

Performance & Resources Committee Meeting

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 31 March 2021
Paper Title	College Sector Statistics 2019-20
Agenda Item	22
Paper Number	PRC4-P
Responsible Officer	Jim Godfrey, Finance and Resources Director
Status	Disclosable
Action	For Noting

1. Report Purpose

- 1.1. To enable the Committee to consider the College Sector Statistics 2019-20.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Committee is asked to **note** the College Sector Statistics 2019-20 published by the Scottish Funding Council.

3. Report

- 3.1. On 26 January 2021, the Scottish Funding Council published its report on College Statistics 2019-20. The report is produced on an annual basis and is based upon the audited student data provided by colleges in Scotland.

- 3.2. The publication provides an overview of college sector statistics from 2010-11 to 2019-20. The published documents are available via the following link:

<http://www.sfc.ac.uk/publications-statistics/statistical-publications/2021/SFCST012021.aspx>

- 3.3. The main findings from this year's report are summarised in the Executive Summary and reproduced below:

- Despite the COVID-19 pandemic severely limiting enrolment in April and May, the college sector exceeded the Scottish Government's FTE target by 1,397 FTEs in 2019-20, delivering 117,666 FTEs.
- The total number of 18-19 year-olds in the Scottish population has decreased 13.6% over the last decade and decreased by 2.6% from 2018-19 to 2019-20 alone. However, the participation rate for 18-19 year-olds in the Scottish population attending college full-time has remained stable. In 2019-20, one fifth (20.9%) of 18-19 year olds in the Scottish population attended college full-time. Nonetheless studying at college is just one of the options available to 18-19 year olds, with many choosing to go into work or university.

- At Further Education (FE) level, full-time FTEs (all funding sources) have remained the same since 2018-19 whilst part-time FTEs have decreased (down 2.7%). At Higher Education (HE) level, full-time FTEs decreased by 1.5% and part-time FTEs decreased by 11.3% since 2018-19.
- These reductions largely took place during April and May when FTE's were down 79.1% (1,797 FTE) from 2018-19. Between August and March FTEs were up 0.3% (318 FTE) from 2018-19.
- Whilst FTEs have remained more stable in recent years, in 2019-20 the total student headcount and number of enrolments decreased by 9.8% and 8.1% respectively from the previous year, returning to similar numbers as in 2017-18. These reductions largely occurred again between April and May. The period between 2017-18 and 2018-19 saw the largest year-to-year increases in the last 10 years.
- Enrolments on non-recognised qualifications have decreased by 2.5% since 2018-19. Enrolments on courses under 10 hours in duration have decreased by 37.8% since 2018-19.

4. Risk Analysis

- 4.1.** This report, and the SFC publication, is intended to provide background information to support regional planning. As such it is intended to mitigate the risk that "Ineffective regional curriculum planning impacts regional, economic and social needs" (Risk 006)

5. Equalities Implications

- 5.1.** The SFC report contains information regarding performance by student characteristics (such as age and gender). This may be used to inform the future Strategic Plan.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1.** There are no specific legal implications associated with this report.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1.** There are no financial implications associated with this report.

8. Strategic Plan Implications

- 8.1.** The information available from the published performance indicators is used to inform the future Strategic Plan and Regional Outcome Agreement.