and innovation in learning, teaching and in the development of Glasgow's STEM skills base. Our collegiate approach means that we can build a world-class facility offering cutting edge technology to learners and responding to employers' need to recruit people with the skills required to flourish in the workplace."***

- Glasgow's Clyde and Kelvin Colleges' joint procurement of a new Local Area Network, following Glasgow City College's recent experience with a similar project. Our £985,000 investment in network Infrastructure will enhance our learners' experience throughout the college region and help to build a sustainable core network. Collaborative working saved money that we were able to redirect into learning resources, delivered a better LAN and drove a more efficient procurement process.

Andy Laszlo, Head of ICT, Glasgow Kelvin College said: ***"There is no question that our new LAN strengthens our colleges' network and the support that it offers students. There is also no question that, by working together, the two colleges were able to add value to the solution and reduce its costs."***

In this financial year, our emphasis will shift capital funds towards sustaining and developing the Glasgow colleges' estate to create the best possible learning environments for our learners. Our new Finance and Capital Policies support our key financial objectives of excellence in compliance, governance and assurance. Importantly, they also strive to use resource regionally and collaboratively, supporting our ambition to build Scotland's most inclusive, responsive and effective regional college system.

Self-Evaluation of Effectiveness 3: People and Partnerships

Relevant legislation:

- *23M Regional strategic bodies: consultation and collaboration*

Our regional college system is providing a structure for all its parts and people to collaborate productively, developing and delivering more. Through this, we are able to use our combined strengths to better serve our learners, communities and partners and to meet the needs of employers and of the regional economy.

‘One Door’ Stakeholder Engagement

There is significant participation by the GCRB and the Glasgow college executive in stakeholder led operational groups. By working regionally we are able to offer a “one door” approach to this engagement, with regional leads participating on behalf of all three colleges. This includes regional representation within local authority community planning and education services structures, and engagement with universities, employers and third sector bodies. For example, GCRB contributed significantly to the development of the City-Region Skills Investment plan, and a number of Glasgow College Region actions to improve skills training now sit within the delivery plan, providing greater strategic alignment and impact across the regional public sector offer.

The Glasgow College Region also leads a number of regional engagement groups. This includes the Foundation Apprenticeship Forum which consists of representatives from local authorities, SDS and colleges and supports a collaborative and joined up approach to delivery across agencies. In addition, recognising the unique demographic profile of Glasgow and the high levels of demand for English tuition, Glasgow Region leads a city-wide ESOL network, which coordinates the continued development of the city-wide ESOL register, and delivery by community partners of access provision.

Development Action:

Empower our ESOL Partnership of college, local authority and third sector partners, to deliver a regional access and learning service that responds efficiently to the needs of migrants and new arrivals.

Source: 2019-20 Regional Programme of Action

Another example of utilising a streamlined regional engagement structure is in the development of new articulation pathways. Following regional liaison with the University of Glasgow, GCRB has developed a new articulation model with the University of Glasgow where students from across the three Glasgow colleges can progress into second year at the UoG in Science, Engineering and Social Subjects. Students begin their course at one of the Glasgow colleges and over the course of the year undertake complementary study and induction activities at the university and in year 2 they join the degree course full-time at the university. The course is targeted at widening access groups and offers a guaranteed place at the university if the first year of study is successfully completed. This means students who would not normally meet the UoG entry

requirements, even if contextualised, are able to access a degree at this well-regarded university. To date 22 science students at Glasgow Kelvin College are due to articulate to Glasgow University in June 2019, with cohorts of social science and engineering students due to start at Glasgow Clyde College and City of Glasgow College in August 2019. Additionally, following the development of this model, the Regional Lead for articulation has led the development of a similar partnership with Strathclyde University for 2019-20 with the first cohort of science students being recruited by Glasgow Clyde College.

Development Action:

Strengthen our partnerships with Glasgow's universities and develop more articulation routes to offer more college learners the opportunity to progress to university with advanced standing, including the expansion of our new articulation programme with Glasgow University.

Source: 2019-20 Regional Programme of Action

Collaborative Identification of Strategic Priorities

GCRB has led the collaborative development of a Glasgow's first Regional Strategy for College Education. Our strategy seeks to build Scotland's most inclusive, most responsive and most effective regional college system, and was developed on the basis of extensive stakeholder engagement, including participation by representatives from:

- GCRB Board;
- Assigned College Boards;
- Employers;
- College Management Teams;
- Student Presidents;
- Trade Unions;
- Scottish Funding Council;
- Skills Development Scotland;
- National Union of Students;
- Colleges Scotland and Colleges Development Network;
- Education Scotland;
- Glasgow City Council;
- University Sector;
- Schools; and
- Community Groups.

Based on this extensive stakeholder engagement activity, the following 'big asks' were identified as shared regional strategic priorities:

- realise regional added value through greater collaboration across the three colleges and with regional stakeholders;
- provide a regionally consistent, high quality and supportive student experience for all learners;
- provide clear and flexible vocational learning pathways which widen access, support inter-college progression and break the link between deprivation and qualification attainment;
- deliver learning which develops confidence, well-being and builds skills for work and life;
- continue to align the curriculum to skills needs and support achievement of Developing the Young Workforce aims;
- build closer partnerships with industry and provide more opportunities to develop their skills in real work environments; and
- promote and embed Fair Work values and behaviours and recognise the contribution of all staff in improving services for learners

Regional Board Collaboration

Our regional governance is stronger as a result of the development of new opportunities for Board collaboration. To strengthen partnership working, a Memorandum of understanding was agreed to underpin and drive effective partnership working across the four Glasgow College Region boards. This is based on three broad principles:

A) Open and Proactive Communication - We will facilitate effective communication between board members and the work of the boards, to promote awareness of each other's priorities and concerns, and of developments that may impact on the region as a whole. The systems and structures developed to achieve this will maximise use of digital and online communication methods and promote transparency and open access to information.

B) Collaboration and Consultation - We will promote opportunities for collaborative working through short-life groups and longer term arrangements, between:

- boards and chairs of boards;
- board committees and committee chairs;
- other members or groups of members as appropriate;
- college and GCRB executives.

Ensuring staff and student involvement in any relevant groups will be a key consideration.

C) Joint Development and Networking - We will actively seek opportunities for joint training, development and networking activities to promote common understanding and build stronger and more effective relationships across the region. This will include joint board development and training events. GCRB will co-ordinate collective activity.

The Boards have also agreed to seek to avoid conflict by positively contributing to collective activity and the building of strong and effective regional partnerships. Should conflict arise, the Boards will seek to resolve issues of these in a constructive and positive manner, identifying solutions and avoiding escalation of issues. All boards will also ensure that potentially sensitive issues are raised in advance to allow full discussion.

College and regional board members are now collaborating on key governance issues, including risk management, GDPR, cyber-security and increasing diversity on boards.



Regional Board members, staff, students and stakeholders at a regional conversation event

Development Action:

Develop closer and more effective regional relationships; strengthening regional governance structures and deepening collaboration, supported by our Regional Memorandum of Understanding.

Source: 2019-20 Regional Programme of Action

Exemplar Evaluation Evidence: 'Regional Conversation' Events



Discussing Mental Health at a regional conversation event

The first 'regional conversation' was held in September 2018, with 44 people attending overall, including 26 Board Members and 15 members of staff. The event focused on diversity and considered ways the 4 boards could collaborate on initiatives to improve their diversity.

A presentation from Councillor Jennifer Layden, Glasgow City Council Convener for Equalities and Human Rights, illustrated the significant extent of Glasgow's diversity and the benefits that this brings to the city. Helen Wright from Changing the Chemistry and Ian Bruce from the Office of the Commissioner for Ethical Standards highlighted evidence of good practice in terms of increasing board diversity and both offered to assist further with any initiatives.

The event provided an opportunity for group discussion and suggestions from participants to increase diversity included:

- jointly holding information events with the potential to take a 'roadshow' approach to events in local areas in future;
- drawing more on the support of regional networks and groups;
- producing a shared information leaflet encouraging participation in board activity;
- developing a shared online presence with links from the different boards' web pages which would include positive information about the role, the impact of Glasgow colleges on communities and the economy, and interviews with a diverse range of board members; and
- collaborating on standardised recruitment approaches where appropriate, for example, equalities forms for applicants.

A second 'regional conversation' was held in February 2019 to support the development in Glasgow of strategic and operational approaches to supporting good student and staff mental health and wellbeing. Participants included regional and college board members and staff, staff and student representatives, and stakeholders from bodies such as the Scottish Government, SFC, Scottish Association for Mental Health, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, and Colleges Scotland.

Common themes across the group discussions included:

- The region should take a proactive approach which focuses on prevention and building resilience, developing the skills of staff and learners to effectively tackle mental health issues.
- We need a mapping exercise of mental health and well-being services for both students and staff. This will give a greater understanding of current services available and to support more coherent and collaborative future delivery/development.
- Counselling alone is not the answer and we need to develop services and approaches that are multi-dimensional. We need a whole systems approach, not just across the colleges, but with partners such as the NHS to deliver a coherent, joined up and efficient service.
- The focus on improving services for students should be balanced with effective and supportive services for college staff.

The response to these 'regional conversation' events has been extremely positive and demonstrate what can be achieved when the college region comes together to advance its shared ambitions.

Collaboration across Regional Executive Structures

As GCRB is designed to be an enabling body with a strategic regional focus and delivery is through the assigned colleges, effective collaboration and partnership working is central to the successful delivery of regional strategic goals in an efficient and effective manner.

A wide range of regional operational working groups exist to support joint planning across the three Glasgow colleges. This includes a Glasgow Principals Group, a Learning and Teaching group and a Sustainable Institutions' group. In addition our regional curriculum hubs contribute to planning through an analysis of curriculum volumes in the context of relevant labour market information and sector-specific development plans, and intelligence developed through the colleges' engagement with employers. Working through these groups supports the agreement of college targets which deliver on regional and national ambitions, but which allow for differentiation in respect of college specialties and strengths.

Additionally, colleges may lead on specific projects in a regional capacity. For example, Glasgow Kelvin College coordinate the regional Foundation Apprenticeship programme and Glasgow Clyde College lead the regional ESOL partnership and the joint delivery of community based provision.

A collaborative management approach has also been developed to increase capacity to deliver regional strategic aims, and empower college members to contribute to regional decision making, and ensure that direct GCRB executive staffing is kept to a minimum. This stronger focus on working together to achieve shared regional goals has provided opportunities to strengthen inter-region relationships, alongside allowing accountability to be more clearly defined. Overall, an enhanced collaborative management approach has added value so that the three colleges working with GCRB have achieved more than they could have individually.

There are two aspects to the regional collaborative management approach:

- **Regional leads**, each with clear agreed regional responsibilities and expectations of outputs, drawn from college management teams who lead delivery of aspects of regional strategy. Currently, Regional Leads exist to support collaborative activity in relation to regional professional development, student support and admissions, Developing the Young Workforce, student data, STEM, articulation, and attainment improvement.
- **Working practices** which provide space to collaborate as a regional team, enhancing opportunities for nominated regional leads and GCRB staff to build relationships, share knowledge and insights, and work together on delivering regional strategic aims.

These developments build on existing regional working practices and opportunities are provided for participants to contribute to evaluation of the effectiveness of working arrangements, with the outputs of this used to further enhance regional operational effectiveness.

Each year, ambitions are set for regional leads, guided by a review/initiate/embed change process which maximises opportunities for collaboration and promotes flexible, informed and consensual decision-making. A key focus of early Regional Lead work has therefore been on building relationships and making connections (both internally and externally), sharing perspectives and information, and identifying and discussing potential proposals for change. Regional Leads develop more detailed operational plans, and these are regularly reviewed and progress reported to the GCRB Board. Since their establishment significant progress has been made by the new Regional Leads in relation to collaborative approaches to CPD, to more systematic and in-depth curriculum review, to delivering more consistent student support services, and to improved data provision and analysis.

“The process for setting operational plans, and monitoring, reporting and escalating issues from Regional Leads’ operating plans is robust and working effectively”

Henderson Loggie,
Internal Audit of Progress Against Corporate Plan

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2017/18 Group Annual Audit Report to the Board and the Auditor General for Scotland,
Scott-Moncrieff, January 2019

Development Action:

Develop further our regional collaborative management structure, ensuring that college staff have a greater say in the organisation of college services across the Glasgow region.

Source: 2019-20 Regional Programme of Action

Student and Staff Representation

GCRB values the contribution of staff and student representatives to regional activity and has agreed a protocol which ensures all three Student Association presidents participate in GCRB Board meetings.

GCRB also engages with Student Associations through the Glasgow College Region Student Executive (GCRSE) group, which meets on a bi-monthly basis and coordinates regional activity across all three Students Associations. For example in 2018-19, the Glasgow Colleges' Regional Student Executive hosted Clean Campus Week in March across all of our colleges, aiming to clear the grounds, raise awareness of recycling facilities and keeping campuses tidy on an ongoing basis. The collaborative initiative saw groups of students and staff giving up their lunchtime to roll up their sleeves and pick up litter around campus and college students hosted a dedicated information session with advice on recycling and waste management.



Glasgow Colleges' Regional Student Executive organised Clean Campus Week across the Glasgow colleges

“ I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as chair of the Glasgow College Region Student Executive as I was able to work with the regional colleges to work collaboratively to create new initiatives to benefit the student experience. Working together as a region allows us to have a stronger collective voice which can make a bigger joint impact on campaigning issues. We were able to share our experiences as individual Students' Associations and support each other in our work. We were also able to receive support from the GCRB and share our views on topics that could affect our students. ”

Milea Leone,
Chair of Glasgow College Region Student Executive (GCRSE) Group

GCRB has also established a regular regional engagement forum with representatives from all trades unions. In addition, to promote greater understanding of, and engagement with, a regional approach to college service delivery in Glasgow, GCRB developed a regular regional newsletter for Glasgow's college staff. The online magazine provides narrative and video content highlighting regional developments, collaborative working and information on staff and board members leading regional activity. Feedback from staff on the regional newsletter has been very positive.

Collaborative Career and Personal Development

Taking an integrated regional approach means we can offer staff across the three colleges access to a new range of Career and Personal Development opportunities. In the last six months alone, the following CPD events have been successfully delivered across each of our colleges, open to staff from each site:

- A solution-focused coaching event was hosted at Glasgow Kelvin College
- An introduction to Emotional Intelligence event was delivered at City of Glasgow College
- DISC Profiling and the GROW coaching model was hosted by Glasgow Clyde College
- The Autism Resource Centre (ARC) attended Glasgow Kelvin College to deliver and enhancing inclusive practice around transitions and autism

College staff have access to a wider range of professional development opportunities, including solution focused coaching



Courses are open to all staff members across the Glasgow college region and are mainly delivered by in house staff, with support from expert partner organisations when required. The CPD programme will continue in 2019/20 and we have asked staff to identify the courses that they would find beneficial to help shape the joint delivery sessions for next year, such as Working with groups, Lean Working, An introduction to Myers Briggs, Organisational Resilience and Action Learning.

“Our aim is to create a regional professional community where staff can learn together and from each other. I expect that the scale and variety of connections we can make regionally will lead to even more collaboration and opportunities.”

Audrey Miller, Regional Lead for CPD

“It didn’t take us long to figure out that we could do more if we worked regionally. So, we’ve been collaborating on: the regional curriculum; shared issues with SQA assessments; mental health strategies; and joint CPD. It’s working for us and our learners are already benefiting.”

Julie Wales is Head of Curriculum Hairdressing, Beauty and Complementary Therapies at Glasgow Clyde College

Development Action:

Expand a programme of regional CPD opportunities that includes courses and initiatives from our colleges and from national bodies such as the Colleges Development Network.

Source: 2019-20 Regional Programme of Action

Collaborating on Skills Alignment/Curriculum Planning

To support the aim of the Enterprise and Skills Board that there is greater alignment and collaborative working across skills development and training agencies staff from GCRB, Glasgow’s colleges, SFC and SDS are collaborating on a pilot to develop a combined curriculum planning model for Glasgow.

To date this has involved the establishment of a steering group formed of representatives from SFC, SDS, the Glasgow Colleges and GCRB and initial activity to work through a ‘5-step skills planning and provision model’ related to the Glasgow context.

To take forwards ‘Step 1: Skills Demand Assessment’ work has been undertaken to collate and analyse data on curriculum supply delivered by the three Glasgow colleges and to begin to assess its alignment to economic and employment demand. SFC/GCRB are leading on the development of appropriate training supply data and SDS are leading on the collation of employment demand information. To develop a consensus on skills alignment across the Glasgow Region, and to ensure we maximise the knowledge and expertise of college curriculum managers, curriculum hub events have been held for college staff and SDS, SFC and GCRB representatives to consider current curriculum supply in the context of recently published regional skills assessment data.

“This pilot will enhance the impact of labour market information and insight on the planning of a responsive regional curriculum across Glasgow, identifying more clearly skills gaps and developing efficient pathways to support more college learners to gain the skills and experiences required by employers enabling learners to prosper in a more inclusive workplace.”

Neville Prentice,
SDS Senior Director of Service Development & Delivery

GCRB is also engaging with a newly formed Financial Services Employers Group organised jointly by Skills Development Scotland (SDS). SDS have engaged across a range of Financial Services employers (including Barclays, JP Morgan, HSBC, Morgan Stanley, BNP Paribas, and Tesco Bank) to develop a skills training demand statement. Based on this information, GCRB is liaising across the three colleges to draw together potential training opportunities for college students, school leavers and graduates/career changers. This closer partnership with employers is supporting a more aligned curriculum offer, including improved access to work placements and guaranteed interviews for successful completing college learners.

Collaborative STEM Development

The Scottish Government’s STEM Education and Training Strategy published in October 2017, set out an expectation that each region would have a STEM Hub to provide a forum for STEM collaboration and development. The GCRB Executive Director established the Glasgow STEM Hub in June 2018, and this is now being taken forwards by the Regional Lead for STEM. The group has representation from across Glasgow’s colleges, education services, universities, SDS, and Glasgow Science centre and is establishing an accurate baseline of STEM engagement activity across the region as a basis for the identification of joint development priorities.

Alongside STEM Hub discussions, the Glasgow Colleges and GCRB are working with the STEM Foundation (formerly the New Engineering Foundation) to revise and renew regional and college STEM strategies within the STEM Foundation assurance framework. This work will align to the Scottish Government’s STEM strategic goals and a revised regional STEM strategy is currently being drafted. Across October and November, accreditation inspection visits were undertaken by the STEM Foundation and re-accreditation has been awarded across the Glasgow College Region.

Exemplar Evaluation Evidence: Regional Collaboration to Improve Retention and Attainment

A regional group formed of Quality Leads from the Glasgow colleges was established to support collaborative actions to improve retention and attainment. The group examined and discussed retention and attainment data from SFC's 2017/18 published information. This outcome from this discussion was to devise a methodology that would allow Curriculum hubs across the region to collaboratively evaluate their performance in relation to retention and attainment and in particular PIs relating to full time further education.

The Quality Leads developed a methodology and piloted this with Sport and Leisure practitioners delivering FT FE programmes. Sport and Leisure were chosen as the PIs for this FT FE subject area is one of the lowest in Glasgow Region. The methodology involved prior consideration of retention and attainment data using the SFC elements tool followed by a facilitator led forum which would bring together members of the relevant Curriculum hub. Prior to the Sport and Leisure forum each of the participant College's completed a view of the student journey to identify what the issues were in relation to FT FE retention and attainment.

A regional forum was held and participants considered 3 aspects:

- **Good Practice?** – What are participants currently doing that they considered as good practice in targeting retention and attainment.
- **Try?** - What approach might participants be able to try from the good practice discussion to improve retention and attainment?
- **Who should be influenced?** – Who has a key role in attainment and retention and should be influenced?

Key outcomes from the forum included identification of the following improvement actions:

- Providing pre-entry tasks or activities to complete prior to joining the course to provide an early indicator of the support required for students.
- Extending class inductions over a longer period of time, with no teaching, to allow the class members to bond. This also prevents a lot of information being delivered in one afternoon that is then forgotten by students.
- Closer tracking of student assessment progress outcome by outcome. This approach facilitates richer guidance sessions with students, allows action planning of remediation and submission of work. One College was using Google documents which ensured this information was live.
- Utilising student calendars in Google or Office 365 to identify assessment dates.
- Utilising HE students to work with FE students and cross assess.
- Embedding core skills across the curriculum and grouping units under titles such as 'Preparation for Employment' so that students see the value of units and don't see them as discrete.

Having tested the methodology, it is intended that the other regional curriculum hubs will undertake a similar method to examine and share good practice in targeting retention and attainment.

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