NOTICE OF MEETING

There will be a meeting of the Learning & Teaching and Student Services Committee on Tuesday 18 March 2014 at 1400 hours in Gate 63 (Training Restaurant), Aberdeen City Campus.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT
Ms. A Bell
Ms. S Cormack
Mr. B Cruickshank
Mr. B Dunn
Mr. D Duthie (Chair)
Prof. J Harper
Ms. C Inglis
Mr. J McKendrick
Ms. D Michie
Ms. A Simpson
Mr. R Wallen

IN ATTENDANCE
Mr. N Cowie, Vice Principal Organisational Services
Mr. F Hughes, Vice Principal Student Service
Mr. P Sherrington, Depute Principal
Ms. S Walker, Vice Principal Curriculum
Ms. P May, Secretary to the Board of Management
Ms. P Kesson, Minute Secretary
Meeting of 18 March 2014

Agenda

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Minute of the Previous Meeting
   2.1. Meeting of 21 January 2014 (paper enclosed)

3. Matters Arising
   3.1. Matters to be raised at the meeting

4. Principal’s Report (paper enclosed)

5. Matters for Decision
   5.1. Strategies for Learning and Teaching (paper enclosed)
   5.2. College/Local Authority/Schools Partnership Policy (paper enclosed)
   5.3. ICT Strategy (paper enclosed)
   5.4. Fee Refund Policy (paper enclosed)
   5.5. Remission of Fees Policy (paper enclosed)

6. Matters for Discussion
   6.1. Curriculum Planning: Links with Regional Outcome Agreement (paper enclosed)
   6.2. Partnerships with Schools/Local Authorities (paper enclosed)
   6.3. IT in the Curriculum for AY2014-15 (paper enclosed)
   6.4. Non SFC Funded Activity (paper enclosed)
   6.5. Students’ Association (paper enclosed)
   6.6. Identification of Training Needs (paper enclosed)

7. Papers for Information
   7.1. Student Activity – standing item (paper enclosed)
   7.2. Update from Education Scotland: Analysing Performance Indicators for External Evaluation (paper enclosed)
   7.3. Student Performance Indicators – standing item (paper enclosed)
   7.4. Student Support Funds (paper enclosed)

8. Summation of Business and Date and Time of Next Meeting
Draft Minute of Meeting of 21 January 2014

The meeting commenced at 1330 hours.

PRESENT – A Bell, S Cormack, B Cruickshank, B Dunn, D Duthie (Chair), J Harper, C Inglis, J McKendrick, D Michie, R Woods, R Wallen
IN ATTENDANCE – N Cowie, F Hughes, S Walker, P May, P Kesson

1. Apologies for Absence
Apologies were received from A Simpson, Board Member.

2. Minute of previous Meeting
The Minute of Meeting held on 26 November 2013 was approved.

3. Matters arising from previous Meeting
   3.1 Peer-led Review
   Mr Cruickshank said he would speak about this matter later in the meeting.

4. Report by the Principal
The Committee noted a report providing information on: the recent Board visit to the Service Industries and Social Sciences Sector; promoted teaching structure; Safe Drive, Stay Alive campaign; Christmas Fair; Learning Opportunities events; enterprising Animal Care students; primary school coaching; fit for work visit; Student IT Helpzone; and a visit to Hungary by science students.

Ms Cormack thanked everyone involved in the arrangements for the Board’s visit to Aberdeen City Campus on 09 December 2013.

5. Matters for Decision
   5.1 Course Fee Policy
   The Committee considered the proposed Policy on Course Fees.

   Members noted that the Policy had been drafted using elements of the policies operated by the former Aberdeen and Banff & Buchan Colleges.

   After some discussion the Committee adopted the College’s Policy on Course Fees.

   The Committee agreed that the Policy would be reviewed annually and set the next review date as January 2015.

   5.2 Students’ Association Grant – Academic Year 2013-14
   The Committee considered the award of grant to the Students’ Association for the year to 31 July 2014.

   Information was provided on the background to provision of a grant; fulfilment of condition of grant; grant funding; review mechanism; grant for AY2012-13; and grant for AY2013-14.

   Principal Wallen informed the Committee that, from 01 August 2014, the College can draw upon the additional monies made available by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) to manage the Students’ Association. Funding will be made available from the Scottish Funding Council up to October 2015 specifically for Students’ Associations.

   Mr Wallen suggested that the same level of funding be made available for AY2013-14 as was available for the previous academic year.
The Committee agreed to set the level of grant for the year to 31 July 2014 at a total of £36,735, of which £1,847 is to be ring fenced to fund the costs of engaging an external book-keeping service. The Committee agreed that a paper be brought to a future meeting to allow them to consider harmonisation of arrangements for 2014-15 following the creation of a single regional Students’ Association.

6. Matters for Discussion

6.1 Early Retention/Early Withdrawal
The Committee considered a report providing information on early retention/early withdrawal levels for the current year (2013-14) compared with last year (2012-12).

Information was provided on early withdrawal by Team for 2013-14 and 2012-13 in the Aberdeen City Campuses and early withdrawal by Sector for the same periods in Fraserburgh Campus.

Mrs Walker informed the Committee that, due to high early withdrawal rates in Mechanical Engineering, pre-entry guidance would be strengthened. In relation to future reports, it was agreed that a commentary would be provided for areas showing an early withdrawal rate of 10% or above.

The Committee noted the information provided in the report.

6.2 Learner Engagement Self-Evaluation 2012-13
The Committee considered a paper providing information on the range of different opportunities students had to engage with both the previous Aberdeen College and Banff & Buchan College in AY2012-13.

Members noted the information provided in the paper and appendices and commented that it was good to see the variety of strands of communication that had been established.

6.3 Enrolment Data by Age and Gender
The Committee considered a report providing information about the age and gender profiles of the student body.

Members noted the information provided in the appendices. It was suggested that it would be helpful for the Committee to receive gender information by curriculum areas. It was also proposed that consideration should be given to the reporting of students who do not self-define their gender.

6.4 Status Report on Pre-merger Quality Work Stream
The Committee considered a paper providing information on the development of quality assurance and improvement arrangements for North East Scotland College.

Information was provided on quality-related activities; quality structure for the College; and Education Scotland Quality Review arrangements.

In noting the paper Members commented on the substantial and effective work undertaken by Quality managers and teams in the former Aberdeen and Banff & Buchan Colleges.

6.5 Non SFC Funded Activity – Recent Developments
The Committee considered a paper highlighting developments in non-SFC funded activity and updates in the timeframe to review and implement changes to current practice and structures.
Information was provided on key developments with Skills Development Scotland and with the European Social Fund Project; and integration of existing teams responsible for managing non SFC-funded activity in Aberdeen and Fraserburgh.

The Committee noted the information provided in the paper.

6.6 Students’ Association
The Committee considered issues relating to the Students’ Association.

Members noted the reports provided by Mr McKendrick and Mr Cruickshank.

Mr McKendrick and Mr Wallen agreed to discuss the operation of the Shopmobility raffle outwith the meeting.

Mr Duthie asked Mr Cruickshank if there was any evidence to back up the statement in his report which said “It’s believed there is a huge issue of discrimination on the Aberdeen City campus”. Mr Cruickshank said he was unsure as to the origin of the claim.

Principal Wallen commented that he had not been made aware of any such issue. Mr Cruickshank was asked to provide any available information relevant to this claim to enable the College to address the matter if validated.

Mr Cruickshank was informed that under items such as “Student Representation” the Committee did not require a breakdown of names and percentages of students.

The Committee noted that peer-led reviews would be carried out as planned. Mr Cruickshank was asked to meet with Mr Cowie, Vice Principal, to discuss the process further and to identify and address any possible barriers to undertaking peer-led reviews across the College.

7. Papers for Information
7.1 Student Activity
The Committee noted a paper providing information on the current status of student activity for AY 2013-14.

Members noted that the College was on track to achieve its wSUMs target.

7.2 Student Performance Indicators
The Committee noted a report providing information on high level, student-related success outcomes for 2010 to 2013.

Information was provided on SFC student-related PI data; student attainment; and a forthcoming review by SFC and Education Scotland.

7.3 Student Support Funds
The Committee noted a report providing information on amounts allocated for various support funds and comparative spend for AY2013-14 and AY2012-13.

Information was provided on the general rules for Bursary Funds; Discretionary and Childcare Funds; Childcare Reserve Fund; Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) Programme; and disbursement of funds in AY2013-14.
8. Summation of Business and date of next Meeting
The Secretary gave a summation of the business conducted. The next meeting of the Learning & Teaching and Student Services Committee is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 18th March 2014.

The meeting concluded at 1450 hours.
Report by the Principal

1. Introduction
   1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform members of the Committee about significant developments.

2. Promoted Teaching Staff Structure
   2.1 The promoted teaching staff structure for North East Scotland College came into effect on Monday 03 February. The 3 Heads of School, 12 Faculty Managers and 33 of the 35 Curriculum and Quality Managers are all now in post, with the 2 remaining vacancies currently being recruited. In addition a Schools/College Liaison Team has been established, with the appointment of a Schools Liaison Manager, supported by two Schools Liaison Officers. To support and enhance university articulation a University Liaison Manager is also now in post. Role clarification events for colleagues appointed to the promoted teaching staff structure of the College were delivered by the Vice Principal Curriculum on 03 and 04 February at Aberdeen City and Fraserburgh campuses. Details of appointments are attached as an appendix to this paper.

3. Review of College Development Network
   3.1 The organisation which promotes the interests of the College Sector recently changed from a single body called Scotland’s Colleges to two separate entities: Colleges Scotland and the College Development Network (CDN). Colleges Scotland is the voice of the sector, seeking to ensure that the interests of the college sector, which are so important to the people and economy of Scotland, are promoted.

   3.2 The role of College Development Network (CDN) is to support colleges to deliver high quality, efficient learning and best practice. Regionalisation brings new development needs for the sector and therefore the requirement for CDN’s current capacity and future potential to be defined. The Vice Principal Curriculum is a member of the Review Team of three, which is undertaking a review of CDN in relation to leadership and management, delivery of programmes and activities and staffing arrangements. The team, which is being overseen by the Regional Leads for Tayside and Borders, will report its findings in early March, prior to submission of a full report to the Cabinet Secretary.

4. Award for Excellence
   4.1 Universities and Colleges Information Systems Association (UCISA) has announced that the winner of their 2013 Award for Excellence is the University of Aberdeen for the collaboration with Robert Gordon University and North East Scotland College on the North East of Scotland Shared Data Centre.

   4.2 The goal of this £1.5m initiative was the creation of a unique shared primary data centre facility for all the tertiary educational establishments in the North East of Scotland. The project involved the extensive upgrade of an aging, operational, live data centre during term-time providing an innovative, cost-effective and highly carbon-efficient shared services environment – thus allowing for the closure of existing inefficient facilities at the partner organisations. This is the fourth award the project has won.

5. Creativity Across Learning – NESC01’s Creative Learning Network champions
   5.1 New funding has become available from Colleges Scotland to support North East Scotland College (with other partners including Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council) in promoting creative learning approaches in Curriculum for Excellence. The Faculty Manager for the Creative Arts and the Curriculum and Quality Manager for Childcare and Education will continue to lead the development of links with regional and national partners, and support staff development events to ensure that creativity in learning is embraced by all areas of the new College that will further enhance the learner experience.
6. Be Your Own Boss – Aberdeen City Campus Wednesday 5 March 10-4
   6.1 Enterprise North East Trust is working with the College to provide learners and staff with a rich and varied conference day, to include a range of young entrepreneurs who have decided to become their own boss.

7. The Buttle UK Quality Mark for Care Leavers
   7.1 North East Scotland College has embarked on the process of achieving the Buttle UK Quality Mark. The Quality Mark was introduced in 2006 to provide a framework to improve and accredit support for Looked After Children and Care Leavers initially in Higher Education and now in Further Education. The Quality Mark recognises good practice and is a mark of excellence recognising and celebrating the work that institutions do to raise aspirations among children and young people in and leaving care and to help them access and succeed in college, university and beyond.

8. Money for Life Challenge
   8.1 Two groups of HND Advertising and PR students have been successful in the first stage of the Money for Life Challenge, through Colleges Scotland, and have been awarded a grant to run the project. The Money for Life Challenge is a national competition which provides small grants for 16 to 24 year olds to run a project to improve money management skills in their communities. The most inspiring and impactful projects progress to the National Finals and the UK Grand Final.

   The projects are:
   - Feed 4 for 5
   - Frugal Food – “cook fae fresh”, the price is good.

   Last year, College teams were runners-up in this competition.

9. Ghetto
   9.1 The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust (HMDT) is the charity which promotes and supports Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD). To mark this important event HND Year 2 Acting and Performance students performed a play by Israeli playwright Joshua Sobol about the experiences of the Jews of the Vilna Ghetto during Nazi occupation in World War II. ‘Ghetto’ was performed on 29 and 30 January.

10. Drama students in anti-bullying campaign
    10.1 Recently, HND Year 2 Acting and Performance students performed two shows in Harlaw Academy for approximately 100 2nd year students. The HND students worked to devise an ensemble show on aspects of bullying and anti-social behaviour, highlighting a variety of scenarios which would be relevant to their audience’s age group and experience.
11. North East Scotland College receives two GOLD Awards

11.1 The Publicity and Marketing Team received two Gold Awards on 26 February at an event organised by the College Development Network. The annual Marketing Awards are designed to recognise and celebrate the excellent marketing practice taking place in colleges. North East Scotland College won the Promotional Literature category and the Student Award for Best Prospectus.

11.2 The entry for Promotional Literature was a booklet aimed at school pupils – ‘What’s Next?’ -- which was produced for use at career events. The judges felt it to be an exciting idea focusing on young people as consumers. There was a good rationale for the material and design and the use of Survey Monkey to evaluate the booklet was good, as was the case study approach.

11.3 The second Gold Award, and perhaps the most prestigious, was for the 2014-15 Prospectus - the first to be produced under the new North East Scotland College brand. Chosen by a group of student judges, the NESCol Prospectus was deemed the best for its easy to follow layout, good information and dynamic design.

12. Game Changer Awards

12.1 North East Scotland College has been announced as a finalist of the Game Changer Awards for its 2014 Legacy Coaching Schools Project. The Awards aim to recognise the role of Scotland’s colleges and higher education institutions in the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games. The College’s project involves HND Coaching and Developing students undertaking various coaching projects at local primary schools in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, with the aim of increasing youth sport participation. The winners will be announced at an awards ceremony on 03 April 2014.

13. Recommendation

13.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the content of this report.

Rob Wallen
Principal
## North East Scotland College Curriculum Structure

### Agenda item 4.1 Appendix 1

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<tr>
<th>Head of School</th>
<th>Faculty Manager</th>
<th>Curriculum Areas</th>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Ref</th>
<th>Curriculum and Quality Manager</th>
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| **Bill Rattray**  
School of Engineering, Science and Technology | **Colin Tweedie**  
Electrical Engineering, Energy and Science | Electrical Engineering | Altens | TAA | David Pirie |
| | | Energy, Oil & Gas and Renewables | Altens | TAB | David Sutherland |
| | | Science | ACC | TAC | Doug Fraser |
| | **Susan Walker**  
Mechanical Engineering | Mechanical Engineering | Altens | TAD | Tracey Wylie |
| | | Maths and Mechanical Engineering Technicians | Altens | TAE | Gillian Cunningham |
| | **Pat Cromar**  
Construction and Automotive Engineering | Construction | Altens | TAF | Ian Lussier |
| | | Automotive Engineering | Altens | TAG | Drew Muir |
| | **Phil Wilson**  
Engineering Technologies | Electrical and Automotive Engineering and Construction | F:b | TAH | Kevin Bruce |
| | | Mechanical Engineering and Welding | F:b | TAJ | Ronnie Cowie |

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| **John Davidson**  
School of Creative Industries, Computing and Business Enterprise | **Elaine Makein**  
Creative Arts | Art, Design and Textiles | ACC | TCA | Janice Scott |
| | | Visual Communication and Photography | ACC | TCB | Innes Taylor |
| | | Art, Design, Floristry and Tourism | F:b | TCC | David Herd |
| | **Dorothy Carnegie**  
Music, Drama, Media and Essential Skills | Music, Drama and Media | ACC | TCD | Tony Young |
| | | Core and Essential Skills and ESOL | F:b | TCE | David Henderson |
| | | Essential and Core Skills | ACC | TCF | Vance Adair |
| | | ESOL | ACC | TCG | Veli Bariskan |
| | **Robert Laird**  
Business Management, Tourism and Enterprise | Business, Enterprise and Administration | ACC | TCH | Michele Burnett |
| | | Accounting and Law | ACC | TCJ | Grace Grimshaw |
| | | Tourism and Events | ACC | TCK | Grant Macdonald |
| | **Cameron Walker**  
Computing | Computing Applications | ACC | TCL | Duncan Macleod |
| | | Computing Networking | ACC | TCM | Pamela Cumming |
| | | Computing, Business, Administration and Accounting | F:b | TCN | Fiona Daniel |

Interim (as at 31-01-14)
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<td>TDC</td>
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<td>F:b</td>
<td>TDD</td>
<td>(Vacancy) Advertised externally</td>
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<td>Catherine Stollery</td>
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Interim (as at 31-01-14)
Strategies for Learning and Teaching

1. Introduction
   1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide the Committee with an opportunity to consider the strategy governing the key function of North East Scotland College - Learning and Teaching - and the sub-strategies that support it. The Learning and Teaching Strategy is attached as appendix 1.

   1.2 The Committee is asked to consider adopting the final four sub-strategies to complete the set of six that support learning and teaching.

2. Background
   2.1 All College strategies and the policies related to them are the responsibility of the Board of Management, appropriate Committee of the Board, the Principal or a Senior Manager, depending on the purpose and status of the strategy.

   2.2 Responsibility for the implementation of each strategy depends on who has overall responsibility for it and this is typically a member of the Senior Management Team.

   2.3 In order to ensure that the aspirations and aims for learning and teaching at North East Scotland College are implemented, a full set of strategies covering this vital aspect of the College’s work has been developed.

3. The Strategies for Learning and Teaching
   3.1 The relationship between the proposed strategies governing learning and teaching is set out in appendix 2.

   3.2 The Learning and Teaching Strategy, which was approved prior to merger by the Regional Partnership Board, has been adopted by North East Scotland College as the overarching policy governing learning and teaching.

   3.3 The sub-strategies to support the implementation of the Learning and Teaching Strategy are as follows:

   - Access and Articulation Strategy (approved)
   - External Engagement Strategy (Appendix 3.3.1)
   - Dissemination of Good Practice in the Curriculum Strategy (Appendix 3.3.2)
   - Essential Skills: Core and Soft Skills Strategy (Appendix 3.3.3)
   - Curriculum Strategy (Appendix 3.3.4)
   - Learning Resources to Support the Curriculum Strategy (Appendix 3.3.5).

   3.4 The first two sub-strategies have already been approved and are being implemented. However, the External Engagement Strategy was further amended by the Senior Management Team following comments received at the Board’s recent Planning Event and is attached as appendix 3.3.1.

   3.5 The final four sub-strategies are being presented to the Committee for approval. These are attached as appendices 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5.

   3.6 The Essential Skills: Core and Soft Skills Strategy was identified as an example of good practice by Education Scotland as part of a national HMI Aspect Task in 2013.
4. **Recommendation**

4.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

4.1.1. Considers the proposed relationship between the Learning and Teaching Strategy and related sub-strategies that support its implementation.

4.1.2. Considers adopting the amendment to the External Engagement Strategy attached as appendix 3.3.1.

4.1.3. Considers adopting the four attached draft strategies to complete the review of strategies governing learning and teaching at North East Scotland College.

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Rob Wallen  
Principal

Sandra Walker  
Vice Principal Curriculum
NORTH EAST SCOTLAND COLLEGE

LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGY

Version Date: Approved by Regional Partnership Board 21st October 2013
1.0 Introduction/Background

1.1 The overall aim of the College’s Learning and Teaching Strategy is to enable all students to reach their full potential with maximum achievement of vocational and essential skills for learning, life and work.

1.2 The College is committed to delivering high quality inclusive learning and teaching experiences for students that lead to the attainment of certificated qualifications and progression to or within employment or further study.

1.3 The College will provide high quality flexible and accessible courses responsive to the needs of individuals, employers and communities served by the College.

1.4 The Strategy supports the changing needs, aspirations and expectations of students and addresses developments in learning, teaching and assessment within the context of an immersive ICT environment.

2.0 The Strategy

2.1 The focus of the Learning and Teaching Strategy is to provide inspirational teaching, supported by high quality resources and services to support learning.

2.2 The College will provide high quality learning and teaching through:

2.2.1 Flexible and varied teaching approaches and delivery methods that reflect different learning styles

2.2.2 Active engagement of students at the centre of learning experiences, including the co-creation and co-evaluation of learning as appropriate

2.2.3 A wide range of creative, dynamic and inclusive learning and teaching approaches, promoting creativity across learning with a holistic approach to student engagement

2.2.4 Dissemination of good and innovative practice across the curriculum

2.2.5 The development of core and essential skills for learning, life and work

2.2.6 Commitment to enterprise, independence and self-reflection

2.2.7 Up-to-date, relevant and appropriate programmes that provide students with opportunities to progress to positive and meaningful destinations

2.2.8 Continuous review of quality indicators and awarding bodies to ensure the provision of nationally recognised qualifications that support employment

2.2.9 Availability of high quality resources for learning, including state-of-the-art learning technologies, set within a learning environment, conducive to positive learner experiences and outcomes.

2.2.10 Commitment to access and inclusion to ensure that all those who can benefit from the education and training provided, and progress where appropriate to further study or work, can access the provision, with reasonable adjustments being made as appropriate

2.2.11 Effective programme and lesson planning and review to ensure that programmes are continually improved

2.2.12 Effective assessment approaches, including formative assessment and compliance with awarding body standards

2.2.13 Promotion of mutually respectful relationships between staff and students and between students that provide the appropriate climate for effective learning to take place

2.2.14 Well qualified and trained teaching and support staff.
2.3 The College will provide high quality support for learning through:

2.3.1 Study support for students who require additional support to optimise their opportunities for success
2.3.2 Information and effective communication with students, including the provision of information on university articulation routes and pathways to employment
2.3.3 Guidance at pre-entry stage to ensure the students are matched to the course that best suits their needs and aspirations
2.3.4 On-course Guidance to support retention
2.3.5 Pre-exit Guidance to support progression to work or further study
2.3.6 Opportunities to participate in competitions, awards and prizes and to engage in enterprising, volunteering or citizenship activities that enhance the learning experience and increase the employability potential of students
2.3.7 A comprehensive range of up-to-date technologies appropriate to the curriculum offer
2.3.8 Staff with an understanding of the full range of teaching approaches and available resources, including the latest learning technologies and the ability to use them effectively to meet individual and group needs
2.3.9 Staff with the skills to evaluate their own and their team's performance and to take corrective action, as required, to improve the quality of the student experience
2.3.10 Appropriate and effective staff training to ensure staff remain up-to-date with technology and pedagogy
2.3.11 Lesson observations to ensure that good practice in learning and teaching is being implemented
2.3.12 Management of course provision within the curriculum planning cycle in ways that ensure effective and timely planning, development, delivery and review of learning and teaching
2.3.13 Audits of learning resources to ensure they meet student needs and support high quality curriculum delivery.

3.0 Responsibilities for the Strategy

3.1 Strategic responsibility for the Learning and Teaching Strategy rests with Vice Principal Curriculum.

4.0 Related Documents

4.1 Access and Articulation Strategy
Curriculum Strategy
Dissemination of Good Practice in the Curriculum Strategy
Essential Skills for Learning, Life and Work: Core and Soft Skills Strategy
External Engagement Strategy
Agenda Item 5.1 Appendix 2

North East Scotland College Curriculum

Learning and Teaching Strategy (Approved 21/10/13)

Essential Skills: Core and Soft Skills Strategy (For approval by LTSSC March 2014)

Learning Resources to support Curriculum (For approval by LTSSC March 2014)

Access and Articulation Strategy (Approved 25/03/13)

Dissemination of Good Practice in the Curriculum (for approval by LTSSC March 2014)

External Engagement Strategy (Approved 25/02/13)

Strategies for Learning and Teaching

North East Scotland College Curriculum
NORTH EAST SCOTLAND COLLEGE

EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Version Date: Revised following Board Planning Event 2014
To be reconsidered at L&T&S Committee 18 March 2014
EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

1.0 Introduction and background

1.1 Colleges do not exist in isolation. The campuses of North East Scotland College are rooted in the social and economic communities of Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire, and they operate in a complex political, educational and cultural environment.

1.2 In order to function effectively, it is important for the College to develop productive relationships with a wide range of key external stakeholders, those bodies or individuals which have an interest in and/or influence on the work of the College.

1.3 The various factors, political, economic, social, educational and cultural, are themselves significantly intertwined and the College often engages in more than one of these ways with the same organisation.

1.4 It is important to have a clear framework within which the College will work in partnership with employers and communities to ascertain their learning needs and aspirations and to increase their capacity for learning and the development of skills.

1.5 This Strategy links to the Regional Outcome Agreement, and outlines how the College will contribute appropriately and effectively to national and local agendas, including:
   - Community Planning and Single Outcome Agreements;
   - Curriculum alignment to key growth sectors;
   - Responding to employer needs;
   - Development of skills for local economic growth;
   - Clearly articulated routes to employment or further study;
   - National Priorities for Community Learning and Development;
   - Curriculum for Excellence;
   - Learning for All and social inclusion.

2.0 Current position

2.1 Prior to merger, both Aberdeen College and Banff & Buchan College separately had a number of effective stakeholder relationships, in many cases with the same stakeholders, as well as some joint relationships (such as in the case of the involvement of both in the Oil and Gas Academy of Scotland (OGAS) and in the Regional Articulation Hub).

2.2 The process of merger has created both the need to reaffirm some of the relationships which existed between one or other of the formerly separate Colleges, which may in some cases have been negatively affected by the merger process or by perceptions of the merger, and also the opportunity to clarify and/or strengthen them, as well as to develop new relationships. Amongst the key external stakeholders of the College are:

2.2.1 Political government bodies
   - Scottish Government (including agencies such as the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and Skills Development Scotland (SDS), which are purely Scottish Government funded and which therefore implement governmental policy);
• Local government;
• UK Government (including agencies which are UK government funded and which therefore implement governmental policy).

2.2.2 Economic – employers and employer organisations
• Aberdeen City & Shire Economic Future (ACSEF);
• Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce (AGCC);
• Scottish Council for Development and Industry (SCDI);
• Grampian Federation for Small Businesses (GFSB);
• North East Enterprise Trust;
• Employer organisations such as OPITO, ECITB, SNIPEF, GMT, HABIA;
• Employers.

2.2.3 Educational, Social and Cultural – schools, universities, public bodies, third sector
• Education authorities – Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire (and elsewhere);
• Robert Gordon University;
• University of Aberdeen;
• Other universities;
• Third Sector organisations (e.g. ACVO, Aberdeen Foyer);
• Aberdeen Performing Arts;
• Arts Aberdeen;
• Aberdeen Arts Centre;
• Aberdeen City Museums.

3.0 The Aims of the Strategy

3.1 The aims of this Strategy are to ensure that the College:
• influences the decision-making processes which impact upon it;
• aligns itself as far as possible with the legitimate relevant expectations of the external stakeholders – as far as is possible, given the sometimes incompatible expectations of different stakeholders, the constraints of funding and the College’s own identified needs.

4.0 The implementation of the Strategy

4.1 Political engagement
The College will create and maintain effective relationships with Ministers, local MSPs, local MPs and local councillors through:
• making opportunities to meet with Ministers to allow them to understand the particular circumstances of the College;
• lobbying;
• targeted communication of information about the College to local politicians;
• bespoke opportunities to bring local political figures into the College.

4.2 Economic engagement
To ensure that it engages effectively with the employers it serves, employer organisations and other relevant bodies, the College will:
• consult with employers and employer organisations to identify and respond to demand for skills to support local economic growth, and so to develop a curriculum that supports the regional economy;
• liaise with generic Industry Bodies, such as AGCC, SCDI and ACSEF, to ensure that their market intelligence and aspirations are included in the employer engagement arrangements of the College;
• work with Industry Bodies, including OPITO; ECITB; HABIA; SMTA; SNIPEF and ConstructionSkills, to support the emerging training and skills needs of a wide range of industries;
• through OGAS contribute to meeting the challenges faced by the Oil and Gas Sector in relation to the recruitment of an expanding skilled workforce;
• facilitate a number of information events throughout the year to provide employer partners with a forum for articulating their current and future training needs to the College and their education and training partners;
• in accordance with the principles of Curriculum for Excellence embed the development of learners’ essential skills for learning, life and work across the regional curriculum, to include entrepreneurship and enterprise skills;
• in liaison with employer partners seek to secure work placement opportunities for learners, as appropriate, and to facilitate positive destinations, including progression to employment or to further study;
• continue to strengthen links with employers through the teaching sectors and departments at curriculum level by involving them in Course Committees and in setting vocationally specific project briefs for learners;
• work with employers to promote and showcase excellence, including events involving employers in judging competitions and presenting prizes. Examples include: The North East Hair and Beauty Festival; Fashion Shows; Construction Awards and End of Year Art and Photography Exhibitions;
• support employers in a range of activities including: attracting and retaining skilled people; providing continuous professional development for existing employees; attracting apprentices, and providing information about qualifications and skills;
• undertake market research to determine the needs of employers in order to inform curriculum planning and activity processes.

4.3 Engagement socially, educationally, culturally:
In order to engage properly with bodies involved in social, educational and cultural issues, the College will:
• participate as appropriate in the formal structures of Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) in the region to ensure that education and training opportunities and the development of skills are taken into account as part of the overall planning for community development;
• work in partnership with a range of key community groups for the benefit of the communities served by partner agencies: this includes: Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Community Learning and Development; Aberdeenshire Literacies Partnership; Jobcentre Plus; More Choices More Chances; Aberdeen Foyer; Aberdeen Library Service and Skills Development Scotland;
• host Open Days for members of the public in a wide range of locations across the region;
• undertake market research to determine the needs of individuals and communities in order to inform the curriculum planning process;
• participate in Community Engagement events hosted by community partners, including Job Fairs and locally based information events;
• provide locally based learning opportunities in a range of community locations across the Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire region, optimising the use of ICT as appropriate to increase access to education and training;
• create effective progression and articulation links between community-based learning and more substantial College based provision;
• work with the voluntary sector to develop mutually supportive skills sets between the College and third sector organisations in order to provide effective skills for learning, life and work for fragile or disadvantaged learners, within the context of available funding;
• work with Local Authorities to ensure that the communities of school pupils have the maximum opportunity to benefit from College delivered programmes as part of their overall educational experience in the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence and to ensure that school pupils are fully informed of the full range of post school opportunities available in the local community/region;
• work with key university partners to establish integrated regional educational pathways into Higher Education.

5.0 The evaluation of the Strategy

5.1 The impact of this Strategy will be continuously monitored to establish the extent to which we have engaged effectively with employers.

5.2 Indicators of success will include:
• College membership of key regional fora;
• positive press coverage for the College;
• healthy recruitment of employer-sponsored students;
• good progression rates of full-time students into employment;
• the availability of relevant workplacements for full-time students.

6.0 Responsibilities

6.1 Strategic responsibility for the External Engagement Strategy rests with the Senior Management Team.
NORTH EAST SCOTLAND COLLEGE

DISSEMINATION OF GOOD PRACTICE IN THE CURRICULUM STRATEGY

Revision Date: March 2014
1.0 Introduction/Background

1.1 North East College is committed to providing the highest quality of learning and teaching opportunities for all students.

1.2 The College is committed to engaging learners in enhancing their own learning by encouraging them to be effective contributors, confident individuals, responsible citizens and successful learners.

1.3 The College recognises the need to identify good practice and to embed it as the required standard on all programmes.

1.4 It is expected that all teaching staff of the College will continuously seek to improve their practice so that good practice becomes the norm and excellence is the aim.

1.5 The College recognises that good and innovative practice can be identified and acknowledged through lesson observations, quality audits, peer observation, student focus groups, course committees involving students and other means. The challenge is to ensure that the high standard of learning and teaching identified through these approaches is provided universally in all areas of provision and for each student, irrespective of the mode of attendance or location.

1.6 The College recognises that the main challenge is the dissemination - not the identification - of that good practice.

2.0 The Strategy

2.1 The main strands of the strategy are to:

2.1.1 Ensure that all staff recognise good practice and apply it across the curriculum and in all modes of attendance.

2.1.2 Ensure that all staff understand the benefits of sharing good practice with colleagues.

2.1.3 Assist staff with the identification and dissemination of good practice.

2.1.4 Facilitate good practice dissemination events for all appropriate staff.

2.1.5 Undertake lesson observations to ensure that good practice is implemented in accordance with the needs of individuals within the group.

2.1.6 Ensure that individual members of staff take responsibility for embedding good practice in the learning and teaching experience of their students.

2.1.7 Ensure that technology is utilised as appropriate to disseminate good and innovative practice across the curriculum.

2.1.8 Ensure that students are engaged in the identification and promotion of good practice in learning and teaching.

2.1.9 Measure the extent to which the benefits of good practice dissemination are having a positive impact on learner engagement and relevant high quality outcomes.

2.2 The College will identify and disseminate good practice by:

2.2.1 Facilitating Good Practice Dissemination Events for teaching staff and managers.

2.2.2 Establishing good practice forums for all teaching staff, particularly Faculty Managers and Curriculum and Quality Managers.

2.2.3 Ensuring that Faculty and Curriculum and Quality Managers are fully involved in promoting good practice in identified curriculum areas and across the wider College.
2.2.4 Providing opportunities for students to identify Good Practice in the Curriculum by organising events for students, chaired by the Vice Principal Curriculum and Heads of School, that encourage learners to identify good and innovative practice.

2.2.5 Ensure Learner Focus Groups are held with Senior Lecturers (Quality Improvement) from the start of the year to engage learners at the earliest stage in the identification of good practice in their learning and teaching and to seek their views on areas for improvement.

2.2.6 Communicating Good Practice ideas discussed at Good Practice Events throughout the year through the Knowledge Base section of the College website.

2.2.7 Utilising The Good Practice area in Blackboard to collect examples of the effective use of the VLE from across all College teams.

2.2.8 Working with colleagues in the school and university sectors to promote good practice in the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence.

3.0 Responsibilities for the Strategy

3.1 Strategic responsibility for the Dissemination of Good Practice in the Curriculum Strategy rests with the Vice Principal Curriculum.

3.2 Responsibility for implementing the Strategy across all areas of the curriculum rests with the Heads of School.
ESSENTIAL SKILLS: CORE AND SOFT SKILLS STRATEGY

1.0 Introduction

North East Scotland College recognises the importance of not only developing vocationally-specific knowledge and skills, but also in enabling students to develop essential skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work that form the basis of Curriculum for Excellence. These skills have been defined as Core Skills and Soft Skills.

The key importance of the Core Skills of Communication, Numeracy, ICT, Working with Others and Problem Solving, and Soft Skills of Citizenship, Employability, Environmental and Economic Sustainability, Enterprise and Study Skills is reflected in the College’s overall range of services. The College is committed to developing the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence across the curriculum in ways that develop in learners the essential skills for life and work beyond college.

The College recognises that the development of a wide range of essential life skills including the promotion of equality and diversity helps learners to secure positive destinations post College.

The College is committed to including Core Skills units and Soft Skills development on full-time programmes, and on part-time programmes where appropriate.

The Essential Skills will be delivered using a combination of discrete unitised, embedded and/or integrated provision according to the vocational context.

The College recognises the need for the integration of these skills into meaningful vocational contexts. The most appropriate method of integration is determined on the basis of the client group and their prior experience. In deciding on the appropriate method of delivery, issues of skill development and skill assessment will be planned.

2.0 Core Skills

2.1 In order to develop the Core Skills of Numeracy, Communication, ICT, Working with Others and Problem Solving in mainstream College provision, the College strategy is to:

- Incorporate contextualised discrete Numeracy, Communication and ICT units within course programmes and promote ICT pervasiveness in the curriculum.

- Through programme design and lesson planning, promote the inclusion and development of Working with Others and Problem Solving (and other similar essential skills for life and work) through appropriate learning activities and experiences, and ensure that progress is recorded in individual learning plans.

- Put in place arrangements to allow learners who have already achieved the Core Skills level for the programme to progress to the next level, and to support those whose Core Skill entry level is such that they cannot readily achieve the Core Skills level for the programme.

- Implement a diagnostic approach to establishing Core Skills competency for non-advanced full-time learners (with the exception of ESOL and Learning Opportunities students) to establish and record individual skill levels and promote the full development of Core Skills:
  - recognition by students of acknowledgement of prior attainment.
  - course overviews and lesson plans to include planning for Core Skills development at individual and class level.
  - early intervention and support for learners with particular difficulties.
  - further development of learners who are already at the required level and who have the capacity to make further progress.
  - teaching staff to differentiate the learning and teaching experiences of learners to accommodate differing levels of core skills in any class group.
• Enabling learners to see the relevance of Core Skills to their overall employability and citizenship skills profile.

• Encouraging curriculum teams to be innovative in their approaches to reflecting on core skills development with learners.

• Enabling HE learners to self profile by giving access to profiling software through StudentNet.

3.0 Soft Skills

The College has identified four broad clusters of Soft Skills, and for each has identified the key elements in how it will help students to develop them. Each cluster consists of a different mix of skills, essential understandings and underpinning attitudes. However, the College recognises that there is a high degree of integration of these essential skills.

The College has mapped the soft skills to the 4 capacities of Curriculum for Excellence and to the experiences and outcomes to help learners identify the full range of essential skills that they are developing and being credited for.

3.1 Citizenship Skills: developing Responsible Citizens

The cluster of skills, understanding and attitudes that enables an individual to be integrated as an active and informed member of local, Scottish, British, European and world society.

• Citizenship will be taken to incorporate both the values of respect for fellow citizens, whilst at the same time constructively participating in and contributing to the life of the local community and wider society.

• Citizenship as a concept incorporates an awareness regarding wider social issues of justice, environmental sustainability and participation in democracy and decision-making.

• The concept of Citizenship furthermore links the individual to competencies of integrity, diligence and punctuality, which are essential values for employability.

3.2 Enterprise and Employability Skills: developing Effective Contributors and Confident Individuals

The cluster of skills, understanding and attitudes that (in conjunction with relevant specific vocational skills) enables an individual to enter and sustain paid employment, to create self-employment, to develop entrepreneurship in taking advantage of opportunities for career progression and to remain versatile by adapting to changes in the economy.

The College will develop enterprise and employability skills in students by:

• Setting an example through the professional manner in which it delivers its service and the behaviours of all its employees.

• Reinforcing in students the essential skills and attitudes that underpin enterprise and employability, and developing the capacity for challenging negative behaviours.

• Providing systematic workplace experience, where relevant.

• Involving employers in programmes where appropriate.

• Supporting learners to progress to positive destinations.

3.3 Environmental and Economic Sustainability Skills: developing Responsible Citizens

The cluster of skills, understanding and attitudes that enables an individual to make informed decisions relating to the impact of their actions on the environment and to act in ways that promote a sustainable world environment.

The College is committed to ensuring that all learners develop skills and habits that allow them to become responsible citizens who can and do contribute to the wellbeing of society and the environment.
The College is aware of its educational, organisational and social responsibilities, therefore in promoting and developing environmental sustainability the College will:

- Promote sustainability across the curriculum whether it is delivered as a discrete unit in areas such as Science, Construction, Hospitality, Engineering and Travel and Tourism or in projects integrated into the curriculum, such as in Fashion, Photography, Marketing and Hairdressing, it permeates the life of the College.
- Recognise sustainability as an essential skill for life and work.
- Use both the curriculum and CPD to promote knowledge, attitudes and skills that enable learners and staff to make informed decisions relating to the impact of their actions on the environment.
- Act in ways that promote a sustainable world environment through reducing, reusing and recycling wherever possible and implementing safe and ethical disposal procedures.
- Develop and share good practice in order to influence society in a positive way, seek to engage creativity and diversity and promote opportunity for all.

3.4 Study Skills: developing successful learners

The cluster of skills, understanding and attitudes that enables an individual to manage their learning effectively and to take maximum advantage from learning opportunities whether in formal or informal contexts.

The College will develop study skills by:

- Providing (subject to the availability of funding) specific courses relating to the use of IT and to information skills for study.
- Ensuring that staff teaching course programmes embed within programmes appropriate methodologies to allow students to learn effective study techniques.

3.5 Soft Skills development will be secured through a range of enterprising approaches to learning and teaching to provide learning experiences set in the daily life of the College, discrete areas of the curriculum, cross-curricular experiences and activities involving links with local, national and international partners. Soft Skills development will be encouraged through:

- Student involvement in College life and management
- Students managing their own learning
- Student involvement in local communities and with charities and other third sector organisations
- Student engagement in economic activity
- Promotion of diversity
- Awareness of global, national and local issues
- Recognition of student achievement.

Essentially the College’s approach to Soft Skills involves:

- Leading by example - College staff providing role models to demonstrate the essential skills needed for employment, citizenship, sustainability and study.
- Reinforcing the required skills, behaviours and understanding in our students and challenging inappropriate behaviours.
- Promoting best practice in relation to their delivery and development through the formal good practice in the curriculum dissemination events.
4.0 Implementation and Monitoring

4.1 The College recognises its crucial role in the development of students’ Core and Soft Skills underpinning the principles of Curriculum for Excellence and understands that this strategy requires College wide commitment. By developing students’ essential skills for life and work, the College is supporting its students to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

4.2 Core Skills profiles to be established prior to starting the course for relevant full time students:

- Lesson observations
- Audits of course materials
- Self-audit checklist for teaching teams
- Documenting students’ understanding and development of Core and Soft Skills in Individual Learning Plans
- Core Skills profiling at the start of each academic year for relevant full-time students
- Learner attainment
- First destination statistics, including progression to work or further study
- Employer feedback
- Learner participation in competitions and prizes
- Learner involvement in the life and work of the College and in the wider community, including volunteering and charity work
- The monitoring role of the Curriculum for Excellence Essential Skills Steering group
- Performance Indicator data relating to the impact of embedding Curriculum for Excellence in the curriculum of the College
- A range of self reflection approaches adopted by curriculum teams
- Impact of embedding Curriculum for Excellence across the curriculum, as evidenced by Performance Indicator data.

The College will ensure that students are aware of the essential skills they have gained and accept ownership of their progression, and the recording of the progress made.

4.3 Self-evaluation of each course will take place on an annual basis to review the provision with respect to experiences and outcomes, including essential skills developments. These reviews will be quality assured by the Quality Assurance Sub-Committee of the Academic Board.

4.4 The College’s Core and Soft Skills Strategy will be implemented by specialist teaching staff in College Schools, Faculties and other departments, and by staff development relating to Core and Soft Skills.

5.0 Responsibilities

5.1 The Vice Principal Curriculum has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Core and Soft Skills Strategy as part of the College’s approach to the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence.

5.2 The Head of School of Creative Industries, Computing and Business Enterprise is responsible for the management of Core Skills profiling results and resulting actions.

5.3 Teaching staff will plan lessons to take account of learners’ Core and Soft Skill levels in the development of skills for life and work.

5.4 Guidance Tutors will discuss learners’ progress in relation to Core and Soft Skills with them and will liaise with the appropriate staff if intervention strategies are required.
1.0 Introduction/ Background

1.1 The priority for the curriculum of North East Scotland College is to deliver high quality education and training opportunities for students across the Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Region so that, "lives can be transformed and ambitions realised."

1.2 The curriculum of the College will be delivered in ways that are flexible, accessible and efficient and that deliver positive outcomes through inspirational teaching across the region.

1.3 North East Scotland College is committed to implementing the Government’s policy objectives relevant to College sector, including:

1.3.1 Increased participation in education and training, particularly for 16-19 and 19-24 year olds
1.3.2 Wider access to education and training across the region served by the College
1.3.3 Lifelong learning opportunities for all
1.3.4 Digital inclusiveness
1.3.5 Inclusive approaches to meeting the needs of those with additional learning requirements
1.3.6 Developing skills to support for the local and national economy
1.3.7 Promoting excellence
1.3.8 Promoting essential skills for life and work, including Core Skills, employability skills, entrepreneurship and citizenship, and environmental awareness
1.3.9 Promoting equality of opportunity
1.3.10 Development of the four capacities and of the experiences and outcomes for learners in relation to Curriculum for Excellence
1.3.11 Providing articulation and progression opportunities for learners to progress to degree link programmes or to employment
1.3.12 Providing positive destinations for school leavers, in liaison with key partners
1.3.13 Working with partners in local authorities to enhance vocational learning opportunities for school pupils.

1.4 The College will provide a rich and varied curriculum across a range of vocational areas, subject to available resources, while optimising the funding available to the College as a result of changes to SFC funding methodology.

1.5 The College curriculum will be planned and developed to ensure that the right learning of the highest quality is provided in the right place across the region.

1.6 Subject to activity levels agreed with the Scottish Funding Council in the Regional Outcome Agreement, the College will provide a curriculum that optimises participation in College courses by utilising a wide range of new learning technologies in ways that increase access and enhance the quality of learning and teaching.

2.0 The Strategy

2.1 The College’s strategy for the curriculum is to:

2.1.1 Maintain an appropriate range of up-to-date vocational subject areas across the region.

2.1.2 Develop new courses where there is identified, or clearly perceived, demand, and remove programmes as they reach the end of their period of currency.

2.1.3 Plan curriculum development on systematic analysis of market intelligence, including that provided by local organisations such as Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce and national data from SDS and others in order to ensure that resources committed to development are optimised.
2.1.4 Work closely with employer partners to plan the curriculum in line with emerging employment opportunities and to develop the skills required to contribute to the local and national economy.

2.1.5 Work closely with University partners to plan the curriculum in line with articulation and progression opportunities for students in ways that increase choice and promote Degree Links.

2.1.6 Ensure that there are entry-level courses in each area of provision wherever possible, and a clear and coherent progression pathway into more advanced programmes and articulation into relevant Higher Education provision wherever possible.

2.1.7 Develop and deliver courses in flexible ways that promote access to learning in order to increase participation and reduce costs.

2.2 Integrate new technology and innovative teaching approaches into programmes wherever possible to increase access and fully engage learners in their learning.

2.3 Make appropriate use of electronic delivery methods, including the Virtual Learning Environment, where appropriate.

2.4 Use nationally developed and recognised group awards for full-time courses wherever possible, in order to optimise learner progression.

2.5 Select the most appropriate forms of certification and Awarding Bodies to meet the needs of students and employers.

2.6 Use the College’s credit rating status to develop certification where no suitable external certification is available.

2.7 Ensure that issues of equality of opportunity and environmental awareness are reflected and included within the curriculum where possible.

2.8 Ensure that essential skills including core skills, citizenship skills, employability skills, and entrepreneurial skills are promoted across the curriculum.

2.9 Ensure that delivery methods are sensitive to the needs of those with additional learning requirements and facilitate the provision of extended learning support where required.

2.10 Ensure that reasonable adjustments are made where appropriate to anticipate the needs of those with additional requirements.

2.11 Ensure the curriculum is developed in line with key Government policy initiatives, such as Curriculum for Excellence and the Wood Commission for Developing the Young Workforce.

2.12 New provision will be subject to the College’s systematic processes of validation and/or approval, and to systematic review and scheduled re-approval.

3.0 Responsibilities for the Strategy

3.1 Strategic responsibility for the Curriculum Strategy rests with the Vice Principal Curriculum.

4.0 Related Documents

4.1 The Curriculum Strategy is a sub-strategy of the Learning and Teaching Strategy.
LEARNING RESOURCES STRATEGY

1.0 Introduction/Background

1.1 North East Scotland College provides a range of learning resources across all campuses, the purpose of which is to make learning and teaching stimulating, motivating and effective, within the context of efficient use of available funding.

2.0 The Strategy

2.1 For the purposes of this strategy, learning resources are defined as follows all those resources which support the delivery of the College curriculum, either directly or indirectly. This includes all learning environments within the College, though not the buildings which contain them (which are covered by the College’s Estates Strategy), nor human resources (although the skills, knowledge and attitudes of staff will impact on the effectiveness of other learning resources). The key resources to support the curriculum include:

- Libraries and resource centres
- IT Centres
- The Learning Development Centre
- ICT hardware, software, systems and infrastructure
- Internet connectivity and access
- Media in a variety of formats
- Classroom-based learning resources and facilities
- Resources provided to centres outwith the main College campuses
- Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and other web based resources
- Virtual Library and automated library catalogue
- Content Management System (Equella)
- Multimedia and off-air recording facilities
- Distance learning facilities including e-learning resources
- Learning materials (in paper or electronic formats).

2.2 The Strategy aims to provide, in a coherent and co-ordinated way, and in a range of flexible formats, the resources which learners need in order to learn effectively and successfully in the context of industry standard resources and fully up-to-date equipment, including learning technologies.

2.3 The College will provide high quality resources for learning through:

- High quality learning resources which achieve the best possible match with the current and anticipated needs of learners, taking full account of individual students and potential students in terms of ability, protected characteristics, aspirations and progression opportunities.

- A range of media which take account of the variety of learning styles and preferences, in ways which optimise access and participation in college courses.

- Full and appropriate use of ICT, and other learning technologies, as they develop.

- The deployment of resources and equipment in ways that optimise access and flexibility, while making efficient use of College resources.

- Learning environments, both physical and virtual, which are conducive to effective and enjoyable learning and which support individual and group work as well as quiet study and computer-based learning.

- Facilities that are appropriately staffed and supported and can provide expert assistance, guidance and advice to support learning.
2.3.7 a robust network infrastructure capable of supporting the use of technology in learning throughout the College, and to provide technical support for all College; to utilise this infrastructure to bring digital learning and information resources directly to the classroom or learner’s desktop or laptop; and to integrate, where appropriate, learning systems with other College systems for the benefit of users.

2.3.8 appropriate access for students to learning resources on a 24 hour a day 7 days a week basis, regardless of location, through the provision of ICT based services such as the VLE.

2.3.9 widening participation by ensuring, wherever possible, that learning resources are accessible to learners, regardless of geographical location, mode of study, or learning style and to overcome barriers to learning wherever possible by meeting established standards of accessibility and through the use of assistive and enabling technologies.

2.3.10 supporting learners in the effective use of learning resources through specific induction programmes and the integration of resource-based approaches to learning across the curriculum and to develop learner confidence in the effective use of information and learning resources.

2.3.11 encouraging learners to make appropriate use of their own equipment (such as laptops and other portable devices) within the College as far as is consistent with the requirements of the Bring your own Device arrangements.

2.3.12 find appropriate ways of integrating social media technologies into the learning experience as far as is consistent with requirements of safety, security and the avoidance of risk.

2.3.13 the Validation and Approval process by ensuring that programmes do not run unless the appropriate resources are available.

2.3.14 regularly auditing the learning resources used to ensure they meet requirements.

2.3.15 disseminating good practice in the use of learning resources within and between teams.

2.3.16 The implementation of this strategy is dependent on the financial constraints under which the College operates.

3.0 Responsibility for the Strategy

3.1 Responsibility for this strategy lies with the Vice Principal Curriculum with particular senior management responsibilities as follows:

3.1.1 The Vice Principal Curriculum in liaison with the Vice Principal Student Services will ensure that high quality resources are in place to support high quality learning and teaching.

3.1.2 The Vice Principal Curriculum will ensure that teaching teams deploy appropriate resources and share and exchange good practice.

3.1.3 The Vice Principal Finance will ensure that, subject to funding, resources are allocated to acquire and develop the learning resources required to support effective curriculum delivery.

3.1.4 The Vice Principal Organisational Services will ensure that the Validation and Approval processes are effective in ensuring that resource requirements are considered as part of the approval of new courses.

3.1.5 The Vice Principal Student Services will ensure that the IT infrastructure is effective and supports curriculum delivery and innovation in relation to learning technologies.
3.1.6 The Vice Principal HR will ensure that staff are appropriately qualified and experienced to deliver high quality learning and teaching experiences for learners and that staff training is up-to-date and available for staff involved in the delivery of the curriculum and support for learners.
College/Local Authority/Schools Partnership Policy

1. Introduction
   1.1. The purpose of this report is to enable the Committee to undertake a review of The College/Local Authority/Schools Partnership Policy.

2. Background
   2.1. The Board of Management has established a timetable for the review of policies established by the Board and its Standing Committees.

   2.2. Aberdeen College had a College/Local Authority/Schools Partnerships policy. There was no equivalent in Banff and Buchan College.

3. Review
   3.1. Experience has shown that the current former Aberdeen College policy governing College/Local Authority/Schools Partnerships has been effective and has presented no strategic or operational problems.

   3.2. However, given the establishment of North East Scotland College the Policy has been slightly adapted to reflect the merger.

   3.3. A proposed amended policy is attached as appendix 1.

4. Recommendation
   4.1. It is recommended that the Committee:

       4.1.1. Reviews the policy detailed in this paper;

       4.1.2. Adopts the policy with minor changes.

Rob Wallen
Principal

Sandra Walker
Vice Principal Curriculum
1.0 Introduction

North East Scotland College is committed to College/School partnerships, as set out in the Memorandum of Understanding with each Local Authority. It recognises the mutual benefit of collaboration with Local Authorities and schools in building a culture of learning and in providing smooth post school progression for pupils of all skill levels.

This policy establishes the framework for the operation of College/School links.

2.0 General Principles

The following principles underlie College/School links:

- The College and Local Authorities operate within the mutually agreed terms detailed in the Memorandum of Understanding for College/School Partnerships.
- A single over-arching Agreement is in place with each of the Local Authorities, covering every facet of the College/Local Authority partnership arrangements.
- In its discussions and communication with the Local Authorities, the College operates through the Vice Principal Curriculum.
- Through partnership working, the College aims to meet the needs and aspirations of the young people concerned, in ways which increase their enjoyment and participation in education, training and employment, supporting their progression to employment or further study.
- The College is committed to working with Local Authorities to fulfil the aims of the Scottish Government in relation to Curriculum for Excellence and to achieving the targets for participation in vocational education, employability and articulation set out in the Regional Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Funding Council.
- The College is committed to making a significant contribution to the development of Scotland’s young workforce by implementing, where feasible and
financially viable, the recommendations of the Wood Commission Report (December 2013)

The partnership arrangements are designed to enhance the value of the learning experience and/or lead to a more coherent set of qualifications and/or ease the process of post-school progression for school pupils in the senior phase of their education.

3.0 Types of College/School Partnerships

3.1 Levels of provision

Subject to funding, partnerships will be established at a range of levels, including but not restricted to:

- Skills for Work and other vocational programmes
- College Experience
- Social Science Higher and Intermediate 2 awards
- Link courses, designed specifically for students with additional learning and support needs

3.2 Student groups

Partnerships will be established for pupils in the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence.

4.0 Method of Partnership Working

Partnerships may take the following forms:

- College staff spending an agreed amount of time in schools or other education authority premises working with pupils
- College staff providing teaching and learning for pupils using a range of electronic media.
- Pupils based in schools spending time each week in College
- Pupils based in schools spending a block of time in the College
- Pupils who are eligible to leave school in December undertaking a full-time College course, while remaining the responsibility of the school/Local Authority.
5.0 Management of Partnership Arrangements

5.1 The Vice Principal Curriculum has overall strategic responsibility for The College/Schools Partnerships

5.2 The Vice Principal Curriculum negotiates the level of schools provision to be provided each year with named individuals in both Local Authorities, based on the level of funding available from the SFC and Local Authorities and demand for courses that are financially viable.

5.3 In liaison with the designated Officers of the Councils, the Vice Principal Curriculum ensures that where funding is available and courses are economically viable, the course requests from the Local Authorities are met.

5.4 The operational management of the agreed schools provision is the responsibility of the Schools Liaison Manager, who will liaise between individual schools and Heads of School and Faculty Managers to ensure the smooth operation of the agreed provision.

5.5 The College is committed to working with local authority partners to continue to develop the four capacities that underpin Curriculum for Excellence and to ease transition between school and College in accordance with A Curriculum for Excellence (November 2006)

5.6 The College works with school pupils, staff, parents and Skills Development Scotland to promote pupil aspirations and opportunities for progression, in ways which address gender stereotyping.

5.7 The College’s commitment to school/College links is predicated on the sufficiency of resources and these are, in turn, constrained by the increasing and varied commitments which are placed on the College.
6.0 Self-evaluation and Review

6.1 In partnership with Local Authorities, the College will undertake an annual self-evaluation of all Schools/College links programmes.

6.2 Programme Reviews will be completed for each Vocational Link course and improvement actions will be identified and addressed.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant College policies.

Status: Approved by Board of Management
Date of version: March 2014
Responsibility for Policy: Vice Principal Curriculum
Responsibility for Implementation: Heads of School, Faculty Managers, Schools Liaison Manager
Responsibility for Review: Vice Principal Curriculum
Date of Equality Impact Assessment: June 2008
Review date: March 2016
ICT Strategy

1. Introduction
   1.1 The purpose of this paper is to allow the Committee to consider the proposed Information Communication Technology (ICT) Strategy for North East Scotland College for 2014-16.

2. Background
   2.1 At the recent Planning Event for the Board of Management it was agreed to develop a number of regional strategies for North East Scotland College and that one of these should be an Information Technology (IT) Strategy.

   2.2 Previously Aberdeen College had an ICT strategy which had undergone recent development to align it with both the Robert Gordon University and the University of Aberdeen strategies as part of the work of the North East Shared Services Group.

   2.3 Banff and Buchan College did not have a strategy as such but as part of the work of the IT work stream a draft ICT strategy was drawn up, aligning it with the Aberdeen College strategy and allowing for local developments.

   2.4 For North East Scotland College both previous strategies have been merged which has led to greater synergy and direction across the whole estate.

   2.5 The Strategy, as proposed, was presented to the College’s IT Steering Board (essentially the SMT plus RM senior managers) and agreement given on the direction of travel.

3. The Strategy
   3.1 The Strategy itself is included as appendix 1 to this paper.

   3.2 At page 3 the Strategy is set out diagrammatically for ease of reference, this style is similar to that used by both the Robert Gordon University and the University of Aberdeen and will allow for identifying future possible shared aspects of ICT delivery.

4. Recommendation
   4.1 It is recommended the Committee consider the proposed ICT Strategy for North East Scotland College.

   4.2 If adopted it is recommended that the Committee agree an appropriate review date to include with an update on progress against the Strategy.

Rob Wallen
Principal

Frank Hughes
Vice Principal Student Services
Agenda item 5.3 Appendix 1

DRAFT

North East Scotland College

ICT Strategy
1. **Introduction**

This document sets out the strategic direction for ICT for the College for the period 2014 – 2016.

The strategy provides the framework for all development activities related to ICT for that period and is monitored by the IT Steering Board (ITSB).

It should be seen as both a ‘top down’ definition of direction of travel and priorities and as a ‘bottom up’ driver of programmes of projects by which the College will achieve its strategic aims.

The intention is that this document provides an overall context for ICT but does not capture or replace detailed project and programme management documentation.

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2. **The Strategy**

The diagram on the following page essentially sets out the strategy.

The starting point is the vision of what we want to achieve across the College in terms of ICT development and by its nature this pervades most College operations.

The context for the strategy has been set through a number of sets of drivers, namely drivers internal to the College focussed on both the curriculum and underlying business systems, drivers that take cognisance of the external environment the College currently operates in and technological drivers, giving a shape to where ICT itself is moving.

A number of priorities have been identified and these presented as a number of key strategic themes, namely

- IT infrastructure
- Bring Your Own Device
- Teaching and Learning
- IT Service Efficiency
- Regional implementation

For each theme a number of actions / projects have been identified to underpin successful achievement of each key strategic priority.

Further detail on each key strategic theme is included following the diagram to include purpose, an overview and high level ownership / sponsorship.
North East Scotland College

LTSC 18-03-14 Agenda Item 5.3 Appendix 1.docx

Agenda item 5.3

Appendix 1.docx

03/03/2014

North East Scotland College ICT Strategy - 2014
Strategic Theme 1: IT Infrastructure

Purpose
This theme exists to ensure that the underlying infrastructure for the College and for all systems is up to date, resilient, costs effective and maintained and operated to appropriate standards.

Overview
Set of programmes and projects to maintain and develop the IT infrastructure.

- Keeping systems up to date with appropriate warranty, support structures and software / build records.
- To agree the appropriate levels of resilience and robustness and deliver projects to support these
- To define and implement projects to improve, develop or enhance the facilities
- To deliver the infrastructure elements of new systems

Ownership of this strand □Head of IT and Technical Services
Executive sponsor □Vice Principal Student Services

Strategic Theme 2: Bring Your Own Device

Purpose
To deliver a major transformation programme which will see College students completing most of their IT activities on devices which they own (or are personal to them), improving their access to IT and enabling them to use devices which they choose and maintain.

Whilst there is substantial parallel activity in this area across the sectors, it is recognised that the College is clearly breaking new ground and so a carefully constructed programme of pilot projects is integral to this.

Overview

- The basis of this a 3 year programme was defined and procured as part of the RM contract extension. Phase 1 has completed and has implemented pilots, underling technology, research into modes of use and device strategy, and implemented sufficient for 2013-2014 academic year.
- 2014-15 programme is the subject of detailed planning and a separate paper defines this.
- To improve the student experience by enabling them to use devices which are familiar, personal and available 24/7.
- To reduce college expenditure by reducing the size of the college IT estate, by eventually removing those PCs provided for general purpose computing.

Ownership of this strand □Head of Learning Resources.
Executive Sponsor □Vice Principal Curriculum.
Strategic Theme 3: Teaching and Learning Effectiveness and Efficiency

Purpose
To improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning and the student experience
To provide opportunities for cost savings across teaching and learning through the appropriate use of technology to support staff and students
To provide equality of student experience of technology in teaching and learning across all campuses

Overview
• Major focus of this Theme is the continual development and improvement of the VLE and its associated products. This includes the development of a regional VLE for NESCol
• Part of the role of the teams is the encouragement of staff to take up opportunities provided by the VLE and to provide them with the appropriate skill set
• This strand will own the IT centre, libraries and test centres from an ICT perspective;
• Steered by ITSB.

Ownership of this strand – Head of Learning Resources.
Executive sponsor – Vice Principal Curriculum.

Strategic Theme 4: ICT Service Efficiency

Purpose
To drive cost savings in the delivery of ICT service and facilities.
Note that initially this is focused on the RM service however the other elements of the service provision should be included in due course.
To drive down the size of the college owned and maintained estate, commensurate with ensuring teaching and learning facilities meet the needs of students. This will be driven by BYOD opportunities and by better utilisation of resources through flexibility and tighter monitoring and control.

Overview
• To deliver cost savings in the ICT service (from RM) through a series of projects individually identified to provide good return on investment.
• Gain share to be core motivation for RM to research, identify and propose.
• Different models of funding these projects will be considered.
• Steered by ITSB.

Ownership of this strand – College / RM Education
Executive sponsor – Vice Principal Student Services / RM SMT
Strategic Theme 5: Regional (NESCol) implementation

Purpose
This Theme exists to deliver all of the systems required to allow NESCol to function efficiently and effectively. Whilst previous strategies made a distinction between business efficiency and the regional consolidation agenda, this strategy combines the two with a focus on supporting the creation of an efficient new college in NESCol.

Overview
- To deliver essential business systems to NESCol through either consolidation or replacement of existing systems;
- To deliver business efficiency gains across the regional colleges through rigorous approach to consolidation of support functions and supporting systems.
- To enable regional reporting, and to support the governance models and structures which emerge for the region
- Steered by ITSB

Ownership of this strand: Head of IT and Technical Services
Executive sponsor: Vice Principal Student Services

3. Future Review

This Strategy has been produced at a point where the implementation of the NESCol merger is in progress with staffing structures across the college undergoing review and change and coinciding with a peak of IT development projects. As part of their recommendation for approval of this Strategy, the ITSB recognised the likely need to review and refine this document within 12 months as the needs of new teaching and learning structures become clearer post-merger.

It is envisaged that this will be an opportune time to move from ‘essential projects to implement the merger’ towards ‘discretionary projects to reap the benefits from the merger.'
Fee Refund Policy

1. Introduction
   1.1 The purpose of this report is to assist the Committee to consider the College’s Fee Refund Policy.

2. Background
   2.1 Previously at Aberdeen College the Board of Management adopted a Refund of Course Fees Policy supported by a Course Fee policy and Remission of Fees for Non Full-time Provision Policy.

   2.2 Previously at Banff and Buchan College there was a Course Fee and Cancellation Policy, the main thrust of which was to consider fee refunds.

3. Consideration for Academic Year 2014-15
   3.1 Discussions have taken place with staff from the previous two Colleges who would have had an input into consideration of fee refunds of some description.

   3.2 Existing procedures and practices have also been considered.

   3.3 Attached as appendix 1 is the proposed Refund of Course Fees Policy for North East Scotland College for Academic Year 2014-15 which has taken elements of both Colleges’ previous approaches and combined these.

   3.4 As working practices become more common as the newly merged College matures it is envisaged that this Policy will need to be reviewed at least annually.

4. Recommendation
   4.1 It is recommended that the Committee consider the College’s Refund of Course Fees Policy.

Rob Wallen
Principal

Frank Hughes
Vice Principal Student Services
Refund of Course Fees Policy

Agenda item 5.4 Appendix 1

Review Date: March 2015
Caveat

This policy relates to provision of North East Scotland College, and does not apply to provision of ASET, the College’s training company.
Where the policy refers to individuals entering into a contract with the college it is understood that where an employer or other sponsor undertakes the responsibility for the fee the contractual responsibility relating to the payment of the fee and any subsequent refund of fee equally applies.

1. Introduction: Background and Context

1.1 The College exists to provide education and training.

1.2 The College is by status a non-profit making organisation; the College does not exist to make profit. The College Board of Management sets fee rates and levies fees, not in order to make a profit, but as a contribution to the cost of the education and training it provides.

1.3 The College is provided with grant-in-aid; public funds distributed by the Scottish Further and Higher Education Funding Council (SFC). However, the College seeks to maximise its income from non-governmental sources to reduce its reliance on public funds and to offer students even better service. It is required to ensure that fees due to it are collected and, by extension, not to refund fees legitimately collected without due reason. The purpose of these guidelines is to set an appropriate balance between the College’s obligations to secure its income and its commitment to be considerate towards clients and potential clients.

1.4 In booking onto a College course, an individual enters into a contract. On the College’s side, the contractual obligation is to provide the training as described with the overriding caveat that this is subject to the availability of resources and acceptable student numbers. In circumstances where the College cannot meet the terms of the contract it will, without question, refund the fee paid. On the individual’s side, an individual booking onto a part-time course, or accepting a place on a full-time course, is making a commitment to undertake the education or training programme.

1.5 Any individual booking onto a College course in effect reserves for himself/ herself a place. This may, in the situation...
Refund of Course Fees Policy

of restricted numbers, result in a place being denied to another, and may therefore result in a reduction in the numbers the College is able to recruit and resultant SFC income (indeed this could result in the course dropping below a viability threshold with the resultant need to cancel the whole course). It will, in any case, result in the College incurring expense in terms of the administration involved in processing the booking.

1.6 As such, in order to reflect this, the College will not normally automatically refund a fee paid where the reason is a change of mind of the individual who has booked/accepted a place.

1.7 However, the College recognises that for reasons of equity, customer-care and good-will refunds must be offered in certain circumstances.

1.8 The College is committed to achieving consistency and equality in determining whether or not to make a refund in so far as is compatible with the particular circumstances of individual cases, the varying arrangements of different types of programme (in particular full-time as opposed to non-full time provision and the fee arrangements pertinent to each) the constraints of statute, the realities of the funding mechanism, and in particular the issue of SUM eligibility (or otherwise) and fee-waiver provision.

1.9 For the purposes of fee refunds, the College does not differentiate between students on the basis of national origin and does not automatically differentiate between those from the European Union (or European Economic Area) and those from other locations. However, the College is bound to recognise the public policy issues relating to the issue of visas to individuals for the sole purpose of studying in the UK and, where relevant, this recognition is reflected in the specific circumstances of refunds.

1.10 In circumstances where a refund of course fees is to be made in respect of a student, unless authorised otherwise, the College will normally pay the refund directly to the entity or individual who made the payment of the fee to the College.
2. **Circumstances of Refunds**

2.1 **Refunds because of cancellation of a course by the College**

2.1.1 Where the College decides to cancel a course, fees paid for the course will be refunded automatically and in their entirety.

2.1.2 Where the College cancels a course which is a mandatory component of a Group Award and no alternative is provided by the College thereby preventing the student achieving the Group Award the College will refund the fees for the other elements of the Group Award where the student has already booked and paid the fee and has elected not to undertake these elements of the course.

2.2. **Other circumstances of fee refunds**

2.2.1 Part-time provision (except in each case where payment of the fee was part of a process that enabled the student to gain entry to the UK for the purpose of study for which see paragraph 2.2.3)

(a) Up to fourteen calendar days before the commencement of the course the fee paid will be refunded in its entirety on request to the College by submission of form RR2 (Refund Request Form) enclosing Proof of Payment with supporting written evidence where appropriate.

(b) During the period from less than fourteen calendar days before the start of the course up to a quarter of the way through the course, a percentage of the course fee proportional to the amount of the course remaining at the time of claim for refund, subject to a limit of 90% of the course fee, will be refunded on request to the College by submission of form RR2 (Refund Request Form) enclosing Proof of Payment with supporting written evidence where appropriate in the following circumstances:

- the individual was unable to attend the course because of medically certificated illness for a period of time no less than 25% of the course
- the individual had to move away from the area to a distance which made completion of the course
Refund of Course Fees Policy

impossible (eg because of job or spouse’s relocation)

- the individual was unable to commence or complete attendance at College because of legal constraints, for example:
  - inability to obtain/maintain/renew a visa;
  - imprisonment;
  - requirement to undertake jury or military service.

(c) For reasons other than those stated above, no refund will be made other than in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Principal on the basis of supporting written evidence supplied by the student.

2.2.2 Full-time provision where fees are paid in advance by the student or a liability to pay fees is incurred by the student (except in each case where payment of the fee was part of a process that enabled the student to gain entry to the UK for the purpose of study for which see paragraph 2.2.3)

(a) Up to fourteen calendar days before the commencement of the course the fee paid will be refunded in its entirety on written request to the College.

(b) During the period from less than fourteen calendar days before the start of the course up to a quarter of the way through the course, a percentage of the course fee proportional to the amount of the course remaining at the time of claim for refund, subject to a limit of 90% of the course fee, will be refunded on written request to the College with supporting written evidence where appropriate in the following circumstances:

- the individual was unable to attend the course because of medically certificated illness for a period of time no less than 25% of the course;
- the individual had to remain in or return to his/her country of origin because of unavoidable circumstances which made completion of the course impossible (eg because of job or spouse’s relocation);
- the individual was unable to commence or complete attendance at College because of legal constraints:
  - inability to obtain/maintain/renew a visa
  - imprisonment
Refund of Course Fees Policy

- requirement to undertake jury or military service

(c) For reasons other than those stated above, no refund will be made other than in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Principal on the basis of supporting written evidence supplied by the student.

(d) Where the student has incurred a liability to pay fees (but in fact has not yet paid such fees), the payment of the fee will not be pursued if the student leaves within the first four weeks of the course (i.e., in effect the full fee will be refunded). From that point up until halfway through the course, an element of the fee will be sought proportional to the time of the course that has elapsed (i.e., in effect a partial refund will be made). After the mid point of the course the full fee will be sought (i.e. in effect no refund will be made).

2.2.3 Where payment of the fee was part of a process that enabled the student to gain entry to the UK for the purpose of study

(a) Up to fourteen calendar days before the commencement of the course the fee paid will be refunded in its entirety on request in the following proven circumstances:

- the individual was required to remain in or return to her/his country of origin because of medically certificated illness;
- the individual had to move away from the United Kingdom thus making completion of the course impossible (e.g. because of job or spouse’s relocation)
- the individual was unable to commence attendance at College because of legal constraints, for example:
  - inability to obtain/maintain/renew a visa;
  - imprisonment;
  - requirement to undertake jury or military service.

The burden of proof of the circumstances will rest with the individual in all cases.

(b) During the period from less than fourteen calendar days before the start of the course up to a quarter of the way through the course, a percentage of the course fee proportional to the amount of the course remaining
Refund of Course Fees Policy

at the time of claim for refund, subject to a limit of 90%, will be refunded in the following proven circumstances:

- the individual was required to remain in or return to her/his country of origin because of medically certificated illness
- the individual had to move away from the United Kingdom thus making completion of the course impossible (e.g. because of job or spouse’s relocation)
- the individual was unable to commence or continue attendance at College because of legal constraints, for example:
  - inability to obtain/maintain/renew a visa;
  - imprisonment;
  - requirement to undertake jury or military service.

The burden of proof of the circumstances will rest with the individual in all cases.

(c) For reasons other than those stated above, no refund will be made other than in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Principal on the basis of supporting written evidence supplied by the student.

2.3. Distance Learning

2.3.1. To suit the circumstances of these particular types of provision, the following arrangements have been adopted:

(a) Up to the point at which the process of appointing a tutor is completed, the fee will be refunded in its entirety on request to the College by submission of Form RR2 (Refund Request Form) enclosing Proof of Payment with supporting written evidence where appropriate, conditional on any materials already supplied being returned in their entirety and in an unused condition.

(b) Once the process of appointing a tutor is complete, a percentage of the course fee proportional to the amount of the course not completed at the time of the claim for refund, subject to a limit of 90% of the course fee, will be refunded in the following circumstances:
Refund of Course Fees Policy

- the individual was unable to undertake the course because of medically certificated illness which prevented study
- the individual was unable to undertake study because of legal constraints.

The burden of proof will rest with the individual in all cases.

(c) For reasons other than those stated above, no refund will be made other than in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Principal on the basis of supporting written evidence supplied by the student.

THIS POLICY SHOULD BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER RELEVANT COLLEGE POLICIES AND IN PARTICULAR THE COLLEGE COURSE FEE POLICY.

Version date of Policy: March 2014
Policy approved by: Learning and Teaching and Student Services Committee
Date of review: March 2015
Date of Equality Impact Assessment: Tbc
Post responsible for review of policy: Vice Principal Student Services
Remission of Fees Policy

1. Introduction
   1.1 The purpose of this report is to assist the Committee to consider the College’s Policy on Remission from Fees for Non Full-time Provision.

2. Background
   2.1 Previously at Aberdeen College the Board of Management adopted a College Policy on Remission from Fees for Non Full-time Provision (also known as ‘fee-waiver policy’), which incorporated the mandatory national policy on fee-waivers that had been established by the Scottish Further and Higher Education Funding Council (SFC).

   2.2 Previously at Banff and Buchan College there was no policy as such rather adherence to the national policy.

3. Consideration for Academic Year 2014-15
   3.1 Following discussion with staff across North East Scotland College it was agreed that we should propose to adopt such a policy for Academic Year 2014-15 but that such a policy make reference to other national and local policies as points of reference rather than restate what was contained therein.

   3.2 It was also agreed that in future years as practices settle this policy would be subsumed into the Course Fee policy.

   3.3 Attached as appendix 1 therefore is the proposed Remission of Fees for Non Full-time Provision Policy for North East Scotland College for Academic Year 2014-15.

4. Recommendation
   4.1 It is recommended that the Committee consider the College’s Remission of Fees for Non Full-time Provision.
Remission of Fees for Non Full-Time Provision Policy
1. Introduction

1.1. This document sets out the Board of Management's policy on remission from payment of course fees for the Academic Year 2013-14 for Scottish Funding Council funded courses.

2. Waiving of fees

2.1 Entitlement to remission of fees is governed by the SFC Fee Waiver and Grant Policy and reference should be made to that where feasible in considering fee remission.

2.2 The Principal has discretion to designate as fee exempt certain dedicated programmes aimed at hard-to-reach categories of students.

2.3 Fee waiver normally covers tuition, registration, examination/assessment and materials fees however in the case of programmes where substantial costs are incurred for registration or assessment by an external body (such as in the case of the European Computer Drivers Licence) these costs will not be waived.

2.4 A limit may be imposed on the amount of provision on which an individual is entitled to fee waiver in any one session. This limit will reflect the grant-in-aid funding rules set by SFC and reference should be made to those in operation at the time when considering fee waiver.

3 School Pupils

3.1 Fee waiver guidance for school pupils is contained within the Course Fee Policy.

4 Special Groups

4.1 Where a course is run exclusively for those with a recognised learning difficulty (courses with the Programme Group 18 code, on which each participant has a Personal Learning and Support Plan, and into which additional support is integrated) all the participants are normally entitled to remission of the fee without the need for any evidence.
Remission of Fees Policy

(apart from the existence of an Individual Learning and Support Plan).

4.2 However, where a sponsoring group routinely receives or has acquired funds for the purpose of payment for training, a fee may be levied from the sponsoring organisation, especially where the cost of making the provision exceeds the grant-in-aid income that will be generated (such as where the programme being provided is designed specifically for the needs of the particular group).

5 Full time student additionality
Fee waiver guidance in respect of full time student additionality is contained within the Course Fee Policy.

THIS POLICY SHOULD BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER RELEVANT COLLEGE POLICIES, IN PARTICULAR, THE COLLEGE COURSE FEE POLICY.

Version Date of Policy: March 2014
Policy Approved by: Learning and Teaching and Student Services committee
Date of Review: March 2015
Date of Equality Impact Assessment: tbc
Post Responsible for Review of Policy: Vice Principal Student Services
Curriculum Planning: Links with the Regional Outcome Agreement

1. Introduction
1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with information on progress with meeting the priority outcomes for the College set out in the Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA) 2013-14.

2. Background and Context
2.1. At the meeting of the Learning & Teaching and Student Services Committee on 26 November 2013, it was agreed that the Committee would receive regular status reports on progress towards meeting the aims and aspirations of the Regional Outcome Agreement for the current year.

2.2. The March meeting was identified as the time when a report on progress with the key function of the College – delivery of a high quality Curriculum - would be submitted.

2.3. Papers detailing progress made by the support functions in meeting the aims and aspirations of the ROA will be submitted to the May meeting of this Committee.

2.4. These reports are supplementary to the evidence of progress provided at the Board Planning Event in February.

3. Progress with meeting the Priority Outcomes for the Curriculum
3.1. Prior to merger progress had been made with a number of key priorities for the curriculum, including the adoption of the Learning and Teaching Strategy and the creation of a robust regional curriculum map.

3.2. In the three months since merger the following has been achieved in relation to curriculum priorities:

- The implementation of an efficient promoted teaching staff structure generating the savings planned;
- Role clarification events for promoted teaching staff and team-building events for all teaching staff;
- The creation of a Schools/College Liaison Team to support the Wood Commission recommendations and to enhance provision for schools across the region;
- The creation of a single manager to promote university articulation links across the region;
- Enhancement of the work of the Curriculum Planning Group to finalise the single regional curriculum offer for North East Scotland College in 2015-16;
- Preparation of a suite of sub-strategies to support the Learning and Teaching Strategy;
- Establishment of the Academic Board and its 5 sub-committees.

3.3. A summary status report on progress with curriculum planning in relation to the specific targets set out in the 2013-14 Regional Outcome Agreement is attached at appendix 1.

4. Progress towards the Regional Outcome Agreement 2014-17
4.1. Arrangements are in place for the dissemination of good practice across the curriculum, with a range of cross-campus and cross-school events now being planned for the Summer of 2014 and throughout 2014-15.

4.2. The College’s bid to the SFC to become an early adopter of the Wood Commission recommendations has been accepted. The funds allocated will be used to increase access to the College’s provision for school pupils through the use of new and emerging technologies.
4.3. The College priority outputs detailed in the ROA which will be delivered by the end of 2014-15 and into 2015-16 are making steady progress and include the following:

- Access to the right learning in the right place;
- A highly effective regional college providing high quality education and training;
- An increase in the number of students entering positive destinations;
- Effective and efficient teaching and support staff structures;
- A regional curriculum which meets the needs of the region;
- High quality vocationally relevant learning opportunities to support the skills needs of the North East of Scotland;
- Access to and pathways through the College and into further study for all those who are able to benefit from them, including those who may encounter barriers to learning.

5. **External Audit Measuring Progress**

5.1. The College participated in an Education Scotland Aspect Task on Maximising Learner Achievement in February 2014.

5.2. The second round of visits from Education Scotland relating to the Computing and ESOL Aspect Tasks will take place in the Spring.

5.3. The Education Scotland Annual Engagement Visit will take place on 12 and 13 May 2014.

5.4. The Scottish Funding Council 6 month post-merger Review will take place on Monday 19 May 2014.

5.5. At her request, tours of the Engineering facilities at Altens and Fraserburgh campuses have been arranged for the College HMI, Dr Jan Davidson for 11 March and 01 April 2014.

6. **Recommendation**

6.1. It is recommended that the Committee note the contents of this paper.

Rob Wallen  
Principal

Sandra Walker  
Vice Principal Curriculum
OUTCOME AGREEMENT 2013-14 PROGRESS REPORT - CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

**SFC STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2. RIGHT LEARNING IN THE RIGHT PLACE**

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>PROGRESS</th>
<th>RAG STATUS</th>
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<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>To deliver the SFC target of 177,946 wSUMS in AY 2013-14</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.1.1</td>
<td>Meet targets for enrolment priority groups, by: Maintaining a broad range of provision for 16-19 and 20-24 year olds; Providing appropriate levels of provision for those aged 25 years and over; Delivering additional activity secured through the Employability Fund; Ensuring that individuals from protected characteristic groups are well represented in the student intake; Maintaining vocationally specific opportunities for people with learning and physical disabilities</td>
<td>Enrolment targets for AY2013-14 have been met across the College. In line with Government priorities, the College remains focused on 16-24 year olds although there is a slight increase in the number of students aged 24 and above studying at the College in AY2013-14. Protected characteristics of students, such as gender and disabilities, continue to be monitored to ensure that the College remains an inclusive organisation.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2.2.1 Establish and develop a Regional Curriculum Planning Group and regional curriculum planning process

A Regional Curriculum Planning Group, comprised of key staff from the two former Colleges, operated between May and December 2013. A new Curriculum Planning Group will be established following the implementation of the new promoted teaching staff structure, with its first meeting scheduled for 05 March 2014.

2.2.2 Continue to derive efficiency savings while maintaining choice and progression opportunities for learners in the two local authority areas

Curriculum planning arrangements ensure that provision is reviewed to continue to offer the right learning in the right place as efficiently as possible. Consideration is always given to the use of ICT and the implementation of other measures to improve efficiency.

2.2.3 Undertake a curriculum mapping exercise of the region's part-time provision

This is now part of the Commercial/Non-SFC funded activity.

2.2.4 Ensure consistency of course titles, course units etc of common programmes offered at both College

This is underway and will be complete for the finalisation of the AY2015-16 curriculum.

2.2.5 Further encourage the sharing of curriculum materials and curriculum development work

Following the establishment of the new promoted teaching staff structure, approaches to good practice will be disseminated across all Campuses.

2.2.6 Deliver programmes that lead to nationally recognised qualifications

It is a priority for the College to provide nationally recognised qualifications wherever possible.

2.3.1 Implement the Regional External Engagement Strategy.

Strategy being implemented. Engagement with stakeholders continues to be seen as crucial activity in developing the regional College.

2.3.2 Reflect labour market intelligence provided by partner organisations in the planning of provision

This is undertaken as part of the curriculum planning process where Curriculum Teams are asked to complete an environmental scan.

2.4.1 See Priority Outcome 4

2.4.2 Seek additional funding through the Skills Fund to increase provision in national specialisms

2.4.3 Utilise additional funding received through the Skills Fund to meet latent demand for events management and tourism to support the region's key industries, especially oil and gas, in line with agreed targets

2.4.4 Encourage participation in STEM subjects e.g. science and engineering, amongst school pupils

This is considered as part of the curriculum planning process. It is planned to introduce science in Fraserburgh in partnership with local schools. Engineering provisions continues to be in high demand and Skills for Work Energy is offered for school pupils.

2.2 To continue rationalise and align provision between the two Colleges

2.3 To work with stakeholders (SDS, JCP, CPPs, SCDI, AGCC, ACSEF) to ensure that the needs of the region are identified and delivered through a curriculum that is planned on a regional basis and reflects both the needs of local and regional employers and learner demand

2.4 To maintain national specialisms in Engineering, Oil & Gas, Marine, Creative Industries, Science and Food & Drink in the region in line with agreed funding allocations

The College received £382,323 from the SFC Skills Fund and is using this to provide extra places in areas of demand and skills shortages: Life Sciences; Creative Industries; Events Management; Travel and Tourism; Marine Maintenance and Nautical Science.
2.5.1 Plan jointly a programme of College activity for school pupils in the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence with the two local authorities to provide access to vocational learning opportunities for school pupils across the region.

Following merger, a Minute of Variation to the Memorandum of Agreement with the two local authorities was agreed to strengthen links in the context of the merger College.

2.5.2 Work with schools and university partners to support seamless progression through the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence as the new national exams are introduced.

The College is committed to ensuring seamless transition between school, College and university for young people in the region. The College will develop provision in line with the recommendation of the Wood Commission thereby increasing opportunities for the region's young workforce. As part of restructuring, a University Liaison Manager has been appointed to continue to develop the College's excellent links with university partners across Scotland.

2.6 To develop regional strategies and policies to provide coherent approaches to marketing, student support and course delivery across the region.

2.6.1 Joint working between the Senior Management Teams of both Colleges to review and align all marketing, student support and curriculum related strategies and policies.

To date, five regional strategies have been developed. A proposal to develop a suite of strategies and sub-strategies for NESC will be discussed by the Board of Management at its Planning Event. Once agreement has been reached in relation to the development of strategies, a review of the policies from the two former Colleges will be undertaken.

2.7 To maintain the quality of provision and a local presence to support access.

2.7.1 Review the curriculum portfolio of the two Colleges and identify delivery locations that preserve as far as possible local access while ensuring necessary levels of efficiency in line with funding reductions.

The College continues to ensure that demand for its provision is met in appropriate locations across the region, within available resources. The development of the new Learning Centre at Ellon Academy, expected to open in August 2015, will provide an additional location for the delivery of some full-time courses and Skills for Work provision for school pupils in a venue equidistant to the Aberdeen City and Fraserburgh campuses.

SFC STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3. HIGH QUALITY AND EFFICIENT LEARNING

OBJECTIVE

ACTIVITY

PROGRESS

RAG STATUS

3.3 Contribute to the Regional Articulation Hub achieving its targets.

3.3.1 Work with the Articulation Hub partners and other partner institutions to maximise articulation from HN to degree programmes. This will involve maximising numbers taking advantage of existing articulation agreements and developing new articulation pathways where possible.

The College continues to be an active participant of the North East Scotland Articulation Hub. Annually, over 300 students continue to progress from the College to RGU. To ensure that course planning takes account of articulation opportunities at the earliest stage the Vice Principal Curriculum attends RGU's Academic Development Committee. In AY2013-14 the College received an additional 75 HND places in the areas of Engineering and Business to articulate to Year 3 of the appropriate degree at RGU.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>PROGRESS</th>
<th>RAG STATUS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1.1 Embed and fully develop the Regional Engagement Strategy</td>
<td>Ongoing. The Strategy is now referred to as the Regional External Engagement Strategy.</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.2 Identify key and emerging industries within the region</td>
<td></td>
<td>Green</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.1.3 As part of curriculum review, consider how the current subject mix meets the identified needs of local industries and amend where required</td>
<td></td>
<td>Green</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.1.4 Take note of demand identified in sector skills strategies (e.g. for food and drink) and those soon to be launched (e.g. oil and gas) when planning provision for the region</td>
<td></td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 To maintain a programme of work based learning qualifications</td>
<td></td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.1 Ensure all programmes maintain an element of work placement where this is a mandatory requirement of the award</td>
<td>This has been maintained.</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.1 Continue to offer tailor made training to meet employers' needs and strategic business objectives e.g. Business Solutions &amp; Part-time Learning provision</td>
<td>The structure for Business Solutions &amp; Part-time Learning is currently under review.</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.2 Support employers with continuous workforce development by offering appropriate work based qualifications for current employees</td>
<td>The College has submitted a single contract bid to SDS and is awaiting the outcome.</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 To offer revised SDS-funded programmes that lead to a valuable vocational qualification (rather than job-readiness certificates)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.1 Build on the success of the &quot;Way into Work&quot;/New College Learning Programmes by identifying potential learners who can benefit from a programme which prepares learners for employment</td>
<td>&quot;Way into Work&quot; and the New College Learning Programmes have been replaced by the Employability Fund. A single Employability Fund tender has been submitted by the College.</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.1 In collaboration with Robert Gordon University and University of Aberdeen, use any allocated dedicated funding to progress the development of the Oil and Gas Academy for Scotland</td>
<td>As part of the OGAS arrangements, a Welding Academy has been developed in Fraserburgh using funding provided by the SFC. Work is currently underway to create increased capacity for mechanical engineering training in Fraserburgh also using funds provided by the SFC to support OGAS.</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.2 Establish a website and other marketing tools to promote the Oil and Gas Academy for Scotland</td>
<td>An OGAS website has been established and can be found at <a href="http://www.ogas.co.uk/">http://www.ogas.co.uk/</a></td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6.1 Work with the college sector and SFC to begin to develop a leaver destination survey and the MIS needed to deliver this</td>
<td>As noted in the SFC Guidance - Delivering College Outcome Agreements (AY 2014-15) - a sector wide College Leaver Destination Survey will be developed and piloted with a selected group of colleges during 2013-14. The qualifiers of Summer 2014 will be the first cohort to be surveyed using this approach. This activity has therefore not been required to date.</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6.2 Review process for collating information on learner destinations in order to increase response rates</td>
<td>The process has been reviewed and changes implemented to optimise the response rate e.g. Changing from an online survey completed in student’s own time to a paper survey complete in class.</td>
<td>Green</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

This is considered as part of the curriculum planning process. The College is also active members or participants in significant regional economic development and employer bodies or forums such as ACSEF, AGCC, SCDI, ENE, GFSB, and the Fraserburgh Development Trust and as such remains up-to-date with the regional economy, employer needs and skills shortages.
Partnerships with Schools/Local Authorities

1. Introduction
   1.1. The purpose of this paper is to provide the Committee with information on the College’s partnerships with schools in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

2. Background
   2.1. North East Scotland College is committed to working with schools and Local Authorities to provide meaningful vocational education and skills development for young people as part of their school curriculum, while facilitating seamless transition through the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence on to post school and post College destinations.

   2.2. The College currently delivers vocational training to 27 of the 29 local authority secondary schools across the region in partnership with Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City Local Authorities.

   2.3. These partnerships support the development of skills for learning for school pupils who seek to progress to university and they support skills for work for those seeking meaningful, sustained employment.

3. Context
   3.1. Both former Colleges (Aberdeen and Banff & Buchan) have comprehensive experience of delivering robust Schools/College Links Programmes and the North East is recognised as sector leading in its approach to university articulation links. These strands come together in the context of the Wood Commission Report in that they recognise the importance of the range of skills and progression opportunities being developed for young people as part of the school curriculum.

4. Management of Schools/College Partnerships
   4.1. The partnership between North East Scotland College and each Local Authority is governed by a Memorandum of Understanding which sets out the respective roles and responsibilities for the College and the Local Authority in relation to school pupils on school/College link courses. At the request of the Local Authorities the Memorandum applies to the implementation phase of Curriculum for Excellence, until the end of Academic Year 2015-16.

   4.2. Following Merger, a Minute of Variation to the Memorandum was created and the Directors of Education were advised of the increase in SFC funded vocational courses now available to them. The Minute of Variation and accompanying letter, applicable to Aberdeenshire, are attached at appendix 1.

   4.3. The Vice Principal Curriculum has strategic responsibility for Schools/College partnerships. As part of the restructuring of the promoted teaching staff and other key curriculum areas, including school and university links, a new Schools Liaison Team has been established. This team comprises a Schools Liaison Manager and two officers, one for the North Region and one for the South. This has resulted in a review of key business processes and procedures governing School/College links and has strengthened the College’s capacity to work coherently in partnership with both Local Authorities for the benefit of young people across the Region.

   4.4. The Schools Liaison Team now manages all SFC funded Schools/College Links and the partnership funded courses paid for by the Local Authorities that are included in the Memorandum of Understanding. These courses are all subject to the quality assurance mechanisms agreed with the Local Authorities for School/College links.
4.5. The separation of responsibility for SFC funded and commercial activity at a senior level in the management structure of the College means that any revenue generated through sponsorship or other private means is in addition to the agreed level of schools activity and is managed separately.

4.6. A designated senior official of each Local Authority is responsible for working with the College and with the schools in the relevant Authority to allocate places appropriately to school pupils to ensure that maximum benefit is derived from participation in the range of provision offered by the College. The Local Authority Officer has responsibility for funding courses above the level provided by the College, in accordance with the partnership approach to funding of schools/College links activity, as detailed in the Memorandum of Understanding.

4.7. A strategic Steering Group for Schools/College Links meets at least three times a year, chaired by the Vice Principal Curriculum and attended by senior officials of the Local Authorities. This group evaluates provision and agrees the Programme on an annual basis.

5. **Benefits of Merger for School/College Links**

5.1. The establishment of North East Scotland College has improved access to, and allowed for an increase in, the breadth of vocational training opportunities for young people across the region.

5.2. In 2013-14 the combined SFC funded Schools/College links enrolments for both former Colleges is estimated to be c2,100.

5.3. In May/June 2014 North East Scotland College will offer 53 College Experience courses to schools pupils across the region. If all available places on all courses are taken up by the Local Authorities this will result in 600 enrolments on College Experience courses.

5.4. In partnership with the Local Authorities, North East Scotland College is currently planning Schools/College provision for 2014-15. This includes 19 vocational courses and 14 curriculum enhancement (Psychology, Sociology, Higher Order Skills Passport etc) courses. This amounts to a total of 33 courses and c650 places.

5.5. In addition to the SFC funded places for school pupils available in 2014-15, there has been an increase in requests for partnership courses from the Local Authorities. These are the courses which the Authority will pay for. The total number of courses currently being planned which will be invoiced to the Local Authorities is 15. If all the planned courses are confirmed, a minimum of 150 additional enrolments and associated revenue will be generated.

5.6. If all the planned courses for 2014-15 operate the final enrolment count for the year, including College Experience, Induction Courses and courses for pupils with additional support needs could be c 2,300.

5.7. By offering the Local Authorities additional funded places for school pupils on a regional basis, there are increased opportunities for individual pupils from a number of schools to be able to access a wider choice of vocational experiences and for financially viable groups to be formed.

5.8. The College’s partnership with ASPIRENorth for Higher Education Programme has also been strengthened as a result of merger and of the well established school and university links across the region. The College works with ASPIRENorth and participating schools to improve the skills, knowledge and confidence of pupils in schools who aspire to higher education.
5.9. In addition to increasing participation rates in School/College Links courses, when school pupils participate in College courses while still at school, this has the added benefit of marketing North East Scotland College as a high quality destination for school leavers.

6. **Innovation in School/College Links for 2014-15**

6.1. To provide a broad range of provision for school pupils and to ensure that the right learning is provided in the right place across College campuses, the Schools/College links Programme for 2014-15 includes a number of new courses to support skills development.

6.2. The College is committed to developing skills in STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) and this has led to the inclusion of SCQF level 5 Laboratory Science in the offer for next year. It is intended to make this available across all campuses by working in partnership with Fraserburgh Academy to access local Science laboratories and using the Aberdeen City Campus laboratories for pupils in Aberdeen City schools.

6.3. Also new this year is the NPA (National Progression Award) in Exercise and Fitness Leadership at level 6. This is aimed at senior pupils seeking to develop their skills in leadership and sport and to support progression to college or university.

6.4. The Higher Order Skills Passport is designed to prepare school pupils for further study, by developing research and study skills. This is being delivered in 2014-15 to a group of pupils in Fraserburgh Academy and will also be available on a twilight basis at the Aberdeen City campus for pupils across the region.

7. **The Wood Report: Opportunities for the College**

7.1. In accordance with the Wood Commission’s recommendations, North East Scotland College is committed to working with schools and Local Authority partners to provide relevant vocational experiences of the highest quality for school pupils who can benefit from these opportunities.

7.2. The College was invited by the Scottish Funding Council to submit a proposal to become an “early adopter” of the Wood Commission’s recommendations and was successful in having the submission accepted and the requested funding approved.

7.3. While the College works well with both Local Authorities, there are occasionally conflicting priorities between individual schools and the strategic direction of the Local Authority and between the College and Local Authorities. This can sometimes lead to unrealistic expectations in terms of delivery costs and financial viability. However, the Wood Report provides a useful vehicle to overcome perceived or actual challenges to the entitlement of school pupils to have access to high quality vocational experiences as part of their school timetable.

7.4. The detailed bid is attached at appendix 2. This contains an outline of the specific projects now being funded by the Scottish Funding Council to support School/College Links.

7.5. The Scottish Government’s Letter of Guidance to Colleges (21 October 2013) encouraged Colleges to deliver a number of priority outcomes including:

“.....new forms of partnerships between colleges and schools.....with the potential to transform opportunities for young people and create competitive economic advantage for Scotland’s employers”

North East Scotland College is in a strong position to use the opportunities afforded by the Wood Commission for Developing Scotland’s Young Workforce (Interim Report – September 2013) and partnerships with Local Authorities to make a significant contribution to regional economic development.
8. Recommendation

8.1. It is recommended that the Committee note the current status of the College’s partnership with schools and Local Authorities.

Rob Wallen  
Principal

Sandra Walker  
Vice Principal Curriculum
MINUTE OF VARIATION

between

NORTH EAST SCOTLAND COLLEGE

and

ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL
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MINUTE OF VARIATION

PARTIES

(1) THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT OF NORTH EAST SCOTLAND COLLEGE (formerly known as Aberdeen College) a body corporate constituted by and acting under the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992 and having its administrative centre at Aberdeen City Campus, Gallowgate, Aberdeen AB25 1BN (the “College”)

(2) ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL, a Local Authority constituted under the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994 and having its principal offices at Woodhill House, Aberdeen AB16 5GB (the “Local Authority”)

WHEREAS

(A) The College and the Local Authority entered into an agreement dated 26 March and 18 April 2012 (“the Principal Agreement”) for the purpose of a collaboration between the parties to enable pupils in secondary school years S3 through to S6 to develop vocational skills and improve their employment prospects by allowing them to undertake courses at the College.

(B) Aberdeen College merged with Banff & Buchan College to form the College and accordingly the parties now wish to vary the terms of the Principal Agreement and it is proper that such variation is recorded in writing.

NOW THEREFORE THE PARTIES HEREBY AGREE AS FOLLOWS:-

1 INTERPRETATION

Except where otherwise stated herein, words and expressions contained in the Principal Agreement shall have the same meaning in this Minute of Variation.

2 VARIATION

2.1 All references to “Aberdeen College” within the Principal Agreement shall be replaced with “North East Scotland College” and all references to “Abcol” within the Principal Agreement shall be replaced with “Nescol”.

2.2 The Schedule Part 1 of the Principal Agreement shall be replaced in entirety with the Schedule Part 1 to this Minute of Variation.

2.3 Notices to be served to the College under the Principal Agreement and this Minute of Variation should be addressed to Ms Sandra Walker.
FORCE AND EFFECT

Except as varied hereby the terms of the Principal Agreement shall continue in full force and effect and shall also apply to any courses which had previously been provided by Banff & Buchan College prior to the merger with Aberdeen College.

APPLICABLE LAW/MISCELLANEOUS

4.1 The construction, validity and performance of this Minute of Variation shall be governed in all respects by Scots law and the parties hereto hereby submit to the non-exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of that country.

4.2 This Minute of Variation supersedes the previous agreement between the parties hereto in relation to the matters dealt with herein and represents the entire understanding of such parties in relation thereto:

IN WITNESS WHEREOF these presents consisting of this and the preceding page are, together with the Schedule annexed, executed by the parties hereto as follows:-

_______________________________   _____________________________
Signed for and on behalf of    Signed for and on behalf of the
North East Scotland College    Aberdeenshire Council

_______________________________   _____________________________
Designation                  Designation

_______________________________   _____________________________
Witness                        Witness

_______________________________   _____________________________
Full Name                     Full Name

_______________________________   _____________________________
Date                           Date
This is the Schedule (in 1 part) referred to in the foregoing Minute of Variation between North East Scotland College and Aberdeenshire Council.

**Schedule**

**Part 1**

**PART 1A**

*Courses at North East Scotland College*

**SCHOOLS PROGRAMME**

This Programme applies to 2014-15 and 2015-16 Courses, (Subject to funding)

1) **One Year Vocational Programme (SFC funded)**

Up to a total of 12 SFC funded vocational or skills for work programmes will be offered to be agreed between the parties, subject to availability, which may include, but not limited to the following courses:-

- Skills for Work Hairdressing
- Skills for Work Early Years Education and Childcare
- City and Guilds Auto Engineering
- Skills for Work Construction
- Skills for Work Energy

**Notes**

- One group of each will be offered (subject to viability)
- Location to be agreed with the Local Authority, unless otherwise specified
- Each course will run from 9.30am – 3.30pm for one day per week for 30 weeks or according to alternative mutually agreed local arrangements.
- The total taught hours for most vocational Programmes is 150 hours

2) **One Year Vocational Programme (Local Authority funded)**

- In addition to the SFC funded Vocational Programme, the Local Authority may wish to request additional groups of vocational courses, comprising those listed above or in other subject areas.

- Subject to resources being available the College will provide additional vocational courses which the Local Authority wishes to pay for.

- The cost to the Local Authority is £10,000 per group, whether the class size is at the minimum level of 10 or the maximum 28.
• The class size depends on the health and safety requirements of vocational areas. However, the minimum class size would be 10 for practical courses with a maximum of 28 for more theory-based ones.

3) **Exceptional Entrants (SFC funded)**

• Exceptional entrants attending full-time non-advanced programmes with the permission of their school.

4) **Supported Learning School/College Link courses (SFC funded)**

• School/College Links

5) **Higher/Intermediate 2 Psychology and Sociology (Partnership funded)**

The College will offer up to **8 courses** of Higher and/or Intermediate 2 Psychology and/or Sociology on the following basis:

• The Authority will guarantee a minimum class size of 20 for the duration of the course.
• The College will deliver to group sizes of up to 30 in any one group
• If the group size remains at 20 or above for the full year the Local Authority will not pay for the class.
• For every pupil who withdraws taking the class size to below 20 the Local Authority will pay the College £700 per pupil.
• Location of classes to be agreed with the Local Authority
• Each course will run for 1 x 3 hour session per week for c32 weeks
• The total taught hours for Higher and Intermediate programmes is c100 hours

6) **Higher Order and Academic Skills for HE Passport**

As an option to a Higher/Intermediate 2 Course the College will also offer a partnership funded Higher Order Skills Passport on the same basis as the Higher Programmes, involving the same amount of time.

• Local Investigation (SCQF level 6) or Communication for Academic Purposes (College Unit levelled at SCQF 6 and credit rated)
• Personal Development: Self Awareness (SCQF level 6)
• Using Learning Skills (SCQF level 5)
• Using Information Retrieval Skills (SCQF level 6)

This course may also be available at SCQF levels 5 and 7, depending on demand.
7) **College Experience – Enhancement Programme (SFC funded)**

Engineering @ Nescol  
Creative Industries @ Nescol  
Music and Drama @ Nescol  
Computing and Technology @ Nescol  
Hair and Beauty @ Nescol  
TV and Radio @ Nescol  
Care @ Nescol  
Sport and Health @ Nescol  
Social Science @ Nescol  
Tourism @ Nescol  
Science @ Nescol  
Business and Law @ Nescol  
Construction @ Nescol

Each of the above will comprise 10 hours and will be delivered as 2 day courses on College premises during May and June.

**N.B. All Courses will operate subject to demand and availability of resources and funding.**
15th January 2014

Ms Maria Walker  
Director of Education, Culture & Leisure  
Aberdeenshire Council  
Woodhill House  
Westburn Road  
Aberdeen  
AB16 5GB

Dear Maria

North East Scotland College – School/College Links

Following the establishment of North East Scotland College and recent national and regional developments relating to School/College Links, I attach for your attention a Minute of Variation to the Memorandum of Understanding between Aberdeenshire Council and North East Scotland College in relation to school/College links for 2014/15 and 2015/16.

As part of the College’s commitment to working in partnership with Aberdeenshire Council to provide meaningful vocational opportunities for young people in the region, the Minute of Variation reflects an increase in the amount of activity that the College will fund in support of our links with the schools in Aberdeenshire.

There are now 12 one year vocational courses available to pupils in Aberdeenshire schools across the region and we look forward to working with Ian Stirling to provide the best experience possible for pupils on these programmes.

Of course, in accordance with the Memorandum, if the Authority wishes to provide more than the 12 vocational courses funded by the College, these are available (subject to available resources) at a cost to the Authority of £10,000 per course.

I would be grateful if you could sign the attached Minute of Variation and return it to me. Please retain a copy for your own records. I have also included the Memorandum of Understanding for ease of reference to which the Minute of Variation will subsequently be attached.
I trust this is helpful and I look forward to continuing to work with you and your colleagues to enhance the strong and productive partnership between North East Scotland College and the schools in Aberdeenshire.

I look forward to meeting you again soon.

Yours sincerely

Sandra

Sandra Walker
Vice Principal Curriculum

Encs.
North East Scotland College (NESC)

Proposal to be an early adopter of the Wood Commission recommendations

Introduction

- North East Scotland College is well placed to be an early adopter of the recommendations of the Wood Commission for Developing Scotland’s Young Workforce.

Context

- North East Scotland College is committed to delivering the outcomes detailed in the Memorandum of Understanding between the College and each of its Local Authority partners (attached at appendix 1) and between the College and its University partners (attached at appendix 2).

- These well established Partnerships exist to provide meaningful vocational training and skills development for young people as part of their school curriculum, while facilitating seamless transition throughout the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence on to meaningful post school and post College destinations.

- These partnerships support the development of skills for learning for school pupils who seek to progress to University and they support skills for work for those seeking meaningful, sustained employment.

- The College’s partnership with ASPIRENorth for Higher Education Programme is also strengthened as a result of these well established school and University links across the region. The College works with ASPIRENorth and participating schools to improve the skills, knowledge and confidence of pupils in schools who aspire to higher education.

Background

- The College has delivered a robust Schools/College Links Programme over many years and is recognised as sector leading in its approach to University Articulation Links. These strands come together in the context of the Wood Report in that they recognise the importance of the range of skills being developed for young people as part of their school curriculum.

- In accordance with the Wood Commission’s recommendations, North East Scotland College is committed to working with schools and Local Authority
partners to provide relevant vocational experiences of the highest quality - for school pupils who can benefit from these opportunities.

- The College is committed to providing school pupils who commit to a vocational course as part of their school timetable with nationally recognised qualifications leading to progression.

- The College provides short 3 day College Experiences for c700 school pupils each year. This will be extended to include more vocational areas across all College campuses in 2014/15 to encourage more school pupils to try a range of vocational areas in order to extend their opportunities and for the College to contribute to the career planning skills of young people.

**Additional Planned Activities in response to the Wood Commission’s Recommendations**

**The Planned Outcomes:**

- In 2014/15 and 2015/16 the North East Scotland College will offer each Local Authority an additional vocational Programme for their pupils while still at school.

- This increases to 19 the number of SFC funded vocational courses offered each year to school pupils in the region. In accordance with the partnership approach to funding school/College links, the Local Authorities have the option to pay for further courses above this level.

- In addition 16 Higher /Intermediate 2 level courses are offered each year. These are well subscribed and will be adapted in line with the new National qualifications.

- In addition, this year, the College will deliver the Higher Order Skills Passport (developed by the former Aberdeen College and recognised as broadly equivalent to a Higher by the University of Aberdeen) to c25 pupils in Fraserburgh Academy. Part of the growth in School/College Links provision will come from the extension of this pilot, which is designed to provide school pupils with the skills required to be successful on progression to University (details attached at appendix 3).

- In 2010, the former Aberdeen College arranged for peer reviews with lecturers and teachers from across the region to support joint curriculum planning and transition for pupils in the senior phase. This approach was well received, involving 19 school staff and 34 College lecturers. This will be extended to include all College campuses in 2014/15.
Commitment to STEM Subjects: Planned Outcomes

- North East Scotland College is committed to increasing school pupil (and ultimately school leaver) participation in STEM subjects. As such, the growth during 2014/15 and 2015/16 in this area will be derived from:

1. Extending access to Science courses, specifically including Skills for Work Science and Higher Science across the region by working with local schools to share specialist resources.

2. Promoting Science in schools and increasing University access by introducing a new ±more practical and applications-based ±Physical Science route to the HNC Science. While still at school young people undertaking Skills for Work and/or Higher Science will be encouraged to consider studying Physical Science or Life Sciences, both of which are practical and skills based.

3. Making the National Certificate in Engineering at level 5 available to school pupils to complete over 2 years while still at school (subject to available resources.) In this way pupils can prepare for a career in Engineering while still at school and progress to full-time level 6 at College.

4. For pupils who can benefit and who have a Higher Mathematics, some units from the HNC Mechanical Engineering course can be made available as an open learning package or through College attendance, subject to travel arrangements being agreed (with the possibility of achieving the entire HNC Mechanical Engineering if sufficient time can be allocated within the school timetable). This is beneficial for pupils wishing to progress from school directly to University or to work.

Areas for Investment/ Possible additional SFC Funding for specific projects

- Although the College will not seek additional SFC funding to support the provision detailed in this submission, two significant and discrete projects have been identified which, if funded, would enhance the Schools/College Links plans outlined in this paper.

These are as follows:

Project 1

- The College is committed to extending access to pupils across rural Aberdeenshire and will work with Aberdeenshire Local Authority to increase access through the College’s Virtual Learning Environment. Support in identifying suitable materials and making them available is requested.
Project 2

- Developing skills in Mathematics at the required level can be a barrier to some young people accessing training in some STEM subjects, particularly all disciplines of Engineering: Mechanical, Electrical and Electronic. The proposed Project is to work with the University of Aberdeen who are developing an interactive on-line course for Aspiring Engineers. At present this is available to College students who are Associate Students of the University. The aim of the Project is to work in partnership with the University to extend this facility and make it available to school pupils.

- As such, the College seeks funding for the post of a Skills and Virtual Learning Development Officer to work with the Schools/College Links Team to increase access to vocational experiences for school pupils in rural Aberdeenshire and to increase access to STEM subjects through accessible preparatory courses in mathematics.

Additional Costs

At this stage the College is only seeking additional funding from the Funding Council for the two specific projects identified at a cost of c£40k.

All other additional activity will be undertaken within the resources allocated to Schools/College Links.

All additional activity will be assessed at the end of 2014/15. At that stage, resources will be reviewed and if further substantial programmes are planned, the College may seek financial support from the SFC to deliver this additional activity, notwithstanding the outcome of the request for funding to support the identified projects.

Sandra Walker
Vice Principal Curriculum
North East Scotland College
24th January 2014
IT in the Curriculum for AY2014-15

1. Introduction
   1.1. The purpose of this paper is to update the Committee on the College’s innovative and sector leading approach to Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) for students.

2. Background
   2.1. As noted in the (draft) ICT Strategy as part of the renegotiation of the outsourced IT Managed Service contract with RM Education, what was then Aberdeen College, committed to a partnership of transformation to include the introduction of BYOD for students, a move where feasible to Cloud based ICT solutions and a reduction in IT hardware at the rate of 650 devices a year over three years to drive down contract costs by c£200k.

   2.2. At the Course Provision and Student Services Committee meeting (of Aberdeen College) in March of 2013 the following aspirations for the BYOD project were noted:

   “The introduction of a strategy that requires learners on specified programmes to provide their own device for use in class sees a significant change for both the learner and College. This change in ownership from the College to the learner will support a reduction in the number of devices the College is required to have available for students with obvious financial benefits attached to a reduction in the IT estate. Learners will also benefit from having a much wider choice in the type of device that they wish to use to support their learning experience at College.

   Pilot groups will be testing a variety of technical solutions in April and May 2013 to ensure that learner provided devices can effectively connect into and integrate with College systems to support a high quality experience for the learner. The success of the pilots is critical in ensuring that the transformation can be made successfully.

   Following the successful completion of these pilot activities 700 advanced level students will be required to bring their own device in August 2013 to support their learning. Learners from business, sport, animal care, computing and science will be required to provide their own laptop for use in these courses. To ensure no learner is disadvantaged a device purchase scheme is being negotiated and further support is available through the hardship fund if a learner cannot afford their own device.”

3. Reflection on Phase 1 – current academic year
   3.1. Phase 1 has seen the successful introduction of c700 students providing their own devices to facilitate and support their learning experience at College. The groups involved in this first phase are all Higher Education (HE) from a variety of curriculum teams; Science, Sport, Animal Care, Computing and Business and as such represent a reasonably broad spectrum of the curriculum. It has also seen a reduction of 650 devices across the College, moving ownership to students and reducing costs accordingly.

   3.2. To evaluate the success of the project to date a full online survey was undertaken with all learners as well as a further survey with teaching staff. In addition to this a series of focus groups have been conducted in an attempt to fully evaluate the impact on the learner experience.

   3.3. Feedback from students was positive across the full range of questions posed and perhaps most importantly 88% of respondents confirmed they had been able to access the resources they require for their course from their own device.
3.4. Feedback from teaching staff working with BYOD groups also noted positive feedback. One third of staff reported they have changed their approach in class as a result of BYOD and many of the supporting comments reflect on positive changes as a result of BYOD. This is extremely important to build upon as this approach is rolled out across the College.

3.5. There are three areas both students and staff thought could be improved namely having to repeatedly log on throughout the day, complexity in accessing productivity tools (the Microsoft Office suite) and charging of devices.

   A number of immediate interim actions have been agreed to assist for example with charging, and longer term actions proposed as part of Phase 2.

3.6. One of the undoubted successes has been the introduction of the new-look, higher-profile IT Student Help Desk located in the new social learning space as part of the extension to Dino’s Coffee Bar at Aberdeen City Campus. Feedback from the students running this service indicates that they are enjoying their experience and feel that their customer service skills are being enhanced as well as their technical knowledge as they build up a database of fixes for a variety of problems. A number of employers are now recognising this experience and actively seeking this from students when applying for a job. The Help Desk will be expanded (and carefully managed) into Phase 2 to support more than just BYOD related issues.

3.7. There has been a low take up of the Device Purchasing Scheme. This may have been because the scheme was hard to access, information about the scheme was published late and it did not offer payment terms or simply because students did not need it. It has been agreed to revise the scheme, possibly with alternate supplier, to offer payment terms, and ensure students have early access to information.

3.8. Whilst there are areas to develop, the overall feedback from staff and students provides a strong endorsement that Phase 1 of the BYOD project has been a success.

4. Phase 2 – into AY2014-15

4.1. The following initial project planning parameters have been agreed for Phase 2 in AY2014-15

   • That as a minimum we scale the project up to another 1,000 student users;
   • That in scaling up we consider including non advanced courses;
   • That in scaling up we consider including all advanced courses except those with specialist requirements;
   • That we do not use any constraining metrics in selecting courses e.g. a minimum number of IT timetabled hours, we consider each course on its own merits;
   • That we take another 650 College owned devices out of commission;
   • That we do not jeopardise current flexible arrangements that exist in delivering the curriculum through mobile devices e.g. the use of laptop trolleys.

4.2. It is recognised that the key driver for Phase 1 was to come up with a proven technical solution and that has been achieved. Taking the initial project planning parameters therefore for Phase 2 it is important that we move from technical drivers to those driven by the needs of the curriculum in terms of approaches to teaching and learning, supporting staff through relevant training and support and challenging learners in a different way by ensuring the use of technology is pervasive across courses.
4.3. The new Learning and Teaching Strategy sets out that “The Strategy supports the changing needs, aspirations and expectations of students and addresses developments in learning, teaching and assessment within the context of an immersive ICT environment”. Clearly a model where students are providing their own devices allows the College to deliver developments in learning and teaching and create that truly immersive environment. BYOD supports a level of flexibility both in relation to teaching approaches and learner engagement that cannot be matched in a model based largely on a fixed estate of computer rooms.

4.4. A major driver from Education Scotland is the move towards evidence of creative learning across the curriculum. Already there is strong evidence from both staff and students of a more creative, individual and interactive experience being delivered as a result of learners having a device with them in every class. Many of these experiences would not be practically possible to resource if the College had to provide all the hardware for students. Feedback from staff already demonstrates that different and more creative approaches are being implemented in the classroom as a result of having more flexible access to ICT through students own devices. The creative approaches are not limited to staff as students are also introducing their own innovative approaches and in particular how they choose to use their devices to access materials and enhance their experience in a very individual manner.

4.5. Another key theme from Education Scotland is the development of employability skills as part of the wider College experience. IT has become an integral part of virtually every profession and the BYOD model provides excellent evidence of students being prepared for the world of work. Besides the obvious aspect of developing core IT skills for the student, the experience of using their own device provides a very useful learning experience where the student has to develop the skills to balance work and personal matters within the learning environment.

4.6. All lecturers currently receive training in using Blackboard and its associated tools as part of their induction. This training is refreshed and new features are introduced periodically through the use of newsletters and team briefings but there is no mandatory requirement currently for staff to update their skills in using Blackboard and other tools on a regular basis.

Formal CPD in developing blended courses has been discussed but has not yet been introduced. As part of the preparation for the introduction of BYOD Phase 1, whole day workshops were held and the feedback from these was generally positive.

Moving forward, however, it will be important to bear the following in mind:

- Most of the staff teaching the first BYOD Phase 1 groups had experience from previous hybrid and paperless course initiatives. However, it was clear that a number did not have the level of digital literacy which might be expected and some were unsure of the processes involved. We will need to ensure that all staff possess a base level of digital literacy and understand their role and responsibilities relating to BYOD.

- Feedback from the workshops shows that staff valued the opportunity to discuss issues and share good practice. The survey carried out in October showed that some staff had developed new approaches to take advantage of the flexibility offered when all students have a device available in every class. Spontaneous responses to real time developments in class have been described. It will be important for us to capture these new approaches and practice and make them available to other staff. It will be equally important to make enough time available for staff to understand and reflect on these new approaches.
4.7. In Phase 1 students were enrolled through our normal process. However this has the distinct disadvantage that we are unable to activate the students’ account until they have completed the enrolment process and the enrolment form is put into the system. This effectively means we must then do a second induction with the student relating to BYOD and this can only happen in the first week of term once all learner accounts are live. As the number of students on a BYOD model increases this will become increasingly complex to manage and support.

Ideally we would undertake a single induction which covers all aspects of the process for the student: enrolment, courses specific information and BYOD induction. This is possible on the already established induction date, but requires the student accounts to be live. The solution to this is to pre enrol BYOD students so their accounts are live when they arrive for induction, allowing the entire process to be undertaken on that day and not drift into week 1 teaching time. This would also provide time to help students who may have difficulties integrating their device with our systems and allow these issues to be resolved before classes begin. The slight disadvantage of pre enrolling learners is any who do not actually enrol will need to be removed from the system at a later date.

4.8. Modelling has shown that the implementation of a widespread BYOD model can support a reduction in the number of devices owned by the College and supported by RM, however on its own it is unlikely to support the reduction targets set (650 devices per annum).

It is likely at this stage we need to consider BYOD and device reduction separately to gain the advantages of both.

4.9. There are a number of other considerations for Phase 2 including:

- How we deal with specialist requirements;
- Funding for non-advanced – bursary, to allow the College to facilitate the procurement of BYOD devices using Bursaries funding;
- Expansion of BYOD to Fraserburgh Campus.


5. Recommendation

5.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the content of this paper.

Rob Wallen
Principal

Frank Hughes
Vice Principal Student Services
Non SFC Funded Activity

1. **Introduction**
   1.1. This paper updates the Committee in relation to ongoing activity relating to non-SFC funded activity.

2. **Background and Developments**
   2.1. Re-organisation of the two pre-merger teams into one regional team.

   2.2. The proposed integration of the two existing teams into one is ongoing and should be virtually complete by the end of February 2014. The aim of the exercise is to create one team for the region which maintains current functions and quality of service, and develops a team that is responsive to client need. At the time of writing the consultation process is ongoing.

   2.3. It is proposed that the team will be known as Business and Community Development reflecting the two main purposes of this area of College activity.

   2.4. It is also proposed that there will be three strands to this area specifically the delivery of:
   - Skills Development Scotland funded national training programmes;
   - Community based non-SFC funded (or “full cost”) part-time programmes;
   - Commercial programmes directly to business.

   2.5. Each of these three key strands will have a manager who will report in to one Head of Business and Community Development.

   2.6. A verbal update on progress regarding structure will be given at the meeting.

3. **SDS related issues**
   3.1. The SDS contract position for next year (April 2014-2015) will be announced in March. The College submitted one regional contract for 279 Modern Apprenticeship places of which 196 (70%) are for engineering. The next biggest occupational area requested was hairdressing, 51 places (18%). These places are requested on the basis of regional need, demand from employers, organisational capacity and previous track record.

   3.2. The College also submitted one regional bid for 132 Employability Fund places.

   3.3. An oral update will be given at the meeting.

4. **European Social Fund**
   4.1. As reported at the Board Meeting of 10 February 2014, the College has submitted a project to research approaches into social mobility. We await the outcome of the assessment process.

   4.2. The separate initiative to deliver additional activity from European Social Fund (ESF) underspends is still in the planning phase and any additional activity will be delivered in 2014-15. This activity must be additional to, and accounted separately from, SFC funded activity. The planning process will involve community planning partners.

   4.3. The planning for new nationally developed ESF projects from 2015 to 2020 is on-going and likely to create opportunities for the region. The College is involved in the planning process.
5. **Commercial Activity**

5.1. The areas of commercial activity currently delivered by the Business and Part Time Solutions Team and b-solutions Team remain on target to reach either income targets or WSUMS targets as relevant.

5.2. The contract for open/distance learning currently delivered on behalf of the College by ICS needs to be renewed and a full tendering process (OJEU) has commenced. This will be complete in July 2014.

6. **Recommendation**

6.1. It is recommended that the Committee note the contents of this paper.

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**Rob Wallen**  
Principal

**Paul Sherrington**  
Depute Principal
Students’ Association

1. Introduction
   1.1. The purpose of this paper is to provide the Committee with an opportunity to consider issues relating to the Students’ Association.

2. Reports from Students’ Association Officers
   2.1. Attached as an appendix is a report provided by Brian Cruickshank and Jamie McKendrick.

3. Recommendation
   3.1. It is recommended that the Committee note the information provided in the report.

Rob Wallen
Principal
Students’ Association Report

Regional Activities

Interim Regional Executive Committee (IREC)
- IREC has been convened to help in the transition to create the new Student Association of North East Scotland College. The membership of this committee will consist of all current Sabbatical positions within NESCol. Duties will include developing policies and strategies.

- IREC discussed the possibility of a staff secondment from the college regarding the Development Manager position and agreed that this option should be chosen before the advertisement externally.

- Now that the constitution has been approved in principal, the committee are now working on the schedules which will underpin that constitution. The Election Schedules will be finalised by Monday 3rd March and presented to the Learning, Teaching and Student Services Committee on 18th March as requested at Board meeting on 10th February.

- The Association is now in the process of planning elections for officers for the 2014/15 session. Discussions are underway with the College regarding support required to allow the elections to happen. The biggest challenge will be holding the Regional President election as there is not yet a uniform system across the Regional College to allow for electronic voting.

Conferences
- Between the 4th and 19th of March there has been 4 NUS Conferences. From the 4th-6th was national disabled students’ conferences which we had two officers in attendance at. On the 12th-13th there was International students’ conference in which we had two officers in attendance too also, 15th of March was mature students’ conference which another two officers attended. Today and tomorrow is National women’s conference which we have three officers attending. At the conference various policies have been to help NUS with the way they run and what things they will work on in the next year to try helping improve student lives.

North Area

Equality and Diversity
- The E&D Officer has had some interest from students regarding the role of Mature and Women’s Rep. There has been contact made regarding arranging times for the E&D Committee to meet. There has been a discussion to promote/engage with the NUS “I’m Not That Lad” campaign, which challenges stereotypical behaviours.

- As part of LGBT History Month, information boards have been placed around the campus highlighting issues, history snapshots and legislative milestones. Students work from North and South areas are being used to provide information.
In order to raise cultural awareness at the campus, information was made available about Chinese New Year. Executive Officers handed out red envelopes containing chocolate coins to Students, symbolising the Chinese practice of Lai See.

**Events**
A list of events has been collated by the Executive. These are listed below. Some may have specific activities undertaken during them; others may be simply providing information on boards.

- Valentine’s Day – An Admin class has organised a Valentine Day’s Fayre on the 13th Feb.
- Fair Trade Fortnight 24th Feb – 9th March.
- International Women’s Day 8th March.
- Independence Debate 21st March.
- Easter Egg Surprise Event 1st April.

**Engagement**
- The Association recently surveyed the students at Fraserburgh Campus on the canteen facilities.
- Members of the EXEC met with Sodexo Management to discuss the survey and agreed some points that require action. The report will now be shared with Assistant Principal Student Services.

**South Area**

**Eco Week**
- During Eco week and some of the weeks leading up to it, members of the association were going around campus with a petition to clean up Scotland. Students were asked to agree not to drop litter. Also, to set an example, Jamie decided to start cycling to work and asked officers to try this too.

**Dry Aberdeen**
- Dry Aberdeen is Aberdeen’s first non-alcohol event which was held in Garage on Sunday 9th of February. Jamie was involved in the planning of the event and was in attendance. Overall, the event was a success. We will use comments from a survey completed by attendees of the event for future activities (see appendix 2).

**Actions:**
Members are asked to note the contents of the report.

Submitted on 14-02-14 by:
Jamie McKendrick, Student President South Area
Brian Cruickshank, Student President North Area.
1. **Would you rate this event as:**

   **Great** 8

   *Why*
   - Great, first dry event in Aberdeen!
   - Great music and no alcohol
   - Music was incredible, lots of great people who can talk freely as they are sober.
   - The band
   - Because its non alcoholic
   - I enjoyed it, especially being a non drinker
   - Excellent idea for all students. A sense of alcohol freement

   **Good** 12

   *Why*
   - Its nice and easy
   - The band
   - I don’t drink and miss the social aspect
   - More people
   - Needs more people
   - Not the best day of the week
   - Good Atmosphere

   **Could be better** 2 (1 – also rated night as Great)

   (1 – also rated as good – more publicity more promotion.)

   *Why*
   - The band at the start was difficult to dance to – started off a bit flat
   - Venue is too big

2. **Should we do this again:**

   **Yes** 20
   **No** 0

(2 people did not answer but went on to tick how often)
3. If this is to be done again, how often:
   Weekly  3  Monthly  14
   Termly  4  6 monthly  0

   Other suggestions
   • Every 2 months

4. What day would be best:
   Monday  3  Friday  5
   Tuesday  3  Saturday  5
   Wednesday  1  Sunday  11
   Thursday  3

5. Suggestions for a venue:
   Garage  16

   Please add suggestions
   • Nox x 11
   • Pearl
   • Lemon Tree
   • Park, McDonalds
   • Maybe a pub or bar

6. Programme:
   Same format  7  Comedy  11
   More live music  9  Open mic  6
   DJ night  8

   1 for Same format + comedy

   Other suggestions
   • Live band was too loud to chat to people
   • More people
   • Hot tub/swimming pool
   • DJ or live music, not both. Themed nights – dress up? I had a great time. The no alcohol was a massive draw for me – great idea! Thank you.
   • Comedian
   • More promotion of the event
   • Rock concert
   • Karaoke!!
   • More advertisement
Identification of Training Needs

1 Introduction
1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide the Committee with an opportunity to consider the training needs of its Members.

2 Background
2.1 The Board’s Governance Manual states that “The Board shall ensure that it maintains a balance of appropriate knowledge, skills and experience amongst its membership in order to meet its primary responsibilities”. This involves ensuring that serving Board Members are provided with opportunities for training and development (as well as of course being a key factor in the process of selecting new Board Members).

2.2 A discussion was held at the Board’s Planning Event in relation to training needs. Attendees acknowledged the importance of training for ensuring that Members can perform their duties effectively. Attendees also noted the particular importance of identifying training needs at the present time, given that the College is operating in a time of significant change, both internally and externally.

2.3 It was therefore agreed that each of the Standing Committees, scheduled for 18 March, would be asked to consider training needs as part of its Agenda.

2.4 It should be noted that training can be provided by both internal (e.g. the College’s CPD Department, College staff) and external (e.g. College Development Network, SFC) facilitators, and may take the form of training sessions or briefings.

2.5 As part of the discussion, Members may find it helpful to refer to the remit of the Committee. A copy of the Learning & Teaching and Student Services Committee’s Terms of Reference is attached as an appendix to this paper.

3 Recommendation
3.1 It is recommended that the Committee considers the training needs of its Members.

Rob Wallen
Principal
### THE LEARNING & TEACHING AND STUDENT SERVICES COMMITTEE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.1 Membership</th>
<th>A minimum of 6 other Board of Management members (one of whom will be appointed Committee Chair) Principal Up to two Staff and one Student Board of Management members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Quorum</td>
<td>4 members (including at least 3 other members)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Remit

**General**
The Committee has overall responsibility for monitoring the direction and performance of learning and teaching, and the quality of the learners’ experience, at the College.

**Specific Duties**

- To maintain a strategic overview of the curriculum and the educational direction of the College
- To monitor quality assurance and enhancement including Key Performance Indicators and actions arising therefrom
- To recommend the approval of an annual statement to the Board, to meet Scottish Funding Council (SFC) requirements
- To approve and monitor the effectiveness of the Learning and Teaching Strategy
- To advise the Board of Management on matters relating to students in general, including Equality issues
- To ensure that the Board’s legal responsibilities with regard to the Students Association, as outlined in statute, are addressed and complied with.
- To oversee the relationship with the Students’ Association and to act as a communication link between the Association and the Board, in order to promote the student voice
- To support the Students’ Association’s Operational Plan, and monitor the use of resources therein.

| 1.4 Meetings       | The Learning & Teaching and Student Services will normally meet at least four times per year. |

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**THE LEARNING & TEACHING AND STUDENT SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**1.1 Membership**

A minimum of 6 other Board of Management members (one of whom will be appointed Committee Chair) Principal

Up to two Staff and one Student Board of Management members

**1.2 Quorum**

4 members (including at least 3 other members)

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- To support the Students’ Association’s Operational Plan, and monitor the use of resources therein.

**1.4 Meetings**

The Learning & Teaching and Student Services will normally meet at least four times per year.
Student Activity

1. Introduction
   1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with information on the current status of student activity for the academic year 2013-14.

2. Background
   2.1 For the purposes of securing funding from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) College activity is measured in weighted student units of measurement (wSUMS), which provide a method of aggregating student activity on different types of course and different modes of attendance in such a way that the duration of each programme and its resource demands are approximately reflected in the aggregated totals.

   2.2 If the Colleges fall short of its target the SFC would require part of grant-in-aid for the year to be repaid.

   2.3 The College monitors the level of enrolments and the rate of retention throughout the year, as well as the projected level of additional activity. These data are important in allowing the College to ensure that activity will at least meet required target levels.

   2.4 Differences in approaches to recording and reporting student activity have previously existed at Aberdeen and Banff & Buchan Colleges. Post-merger the harmonisation of these approaches remains a priority. At present, however, the Aberdeen City and Fraserburgh Campuses continue to record and report in different ways. It is anticipated that a single approach to reporting student activity will be implemented for 2014-15.

3. Current Activity Levels AY2012-13
   3.1 The figures noted below should only be read as an approximation of the current position. The final calculation of wSUMS can only be made at the end of the academic year and is dependent on: the final tally of enrolments for all types of activity across the whole year; student retention rates; and the exact weightings applied by the SFC at the end of the year. As such the data below are indicative.

   3.2 The Regional Outcome Agreement established with the SFC for 2013-14 sets the College’s target for student activity at 177,946 wSUMS (Table 1). An additional 2,000 wSUMs was offered by the SFC to, and accepted by, Banff and Buchan College in July 2013. This is accounted for separately. It is hoped that the College will be able to deliver this additional activity, but if it is not possible the annual projected financial outturn will be reduced accordingly.

   3.3 The total current figures for wSUMS for each type of Dominant Programme Group (DPG) area of activity are detailed in Table 2 of this report. The combined total of student activity for the College is currently 149,923 wSUMs.

   3.4 The total projected wSUMs activity (Table 3) is 18,665 wSUMs.

   3.5 As such the current forecast for the end of year position is 177,238 wSUMs, representing a shortfall of 709 wSUMs.

4. Recommendation
   4.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the contents of this report.

Rob Wallen  
Principal

Neil Cowie  
Vice Principal Organisational Services
**Table 1 – wSUMS Targets**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Regional Target</th>
<th>Aberdeen</th>
<th>Fraserburgh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wSUMS</td>
<td>177947</td>
<td>142190</td>
<td>35757</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2 - wSUMs by Dominant Group as at 27th January, 2014**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total wSUMS to date</th>
<th>Target wSUMS</th>
<th>wSUMS to be generated</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>149923</td>
<td>177947</td>
<td>28024</td>
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</table>

**Table 3 - Planned Activity Levels**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Planned Additional wSUMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aberdeen</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business, Creative Industries and Tourism</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Industries and Social Sciences</td>
<td>408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computing, Science and Sport</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engineering and Construction</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-Total</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fraserburgh</strong></td>
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<td>Service Industries</td>
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<td>Business and the Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engineering, Technology and Renewables</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scottish Maritime Centre</td>
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<td>Schools</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td><strong>Sub-Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>990</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Planned Activity</strong></td>
<td><strong>18665</strong></td>
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Table 4 – wSUMS Forecast

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<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>Planned</th>
<th>ELS</th>
<th>Forecast</th>
<th>Potential Shortfall</th>
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<td>Regional</td>
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<td>18665</td>
<td>8650</td>
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<td>709</td>
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Update from Education Scotland:
Analysing Performance Indicators for External Evaluation

1. Introduction
   1.1. The purpose of this paper is to allow the Committee to consider the update for College
       Principals provided by Alan Armstrong, Strategic Director – Lifelong Learning of Education
       Scotland.

2. Background
   2.1. Education Scotland is the organisation that employs Her Majesty’s Inspectors of Education
       (HMIe) in Scotland and that carries out review of colleges on behalf of the Scottish Funding
       Council.

3. Analysing Performance Indicators for external evaluation
   3.1. Attached as appendix 1 is a copy of the recent Update for College Principals. Appendix
       2 of this Update refers to the approaches that will be adopted in future to analysing
       performance indicators for external evaluation.

   3.2. The approach that is outlined in this appendix involves the use of “national sector
       performance” data, which is aggregated from the data of all colleges and will now be
       used as the basis for judging the performance of individual colleges.

   3.3. Footnote 3 on page 12 states that “colleges will be benchmarked against the mean
       performance level within the top quartile of colleges”.

   3.4. While the focus on successful outcomes is to be welcomed, it is important to note some
       caveats to the application of this approach.

   3.5. While Scottish further education colleges are broadly similar – and this is increasingly the
       case since the regionalisation of colleges into a smaller number of bigger institutions –
       there are nevertheless differences between them in terms of mode of attendance, how
       they recruit/select students, the programmes taught and the local context.

   3.5.1 Some colleges have a high proportion of employed block-release students, for
       example, who typically have very high retention and attainment rates; other
       colleges have a high proportion of full-time students who typically have a lower
       level of retention.

   3.5.2 There can also be differences in admissions policies: some, including the former
       Aberdeen College, operated an admissions policy that admitted applicants on
       a first-come-first-served basis all those who had the minimum entry requirement;
       other colleges may operate more of a selection process amongst the applicants
       to admit those with the highest qualifications.

   3.5.3 There are also, of course, differences in the local economic and social context. Some
       colleges operate in areas where there is a buoyant labour market in which
       young people may enter a full-time college course after leaving school, having
       also applied for work, but may take up a job during the course of the year and
       therefore leave college, and will be recorded as “unsuccessful” (even if in some
       cases they continue studying at College on a part-time basis to complete their
       qualification); some other colleges operate in contexts where this is unlikely to be
       the case because of the depressed labour market.
3.5.4 There are also differences in the type of curriculum offered for full-time students. Some colleges mainly use nationally-validated group awards as the basis for their course, success in which will involve attaining all of the units; others may use locally devised programmes which include some nationally-validated units alongside some locally-devised elements, and with the definition of success being such that a lesser number of units need to be attained.

3.6. Discussions held previously with the HMIe have led to a recognition that, because of these many variations, a national “standard” or “sector performance” is not a robust concept.

3.7. As will be seen from the exemplar tables included in the appendix to this paper, in future, reviews will examine on a subject area basis, whether performance within the college has improved or declined over the previous three years and how it compares with the “national sector performance” (i.e. average for all colleges) and “high benchmark” (i.e. average for colleges in the top quartile).

3.8. Ensuring high levels of retention and attainment are a key focus for the Senior Management Team of North East Scotland College. Good practice in course delivery is constantly being identified and shared. Managers and teams have a clear focus on maximising retention and attainment, and it is of course the intention that the resultant PI data will be positive.

3.9. Nevertheless, given the variation between colleges that was identified above, the comparison of North East Scotland College against “national sector performance” and the “top quartile” may not be in every case meaningful or fair. It is, however, the system within which we shall operate.

4. Recommendation

4.1. It is recommended that the Committee consider the information in this paper.

Rob Wallen
Principal
Agenda Item 7.2 Appendices 1&2 appear under separate cover
Student Performance Indicators

1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with information on high level, student-related withdrawal and student success data for AY2012-13.

2. Background

2.1 The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) gathers data relating to student retention and attainment from all colleges in Scotland and collates them. Caveats about the value of comparisons between Colleges using this data have been provided in an earlier paper for this meeting.

2.2 The SFC issued all colleges with draft student-related performance indicator (PI) data sets in December 2013.

2.3 Once accuracy had been confirmed colleges were requested to publish their respective student-related PI data sets by 16 January 2014.

2.4 The student-related PI data for North East Scotland College is now published and is available at:

http://www.abcol.ac.uk/docs/KeyPerformanceIndicatorsNESCOL.pdf

2.5 The SFC has still to provide definitive benchmarking data for all Scotland’s colleges. However, the following tables are based on what information has now been published by individual colleges on their respective websites.

3. SFC Student-related PI Data

3.1 Table 1 shows comparative student outcome data relating specifically to full-time (FT), further education (FE) enrolments.

3.2 The NESC figure for complete FT/FE student success is very similar to the Scottish Sector average i.e. 65.1% vs 65.4%.

3.3 The NESC student withdrawal figure is 2.1% higher than the Scottish Sector average.

3.4 Table 2 shows comparative student outcome data relating specifically to full-time (FT), higher education (HE) enrolments.

3.5 The NESC figure for complete FT/HE student success is also very similar to the Scottish Sector average i.e. 70.3% vs 70.4%.

3.6 The College’s student withdrawal figure is 1.5% above that of the Scottish Sector average.

3.7 In interpreting these data sets, the caveats about the validity of inter-college comparison, because of differences in college circumstances and practices, should be borne in mind.

3.8 Nevertheless, the College continues to undertake work to maximise student retention and attainment, and seeks to establish whether approaches in other colleges might be adopted in North East Scotland College.
4. **Recommendation**
   
   4.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the information provided in this paper.

Rob Wallen  
Principal

Neil Cowie  
Vice Principal Organisational Services
Table 1 - Outcomes for FT FE student enrolments on recognised qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>College</th>
<th>% Completed Successful</th>
<th>% Completed partial success</th>
<th>% Withdrawn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>Orkney</td>
<td>81.0%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>South Lanarkshire</td>
<td>74.0%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>Dundee &amp; Angus</td>
<td>73.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>Shetland</td>
<td>73.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>Borders</td>
<td>71.0%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>69.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>Forth Valley</td>
<td>69.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>North Glasgow</td>
<td>68.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>Cardonald</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Edinburgh</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
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<td>9.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>65.4%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
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<td>West Lothian</td>
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<td>West College Scotland</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>Langside</td>
<td>53.0%</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
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</table>
## Table 2 - Outcomes for FT HE student enrolments on recognised qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>College</th>
<th>% Completed Successful</th>
<th>% Completed partial success</th>
<th>% Withdrawn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>Dundee &amp; Angus</td>
<td>76.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>Cardonald</td>
<td>76.0%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>Coatbridge</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
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<td>17.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>North Glasgow</td>
<td>74.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>South Lanarkshire</td>
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<td>6.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>Langside</td>
<td>73.0%</td>
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<td>17.0%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Edinburgh</td>
<td>72.0%</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
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<td>2012-13</td>
<td>Anniesland</td>
<td>71.0%</td>
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<td>20.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>Borders</td>
<td>71.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
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<td>15.0%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>Dumfries and Galloway</td>
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<td>9.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>West Lothian</td>
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<tr>
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<td>15.0%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Student Support Funds

1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with information on amounts allocated for various support funds and comparative spend of AY2013-14 and AY2012-13.

2. Background

2.1 Funds allocated directly to the College.

The College receives a range of student support funds mainly from the Scottish Further and Higher Education Funding Council (SFC) but also from the Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS). These funds can be grouped as follows:

- bursary funds to support eligible Further Education (FE) students;
- discretionary funds to support both eligible FE and Higher Education (HE) students;
- childcare funds to support both eligible FE and HE students, now incorporating the Lone Parent Childcare Grant.

2.2 Funds controlled centrally by SFC (as opposed to being allocated directly) but administered by the College on their behalf:

- Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) programme.

3. Bursary Funds – general rules

3.1 Both the students and their course of study must be deemed eligible before they can be considered for an award.

3.2 The amount of any award shall be determined by the college and would normally cover the student’s maintenance costs, travelling expenses and study costs (within the limits set in national policy).

3.3 The Bursary Fund is cash limited, students who are eligible for support are not automatically entitled to this support.

3.4 Spend on overall study costs must not exceed 15 per cent of the college’s initial bursary allocation for AY 2013-14.

3.5 Bursary awards should only be made available automatically for attendance above 90 per cent of planned classroom hours.

3.6 Colleges may use their bursary funds to meet some or all of an eligible student’s travelling expenses where they are eligible for inclusion in a travel allowance by securing a transportation agreement with a local transport provider.

3.7 Colleges may spend Bursary Funds on childcare.

3.8 Where SFC have given permission, shortfalls in Bursary allocations can be offset by using FE / HE Childcare Funds or FE Discretionary Funds.
4. Discretionary and Childcare Funds – general rules
   4.1 The range of discretionary and childcare funds is as follows:

   A. Further Education Discretionary Fund (FEDF) (SFC) – for eligible non-advanced level
      students to be used primarily for emergency use to cover general living expenses
      but not for fees where there is a risk to the students continuation on their course.

   B. Further Education and Higher Education Childcare Fund (FE / HE CCF) (SFC) which
      will have two elements as follows:

      i) The Lone Parents Childcare Grant (LPCG) element which will be an entitlement
         payment of up to £1,215 per year to all eligible further and higher education
         students who are lone parents and who have formal registered childcare
         expenses while studying. The LPCG is not income assessed.

      ii) The Discretionary Childcare Funds which all students may apply to for
          financial help with formal registered childcare expenses. Payments from the
          Discretionary Childcare funds will be made at the discretion of the institutions
          and based on an assessment of need.

   C. Higher Education Discretionary Fund (HEDF) (SAAS) – for all eligible advanced level
      students to be used for general living expenses but not for fees (may be used for
      registered/formal childcare costs).

5. Childcare reserve
   5.1 The College’s Board of Management had set aside a reserve childcare fund in 2011-12
      only to allow the previous Voucher Scheme to be phased out yet make an allowance
      should childcare funds be fully committed. Given both Bursary funds and FEDF can be
      used to supplement any shortfall in FE / HE CCF then the reserve would only be committed
      when other funds were fully exhausted.

6. Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) Programme
   6.1 EMAs form a part of the Scottish Government’s agenda of encouraging access to, and
      participation in post-16 learning by young people from low-income families.

   6.2 They are intended to encourage learners to stay on in post-compulsory education i.e.
      after they are legally eligible to leave.

   6.3 Recipients will normally be aged between 16 and 19 years (inclusive).

   6.4 EMA funds do not form part of the grant-in-aid to SFC, but are claimed in arrears based
      on recorded activity in the sector.

   6.5 Eligibility for £30 per week will be for those in households of income of up to £20,351 and
      income of up to £22,403 for households with more than one dependent child.

   6.6 Payment is dependent on 100 per cent weekly attendance and progress towards agreed
      learning targets. Students are however allowed up to 10 authorised absences over the
      course of the year without this impacting on their 100 per cent target.
7. **Disbursement of Funds in Academic Year 2013-14**
   7.1 Information on the disbursement of funds up to 31 January 2014 is given in the tables in the appendix to this report. Comparative figures have been provided at a similar point for last year.

8. **Allocation of Funds in Academic Year 2014-15**
   8.1 Indicative information on the available allocation of funds for 2014-15 is given in tables 1 and 2 in the appendix to this report.

9. **Recommendation**
   9.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the information provided in this paper.

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Rob Wallen  
Principal

Neil Cowie  
Vice Principal Organisational Services