



Meeting of the Human Resource Committee

**to be held on Monday
06 October 2025 at
1400hrs via MS Teams**

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

NOTICE

There will be a meeting of the Human Resources Committee of North East Scotland College on Monday 06 October 2025 at 1400 hours through the use of Microsoft Teams.

AGENDA

Agenda Item		Paper
01-25	Apologies for Absence	
02-25	Declaration of any Potential Conflicts of Interest in relation to any Agenda Items	
03-25	Minute of Previous Meeting – May 2024	x
04-25	Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting	x
	Matters for Decision	
05-25	Committee Terms of Reference	x
06-25	Committee Programme of Business AY2025/26	x
	Matters for Discussion	
07-25	People Services Management Information (Annual Report)	x
08-25	People Services Enhancement Plan Update	x
09-25	People Services Equalities Action Plan plus Equalities Committee Update (Presentation) - (G Watt/L Doyle)	
	Matters for Information	
10-25	Job Evaluation and National Bargaining (verbal update)	
11-25	Any Other Business	
12-25	Summation of Action and Date of Next Meeting	
	The HR Committee will next meet on Wednesday 04 February 2026	

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

MINUTE OF MEETING

Draft Minute of the Meeting of the Human Resources Committee held on Wednesday 21 May 2025 at 1300 hours via Microsoft Teams

AGENDA

Present:

Leona McDermid – Chair
Susan Elston
Gerry Lawrie
Jim Gifford – Vice Chair
Cindy Dempster
Duncan Cockburn

In attendance:

Kimra Donnelly, Director of People Services
Jill Leishman, Learning & Information Manager (for Agenda Item 39-24)
Lorraine Garden, Acting Secretary to the Board / Minute Secretary

Agenda Item		Paper
31-24	Apologies for Absence Apologies received in advance of the meeting from Neil Cowie, Emma MacIsaac and Susan Lawrance	
32-24	Declaration of any Potential Conflicts of Interest in relation to any Agenda Items L McDermid declared a potential conflict of interest by virtue of her position with Aberdeen Foyer.	
33-24	Minute of Previous Meeting – February 2025 The Minute was approved as a true and accurate record.	X
34-24	Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting Members noted that 3 of the matters arising items had been addressed and were marked as completed. K Donnelly provided an additional update regarding the slow national uptake on Shared Parental Leave. Awareness of this will be shared with the Equalities Team.	X
	Matters for Decision	
	There were no matters for decision.	
	Matters for Discussion	
35-24	People Services Enhancement Plan AY2024/25 – Progress Report The Progress Report was summarised by K Donnelly who highlighted the Plan covers a 2-year period.	X

	<p>Details regarding the People Services restructuring were shared with Members.</p> <p>Development of the new sub-strategy entitled "Our Colleagues" which will be aligned with the new Strategic Plan was shared. ACTION – Our Colleagues Sub-Strategy Outcomes to be shared at next meeting</p> <p>Members also noted the summarised points within the enhancement plan, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing works with the IT system/team to ensure coherence with PowerBi and Zellis data. • Development of Learning Development and Learning Technology Strategy & Policy remains ongoing and will be renamed in line with the Sub-Strategy Strategic Plan once agreed and developed. • Some AI tools are progressing with Microsoft Copilot currently in the trial stage before being launched during 25/26. • Policies update: Operational & Policy Reviews to be undertaken to ensure policies are compliant and fit for purpose. The Disciplinary Policy has been agreed nationally. A review will be completed on the Health & Attendance Policy to ensure compliance with employment law changes. • Work is ongoing with the Students' Association on college-wide communication, including participation in the joint consultation on gender-neutral toilets renovation. <p>L McDermid thanked K Donnelly for the update and acknowledged the positive progress. Thanks were also extended to the team.</p> <p>Members shared their positiveness regarding the HR restructuring and the increased cohesiveness of a 2-year plan. It was agreed K Donnelly to review the tracking colour-coding within the report. ACTION – Enhancement Plan to be reviewed and update colour-coding tracking.</p>	
36-24	<p>People Services Equalities Action Plan</p> <p>K Donnelly presented the People Services Equalities Action Plan informing members this will be updated for the October meeting. The transition of responsibility from E Reid to L Doyle was highlighted, with L Doyle tasked to review the existing plan and identify the main priorities over a 2-year period. ACTION – Chair of Equalities Committee to attend next Committee meeting to present Plan jointly with L Doyle.</p>	X
37-24	<p>Employee Voice Group Update</p> <p>K Donnelly highlighted the considerable engagement and commitment from the in-house working group, which has new members across all campuses to gather employee feedback and share ideas, with staff seeing the impact they are making. The Group's next steps regarding the Employee Engagement Survey, similar to the previous 2 years were outlined, including building on the trust and confidence of completing an anonymous survey, with the use of a third party facilitation to be explored, if necessary. The need to be clearer on the question relating to leadership was noted. Interface between the employee group and trade unions was queried, with K Donnelly confirming the proactive approach welcomed by all.</p>	X
38-24	<p>Wellbeing Update</p> <p>K Donnelly provided an update on Wellbeing acknowledging the incredible amount of work undertaken by L Laing in terms of support and being proactive.</p>	X

	<p>An overview of key highlights included the Staff Wellbeing Framework, Staff Benefits, Stress Risk Assessments, Menopause and Wellbeing Training. Information will follow on the electric car scheme to be available to staff. Mention was made of the national recognition of the menopause awareness provided to staff.</p> <p>A query was raised in relation to the financial advice and incentives benefits, and any pension impact. K Donnelly is confident this does not impact pensions but will look further into this. ACTION – K Donnelly to review pension impacts in relation to staff benefits</p>	
	Matters for Information	
39-24	<p>Learning & Development Update Report & Onboarding Demo (J Leishman)</p> <p>K Donnelly introduced J Leishman to members. A presentation was shared on Learning & Innovation at NESCol with J Leishman highlighting the close working relationship with all departments within the People Services Team.</p> <p>Projects undertaken in AY2024/25 were highlighted, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Induction project. • The Onboarding hub, launched in April, and its progress. The landing page of this hub includes a Welcome to NESCol video and this was shared with members to view. • Staff learning opportunities highlighted the training programme development. • The NESCol Minibites ongoing programme continues to be well attended. • A re-launch of Digital Futures forms part of the strategic led learning culture to bring together learning and innovation. • The future vision of Learning & Development and Digital Futures projects highlighting the need to share good practice and impact of developments. <p>Discussion followed on the overall strategy and strategic focus which is an ongoing piece of work.</p> <p>Thanks were given to J Leishman for the informative update.</p> <p>Following the presentation, queries were raised about survey engagement and how this can be improved and K Donnelly confirmed this is being reviewed.</p> <p>Participation in the Wellbeing Event was discussed with encouragement for more staff to participate in future events.</p>	
40-24	National Collective Bargaining Update – verbal	
41-24	<p>Employment Law Changes – verbal</p> <p>K Donnelly provided assurance to Committee of the Colleges compliance with any changes.</p> <p>The Worker Protection Act is progressing with recognition of trade unions and discussion of employment rights ongoing. Challenges were noted and the action plan is being worked on.</p>	
42-24	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>J Gifford queried availability of the A&R Committee agenda - this information will be requested.</p>	

43-24	Summation of Action and Date of Next Meeting L McDermid thanked K Donnelly for the great progress made. L Garden provided a summary of the identified actions and confirmed the next Committee Meeting will be held in October 2025.	

Actions from the HR Committee (May 2024)			
Agenda Item	Action	Responsible Person	Deadline
35-24	Our Colleagues Sub-Strategy: Outcomes to be shared at next meeting.	K Donnelly	Oct 2025
35-24	Enhancement Plan colour-coding to be revised and updated.	K Donnelly	Oct 2025
36-24	Chair of Equalities Committee and L Doyle to present Equalities Action Plan at October meeting.	K Donnelly	Oct 2025
38-24	Review pension impacts in relation to staff benefits.	K Donnelly	Oct 2025
40-24	Update;		

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

An update on matters arising from the meeting of the Human Resources Committee held in May 2025

Agenda Item	
35-24	Action: Our Colleagues Sub-Strategy: Outcomes to be shared at next meeting.
	Status: In Hand - Sub-Strategy (as presented at recent Regional Board Meeting) in final stages of preparation and will be shared more widely post October holidays.
35-24	Action: Enhancement Plan colour-coding to be revised and updated
	Status: Complete.
36-24	Action: Equalities Action Plan: To be presented to October Committee.
	Status: Complete – on Agenda for October meeting.
38-24	Action: Review pension impacts in relation to staff benefits.
	Status: Complete – verbal update will be provided at October meeting.
40- 24	Action:
	Status:

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE	
Meeting of 6 October 2025	
Title: Committee Terms of Reference	
Author: Susan Lawrance, Secretary to the Board	Contributor(s): Kimra Donnelly, Assistant Principal People Services
Type of Agenda Item: For Decision <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> Reserved Item of Business <input type="checkbox"/>	
Purpose: To enable the Committee to review its Terms of Reference.	
Linked to Strategic Goal:	
Linked to Annual Priority:	
Executive Summary: <p>Attached as Appendix 1 to this paper is the Committee's current Terms of Reference. The Terms were last considered by the Committee in October 2024.</p> <p>Members are asked to review the attached and consider if the Committee's Specific Duties accurately reflect its main areas of focus. Highlight is made to the change reflecting the College's new Strategic Plan and sub-strategies.</p>	
Recommendation: <p>It is recommended that the Committee review its Terms of Reference.</p>	
Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval (if applicable): <p>None</p>	
Equality Impact Assessment: Positive Impact <input type="checkbox"/> Negative Impact <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Evidence:	

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE	
1.1	<p>Membership</p> <p>A minimum of 5 Members, one of whom shall be appointed Committee Chair Principal One Staff and one Student Board Member</p>
1.2	<p>Quorum</p> <p>No less than one half of the members entitled to vote.</p>
1.3	<p>Remit</p> <p>General The Committee shall make its recommendations to the Regional Board as appropriate. The Committee shall make its decisions and report these to the Regional Board. The Committee shall observe the Standing Orders in all its business.</p> <p>Specific Duties The Committee has overall responsibility for the direction and oversight of all human resource matters relating to the function of the Regional Board as employer of the College's staff. The Human Resources Committee shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the implementation of the College's Strategic Plan and Supporting Strategies, as it relates to Our Colleagues • Monitor key performance indicators with regard to People Services objectives and College staff through the consideration of key management information reports • Monitor staff-related equality data • Ensure that the College maintains positive employer relations through the implementation of its approach to employee engagement • Ensure that the College promotes the physical and mental health and wellbeing of its staff • Maintain oversight of Learning & Development, including health and wellbeing and Learning Technologies, activities within the College • Approve the College's annual Equal Pay Statement and Policy, Occupational Segregation and Gender Pay Gap Reports • Approve College HR policies and procedures as appropriate. including the Health and Safety Policy • Monitor progress against the People Services Enhancement Plan • Undertake appropriate monitoring to ensure that the College meets all legislative duties in relation to human resources • Monitor progress against the implementation of the outcomes of National Collective Bargaining. • Receive regular updates on Local Joint Negotiating Committee meetings.
1.4	<p>Meetings</p> <p>The Human Resources Committee will normally meet three times per year, with additional meetings convened if required.</p>
1.5	<p>Management Support</p> <p>The following member of the Leadership Team provides objective, specialist advice to support the Committee to discharge its remit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistant Principal People Services.

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE – PROGRAMME OF BUSINESS AY2025-26

Please note that the Programme of Business will be amended as required to include agenda items that arise throughout the academic year.

October 2025
For Decision
HR Policies Update (if required)
Committee Terms of Reference
Programme of Business AY2025/26
For Discussion
People Services Management Information (Annual Report)
People Services Enhancement Plan Update (including update on new Sub-Strategy)
People Services Equalities Action Plan plus Equalities Committee Update (Presentation)
For Information
Job Evaluation and Pay Award (verbal update)

JANUARY 2026
For Decision
HR Policies Update (if required)
Equal Pay Policy and Statement (Reviewed Annually)
For Discussion
People Services Enhancement Plan (Update)
People Services Equalities Action Plan
Learning Technologies Update
Wellbeing Update
Committee Evaluation
For Information
National Collective Bargaining Update

MAY 2026
For Decision
HR Policies Update (if required)
People Services Equalities Action Plan
NESCoI Equality Reporting
For Discussion
People Services Enhancement Plan – Progress Report
Pension Discretionary Policy (Reviewed Annually)
For Information
National Collective Bargaining Update

Red Text Denotes Reserved items

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE Meeting of 06 October 2025	
Title: People Services Management Information (Annual Report)	
Author: Kimra Donnelly, Assistant Principal People Services	Contributor(s): Alison Kerr-McCall Senior HR Business Partner & Maureen Reid Senior HR Business Partner
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 HR Committee with People Services annual management information for the period of January 2024 – December 2024.	
Linked to Strategic Theme: 4. Delivering Excellence and Innovation	
Linked to Strategic Risk(s): 2.1	
Executive Summary: <p>Appendix 1-The People Services Annual Report provides management information in relation to staff turnover, absence and employee wellbeing & engagement.</p> <p>In 2024, North East Scotland College maintained a stable workforce with an average monthly headcount of 564.75 (495.65 FTE), reflecting a slight decrease from the previous year. Staff turnover was 10.6% excluding student interns and 13.3% including them, with resignations and end-of-contracts being the most common reasons for leaving. Overall staff turn excluding student interns is down by just under 3% compared to 2023. Recruitment activity remained strong, with 51 posts advertised and 54 appointments made, demonstrating flexible hiring practices.</p> <p>Sickness absence accounted for 4,628 working days lost, with long-term absences comprising 2,750 days. The overall absence rate was 3.15%, and the average number of days lost per employee was 8.2, with mental health-related conditions being the leading cause. This is a slight decrease in from 2023.</p> <p>The College continued to prioritise staff wellbeing and engagement through a range of initiatives. The NESCol Minibites programme achieved high awareness and participation, with 90% of respondents attending at least one session and</p>	

89% finding them useful. Wellbeing workshops on Imposter Syndrome and Sleep received excellent feedback, and further training was delivered on topics such as suicide prevention and trauma-informed practice. Occupational Health supported staff through 64 referrals and 180 flu vaccinations.

The Pluxee benefits platform saw strong engagement (52.46%), and the annual Wellbeing Day was a highlight, with a wide range of activities and an average feedback rating of 4.81/5. These efforts reflect the College's ongoing commitment to fostering a healthy, inclusive, and supportive working environment.

We are currently collaborating with the College HR Network to conduct sector-wide benchmarking of sickness absence rates. The findings will be presented at the next HR Committee meeting.

Work to enhance management information reporting is ongoing. People Services continues to develop and improve the data available to managers and the HR Committee. Some progress has been made in integrating the HR Payroll system with Power BI, and current efforts are focused on making this information more accessible and user-friendly for managers.

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

Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval (if applicable):

Equality Impact Assessment:

Positive Impact ☐

Negative Impact ☐

No Impact ☒

Evidence: This Report is for information only



People Services Annual Report - 2024

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Attracting, Recruiting, Rewarding & Retaining Staff - Management Information
3. Empowering, Engaging & Wellbeing

Please note that the management information in this report relates to the period January - December 2024 unless otherwise stated.

1. Introduction

People Services sets and measures its priorities in line with the College Strategic Plan and People Services Strategy. These are detailed below:

College Strategic Plan

The College Strategic Plan for 2021-23 was focused on five Strategic Themes and their accompanying Strategic Goals:

1. Being Agile and Responsive
2. Empowering People
3. Advancing Partnership Working
4. Delivering Excellence and Innovation
5. Leading Sustainability.

People Strategy 2021-23

North East Scotland College's people are at the heart of the College. Our people are talented, innovative, work with integrity and are essential to achieving the College's ambitions.

It is People Services team's mission to continue to provide an excellent client-focussed service that is aligned to the College's strategic objectives, which are delivered through its People Strategy.

The College has identified six key themes that will be crucial in ensuring that its strategic ambitions relating to People Services are achieved:

1. Attraction, Recruitment, Reward & Retention
2. Empower & Engage
3. Performance & Development
4. Leadership & Management
5. Equality & Diversity
6. Wellbeing

2. Attracting, Recruiting, Rewarding, Retaining Staff: Management Information – 2024

Headcount/ Full Time Equivalent (FTE)

Average monthly headcount and FTE was 564.75(495.65 FTE) in 2024, compared with an average of 583.92 (508.74 FTE) in 2023.

Average Monthly Headcount & FTE – 01 January – 31 December 2024	Head Count	FTE
All Staff	564.75	495.65
Department	Head Count	FTE
Lecturer	281.42	248.06
Support*	297.33	247.59
Campus	Head Count	FTE
Aberdeen City	355.67	303.38
Altens	62.58	60.74
Ellon	N/A	N/A
Fraserburgh	151.08	124.59
Peterhead	9.42	6.94

*Note: Support staff includes Instructors and on average 20 Student Interns

Please note that the 'all staff' headcount figures and the figures by campus and department do not tally. This is because some staff have 2 posts and are counted twice in the headcount by department and campus (as some staff have both lecturing and support posts and work in more than one campus) but are only counted once in the all staff headcount figures.

Snapshot Headcount & FTE figures as at 31 December 2024	Head Count	FTE
All Staff	562	489.57
Department	Head Count	FTE
Lecturer	280	247.07
Support *	297	242.53
Campus	Head Count	FTE
Aberdeen City	355	299.19
Altens	66	63.78
Ellon	N/A	N/A
Fraserburgh	146	119.06
Peterhead	20	7.55

*Note: Support staff includes Instructors and Student Interns

Please note that the 'all staff' headcount figures and the figures by campus and department do not tally. This is because some staff have 2 posts and are counted twice in the headcount by department and campus (as some staff have both lecturing and support posts and work in more than one campus) but are only counted once in the all staff headcount figures.

This report has included Student Interns within the headcount and FTE. This could affect figures due to the nature of this role as these are fixed-term contracts with an intake at specific times of the year and depending on the student's course, these contracts may be extended into the following year.

Leavers

Leavers 2024	Headcount	FTE
Total	58	48.92
Lecturer	30	25.97
Support	28	22.95

*Note: Support staff includes Instructors

**Note: This figure does not include Student Interns. An additional 15 Student Helpdesk Interns left from 01/01/2024 – 31/12/2024 due to their fixed-term contracts ending.

Leavers 2023	Headcount	FTE
Total	76	47.68
Lecturer	40	25.7
Support	36	21.98

*Note: Support staff includes Instructors

** Note: This figure does not include Student Interns. An additional 16 Student Helpdesk Interns left from 01/01/2023 – 31/12/2023 due to their fixed-term contracts ending.

Number of Leavers by Campus, 2024

Campus	Head Count*	FTE
Aberdeen City	40	29.28
Altens	8	7.8
Fraserburgh	22	16.59
Peterhead	3	2.6

Number of Leavers by Age, 2024

Age of leaver	Head Count	FTE
<25	8	3.6
25-34	15	11.29
35-44	11	8.39
45-54	6	5.5
55-64	17	13.68
65 & Over	16	13.81

Number of Leavers by Length of Service, 2024

Length of Service	Head Count	FTE
< 1 Year	1	1
1-5 Years	38	26.59
6-10 Years	8	7.29
11-15 Years	5	3.79
16-20 Years	5	3.59
21-25 Years	6	5.46
26-30 Years	7	5.85
31- 39 Years	2	2
40+ Years	1	0.69

Please note that all FTE figures in this section have been rounded and so may not tally

The Top Reasons for Leaving, 2024

Reason Given	Number of Leavers
Resignation	29
Mutual Agreement	14
End of Contract	15
Retirement	11

Turnover

The overall staff turnover, excluding student interns, in 2024 was 10.6%

The total number of leavers in the year divided by the average monthly staff headcount in the year x 100 (rounded to one decimal place) i.e. 76 (leavers excluding student interns)/563.92 (ie average staff headcount minus an average of 20 headcount of student interns) x100 = 13.5%.

The overall staff turnover, including student interns, in 2024, was 13.3%

The total number of leavers in the year, including student interns divided by the average monthly staff headcount in the year x 100 (rounded to one decimal place) i.e. 92 (76 staff leavers plus 16 student intern leavers)/583.92 (ie average staff headcount inc student interns) x100 = 15.8%.

Recruitment Data - Number of Vacancies, Applicants & Appointments

During 2024, 51 posts were advertised and 54 appointments were made.

Post Type	Vacancies Advertised	Appointments Made
Support Staff	26	27
Lecturer	24	25
TOTAL	50	52

There is a difference between the number of appointments made and vacancies advertised due to some posts being filled by multiple individuals (e.g. on a job share basis) or using the same advertisement to recruitment for 3 vacancies of the same role.

Campus	Vacancies
Aberdeen City	22
Altens	16
Fraserburgh	9
Peterhead	3
TOTAL	50

Number and Type of Vacancy Filled Internally and Externally

Post Type	Appointments	Internal	Protocol	External
Support Staff	27	16	1	10
Lecturer	25	8	5	12
TOTAL	52	24	6	22

Sickness Absence Data

The overall number of working days lost to sickness absence in 2024 were 4,628 compared with 4,708 in 2023, and 4,379.5 in 2022.

The number of working days lost to long-term sickness absence in 2024 were 2,750 compared with 2,962 in 2023 and 2,044 in 2022.

The College's sickness absence rate for 2024 was 3.15%.

Calculation: number of days lost due to absence/(headcount x number of working days available) x 100

The average number of days lost at the College for 2024 was 8.2.

Calculation: number of days lost due to absence/(average headcount including interns)

Overall Absence (Number of Working Days Lost)	Long Term Absence (Number of Working Days Lost)
4,628	2,750

Absence Type	Number of Employees	Number of Days Lost
Anxiety/stress/depression/other psychiatric illness	18	1035.5
Gastrointestinal problems	56	560.5
Other known causes (nec) - not elsewhere	10	557.5
Cold, Cough, Flu – Influenza (inc COVID)	104	505.5
Unknown causes / Not specified	33	347

Other musculoskeletal problems -	14	320
Chest & respiratory problems	22	252
Back Problems	3	166.5
Benign and malignant tumours, cancers	1	155
Ear, nose, throat (ENT)	8	151
Heart, cardiac & circulatory problems	1	135
Headache / migraine	31	97
Skin disorders	2	84
Eye problems	1	69.5
Null	6	66
Injury, fracture	2	56
Genitourinary & gynaecological disorders	1	32
Dental and oral problems	3	11
Endocrine / glandular problems	1	10
Blood disorders (e.g. anaemia)	1	8
Pregnancy related disorders	1	3
Infectious diseases	1	4
Nervous system disorders - exclude headache	2	2

3. Empowering, Engaging & Wellbeing

In 2024, the People Services team continued to focus on embedding wellbeing for staff through:

NESCol Minibites

The NESCol Minibites programme continued throughout 2024, offering sessions on a range of wellbeing topics including menopause, staff benefits, and Time to Talk Day.

Although attendance at each session was modest, every session had participants, and feedback on the day was consistently positive.

In June 2024, a formal evaluation of the NESCol Minibites brand was carried out, revealing the following insights:

- 100% of respondents were aware of NESCol Minibites.
- 90% had attended at least one session.
- The Menopause session had the highest attendance among respondents.
- 89% found the sessions useful.
- Among those who had not attended, the main reasons cited were lack of time and perceived lack of relevance.

Overall, the programme was considered a success, with strong brand recognition. A new programme for 2025 will be developed based on this positive foundation.

Wellbeing Workshops

Two wellbeing workshops were offered for staff in 2024. Two themes were identified; Imposter Syndrome, as this is mentioned often by staff at all levels, including new staff as they transition from industry to teaching, and Sleep. Two online sessions were held and feedback from the is as follows:

- Imposter Syndrome: 4.6/5
- Importance of Sleep: 4.9/5

Further wellbeing training was delivered on:

- British Sign Language
- Talk Money Week Pension Information Session
- ASIST Suicide Prevention
- Gender Based Violence Training
- Cancer in the Workplace
- LISTEN Training
- Trauma Informed Practice

Ongoing wellbeing initiatives and provisions for staff wellbeing in 2024 are detailed below:

Occupational Health

In 2024, the College recorded the following activity:

- 64 Occupational Health referrals, including:
 - 12 workstation assessments
 - 4 pregnancy risk assessments

180 flu vaccinations were administered across campuses during October:

- City Campus – 100
- Altens Campus – 30
- Fraserburgh Campus – 50

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

Care First, the College's Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), provided annual usage data for the period 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024.

Usage during this period was 2.83% of the average staff headcount (based on an average of 564.75 employees).

A total of 16 contacts were made to Care First during this time, representing a notable decrease compared to the previous year's report.

Breakdown of the contacts:

- 5 telephone counselling sessions
- 6 online counselling sessions
- 5 instances of staff accessing the information resources available through the service.

Employee Online Benefits Scheme - Pluxee

During this period, 299 staff members registered on the site, resulting in an engagement rate of approximately 52.46%, based on the average headcount. This is a strong level of engagement.

Top retailers included Tesco and Currys, indicating that many staff are using the platform to save money on everyday purchases—not just on larger, one-off items as seen in previous years.

In total, staff spent £49,561 through the scheme and achieved savings of £2,755.

Cycle to Work

The College's Cycle to Work Scheme, delivered through Pluxee, continues to be well-received, with 14 approved applications during the reporting period, totalling £29,350 in value.

This has resulted in estimated National Insurance savings of £4,050.30 for the College and £9,392 for participating staff.

Wellbeing Day

The College's annual Wellbeing Day took place on Thursday, 27 June 2024. A wide range of activities was organised for staff to enjoy, including walks, paddleboarding, craft sessions, and bowling at Codonas. All staff were encouraged to participate in at least one activity to support their wellbeing. Managers were advised that if operational needs prevented participation on the day, alternative arrangements could be made to allow staff to take part at another time or date.

In addition to the main event, a variety of wellbeing activities were offered throughout the week. These included Zumba and Qigong sessions led by our Active Campus Coordinator. TAC Healthcare also visited the Aberdeen City, Altens, and Fraserburgh campuses with their InBody machine, providing staff with insights into their body composition, including body fat percentage, muscle mass, and water levels. Guided tours of the Planetarium at City Campus were also held throughout the day and proved to be a huge success.

We received 75 responses to the feedback survey, with an impressive average rating of 4.81 out of 5 for the activities. Comments included:

- *"Fantastic day!"*
- *"I really enjoyed it – it was a great chance to meet people from different teams."*
- *"Great day, really positive experience, and it felt like many more staff took part than in previous years."*

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE Meeting of October 6, 2025	
Title: People Services AY 2024-25 & 2025-26 Enhancement Plan Update	
Author: Kimra Donnelly, Assistant Principal – People Services	Contributor(s): People Services Teams
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 HR Committee to consider and discuss the People Services Enhancement Plan Update for AY 2024-25 & 2025-26	
Linked to Strategic Theme: 1. Being Agile and Responsive	
Linked to Strategic Risk(s): 2.1	
Executive Summary: Appendix 1 is the People Services Enhancement Plan for AY 2024-25 & 2025-26 providing updates on the following 8 strategic areas that were identified in the AY 2024-25 & 2025-26 Our Evaluation outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People Services Restructure • Develop a New People Strategy • Enhance access to and use of staff data in decision making • Develop a Learning Development and Learning Technology Strategy & Policy • Operational & Policy Reviews • Progress the People Services Equalities Action Plan • Sustainability • Students' Association 	
Recommendation: It is recommended that the HR Committee consider and note the information provided in this report.	

Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval: It was agreed at the October 2024 HR Committee that the People Services Enhancement Plan should be for a period of 2 academic years. The Enhancement plan is updated at every HR Committee meeting and can be amended as required throughout the two years.

Equality Impact Assessment:

Positive Impact ☐

Negative Impact ☐

No Impact ☒

Evidence:

This report is for information only.



Support Area Enhancement Plan Template AY 2024-26

Department/Team: People Services

Support Area AY 2024-26

SECTION 1 - ENHANCEMENT PLAN

In identifying the actions, it is important to **ensure that they address a specific area for improvement and are designed to positively impact on service delivery**. The actions should be SMART - specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound – and should seek to address any areas for improvement identified in commentaries

Please reference each Developmental Driver using the following coding:

Area for Improvement (from the self-evaluation) – Reference back to OurEvaluation (e.g. AI - 2)

Strategic Objective - Reference number from the [Strategic Plan](#) (e.g. SO1.1)

Supporting Strategy - Reference relevant [Supporting Strategies](#)

Reference to [Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework](#) (e.g. TQEF3)

Reference risk from [Strategic Risk Register](#) (e.g. R2.1)

Reference the [Equality Outcomes](#) and/or Equality Enhancement Plan (EO)

You can add further areas for development as they arise; this enhancement plan should be continuously reviewed and augmented as required throughout the academic session. You are required however to formally evaluate progress and update the plan in **February** and final review between **July** and **September**. You should give a brief update of progress and evaluate your progress using the RAG status. The Director of Quality will review all updated enhancement plans as part of the college-wide quality assurance activity.

RAG Guidance

Green - colour the box green if the impact has been achieved or you are on target to achieve the desired impact.

Amber - colour the box amber if there is a chance you will not achieve the desired impact by June 2026.

Red - colour the box red if you feel there is a significant likelihood of not achieving the desired impact by June 2026.

Enhancement Plan Requirements

You **must** include at least one action for each of the **Equalities, Sustainability and Students' Association Partnership Agreement** themes in your enhancement plan and clearly link to areas for development recorded on OurEvaluation from AY2024-25 and AY2025-26

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No.	Area for Development (Development Driver)	Impact (The intended difference to be made)	Action/s to be taken (Describe each activity you will undertake to have the desired impact)	By When & by Whom	Development Driver Code (e.g. AI1, E2, R1, TQEF3)
1	People Services Restructure	A full review of People Services will be undertaken in summer of 2025 to ensure that the services provided are aligned with the strategic objectives of the College.	1. The review will consider resources required and future succession planning. 2. The review will also consider how Learning & Development, Learning Technology and parts of the Quality team (the delivery of mandatory training) are structured to ensure that staff development is delivered in the most effective and efficient way.	August 2025: Assistant Principal – People Services.	SO 1, 5 People Services Strategy
<p>May 2025 Update: Additional resources have been approved for HR with a new HR Advisor being appointed and we are currently in the process of recruiting a Head of HR to lead the Payroll and HR teams. The wider service review will start in May 2025. Information gathering has started by having conversations with other colleges to learn more about how their Learning & Development and Learning Technology teams are structured.</p>					
<p>September 2025 Update: A new Head of HR has been appointed. Lindsey Hamilton, currently at the University of Aberdeen, will be joining People Services before the end of December 2025. Potential restructuring options are being developed as part of a business case, which will first be reviewed by the Executive Team by the end of October 2025. This will be followed by broader discussions with stakeholders.</p>					
<p>February 2026 Update.</p>					

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2	Develop a New People Strategy	A People Strategy aligned with the College's Strategic Plan will support the College to attract, retain talent, and benefit employees. A strong people strategy fosters a work environment where employees feel engaged, supported, and motivated to perform at their best.	1. Contribute to the revision of the College's Strategic Plan 2. Consult with People Services teams and stakeholders to develop a People Strategy aligned with the College's Strategic Objectives.	August 2025; Assistant Principal – People Services.	Strategic Business Plan
May 2025 Update: A member of the Learning Technologies Team is on the College-wide group working on the new Strategic Plan and several members of People Services are on the working groups developing the supporting strategies. The Assistant Principal Marketing and Communications and the Assistant Principal People Services will facilitate the Strategic Plan Sub-Strategy Meeting: Our Colleagues on May 20, 2025.					
September 2025 Update: With the Strategic Plan and its associated sub-strategies — including Our Colleagues — now finalised, they will be submitted to the Board for approval on 30 September 2025. Following this, People Services will develop an operational plan that aligns with our strategic objectives and actively contributes to the Enhancement Plan as we move forward.					
February 2026 Update:					
3	Enhance Access to and Use of Staff Data in Decision Making.	Data-driven decision making is essential for People Services, as it impacts every service and employee. People analytics helps clarify, identify, and guide actions	1. Establish an API/Connector to and from the College's HR Payroll system to the College's Power BI platform 2. Identify reporting required and the priorities of these being developed.	March 2025 - Aug 2026: Assistant Principal – People Services; Senior HR Business Partner;	SO 4, 4.3, SO 4, 4.6, SO 4, 4.7, SO 4, 4.8

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		across the College to achieve our strategic goals.	3. Actively use Power BI's analytics tools to analyse the data, spot trends and provide the required management information to managers. Including KPIs such as turnover and absence. 4. Develop People Services team members in the use of Power BI and presenting the data in an informative and accessible way.	People Services Teams.	
<p>May 2025 Update:</p> <p>Work is still ongoing to get the connectors that will enable data to transfer between the HR Payroll system and the College's Power BI. The API connector has been established, however, there has been an issue with delays in updated data pulling across to the College systems in a consistent timeframe - when data is updated in Resourcelink there are often delays of up to 3-4 days in the updated pulling across to the College, it should happen instantly. Zellis have now confirmed that the issue is the result of a bug in the system. Last contact from Zellis was 22/04/2025 where they updated that their development team were now looking at getting the issue corrected. A further update on the progress of this will be provided to next HR Committee.</p> <p>The Learning Technologies Team is also investigating the creation of additional PowerBI dashboards to extract more actionable data from Brightspace and make it available to curriculum teams.</p> <p>Power BI training to be sourced and delivered to People Services team.</p>					
<p>September 2025 Update:</p> <p>The issue with data not pulling through consistently has been addressed in the latest R/L upgrade, implemented in mid-September. The problem now appears to be resolved, although we continue to monitor it for consistency.</p> <p>Work on the Active Directory is still ongoing; however, progress has been delayed due to competing priorities and other issues. This will be picked up again as soon as possible.</p> <p>Learning & Development will meet with the NESCol BI developer to discuss the training required for the team in preparation for HR/Payroll data becoming accessible within Power BI.</p>					
<p>February 2026 Update:</p>					

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4	Develop a Learning Development and Learning Technology Strategy & Policy	A strong learning strategy improves employee skills and engagement, supporting the College's strategic objectives. Well-trained employees make better decisions, enhancing productivity and success.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create Learning & Development & Learning Technology strategies, policies and procedures. 2. Support the implementation of the College's Digital Strategy. 3. Annual Programme of Business for L&D & LT. 4. Investigate areas to support income generation, exploring enhancement of distance-learning digital course materials and use of AI in education. 	December 2025 Learning Development Manager, Learning & Technologies Manager	SO 1, 1.1 SO2, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6 SO3, 3.8 SO4 People Services Strategy
<p>May 2025 Update:</p> <p>The Learning and Development Manager and Learning Technologies Manager met to discuss the team's programme of business for 2025. In April, a presentation was made to CQASS to outline plans for the Learning Technologies/Digital Futures Team in the coming months.</p> <p>A member of the Learning Technologies Team is trialling the paid AI tool, Microsoft Copilot, before a wider launch during 2025/26. Additionally, a pilot of the AI tool Teachermatic was completed in 2024/25, with a planned rollout during 2025/26. The team will create guidance for staff on how to maximize the benefits of these tools, highlighting their time-saving and efficiency features for daily tasks.</p> <p>The Learning Technologies Team will also participate in developing the College's Digital Strategy later in 2025. Furthermore, a Programme of Business for Learning Technologies is due to be created in 2025 and will be presented at the next HR Committee meeting.</p> <p>September 2025 Update:</p> <p>Work will commence on the development of strategies, policies, and procedures for Learning Development and Learning Technologies. This will support the operationalisation of sub-strategic plans and align with the formalisation of the People Services structure.</p> <p>A proposal will be presented to the Strategic Leadership Team in October 2025 to distribute a Digital Capabilities Self-Assessment Survey to all staff. The aim is to establish a benchmark of digital competency across the College—at institutional, team, and individual levels—enabling a strategically led programme of digital development to be implemented.</p>					

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Subject to the outcomes of the departmental review, a separate Learning and Development programme of business or a new team-specific programme of business will be enhanced to support the College's strategic objectives.

Progress continues on the rollout of Copilot Pro (initially 100 licences) and Teachermatic (also 100 licences). Work is also underway to assess the functionality of the free version of Copilot, which may be suitable for many staff. This could reduce the overall number of Pro licences required.

The Learning and Development and Learning Technologies team were honoured to receive the L&D Impact Award at the Charity Learning Consortium Scottish Awards Ceremony, held during their bi-annual conference. The award recognised the team's contributions to enhancing induction and onboarding processes for new employees.

Significant progress has been made on the actions identified; however, the EBS/Brightspace data issues placed considerable pressure on the Learning Technology Team. The team was responsible for identifying and resolving issues. Much of the work involved investigating discrepancies, removing incorrect enrolments, recoding and recreating courses, and deleting obsolete course shells.

While the most critical fixes have now been completed, the process of cleaning up courses and enrolments remains ongoing. Rarely does a day pass without at least one team member working through spreadsheets to trace and address outstanding issues. This has diverted attention from planned activities and delayed the MyNESCOl course reviews, which were intended to be completed early to allow teaching staff sufficient time to enhance their courses before transferring them into new shells.

The disruption also impacted course development timelines, resulting in missed deadlines with both the AI group and the Learning Lounge—although these have since been recovered. Additionally, the team now conducts daily manual checks to verify the accuracy of data feeds from the new system, a task that was not previously required.

February 2026 Update:

5	Operational & Policy Reviews	These reviews will focus on three operational areas: Harassment/Grievance, Health & Attendance, and Recruitment. The goal is to ensure that the related policies, procedures, and practices are compliant, proactive, and suitable for their intended purpose.	1. Ensure the College is compliant with the new employment law legislation around harassment. 2. Review our grievance procedures to ensure support for all parties. 3. Professional development for the HR Team on supporting grievances.	July 2026: Assistant Principal – People Services; HR Team; L&D Manager.	OurEvaluation - AI R2.1, R6.1
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			<p>4. Review our recruitment practices, including (but not limited to) incorporating actions identified from our equalities reporting.</p> <p>5. Complete review of the College's Health and Attendance Policy ensuring it is meeting staff and management requirements, and supports wellbeing and business delivery.</p> <p>6. Management training to be enhanced for all three operational areas.</p>		
<p>May 2025 Update:</p> <p>The newly recruited HR Advisor, starting in June 2025, will take the lead in ensuring our HR policies are up-to-date and compliant. Recruitment training for managers is being developed for rollout in 2025-26.</p> <p>Grievance training for the HR team was conducted by employment lawyers to ensure the advice provided to managers is both legally compliant and fit for purpose.</p>					
<p>September 2025 Update: Due to unforeseen staff absences and the retirement of a Senior HR Business Partner, progress on these actions has been limited since the May 2025 update. These actions will be a key priority for the incoming Head of HR to advance in early 2026.</p>					
<p>February 2026 Update:</p>					
6	Progress the People Services Equalities Action Plan	Ensuring People Services support and enable the College to embed	1. Take forward findings and recommendations from recent	July 2026: All People Services Teams.	SO 2 EO 1, 2, 3, 4 R 2.1, 2.3

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		equalities and demonstrate best practice.	equalities reports and the equalities survey.		People Services Strategy
May 2025 Update: New People Services Equality Working Group being formed to lead on projects such as inclusive recruitment and take forward the actions identified in the Mainstreaming reports.					
September 2025 Update: The former Recruitment Working Group has been reinstated under the refreshed title People Services Equalities Working Group, with an expanded remit to support the delivery of the Equalities Action Plan. Much of the Action Plan involves longer-term research and project-based work, which is now underway. An update on progress relating to staff equalities will be presented to the HR Committee of the Board in early October.					
February 2026 Update:					
7	Sustainability	As a sustainable employer, we are committed to ensuring the College's activities foster equality, build stronger communities, and improve the wellbeing of both staff and students, now and in the future.	1. Continue to embed wellbeing into the College's management culture. 2. Take a proactive and supportive approach to staff absence with an aim of reducing absence levels as a whole, but focusing on reducing absences due to work-related stress. 3. Progress the Employee Voice Group into the next phase. Take forward ideas to improve employee engagement from the staff survey. Prepare for the next Staff Engagement survey that will take place again in late 2025. 4. Continue to enhance and provide support for staff in relation to financial wellbeing.	July 2026: L&D Manager; Senior HR Business Partners.	SO 2, 5.8 R 2.1 Wellbeing Strategy

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May 2025 Update:

Employee Voice group meeting regularly, currently looking at the topic of visible leadership.

Pension information session being held in June to support staff's financial wellbeing.

A proactive approach is being taken in managing staff sickness absence. The HR Advisor – Wellbeing is working closely with line managers in managing absence and taking a proactive approach by using the stress risk assessment proactively to keep staff in work instead of reactively once they have been off.

Various new staff benefits including smart pay and refurbished technology have been introduced to help staff with financial wellbeing. We are also in the process of introducing a salary sacrifice scheme for staff to buy electric cars.

September 2025 Update: The first meeting of the Employee Voice Working Group for 2025/26 took place on 17 September 2025, with strong attendance and active engagement from members. The group is continuing its previous work on gathering employee feedback and fostering a positive workplace culture for the benefit of all staff.

Themes emerging from the Visible Leadership Survey were discussed, and moving forward, we will collaborate with both the Strategic Leadership Team and the Employee Voice Group to identify and implement appropriate actions.

The group also discussed plans for a new Staff Engagement Survey, scheduled for release in late 2025 or early 2026. Proposals for this survey will be presented to the Strategic Leadership Team in October.

Section 3 – *Empowering, Engaging & Wellbeing* – of the People Services Annual Report outlines the initiatives and actions undertaken throughout 2024. An update covering the first part of 2025 will be provided at the next HR Committee meeting.

We have seen a slight reduction in the number of days lost to absence from 2023 to 2024, both overall and specifically due to stress. However, further work is needed to proactively support managers and staff in reducing absence levels. To assist with this, a member of the People Services Team has arranged to attend management meetings—such as the Curriculum Managers Forum—to provide advice and support on managing absence within teams.

February 2026 Update:

8	Students' Association		1. Ensure that the Students' Association is involved in college-wide consultations proposing significant changes. 2.A greater commitment to joint staff-and-students events.	July 2026: All People Services Teams.	
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May 2025 Update:

People Services are proactively working to involve the Students' Association in college-wide consultations. Recently, the Students' Association participated in a consultation regarding the toilets on the ground and lower ground floors of the Tower Block at Aberdeen City Campus.

September 2025 Update:

The Assistant Principal People Services, along with other members of the Strategic Leadership Team, will attend regular meetings with both the Student Association and the Executive Team. This engagement will enable People Services to explore opportunities for closer collaboration with the Student Association, ensuring that the student voice is meaningfully reflected in our work.

The Learning & Development team recently participated in research examining how the student voice is incorporated into staff training. This prompted valuable reflection on how this aspect of the TQEF (Teaching Quality Enhancement Framework) is embedded within the People Team. The Learning & Development Manager will liaise with the CDN Professional Development Network to explore how TQEF is approached within their institution.

February 2026 Update: