

Glasgow College Region

Ambitious, regional and collaborative

Regional news and opportunities for
college staff

October 2019 - January 2020



Hello and welcome to the third edition of our regional newsletter for Glasgow's college staff.

Our aim is to share some of the news and views about the collective work that is happening across our region every day and highlight some of our successful initiatives, with insight from staff who help to deliver them.

The new term is now well underway and, as a Board, we have been reviewing the region's progress and achievements with stakeholders and partners, as well as looking to the future. You can read more about our Self Evaluation on Regional Effectiveness and our Strategic Board Development Day, which coincided with the start of term, in this newsletter.

We are committed to developing opportunities for our college staff in Glasgow and planning is underway around professional development opportunities which will be announced soon.

I want to thank you for supporting our new cohort and for your continued hard

work, support and for contributing to enhancing our learners' futures.



Janie McCusker
Chair, Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board



In this Newsletter:

- [Regional Self Evaluation »](#)**
- [Regional CPR Opportunities »](#)**
- [Regional Lead for Student Experience »](#)**
- [GCRB Strategic Board Development Day »](#)**
- [Welcome on Board: Trade Union Representatives »](#)**
- [Spotlight on: Financial Services' Hubs »](#)**
- [Regional Events and Board Member profile »](#)**

Self Evaluation on Regional Effectiveness

GCRB welcomed the Scottish Funding Council, college representatives and partner organisations to review the region's achievements and progress, as part of a recommended approach outlined by the Scottish Government.

The meeting followed Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board's **Self Evaluation on Regional Effectiveness**, which provides a review of the performance of the Glasgow College Region across key areas: regional planning and provision, regional performance and productivity, and regional partnerships and people.

GCRB Chair Janie McCusker said: "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.

"In Glasgow, we are progressing well towards achieving our ambition of being Scotland's most inclusive, responsive and effective regional college service.

"Our achievements are a direct result of committed collaboration between the Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board, 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."

The report evidences the work to build consistent regional college provision, to align learning with jobs and Glasgow's economic growth, and to create wider access to life changing college education.

The full report is available [here](#) and you can also read about GCRB's future plans in the **2019-20 Programme of Action**.





Sign up to our occasional e-bulletins

Regional CPD Opportunities

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.**

Glasgow Clyde, City of Glasgow and Kelvin College Organisation Development staff recently met to discuss these continued collaborative working plans for staff in 2019/20.

They explored four key themes for professional learning, as supported by the three College Principals:



Audrey Miller, GCRB Regional Lead, said: "We are progressing with plans to have a number of professional development events over the course of the next academic year.

"Our focus will be on delivering development opportunities for college staff around Wellbeing, Innovation, Digital Transformation and Networking , as well as general professional development.

"We plan to host three Networking events and will be working with ICT on enhancing digital skills for our employees and work towards a joint professional

learning plans.

"Mental Health and Well-being courses will also be scheduled for line managers and staff alike."

There are also plans in progress to develop specialist training around Assistive Technologies and British Sign Language.

Courses will be announced on **Twitter** - follow GCRB to keep up to date with confirmed course dates and to sign up to attend.



Regional Lead for Student Experience



Gillian Plunkett is the Regional Lead for Student Experience.

Gillian is also the Director of Student Experience at City of Glasgow College, where she works with Principal and CEO Paul Little and colleagues on the Senior Management Team, to deliver a world class experience for students.

"What is the Student Experience I hear you ask!

"Well, it covers just about every aspect of a student's journey, from well before they start college and throughout their learning experience to graduation and beyond. This means that everyone at the college inputs to the student experience, and my job is to work with colleagues to help smooth out the pinch points and ensure that students have an experience which is personalised to

Executive Team and other Regional Leads from across all 3 colleges in the Region.

"The Regional Leads were appointed for their expertise and specialist knowledge in a variety of areas and our job is to work together, on one day per week, to drive forward the GCRB's ambitions for the Glasgow Region by identifying the many examples of excellence and innovation in the three Regional Colleges, ensuring that all students

their needs, responsive and relevant to their journey.

"I also lead the core student support services at the college and this includes an applications and admissions service, student funding including Bursaries, childcare and hardship funds, learning support for students with an additional support need, personal support, and a counselling and a wellbeing service for any student who needs this help.

"I work closely with the Students' Association, CitySA, to ensure that the student voice is heard within the college and students have a democratically elected Presidential Team, Student Executive and class representation system.

"I have a Master's Degree in Business Administration from Caledonian University which I have put to good use in various roles in the education sector over 25 plus years.

"My early career involved the development and funding of community projects in some of the most socially and economically deprived areas in the West of Scotland, and I am sure that my passion for social justice and inclusion grew from this exposure.

"Currently I am also privileged to be a member of the sparqs (Student Partnership in Quality Scotland) Trustee Board chaired by Sir Andrew Cubie. Sparqs is a small, but

benefit from what the Region can offer.

"Working with colleagues from Glasgow Clyde and Glasgow Kelvin Colleges we have progressed 3 main areas of work:-

· **Student Funding** – reviewing student funding across the Region (approx. £21m) to give the GCRB some level of assurance that student support funds are targeted at those most in need and that funds support regional outcome agreements; developing common student support policies across the Region to ensure that all students are treated fairly whilst still allowing local flexibility to need; encouraging cross Region sharing of good practice and ideas for improvements.

· **Admissions and inter-college progression** – supporting new inter-college progression pathways developed by curriculum hubs to ensure that students can access opportunities across the Region; working collectively to share best practice in admissions to improve response times to applicants.

· **Student data management** – working with the Regional MIS Lead, Scottish Government, Skills Development Scotland and Scotland's Colleges to improve the experience of individuals applying to college.

"I have learned a lot from colleagues across the Region and I am looking forward to continuing this work in

dynamic publicly-funded agency for Scotland's university and college sectors who support student engagement in the quality of the learning experience.

"Two years ago, I had the opportunity of taking on the Regional Lead role for Student Experience for the Glasgow Colleges Regional Board (GCRB), working with the Chair Janie McCusker, the GCRB

2019/20 and meeting up with my regional colleagues once again, there is still a lot to do.

"My final word would be to say that colleges have offer a vitally important economic and social anchor for many people, communities, and businesses and I am very proud of what we are achieving."



GCRB Strategic Board Development Day



The Glasgow College Region has been planning for the future, with a Strategic Development Day. Board Members, College Principals and stakeholders got together to develop collaborative, ambitious and regional strategic plans.

The session was hosted by GCRB's Chair **Janie McCusker** and facilitated by University of Stirling's Professor of Education Ron Hill.

Karen Watt, Chief Executive of the Scottish Funding Council, and Damien Yeates, Chief Executive of Skills Development Scotland (pictured above with Janie McCusker) outlined their joint strategy and vision as part of the Development Day, highlighting '**Skills 2035: A Human Future**'.

Glasgow Regional College Board Chair Janie McCusker said:

"The Strategic Development Day brought Board members and key stakeholders together, with their collective knowledge, expertise and experience in the sector and beyond, to consider the region's collective position on strategic priorities.

"Our discussions centred around supporting our learners' ambitions, driving excellence in our colleges and responding to the region's social and skills' needs.

"Karen Watt from the Scottish Funding Council and Damien Yeates from Skills Development Scotland shared their strategic plans for the future, contributing to and stimulating a progressive and insightful discussion.

"We look forward to developing and progressing plans and continuing to build Scotland's most inclusive, responsive and effective regional college system."





Welcome on Board: Trade Union Representatives

Representatives from Trade Unions will have the opportunity to attend the Glasgow College Regional Board's quarterly meetings from October 2019.

Trade unions have each been invited to put forward one member to attend and observe GCRB Board meetings.

The Scottish Government has asked that all college boards have trade union board members by 2020. Glasgow College Regional Board has offered union representatives observer status ahead of formal arrangements being introduced.

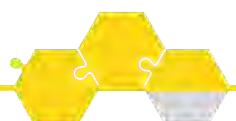
Janie McCusker, Chair of Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board, said:

"The inclusion of trade union representatives is a very positive development, which will both enhance the Glasgow staff voice in discussions and support increased diversity of thought."

Chris Greenshields, chair of UNISON Scotland's further education committee, said:

"It is important that there is a trade union voice in decision making on College Boards. The Scottish Government recognises this in term of its Fair Work agenda and will enact provision for trade union seats on every college Board in 2020.

"This interim arrangement with the Glasgow Regional Board is welcome and is an important first step."



Spotlight on: Financial Services Hubs



Nikola (second from left) and her classmates are the first group of students to participate in the Pilot of the new, part-time Financial Services' course.

The Glasgow College region has developed a new Financial Services' Employers' Hub, aimed at meeting the skills' needs of some of the biggest financial services employers.

The Pilot scheme of the course, delivered by City of Glasgow College, has been shortlisted for a **Scottish Financial Services Award**, which celebrates success and recognises excellence in financial services.

The programme was established

"The course offered quite a few technical skills, some personal development and looked at the financial services sector. We learned what banks do, covering monetary policy and economics.

"My favourite part of the course was the Fraud class as we learned about all the people working in the background to keep customers safe and it gave me some insight into this as a possible career path. I also found the Introduction to Financial Services class to be worthwhile."

following discussion with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) around skills, training and demand with a range of Financial Services employers, including Barclays, JP Morgan, HSBC, Morgan Stanley and Tesco Bank.

City of Glasgow College successfully delivered the course's Pilot Scheme, which saw 20 students taking part in a part-time Financial Services course, aimed at college and university graduates and plans to run a second pilot next November.

21-year-old Nikola, who has just completed her second year studying International Business at Strathclyde University, was one of the first students to take part in the eight-week course.

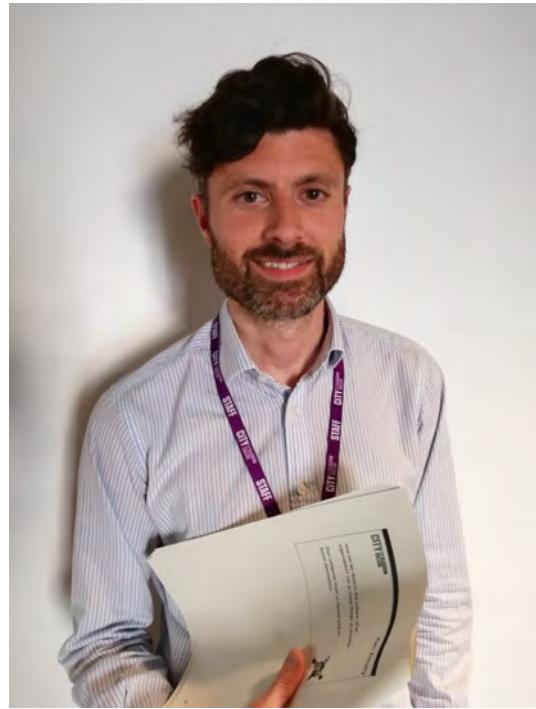
Nikola said: "I took up this course as I wanted to get a better understanding of the Finance industry as a whole and to get a better idea of what employment opportunities would be available when I finish my degree.

Representatives from Barclay's Bank and Morgan Stanley spoke to the students about opportunities and working in the sector, as well as innovation and progression in banking.

Chris Colvin from City of Glasgow College, said: "It has been fantastic to work with our industry partners and SDS to develop such a forward thinking and dynamic course to meet the needs of local industry and helps to equip our students with the skills required to embark in a career in the Financial Service Sector.

"Our whole team are looking forward to continuing and developing this partnership"

Chief Executive of Skills Development Scotland Damien Yeates also highlighted the Financial Services' Hub scheme while presenting joint strategic vision and priorities with the Scottish Funding Council's Chief Executive Karen Watt at GCRB's recent Strategic Board Development Day.



Regional Events





Well done to all of the staff and students who took part in two important regional events at the end of last term.

Foundation Apprenticeship Celebration Event

More than 180 pupils gathered at Glasgow's City Chambers were recognised at a special celebration event to mark the completion of their Foundation Apprenticeships. Developed with Skills Development Scotland, Foundation Apprenticeships offer pupils vocational and personal development skills learning at college and a hands-on work experience with an employer leading to a qualification at the same level of learning as a Higher.

Jamie Hepburn MSP, Minister for Business, Fair Work and Skills was invited along to deliver the keynote speech to a packed venue which included the pupils, families and employers as well as representatives from the consortium partners. Chair of Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board, Janie McCusker, helped to present certificates to the successful students in front of their proud friends and families.

Regional Diversity Competition

Students across Glasgow's three colleges also celebrated diversity with the annual Regional Diversity Competition.

Glasgow's Clyde, City of Glasgow and Kelvin Colleges selected their top entrants for a regional competition event, hosted at the Riverside Campus and judged by representatives from Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board.

In its fourth year, the competition aims to find an effective expression or communication of the 'embracing diversity' theme and is open to students from all subject areas, who are encouraged to reflect upon what Equality, Diversity and Inclusion means to them.

The winning entry was from HNC contemporary art student Santiago Del Pozo who studies at Glasgow Clyde College's Anniesland Campus (pictured above right)

Board Member Profile



Lesley Garrick joined GCRB as a Board member in 2016. She is a self-employed coach, consultant and facilitator, mainly working in the public sector, helping people and organisations to improve their work and working lives. She has worked as a management consultant for 18 years, was employed by Hay Group as an Associate Director and worked as a senior manager in the NHS for ten years.

Lesley is a Chartered Fellow of the CIPD and a member of the Association of Coaching.

"I joined GCRB as a Board member in the second half of 2016.

"I've gathered a range of qualifications and experience across my career - and initially a PhD in Geography had me thinking about an academic career.

"I previously worked as a Hospital Manager at Inverclyde Royal Hospital in Greenock, and having had a big operational management responsibility for the services of a Hospital means I understand the very real pressures of running delivery of complex services for which there is increasing demand.

"It has also helped me to really understand and support approaches that were needed when communicating difficult decisions that affected services which are delivered by committed professional staff who want to do the best for their patients.

"In my experience that level of commitment, energy and passion is mirrored in the college staff in Glasgow who want to do their best for students and learners, and their communities.

"Glasgow Colleges are such a key part of education for the City and beyond, and I am keen to play a part in the debate and decisions which will help shape and improve the learning experience.

"Further Education has gone through so much change over the last few years, and it has such an important part to play in people's lives and their learning journey.

"The three Colleges in Glasgow are already achieving great things. Colleges are a critical way for learners to gain skills, experiences and qualifications across their lifetime and as their career changes. With all of the predicted changes coming to things like our working lives, the economy, and our population, we need to work together to make sure we are ready to adapt and meet those challenges.

"The Glasgow College Regional Board brings a great opportunity for us to look for shared improvements and shared opportunities that make us even better. We need to make sure we ask challenging questions of ourselves, our stakeholders and our Colleges as a way of making the best decisions about strategic investments and resourcing. Knowing that we have done that also means we can tell our story to other people and politicians in a really powerful way.

"I really believe in the idea that for the Glasgow college system, "the whole is more than the sum of the parts".

"I would like to see GCRB achieve a way of working and making decisions that allows it to deliver the benefits to current and future learners which come from making strategic decisions on resourcing and investment, and supporting Colleges in managing the challenges of making those decisions a reality."



Tell us about any Regional projects you're working on:

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