

CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE

NOTICE

There will be a meeting of the Curriculum & Quality Committee on Wednesday 9 March 2022 at 1000 hours through the use of Microsoft Teams.

AGENDA

Agenda Item		Paper
39-21	Apologies for Absence	
40-21	Declaration of any Potential Conflicts of Interest in relation to any Agenda Items	
41-21	Minutes of Previous Meeting – 02 December 2021	X
42-21	Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting	X
	Matters for Discussion	
43-21	Students' Association Activity Report (S Brydon)	x
44-21	Student Support Activity Report	x
	Performance Reporting	
45-21	AY2022-23 Applications Update (P Smith)	x
	Matters for Information	
46-21	Education Scotland Progress Visit Overview	x
	Reserved Items of Business	
47-21	Current Credit Position and overview of activity	x
48-21	Curriculum Update Presentation (R McGregor)	
49-21	Any Other Business	
50-21	Summation of Actions and Date of Next Meeting	



CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE

Draft Minutes of the meeting of the Curriculum & Quality Committee held on Thursday 2 December 2021 at 1000 hours via Microsoft Teams.

Agenda Item	
	<p>Present: David Anderson Sasha Brydon Neil Cowie Abdul Elghedafi Leona McDermid Andrew Russell Andy Rodden Gwen Watt</p> <p>In attendance: Ken Milroy, Regional Chair Robin McGregor, Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality Susan Grant, Director of Learning Alesia Du Plessis, Associate Vice Principal Duncan Abernethy, Director of Business Development Gill Griffin, Director of Quality Susan Lawrance, Secretary to the Board Karen Fraser, Minute Secretary Lorraine Garden, Minute Secretary</p>
21-21	<p>Apologies: Apologies were received from N McLennan, H Evans and A Simpson.</p>
22-21	<p>Declaration of any Potential Conflicts of Interest in relation to any Agenda Items L McDermid declared an issue by virtue of her position with Aberdeen Foyer. A Rodden declared an interest in relation to Agenda item 31.</p>
23-21	<p>Minutes of Previous Meeting – 9 June 2021 The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.</p>
24-21	<p>Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting The Committee noted the Matters Arising Report. R McGregor highlighted the recently circulated SFC Report (Student Satisfaction).</p>
	<p>Matters for Decision</p>
25-21	<p>Committee Terms of Reference Members reviewed the Committee's Terms of Reference and the amendment to reflect the new Associate Vice Principal roles. The Committee confirmed the specific duties continue to accurately reflect the main areas of the Committee's focus and re-adopted the terms as presented.</p>

26-21	<p>Programme of Business Members considered the Programme of Business for AY2021-22. The Committee approved the Programme as presented, noting that it provides an overview of intention to bring papers, but remains fluid with additional items added if/as required.</p>
	<p><i>E Fulton joined the meeting</i> <i>D Blackhall joined the meeting</i></p>
27-21	<p>SA Partnership Agreement E Fulton summarised the paper and highlighted to Members the Agreement's review and update including a list of engagement opportunities for students as well as the detailed plan for the Priority Projects for AY2021/22.</p> <p>A short discussion took place regarding the ambitious timeframe, noting the Project Leads will give regular updates on the Priority Projects to the Student Engagement Action Group, and updates will be included in the Students' Association activity report. The Board's cautious comments with regard to deadlines and flexibility were recorded.</p> <p>Action: Committee to be advised of any deadline slippage at the first opportunity.</p> <p>The Board recorded their congratulations to the Students' Association on their increased student engagement, especially during the pandemic.</p> <p>The Committee approved, and support, the Agreement, noting the Marketing and Communications Team will help with the design of the document before circulation.</p>
28-21	<p>NESCol Students' Association Budget Proposal AY2022-23 The Committee considered the NESCol Students' Association Budget Proposal for AY2022/23.</p> <p>E Fulton gave a summary of the SA current financial position.</p> <p>Members noted the Budget Proposal shows a significant underspend as the Students' Association continue to operate out with a "normal" year, with no big scale events as yet, and Officer training being offered online. Other savings were summarised by E Fulton. Details regarding the use of the reserve funds and ring-fenced Student Wellbeing staffing costs (including SFC funding) were also outlined to Committee members. Members noted the opportunities afforded students with regard to potential work placement within the SA.</p> <p>The Committee approved the Students' Association budget as presented.</p>
	<p><i>E Fulton left the meeting</i> <i>Robert Laird joined the meeting</i></p>
	<p>Performance Reporting</p>
29-21	<p>Reserved Item of Business Overview of activity and credit position.</p>

	<p><i>R Laird left the meeting.</i></p>
<p>30-21</p>	<p>BCD Update D Abernethy gave a summary of the range of Business and Community Development deliver, and the priority projects in the current year, including “spanned” activity. Members noted the decreased activity and income due to Covid restrictions and mitigations, but D Abernethy acknowledged that leisure courses are beginning to draw interest. The important relationship between the</p>

	<p>College and Aberdeen Foyer was highlighted with approximately 300 vulnerable young adults enrolled in a typical year.</p> <p>D Abernethy highlighted the positively expressed by sponsored companies regarding the Merchant Navy Cadet Programme and the 100% success rate of the Class 1 and Class 2 Fishing Certificate of Competency Course achieved through remote delivery.</p> <p>A summary of the Modern Apprenticeships; Community Planning Partnership ESOL Activity and Sponsored Initiatives was given by D Abernethy, noting the additional passport programme for this year which is sponsored by Shell, in addition to the Engineering Scheme and Girls in Energy; and S2 Skills competition already supported by Shell.</p> <p>D Abernethy encouraged all Committee Members to promote through their networks, the Flexible Workforce Development fund, which can be accessed by most businesses and covers a variety of courses.</p>
	Matters for Discussion
31-21	<p>National Energy Skills Accelerator and Energy Transition Zone Update: R McGregor summarised the paper presented, which outlines the agreements to shape and steer the skills pipeline. It was acknowledged that the Identity of NESA continues to evolve and that sharing of knowledge and experience through Committee Member networks would be beneficial.</p>
32-21	<p>Students' Association Activity Report S Brydon summarised the Report and Members noted the increased engagement allowed by "in person" meetings. Members also noted the a revised Constitution, including updated Job Titles, and a potential review of the class rep system will be presented to the June Curriculum and Quality Committee meeting. S Brydon highlighted the benefit of having Executive Officers in post to assist on College working groups.</p> <p>The huge amount of both ongoing and planned activity was acknowledged. S Brydon was reminded to ensure that timelines are manageable and achievable. S Brydon acknowledged the Student Engagement and Wellbeing officer position has greatly helped to ensure realistic activity targets are met.</p>
	Matters for Information
33-21	<p>New Self-Evaluation System Development update G Griffin gave a summary of the paper presented to Members and highlighted the College's intention to build on this "year on year" with significant in-roads made already with institutional readiness for AY2022/23. It was noted a demonstration will be made available for a future Curriculum and Quality Committee meeting when available.</p>
34-21	<p>Complaints Annual Summary Report G Griffin summarised the Report and highlighted the 5 Covid complaints for this AY outlined within the Summary Report.</p> <p>In response to a question from D Anderson, G Griffin advised that 56% of support staff and 62% of curriculum staff, along with all new staff (as part of their College induction) have completed the improvements to feedback handling training.</p>

35-21	<p>Student Support Activity Report G Watt summarised the Activity report and highlighted to Members that both City and Altens Campuses now have permanent onsite Student Support staff.</p> <p>The Student Wellbeing Strategy, launched in November via a successful webinar and the recent new Podcast to tie in with the Respect themes were also highlighted by G Watt. Members noted mental health and wellbeing referrals remain high.</p>
36-21	<p>Any Other Business</p>
	<p>N Cowie drew Members attention to the recently circulated SFC case study document sent to the College and University Sector and highlighted that of the 26 case studies published 3 of them were Nescol's. Neil commended Nescol on these that re-iterates the innovative and great work undertaken by the College.</p>
37-21	<p>Summation of the Actions and Date of Next Meeting The Secretary gave a summation of the agreed actions. The next meeting of the Curriculum & Quality Committee is scheduled to take place on 23 February 2021.</p>
	<p>Reserved Items of Business – Matter for Information</p>
38-21	<p>Curriculum Management Restructure Update/Presentation</p>

Agenda Item	Actions from Curriculum & Quality Committee XX/XX/2X	Responsibility	Deadline
27-21	SA Priority Projects: Slippage on any key actions to be highlighted to Committee at the first opportunity.	S Brydon/E Fulton	
29-21	Credits Position:	R McGregor/R Laird	

Signed:.....

Date:



Agenda Item -21

CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE

An update on matters arising from the meeting of the Curriculum & Quality Committee held on Wednesday 2 December 2021

Agenda Item	
27-21	Action: SA Priority Projects: Slippage on any key actions to be highlighted to Committee at the first opportunity.
	Status: Complete – S Brydon confirmed all priority projects remain on track.
29-21	Action: Credits Position:
	Status: Complete

CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE	
Meeting of 09/03/22	
Title: Students' Association Activity Report	
Author: Sasha Brydon, Regional President of the Students' Association	Contributor(s): Eilidh Fulton, Student Engagement Manager; Meredith Brown, Student Engagement and Wellbeing Coordinator
Type of Agenda Item: For Decision <input type="checkbox"/> For Discussion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> Reserved Item of Business <input type="checkbox"/>	
Purpose: To enable the Committee to be updated on the work of the Students' Association.	
Reporting Period: 18.11.21 - 28.02.22	
Introduction: <p>Over this reporting period the Students' Association has engaged in a great deal of student-facing activity, as well as partnership working and relationship building with the College on behalf of students.</p> <p>The activity is detailed below, such as an outline of our events, social media statistics, an update on our upcoming elections, and our Enhancement Plan. Additionally there is an update on the Committees we have attended.</p>	
Students' Association Events <p>On the 22nd and 23rd of November the Students' Association ran sustainable sanitary product stalls on all campuses. This was with the help of the Student Advice and Support Team.</p> <p>Another Care Experienced focus group was ran by the Students Association and the Student Advice and Support Team on the 22nd of November.</p> <p>On the 29th of December we launched a poll to decide the new Students' Association Mascot.</p>	

On the 30th of November the Students' Association ran the Virtual Café session which discussed films.

Focus groups for staff and students were run continuously started the week of the 6th of December to the 17th of December. These were to gather feedback on a number of issues the Students' Association were looking at including a class rep review.

During the week of the 13th, the college ran the event Sparkle. This event involved the collaborative efforts of a number of departments including the Students' Association. The event involved stalls, sing-a-longs and some speaker events.

Come second term, the Students' Association ran a refresher of the Intro Talks which took place across all the campuses for the entirety of January.

Our 3 admin Interns joined in January.

On the 10th of January the Students' Association launched another poll to decide the name of our Mascot.

We have been running our election campaign from mid to late January until the end of March. This was a team effort to get students interested in campaigning to be the new sabbatical officers within the Students' Association. This involved numerous social media posts, video making and info and meet the team sessions.

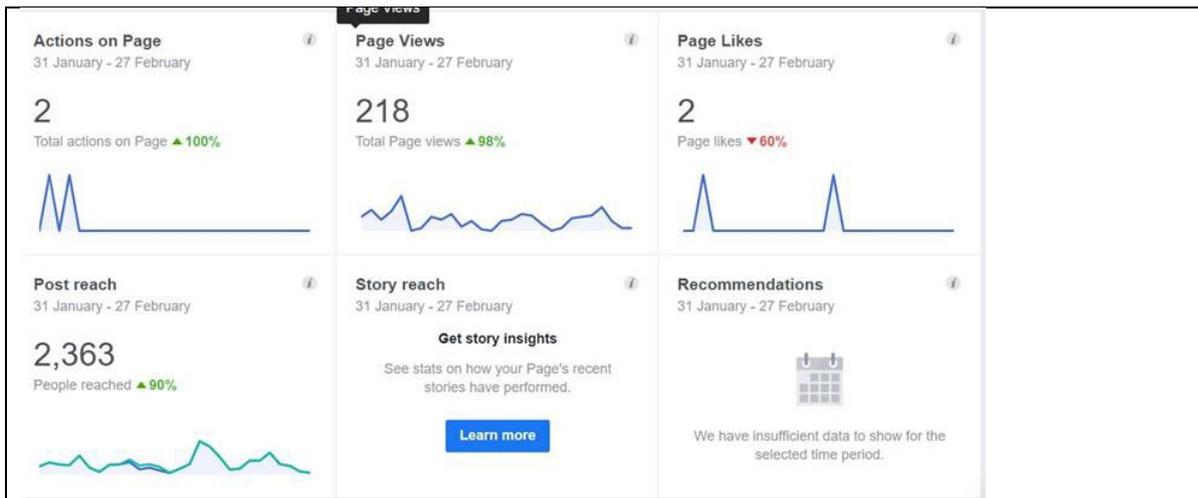
On the 4th of February, we had our Mascot Showdown where we decided the name of our new mascot as the poll ended up in a draw. This was a teams event that was posted on our social medias.

On the 17th of February, we had an LGBTQ+ talk from Walking Tours Scotland that discussed the history of LGBTQ+ in Scotland.

The week of the 21st saw the start of the Health and Wellbeing Fair. The fair included stalls across campus that challenged students to games, a sponsored walk for Purple Friday at City, Altens and Fraserburgh campus. Coffee mornings for students to have a catch up with their officers and several online talks including from Four Pillars and Annie Wallace from Hollyoaks.

Social Media Statistics

Our social media pages have continued to grow over the past few months with a bigger focus placed on expanding our reach across platforms outside of Facebook. Our new Admin Interns have helped us further the development of our Instagram page as well as set up a new LinkedIn page to promote our work and raise awareness with staff and current or prospective students. Please find below snapshots of social media insights.



Facebook Jan/Feb 22

28 day summary with change over previous period



Twitter Feb 22

Update on Elections

This year we have driven up nominations for our Sabbatical Officer elections by offering 1:1 'quick chats' with students, 'Ask the Officer' sessions where prospective candidates could chat to current officers about the roles, numerous election information sessions, and have put out heaps of content surrounded the roles and the election process online in places like the NESCol website, MyNESCol, and social media. We have also targeting students who are already involved with us through clubs and societies or rep positions. This has resulted in us receiving 6 nominations. With one candidate withdrawing due to personal reasons, we are now left with 2 candidates for the Regional President position, 2 candidates for the Depute City/Altens position, and 1 for our Depute Fraserburgh position.

To encourage voting next week we will have stalls running throughout the week at all campuses and voting stations in the libraries. Candidates have been given training on campaigning and have been given election rules.

Voting takes place March 8th 9AM- March 10th 5PM

Meet the Candidates



Chinedu Charles Okenwa
Regional President



Nicole Matthews
Regional President



Carrie Beaton
Depute City/Altens



Jessica Walls
Depute City/Altens



Kevin Gavryluk
Depute Fraserburgh

Snapshot of key student engagement activities (peer led reviews, talks, surveys)

Phase 1 of the Peer Led Review process is underway, due to be completed in the next couple of weeks. Around half of the sessions have taken place already, with a healthy mixture of positive/negative feedback.

The Students' Association have made use of Microsoft Bookings to streamlining the booking process for class talks. Between 10th January and the end of February the Students' Association conducted 141 talks to classes. These have been a mixture of Teams/Collaborate, with some in person. These talks have proved extremely useful in ensuring we are able to reach students from all areas of the College.

The Students' Association conducted a Learning Life at College survey with students to gather student feedback on their learning and teaching. This survey gathered over 200 responses, with a report of the feedback circulated to the Curriculum, Quality and Student Support Committee.

Enhancement Plan Updates

Please see separate document titled 'Enhancement Plan Update Feb 22 Board'.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Committee note the information provided.



NESCol Students' Association Enhancement Plan 2021- 2022

1. Enhancement Plan 21-22

Broad objectives

- 1. Effective communication – social media and digital platforms**
- 2. Developing an effective SA for a blended learning landscape**
- 3. Developing effective Partnerships internal and external**
- 4. Effective Planning; organisation and feedback**
- 5. Engaging students and capacity building**
- 6. Delivery of the Student Mental Health Agreement**
- 7. Measuring Impact**

Broad Objective	Aims	Tasks
1. Effective Communication	Improve Social Media	<p>Post relevant and regular content on Twitter, facebook and Instagram</p> <p>Establish robust presence online</p> <p>Construct a stable 'voice' for our social media channels</p> <p>Ensure Presidents and Executive Officers have channels to shape content going out on Social Media</p> <p>Working with internal partners in Marketing and other departments I.e. Student Advice Centre and Library.</p>
	Enhance Communication Structure for Reps	<p>Improve communication with reps through Teams channel</p>
	Improve MyNESCol presence	<p>Ensure that the MyNESCol space is updated regularly and the content is current</p> <p>Working closely with Marketing department to improve quality of graphics posted online</p> <p>Ensure that the SA work collaboratively on content, including the Presidents, Executive Officers and Student Engagement and Wellbeing Coordinator</p>
	Bi-weekly Bulletin	<p>Publish a bi-weekly Bulletin to all students with regular updates of SA activity, events, engagement opportunities, etc.</p>

Students Association Enhancement Plan 2021

		Content for the bulletin will be decided among the Presidents, Executive Officers, and SA staff
	Introductory Talks	Update existing Intro Talks: Update PowerPoint and move Talks to Collaborate or in-person sessions Record classes where intro talks have been delivered Record session that can be made available to students during class

Broad Objective	Aims	Tasks
2. Developing an effective SA for a blended learning landscape	Offer blended approach to supporting students	Ensure in all our communications that students know how to contact us and that we can offer a virtual or in-person meeting
	Online Tools to Support Class Rep elections, Communication and Training	SPARQS will provide resources in terms of Class rep training and Rep communication advice for a blended learning landscape Review class rep information already produced to assess quality of class rep information Conduct Class Rep review
	Virtual & In-person Events	Continue with Calendar Events; roll out events both virtually and in-person with advice from Digital Futures team re effective platforms

		Ensure Sabb officers are trained in use of platforms and tools
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Broad Objective	Aims	Tasks
3. Developing effective Partnerships	Attend relevant training	NUS Lead and Change The Gathering SPARQS That's Quality SPARQS Board Training – as relevant
	Internal partnerships	Review and amend the Student Partnership Agreement Include new opportunities for partnership working with staff and students Increase staff and student knowledge of the SPA Progress with 'Priority Projects' outlined in the SPA -Class Rep Review -Student Engagement Framework Review -Healthy Body Healthy Mind -Student Mental Health Agreement Increased involved with RESPECT campaign throughout the academic year
	Attend relevant Internal Committees and Meetings	Increase engagement of staff and students with SEAG throughout the year Identify other meetings of most relevance – consider ad Hoc attendance as necessary; request agendas in advance to help identify these; attend part of meeting end/beginning;

Students Association Enhancement Plan 2021

		Consider alternative representation i.e. Officers; Volunteers
	Attend relevant external partner forums	Monthly NUS meetings. Sparqs - NEON meetings SSS Meetings Exploring partnerships with local Youth Councils. Develop partnerships working with local Student Unions and Associations.
	Campaigns with external partners	Identify campaigns as early as possible; focus on those of national and local relevance for our students; Ensure that we take on only what we have the capacity to deliver Revisit "No Smoking" Campaign. Consider picking up local student transport campaign

Broad Objective	Aims	Tasks
4. Effective Planning organisation and feedback	Clear roles and remits for Sabbs	Discussion on remits at starting point. Set remit areas for each officer and set up meetings with the college staff member that leads on that area Outline Sabb objectives for the year, including individual and team objectives
	Establish Calendars	Have these available from outset; ensure effective advertising. Events Calendar Operational Calendar to include meetings to meet Constitutional requirements

Students Association Enhancement Plan 2021

		Rep Meeting Calendar
	Effective Administration	Minute taking of all meetings; ensure minutes are timely and fully circulated- be aware that Minute taking will be a staff responsibility (Student Engagement and Wellbeing Coordinator/SA Admin Intern Agendas are circulated timely before a meeting
	Events	Target these to campus demographics Being mindful of our broad aims –what do students want to see on campus
	Strategic Planning	Use year 21/22 as a transformative year to develop a new strategic plan for the SA that will run 2022-2025.

Broad Objective	Aims	Tasks
5. Engaging students and capacity building	Establish Clubs and Societies	Support an representation groups for liberation groups on campus -LGBT+ Group -Black Minority Ethnic Group -Disabled Group -Womens Group Establish online and in-person clubs and societies to create a sense of community, starting with promotion during Fresher’s Events Ensure strong online presence and promotion of all Clubs and Societies Promote sports clubs in conjunction with Student Sport Scotland and the Sports Department.

Students Association Enhancement Plan 2021

	Executive Officers	Ensure role awareness; effective training; clarity in responsibilities and demands on officers' time from outset Provide Executive Officers with engagement opportunities throughout the year, including involvement in college committees
	Effective Class Rep structure	Support elections of Reps; develop/review materials to support the process Deliver Class Rep Training for new landscape and to enable all Reps to participate Build capacity in Reps and promote use of representative structure Support staff in electing and engaging with the class reps

Broad Objective	Aims	Tasks
6. Delivery of Student Mental Health Agreement	Delivering services to support Student Mental Health	Continue to participate in with Healthy Body, Healthy Mind Initiative Work closely with Student Access and Inclusion Manage in relation to Think Positive and the Student Health Agreement as well as Student Mental Health Matters and the College Respect campaign. Support promotion of resources; support and reporting in relation to GBV Contributing to awareness raising in terms of college's counselling provision To continue to monitor mental health provision in

Students Association Enhancement Plan 2021

		College and identify gaps in provisions and bring these to the relevant sources.
	Work with relevant external agencies in relation to Student Mental Health	Attend workshops in relation to Think Positive and HBHM Support campaigns related to Student Mental Health Be aware of and share with College information from external partner relating to developments and initiatives in relation to Student Mental Health
	Maintain, Review and Update the Student Mental	SEM and Student Access and Inclusion Manger meet regularly to ensure the Student Mental Health Agreement remains relevant

	Health Agreement and support completion of the annual review record	
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Broad Objective	Aims	Tasks
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Students Association Enhancement Plan 2021

7. Measuring Impact	Social Media Statistics	Capture social media statistics each month
	Gathering student opinion	Gather opinion at key decisions made (non- confidential) Gather at key points on the Academic calendar in relation to the blended learning scenario.
	Partnered Activity	Student Engagement Manager meet regularly with the Quality Manager to discuss actions from surveys and focus groups; share feedback with Sabbatical officers Feedback to Quality Team issues raised by student body through surveys etc

Events and Initiatives

Agenda Item 44-21



Hack Your Studies Showcase is a series of sessions delivered twice a year, at the start of block 1 and again at the start of block 2. At the most recent event, 113 students attended the live sessions/drop-ins and there has been 93 views of the Study Skills videos in February.

Employability and Enterprise Activities

The team are running their annual employability and enterprise activities across all campuses. Employability and Enterprise Week took place 21st to 25th February 2022 and will be followed up by Virtual Careers Week the same dates in March 2022.

EMPLOYABILITY & ENTERPRISE WEEK

Monday 21st Feb to Friday 25th Feb 2022

	Mon 21 st Feb	Tues 22 nd Feb	Wed 23 rd Feb	Thurs 24 th Feb	Fri 26 th Feb
09:30 – 10:30	Young Enterprise Scotland - Social Innovators Challenge				
11:00 – 12:00	Tops Tips to Build Your CV and Write a Killer Cover Letter	Job Search Like a Boss	Abz Works Information Session	Start Up Awareness with Elevator	Fraserburgh Enterprise Hub
12:15 – 13:15	Drop In		Drop In		
14:00 – 15:00		How to Ace Your Job Interview		Being an Entrepreneur with Elevator	
15:00 – 16:00	Identify Your Strengths	Skills Development Scotland	Managing Stress with a Wellbeing Adviser		

Care Day 22

As well as a series of social media posts, stalls were held at all three main campuses to promote the support available to Care Experienced students and raise awareness of care experience. There was very good engagement with 97 students participating in activities and discussion at the stalls as well as 82 views of the related video content.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

ACIS Student Counselling Service (report from January 2022)

Counselling provision is being offered in a blended model this academic session, with the team on campus at least once a week at all three main campuses. Online appointments are still the preferred format in most cases, however face to face appointments are picking up with 12 offered in January 2022. ACIS Student continue to flex service delivery according to demand. Currently there are 39 students on the waiting list, although 10 of these are students who have already attended at least 8 sessions and wish to be considered for further sessions. The remaining 29 had their initial appointment since returning in January 2022.

Month	Weeks in month	Referrals made	Capacity	Booked	% booked	% attended
October 21	2.2 weeks	14	88	67	76%	73%
November 21	4.4 weeks	30	176	184	104.5%	74%
December 21	2.6 weeks	28	104	116	111.5%	71%
January 22	3.6 Weeks	21	144	140	97%	70%

For a note of comparison, in January 2021 there were 7 referrals made compared to 21 in January 2022. This demonstrates the increasing demand.

Report+Support (<https://reportplus.nescol.ac.uk/>)

This academic session to date there have been 91 reports and only 14% were submitted anonymously. It has been very positive to see the increase in named reports which result in direct action, but there is still work to do in directing student support referrals appropriately. The highest incident type for reports is Mental Health and

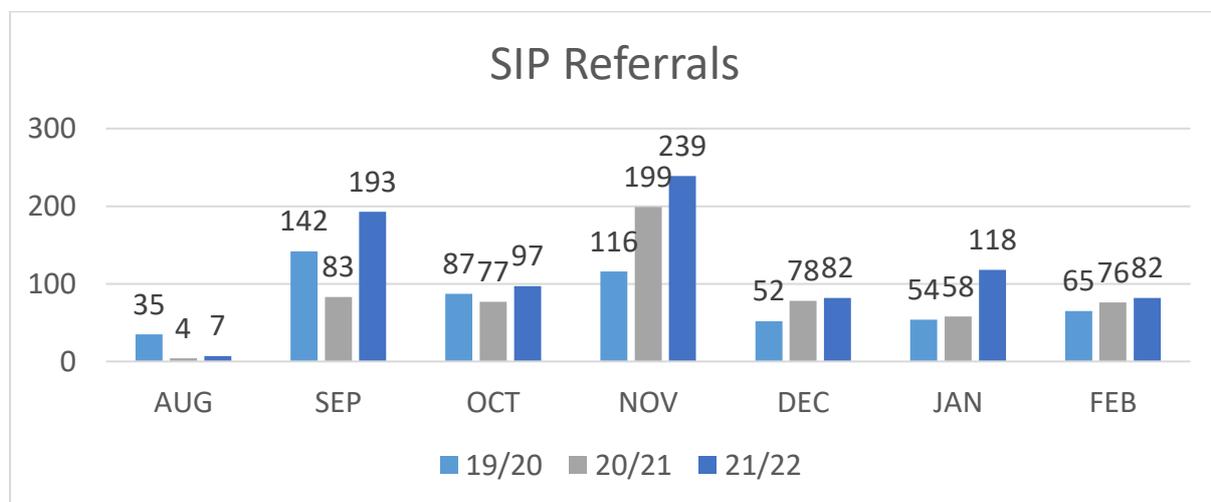
Student Support – Activity Report

Wellbeing, with 44% of reports falling into this category. We continue to utilise the support and campaign pages of Report+Support to raise awareness and promote support available, taking account of current issues highlighted in the media.

Service Provision

Student Support Referrals

In AY2021-22 to date (as of February 2022) we have seen a 42% increase in the number of support referrals, 818 compared to 575 the previous session.



There is continued success in improving engagement at Altens Campus with 42 referrals to date, compared to 22 referrals in total last session.

The majority of student support referrals are wellbeing referrals – most of these are being picked up by our Student Wellbeing Advisers but we are working closely with the Learning and Development Manager to look at training requirements for the Student Support Tutors to ensure we can support this need going forward.



CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE	
Meeting of 9 March 2022	
Title: Update on applications for full-time courses (AY2022-23)	
Author: Paul Smith, Director of Marketing and Communications	Contributor(s):
Type of Agenda Item: For Decision <input type="checkbox"/> For Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> For Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reserved Item of Business <input type="checkbox"/>	
Purpose: To provide the Committee with an update on applications for AY2022-23 and emerging trends.	
Linked to Strategic Theme: 1. Being Agile and Responsive	
Linked to Strategic Risk(s): 4.9 and 5.3	
Executive Summary: Applications for full-time courses for AY2022-23 opened on 1 December 2021. Application trends are monitored throughout the recruitment cycle and reported to Leadership Team on a weekly basis. Data is used to inform Leadership Team actions and to support a tailored approach to marketing and communication. At 01 March 2022, the total number of applications received was 5040. This is 68 applications fewer than at the same point in 2021, representing a 1.33% deficit. Members will be provided with the latest application figures at the meeting of 9 March 2022. Appendix 1 provides further detail on application numbers, trends, external factors, and marketing and communication activity being undertaken.	
Recommendation: It is recommended that the Committee notes the current application trends and the actions being taken in response.	
Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval (if applicable): N/A	

Equality Impact Assessment:

Positive Impact

Negative Impact

No Impact

Evidence:

Update on applications for full-time courses (AY2022-23)

Background:

Applications for full-time courses for the 2022/23 session opened on 1 December 2021.

The winter virtual open day and associated promotion was planned to coincide with applications going live.

The launch date, 13 days later than the previous session, was set in advance to enable additional time for curriculum planning and preparation. The decision to move the launch date did not have a detrimental impact, with figures to the end of January up on the previous session. This provides confidence in the approach and a launch date of 1 December is anticipated for future years.

The College continues to monitor application windows in the sector, which vary by institution. This is contrast to the fixed UCAS schedule for university applications.

Total applications to date:

For marketing purposes, a target of generating a minimum of 12,000 applications has been set. Over a 39 week application cycle (to the end of August 2022), this represents a notional weekly target of 308 applications and daily target of 44 applications. Although these targets do not take into account traditional fluctuations in the cycle, they serve as a useful indicator as part of ongoing monitoring. Weekly and daily targets have been exceeded in 12 of the 13 weeks up to 1 March. The exception was the week of the school half-term break (w/c 17/02/22).

At 1 March 2022 the total number of full-time applications received was 5040. This represents a deficit of 68 applications (-1.33%) in the same period last year.

Month	AY 2022/23	AY 2021/22
November	54*	362
December	1144	1126
January	2437	2129
February	1404	1434
Total	5040	5108**

* Applications opened on 1 December 2021. Applications noted for November were received during testing of the online application system in the days prior to the official launch.

** Includes 57 applications not captured in monthly data.

Application trends and external factors

Interest in full-time courses at NESCol for AY2022-23 has been consistent with the previous session, when numbers were down on pre-pandemic levels and subsequently credit targets were not met.

This is reflective of the external factors which continue to impinge on recruitment activity. These include: Restrictions on physical events which, to date, have prevented the traditional programme of in-school sessions and in-person College open events; Public confidence in the regional employment market and specific sectors affected by ongoing restrictions (E.g. hospitality, travel and tourism); Public uncertainty about the delivery model for AY2022-23, following a mix of blended and fully remote delivery during the current session; Increased in-region and national competition from universities for school leavers.

Interest in FE courses (up by 151 applications / 5.9%) has been strong but there is a contrast in relation to HE applications (down by 219 / 8.57%).

Applications for courses at Fraserburgh (up by 153 / 31.16%) and Altens (up by 43 / 9.53%) have been encouraging. Interest in courses at City (down by 261 / 6.27%) is below the level of the previous session.

Ongoing promotion:

To meet the aim of increasing applications year on year, a number of key actions are being undertaken. These include:

- March Open Week: From 14-17 a range of online events will be hosted and tailored access to campus for smaller groups will be offered. On 19 March, the first in-person open days will be hosted since March 2020. These will run at Altens, City and Fraserburgh campuses as well as at the Scottish Maritime Academy from 10am to 2pm.
- March promotion: The open events are being heavily promoted through social media, digital, press, radio and outdoor advertising. The 'apply now' message is prominent across all channels.
- School activity: A newly established school events group, bringing expertise and knowledge from across the College together, has been designed to increase capacity to attend in-school events. Although opportunities have been limited due to restrictions within schools, there are signs of demand beginning to grow.

- Targeted social media advertising: As application data continues to be monitored, a targeted approach to paid-for social media activity will once again be utilised. This enables NESCol to market by postcode in areas where data indicates additional focus is required.
- PR: Increased PR activity will be undertaken throughout spring and summer 2022 to help build confidence and share positive messages about the plans for the 2022/23 session. A key message will be the anticipated return to a normal college experience and the increased access to the College's industry standard facilities.
- Conversion activity: In addition to increasing application numbers, resource has been dedicated to improving conversion rates. The introduction of structured 'keep warm' activity tailored for NESCol applicants in advance of the 2021/22 session has been continued for current applicants.



CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE	
Meeting of 9 March 2022	
Title: Education Scotland Progress Visit	
Author: Director of Quality, Gill Griffin	Contributor(s): Education Scotland
Type of Agenda Item:	
For Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
For Discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>
For Information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reserved Item of Business	<input type="checkbox"/>
Purpose:	
To provide the Committee with an overview of Education Scotland's approaches to quality assurance and external engagement 2020-21 and details of the College's Progress Visit scheduled for March 2022.	
Linked to Strategic Theme:	
4. Delivering Excellence and Innovation	
Linked to Strategic Risk(s):	
<i>Insert relevant risk reference number</i>	
Executive Summary:	
<p>NESCol received a briefing note from Education Scotland September 2021 outlining their planned approach to quality assurance and external engagement for the 2021-22 academic year. (briefing note provided)</p> <p>In 2018 all colleges produced an Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan (EREP) which were endorsed by Education Scotland and the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). Education Scotland concluded a previous Progress Visit (PV) with North East Scotland College in December 2019 where the purpose of the PV was for the College to demonstrate how well we were delivering on the targets and milestones identified in our Enhancement Plan (EP). Based on the evidence reviewed the college's outcome was that we had made satisfactory progress.</p> <p>Education Scotland have resumed external engagement, as outlined in the briefing note, and have scheduled the 2021-22 Progress Visit with NESCol for March, covering a 3 day period of activity, 22nd to 24th. The purpose of the PV is to explore the impact of the pandemic on the college and to review how we are addressing the impact of COVID-19 and supporting recovery.</p>	

A series of meetings will be arranged over the first 2 days of the visit and Education Scotland will provide a verbal report of their findings to the college on the last day.

The professional discussions with staff and students will cover the 5 themes outlined below, all have been agreed in advance with Education Scotland:

Curriculum

- Learning & teaching and assessment practices impacted by COVID-19. Review the changes implemented, delivery models, impact of assessment, online and blended approaches, overall impact and successes and challenges etc.

Outcomes for Learners

- Review outcomes for learners, address the significant challenges for sector over last few years – review underlying trends – explore issues and strategies to improve outcomes.

Learner Engagement

- Review the learner engagement across all modes of delivery – key focus on young learners and courses with a high practical element.

Student Support

- Review whole-college approach to supporting students - focus on how this has been managed during COVID-19.

Evaluation and Reflection

- Approaches to self-evaluation – our process of evaluation, reflection, modification of approaches and decisions leading to quality improvement and effective planning.

Although the planning is still in progress it is anticipated there will be approximately 30 meetings held over the period of activity. The Education Scotland team will comprise of:

- Lead Inspector
- College Inspector
- 3 Associate Assessors
- Student Team Member

As outlined in the briefing note a written report will be produced and shared with the college and SFC. The report will not be published. The college will have the opportunity to comment if they wish, within five working days. Approximately five weeks after the PV is completed, a final written report will be provided to the college and the Lead HM Inspector will make arrangements to share the report with the college Board.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Committee note the information provided.

Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval (if applicable):

N/A

Equality Impact Assessment:

Positive Impact

Negative Impact

No Impact

Evidence:

Briefing note for colleges: approaches to quality assurance and external engagement 2021-22

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Background

In March 2020, Education Scotland took a number of steps to relieve pressure on the education system, including pausing scrutiny activities and extending this for the duration of academic year (AY) 2020-21. Since then, link HM Inspectors have worked closely with individual colleges to understand their approaches to the provision of remote and blended learning, and to identify and promote best practice approaches. This work has informed the approach to assurance and improvement for the coming academic year, and recognises that AY 2021-22 is a continuation of interim recovery arrangements.

What is Education Scotland's approach to quality assurance and support for recovery during AY 2021-22?

During AY 2021-22 HM Inspectors of Education will undertake three main aspects of quality assurance and enhancement in colleges:

1. Ongoing Engagement

HM Inspectors have worked throughout the pandemic to maintain regular dialogue with all colleges. This approach will continue to be an important aspect of our engagement during AY 2021-22. Link HM Inspectors will carry out both in-person and virtual visits. They will work with colleges to take account of risk assessment and COVID-19 guidance to support ongoing capacity-building and evaluation of progress toward recovery.

2. Thematic Reviews

In order to support improvement in aspects of college sector performance, HM Inspectors will undertake a programme of thematic reviews. Areas for thematic review will be agreed with SFC, with at least one thematic review being undertaken jointly with QAA Scotland. HM Inspectors will seek to identify and share examples of highly effective practice, what is working well, what needs to improve, and the impact on learner outcomes. HM Inspectors will plan to include in-person visits as part of thematic reviews when this is safe and appropriate, and will work with colleges to take account of risk assessment and COVID-19 guidance when planning activities. If necessary and appropriate, a number of engagements may be undertaken virtually. Each thematic review will result in the publication of a national report.

3. Progress Visits

Prior to March 2020, 18 of the planned 27 college Progress Visits (PV) were concluded. As a result of college closures and the pausing of scrutiny activity, nine colleges did not undergo their scheduled PV. Previously, PV methodology was focused on college-devised enhancement plans, all of which were developed prior to the onset of COVID-19. During 2021/22, HM Inspectors will recommence PVs to explore the impact of the pandemic on the college and how colleges are addressing the impact of COVID-19 and support recovery. To minimise the reporting burden, and in line with SFC Outcome Agreement

guidance, evaluation of progress will be informed by college internal approaches to self-evaluation and improvement planning.

Each visit will result in feedback regarding the effectiveness of college's self-evaluation reporting, identification of what is working well and what requires improvement. Visits will consider the experience of learners and how well they are attaining. A schedule of PVs will be developed prioritising visits to colleges based on (a) joint intelligence sharing with SFC and other relevant agencies, (b) college performance data, and (c) timing and outcomes of previous visits. It is envisaged that the PV schedule will commence in **November 2021**, and all PVs will be concluded by **end May 2022**.

3.1 What is the Progress Visit methodology for AY 2021-22?

In preparing for the PVs, we will be mindful of the changing situation re COVID-19 and the plans set out below may change depending on public health advice and local circumstances driven by the pandemic. College risk assessments will form an important part of pre-visit planning.

PVs will be managed by a Lead HM Inspector (LI) who will be accompanied by a second HMI, normally the college Link HM Inspector. Associate Assessors (AAs) and Student Team Members (STMs) will be deployed to support PVs. Team size will be planned to take into account of the size and scale of each college and of COVID mitigations and guidance.

PV planning will be intelligence-led. Pre-visit planning discussions will be held with SFC to establish aspects for exploration in particular colleges. A range of evidence sources will be considered including:

- Performance Indicators (PIs)
- College self-evaluation and improvement plans
- SFC intelligence re: performance
- Learner feedback
- Stakeholder feedback re: performance e.g. senior phase, SCP provision

This will inform the scale and scope for each visit, tailored to the specific circumstances of individual colleges.

Colleges will identify a senior manager to act as college nominee and liaise with the Lead HM Inspector. A visit schedule will be agreed in advance which takes account of college risk assessment and COVID-19 mitigations and guidance. The schedule will include meetings held with college senior leaders, managers, staff, learners and stakeholders. It is expected that colleges will evidence how stakeholders have been engaged in college evaluation for improvement processes. HM Inspectors will plan to include in-person engagement, and will work with colleges to take account of risk assessment and COVID-19 guidance when planning PVs. If necessary and appropriate, a number of meetings may be conducted virtually. Colleges will be required to provide a short written context statement outlining their approach to quality improvement and provide copies of self-evaluation and improvement planning documentation in advance. The PV team will meet at the end of each day to discuss their findings and these meetings will be attended by the college nominee.

3.2 What does Education Scotland focus on during a progress visit?

For AY 2021-22 Progress Visits, colleges will provide details of their existing self-evaluation and improvement/enhancement processes and documentation to inform PV planning. Other than a short context statement, there will be **no requirement** to complete and submit any separate PV documentation. The team will engage in professional dialogue and review relevant documentation made available during the visit.

College approaches to improving outcomes for learners and the quality of the learning experience will be a core aspect of the PVs. Colleges will be required to demonstrate the effectiveness of their arrangements to evaluate learning and teaching practice, including remote learning. PVs will not routinely involve observation of learning and teaching, however, HM Inspectors may include lesson observations if deemed appropriate.

Learner engagement is fundamental to the college's ability to identify areas for improvement to the learner experience. Learners are partners in supporting improvement and colleges should have effective arrangements in place for engaging learners in contributing to enhancement activities. During PVs, HMIs, AAs and STMs will engage in conversations with groups of learners to identify the progress they are making and how effectively they engage in and influence their individual learning experiences.

By focusing on outcomes and impact, and observing practice and experiences directly, HM Inspectors will support college staff to reflect on what is working well and what needs to improve. HM Inspectors will make arrangements in conjunction with College Development Network to ensure that highly effective practice, where identified, is disseminated to support improvement.

3.3 Who carries out progress visits?

PVs will be led by HM Inspectors, AAs and an STM.

PVs will normally be carried out across two to three days. The size of team and duration of the visit will be adjusted in line with the context of each college. Team size will be planned to take into account the size and scale of each college and of COVID mitigations and guidance.

3.4 How will we carry out the progress visit?

PVs are planned collaboratively between the college, HM Inspectors and SFC. Prior to the visit, colleges will have the opportunity to provide relevant updates, identified through self-evaluation, to reflect the progress made and highlight any changes in circumstances. The work of HM Inspectors will be in line with the [PRAISE framework](#) which is used to help establish and maintain positive relationships with all involved. HM Inspectors recognise that all discussions and engagements are opportunities to share and develop thinking, and to learn from each other. Pre-visit planning and engagement will be undertaken virtually.

Throughout the visit, team members will involve managers and staff in professional dialogue, with the aim of supporting improvement. Through this approach HM Inspectors will work with college staff and should ensure that the visit experience is a collaborative process.

3.5 Notification of the progress visit

Colleges will be informed in writing of the agreed date for their PV approximately six weeks in advance of commencement of the visit.

3.6 What happens during a progress visit?

The starting point will be the college's own evaluation of the quality of their provision and improvements required. We will ask the college to outline the progress they have made and the impact it has had, on achievement of improvement actions and the experience of learners. Thereafter the team will review relevant documentation, and engage in professional dialogue with managers, staff, student representatives, other groups of learners and, where required, other key stakeholders.

Discussions will focus on their involvement in delivering the targets and milestones identified by the college. The team will also discuss with learners the impact of improvement actions.

3.7 How do we share our findings?

On conclusion of the PV, the team will provide a verbal report of their findings to the college. This will include commentary on the accuracy and effectiveness of a college's self-evaluation approaches, progress made against improvement targets, and the experiences and outcomes of learners. It will provide assurance of the quality of the learning experience as the college recovers from COVID-19, and may identify aspects requiring further improvement.

3.8 What happens after the progress visit?

Following our internal quality assurance processes, a written report will be produced and shared with the college and SFC. The report **will not** be published. The college will have the opportunity to comment if they wish, within five working days. Approximately five weeks after the PV is completed, a final written report will be provided to the college and the Lead HM Inspector will make arrangements to share the report with the college Board. For multi-college regions, a representative of the Regional Strategic Body (RSB) will be invited to attend and the report will also be shared with the RSB. PV outcomes will inform future engagement approaches with individual colleges.

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