REGIONAL BOARD MEETING

21 June 2023

G10, NESCol City Campus

REGIONAL BOARD

NOTICE OF MEETING

There will be a meeting of the Regional Board of North East Scotland College on Wednesday 21 June 2023 at 1000 hours in the Boardroom of NESCol City Campus.

AGENDA		
Agenda Item		**Paper**
66-22	**Education Scotland Progress Visit: Update from J Mulholland**	**x**
67-22	Apologies for Absence	
68-22	Declaration of any Potential Conflicts of Interest in relation to any Agenda Items	
69-22	Minutes of Previous Meeting – 22 March 2023	x
70-22	Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting	x
	Reports to the Board	
71-22	Report by the Regional Chair (Susan E)	x
72-22	Report by the Principal (N Cowie)	x
73-22	Report by Committee Chairs (Committee Chairs/Vice Chair)	x
	Governance Matters for Decision	
74-22	Board Policies (Susan L)	
	• Succession Planning Policy	x
	• Recruitment & Selection Policy	x
	Governance Matters for Information	
75-22	Board and Committee Membership (Susan L)	x
76-22	Board Recruitment – verbal update (Susan L)	
77-22	Trade Union Representation on Regional Board (Susan L)	x
	For Decision	
78-22	SA Strategy 2023/2026(K Pettitt)	x
79-22	Programme of Meetings for AY2023/24 (Susan L)	x
	Matters for Discussion	
80-22	Graduation Ceremonies – Fellow Nominations (Paul)	x
	Matters for Information	
81-22	Strategy Event – next steps (N Cowie/S Elston)	x
82-22	KPI Data (N Cowie)	x
	Reserved Item of Business	
	Matters for Decision	
83-22	ETZ Progress report (late paper to allow for last minute developments to be included) (S Grant)	
84-22	2023-24 Financial Budget (S Thompson)	x
85-22	2023-24 Capital Budget (S Thompson)	x
86-22	SFC FFR (S Thompson)	x

	Matter for Information	
87-22	Strategic Risk Register (S Thompson)	x
88-22	Credit Activity Overview AY2022/23 (R Laird)	x
89-22	**Any Other Business**	
	Private Reserved Matters for Decision	
90-22	Regional Board Nominee as non-Executive Director of ASET	x
	Private Reserved Matters for Information	
91-22	National bargaining update (K Donnelly)	x
92-22	Think the Unthinkable Convention 5 (N Cowie)	x
93-22	Principal's Performance Objectives Update (N Cowie)	x
94-22	**Summation of Actions and date of next meeting** Next meeting of the Regional Board will take place on Wednesday 11 October 2023.	

REGIONAL BOARD
Meeting of 21 June 2023

Title: Education Scotland Progress Visit Report

Author: Education Scotland	**Contributor(s):** Gill Griffin (cover paper)

Type of Agenda Item:

For Decision ☐

For Discussion ☐

For Information ☒

Reserved Item of Business ☐

Purpose:
To provide the Regional Board with the outcome report following the 3 day Education Scotland Progress Visit 21 – 23 March 2023.

Linked to Strategic Theme:

4. Delivering Excellence and Innovation

Linked to Strategic Risk(s):

Insert relevant risk reference number

Executive Summary:
The Progress Visit report provides external endorsement of effective practice occurring in the College across both curriculum and support services. A total of 24 meetings took place involving learners, teaching and support staff, all levels of management and representatives of the Students' Association. The schedule of meetings facilitated conversations covering five main themes.

- Learner progress and outcomes
- Curriculum, learning, teaching, and assessment
- Services to support learning
- Learner engagement
- Evaluation to facilitate improvement

Each theme was reviewed through the lens of recruitment, retention, attainment and progression.

It is important to note that the data used in the report was the SFC published data for academic year 2020-21.

Template Version: August 2021

The outcome of the Progress Visit determined that - *The college has made satisfactory progress in a number of areas, however further progress is required in improving outcomes for learners.*

Education Scotland identified 37 areas of positive progress, five areas for development and one main point for action.

The outcome of the progress visit report will inform an action plan to address the main point for action and the five areas for development.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that the Board note the content of the College's Progress Visit report.

Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval (if applicable)**:**
N/A

Equality Impact Assessment:

Positive Impact   ☒

Negative Impact   ☐

No Impact   ☐

Evidence

College Progress Visit Report

North East Scotland College

2 May 2023

College Principal	**Neil Cowie**
Progress Visit Date	**21 March 2023**
College Nominee	**Gill Griffin**
Lead HMI	**Joe Mulholland**
Outcome of Progress Visit	**The college has made satisfactory progress in a number of areas, however further progress is required in improving outcomes for learners.**

1. Background

Progress Visits (PVs) are planned collaboratively between the college, HM Inspectors, and the Scottish Funding Council (SFC).

During the PV, a team of HM Inspectors evaluated progress made by the college towards its improvement priorities, and outcomes of previous engagement with HM Inspectors. During the visit, the team met with staff, learners and other stakeholders and explored the following overarching themes linked to the college's enhancement plan; priorities around COVID-19 recovery; learner recruitment; retention; attainment; and progression.

The data used throughout this report is SFC published data for academic year 2020/2021.

This report summarises the findings from the visit and highlights areas of positive progress, areas for development, and any associated main points for action. The report will be shared with the college Principal, college Board of Management, and/or Regional Strategic Body, and SFC. An accompanying short report will be published on Education Scotland's website.

2. The college and its context

North East Scotland College (NESCol) is the largest provider of vocational education and training in the North East of Scotland and serves a mix of rural and urban areas. The college operates from three main campuses in Aberdeen City Centre, Altens and Fraserburgh and a number of learning centres including the Scottish Maritime Academy located in Peterhead.

The college delivers provision from Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels 2 to 8 across a wide range of further education (FE) and higher education (HE) programmes. To enable progression from introductory to degree level study, formal articulation agreements are in place with seven universities across Scotland, including the two local universities, Robert Gordon University and The University of Aberdeen.

3.   Findings from the progress visit

3.1   Recruitment

Areas of positive progress

Learner progress and outcomes

- Overall recruitment for part-time FE and full-time HE programmes has increased in the last year.

Curriculum, learning, teaching, and assessment

- Staff use social media platforms well to promote programmes and celebrate learner achievements. This is helping to raise the profile of the college.

Services to support learning

- Admissions staff monitor applications carefully. They provide helpful assistance to applicants with an additional support need to enable them to proceed through the recruitment process with confidence.

- Student services staff provide good support to care-experienced young people from application through to the start of programmes. They coordinate a range of bespoke activities to familiarise learners with college facilities and introduce them to teaching staff.

Learner engagement

- Almost all learners report that the online application process is easy to understand. They are satisfied with the content and quality of information they receive about their programme prior to enrolment.

- Almost all learners value opportunities provided to acquaint themselves with staff, learn about college facilities and get to know their peers.

- Almost all learners make good use of the Digital Futures Toolkit to access support. They feel well prepared to access IT equipment and systems and make use of the virtual learning environment (VLE).

Evaluation to facilitate improvement

- A few curriculum teams make effective use of transitions days to ensure learners are enrolled at the appropriate level.

- The findings from a Students' Association (SA) survey of learner views regarding induction arrangements have been used constructively by staff to improve the quality and accessibility of pre-induction materials.

Area for development

- Recruitment to full-time FE programmes has decreased by almost 10%.

3.2 Retention

Areas of positive progress

Learner progress and outcomes

- Across all modes of delivery, rates of learner retention are high. Overall retention across the college is 4% better than the national sector average.

Curriculum, learning, teaching, and assessment

- Curriculum managers (CMs) make effective use of a range of systems to track learner progress and identify those at risk of withdrawal. Good communication between curriculum and support staff is ensuring that learners receive support timeously.

- Most curriculum areas timetable flexibly to accommodate learners who are balancing work or caring responsibilities. They make good use of hybrid and blended-learning opportunities to help learners overcome barriers to attending classes on campus.

- Almost all curriculum teams ensure industry standards are embedded well within the curriculum. This is supporting learners to gain knowledge of current work practices and develop career-related skills.

Services to support learning

- Staff and the SA provide helpful support to learners experiencing significant financial hardship, including offering access to free breakfast and a foodbank.

- Learners can access mental health first aid through a variety of services. Health and wellbeing champions are highly visible and easily accessible to learners.

- Access to a free digital support service is helping learners to overcome digital hardware and software issues.

Learner engagement

- Almost all learners know who to contact for pastoral and academic support and report that curriculum and support staff are approachable and helpful.

- Class representatives are in place for almost all programmes and benefit from the training they receive to carry out their duties. They play a key role in providing feedback throughout the year to help improve the learner experience.

Evaluation to facilitate improvement

- The college use a range of mechanisms to gather learner views and teaching staff draw on these productively to support improvement at curriculum level.

Area for development

- Overall, learners do not have sufficient awareness of changes or improvements made as a result of their feedback, for example through the student satisfaction and engagement survey (SSES).

3.3   Attainment

Learner progress and outcomes

- The overall rate of part-time HE learner attainment is high and is 2% above the national sector average.

- The overall rate of full-time HE learner attainment has increased and is just below the national sector average.

Curriculum, learning, teaching, and assessment

- Curriculum staff make good use of labour market intelligence (LMI) to align the content of lessons to projected industry needs and skills shortages.

- Teaching teams provide learners with good work-based opportunities to widen their knowledge and understanding of industry and support attainment.

Services to support learning

- Care-experienced learners have good access to Skills Development Scotland (SDS) staff and My World of Work resources to support attainment and prepare for progression to employment.

Learner engagement

- Learners on most programmes engage productively in work placements to develop and apply practical skills and explore employment options.

- The SA contributes well to the college's evaluation and review arrangements and representatives are confident that the student voice is heard and responded to.

Evaluation to facilitate improvement

- A recently introduced online platform provides academic staff with easy access to useful information and guidance on implementing quality arrangements, including instructional videos featuring curriculum staff.

- All college managers contribute productively to key performance indicator meetings to analyse data trends and develop actions for improvement.

Areas for development

- The Academic Personal Skills and Development (APSD) unit has been contextualised for use in a few subject areas. However, this is not yet consistent across the curriculum or for all learners.

- Rates of attainment for learners on FE programmes are low and are below the national sector average.

- Too many learners do not complete their programme successfully. Rates of completion with partial success are high and significantly above the national sector average.

3.4 Progression

Areas of positive progress

Learner progress and outcomes

- Most learners progress to a positive destination on successfully completing their programme. The rate of progression to a positive destination is just above the national sector average.

Curriculum, learning, teaching, and assessment

- Curriculum staff work well with university partners to maintain articulation arrangements for HE learners to progress to degree level study.

- Almost all curriculum teams draw on strong partnerships with employers to incorporate field visits to industry and presentations from guest speakers into programme delivery. Learners are motivated and inspired by this and draw on these experiences to make career choices.

- Learners on software development programmes gain useful and relevant work experience with the college's learner digital support service.

Services to support learning

- Across the main campuses, engagement in Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) roadshows and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) career events are successfully raising awareness of the range of progression pathways amongst teachers and school-age young people.

- Staff work well with SDS to provide learners with access to services to support career planning. Staff provide helpful support to learners to make UCAS applications, produce curriculum vitae, and prepare for interviews. These facilities are helping learners to prepare for progression to employment or further study.

Learner engagement

- Learners value interaction with industry professionals during on-campus careers events to learn first-hand about the attributes and skills required to achieve their career aspirations.

- Almost all learners are positive about the support they receive from academic tutors to discuss their progress, explore their options and plan for entering employment or further learning.

Evaluation to facilitate improvement

- The response rate and overall learner satisfaction rate from the national SSES is higher than the national sector average.

Areas for development

- None identified

4. Main point for action

The following main point for action is required:

- College managers should take action to improve rates of learner attainment, and in particular address the number of learners who complete with partial success.

5. What happens next?

We recognise the progress made against most aspects for improvement, however further progress is required in improving outcomes for learners. We will ask for a report on progress on the agreed areas for improvement to be provided to the college link HM Inspector within agreed timescales. Taking account of the progress report, we will then decide what further engagement with the college is required.

Joe Mulholland
HM Inspector

	REGIONAL BOARD

Draft Minute of meeting

Draft minute of the meeting of the Regional Board of North East Scotland College on Wednesday 22 March 2023 at 1000 hours in the Boardroom of NESCol Fraserburgh Campus.

Agenda Item	
	Present: Neil Cowie Susan Elston (Regional Chair) Jim Gifford Nicole Matthews Leona McDermid Andy Rodden Drew Russell David Blackhall Neil McLennan Sheena Ross Bryan Hutcheson Duncan Cockburn Iain Watt **In attendance:** Jim Kirkwood, Acting Vice Principal, Finance & Risk Scott Matthew, Acting Vice Principal, Resources & Estates Robin McGregor, Vice Principal, Curriculum & Quality Susan Lawrance, Secretary to the Board Karen Fraser, Minute Secretary **Trade Union Observer:** Sue Porter, EIS/FELA (until Agenda items relating to Private Reserved Matters for Information) **Guest Attendee:** Kimra Donnelly, Director of People Services (for Agenda item 63-22 to end)
	The Regional Chair welcomed all members, introducing new Non-Executive Members Duncan Cockburn and Iain Watt to their first Board Meeting.
46-22	**Apologies for Absence** An apology was received from G Watt. C Beaton was noted, as not in attendance.
47-22	**Declaration of any Potential Conflicts of Interest in relation to any Agenda Items:** A Rodden declared a potential conflict of interest by virtue of his position with ETZ Ltd and Agenda item 58-22.

48-22	**Minutes of Previous Meeting: 14 December 2022** The Minute was approved as a true and accurate record.
49-22	**Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting** Members noted that all matters arising had been addressed and had no additional comments to add.
	Reports to the Board
50-22	**Report by the Regional Chair:** Members noted the Report and the additional verbal information on meetings attended.
51-22	**Report by the Principal** Members noted the Report and the additional information provided in relation to the national and regional pictures, the Pathfinder project, its progression and the senior phase project. The Principal highlighted the positivity and increased interest in the College at the recent Open Days.
52-22	**Report by Committee Chairs** D Russell, as Chair of the Curriculum and Quality Committee detailed the key business content from the last Committee Meeting. S Ross, as Chair of the Finance and Resource Committee highlighted the F&R Committee discussions on the January 2023 accounts and the budget review and assumptions. On behalf of the Governance and Nominations Committee, S Elston elaborated on targeted Board recruitment, the Board engagement plan and the role of Fellows, as recently discussed with K Milroy.
	Governance Matters for Decision
53-22	**Governance Manual – Annual Review:** The Board Secretary highlighted the proposed alterations to serving term length and the request from the current Equality and Diversity Champion, S Elston, to continue in the role. Members agreed to this continuation. A discussion took place on the serving term for co-opted members. It was agreed this be changed from the current 12 months to 24 months, with a review to be held every 12 months. The need for a succession/transfer of knowledge plan was highlighted. **Action: Board Secretary to bring revised succession plan to next meeting of the Governance and Nominations Committee.** The proposed changes to the Governance Manual were agreed subject to the above amendment. **Action: Board Secretary to reflect the proposed amendment and make available updated Governance manual**.
54-22	**Co-opted Membership Offer:** 14

	Members approved the suggested co-option of D Anderson to the Audit and Risk Committee. **Action: Board Secretary to take this further on behalf of the Regional Chair.**
	Governance Matters for Information
55-22	**Board and Committee Membership** The Board Secretary highlighted the changes and the induction meetings arranged for new Board Members.
	For Decision
56-22	**Equalities Mainstreaming Report (including approval of new Equality Outcomes):** The Public Sector Equality Duty Interim Report was presented on behalf of author, S Grant by R McGregor who summarised the Colleges requirements and the update on progress made across key equalities outcomes including changes in attainment gaps; the ongoing work on ensuring an anti-racist curriculum and the work of the student support team. Members acknowledged the very informative Report, with R McGregor confirming to members the need to "leave no-one behind" with component parts of the report visible within the annual College Respect campaign. The Principal highlighted the challenge of providing ESOL provision to the increasing number of asylum seekers within both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. Members approved the Report and thanked the College for the excellent work highlighted therein.
	Matters for Information
57-22	**PREVENT Annual Report:** R McGregor presented and summarised the work of the PREVENT Board on behalf of A Du Plessis. MR McGregor, in response to a Member's query confirmed there are no PREVENT cases currently at the College, and gave assurance to Members' of the ongoing staff awareness training.
	Reserved Item of Business
	Matters for Decision

58-22	**ETZ Ltd – NESCol Advanced manufacturing Skills Hub Proposal – late paper**

		Matters for Information
60-22		**Indicative Funding Allocation AY2023/24 – verbal update**
61-22		**Revised Budget including Scenario Options**
62-22		**Strategic Risk Register**
		Any Other Business
		Private Reserved Matters for Information
59-22		**Think the Unthinkable – taken under Private Reserved Matters**

63-22	**Financial Savings/Scenario Planning/VS Update**
64-22	**National bargaining update**
65-22	**Summation of Actions and date of next meeting** A summation of the Actions was given by S Lawrance. Members noted the next meeting of the Regional Board will take place on Wednesday 21 June in **Aberdeen City Campus.**

Agenda Item	Actions from Regional Board Meeting 22.03.23	Responsibility	Deadline
53-22	Revised Succession Plan to be presented to next meeting of the Governance and Nominations Group.	Board Secretary	21.06.23
53-22	Governance Manual to reflect agreed amendment to length of co-opted Board Membership.	Board Secretary	As soon as possible.
54-22	Co-opted Membership to be offered to D Anderson.	Board Secretary/ Regional Chair	As soon as possible.

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58-22	ETZ Ltd – NESCol Advanced manufacturing Skills Hub Proposal		
58-22	ETZ Ltd – NESCol Advanced manufacturing Skills Hub Proposal		

Signed ……………………………………………..   **Date** …………....................

REGIONAL BOARD

An update on matters arising from the meeting of the Regional Board of North East Scotland College held on Wednesday 22 March 2023.

Agenda Item	
53-22	**Action:** Revised Succession Plan to be presented to next meeting of the Governance and Nominations Group.
	Status: Complete - revised Policy on Regional Board Agenda for 21.06.23.
53-22	**Action:** Governance Manual to reflect agreed amendment to length of co-opted Board Membership.
	Status: Complete
54-22	**Action:** Co-opted Membership to be offered to D Anderson.
	Status: Complete – D Anderson offered, and accepted, Regional Board Co-option to Audit and Risk Committee and Regional Board.
	Reserved Matters Arising
58-22	**Action:**
	Status:
58-22	**Action:**
	Status:

REGIONAL BOARD	
Meeting of 21 June 2023	
REPORT BY THE REGIONAL CHAIR	
The purpose of this report is to update the Regional Board on activities of the Regional Chair during the period from 23 March to 21 June 2023.	
1	Regular catch up with Principal and Board Secretary
2	Several meetings with Chairs of RGU and UoA
3	**Attendance at Meetings – Regional Chair** **March 2023** • Colleges Scotland Board Meeting • Colleges Scotland Stakeholder Dinner • Meeting with new Board Member, Iain Watt • ASET Management Committee Meeting • Along with Principal, met with local MSPs, MPs. **April 2023** • Colleges Scotland All Chairs Group Meeting • CPA Board Meeting • Think the Unthinkable Apprenticeships Working Group • NESCol Equalities Committee Meeting • NJNC Pay Dispute Side Table Meeting

REPORT BY THE PRINCIPAL
The purpose of this report is to provide the Regional Board with information relating to the period immediately prior to the Board Meeting; information which may have relevance, significance, priority or challenge for future College activity.

| 1 | **Independent Review of the Skills Delivery Landscape (The Withers Review)**

The Independent Review of the Skills Delivery Landscape, undertaken by James Withers, was published on Wednesday 7 June 2023.
A summary of the Review recommendations is provided below. Broadly speaking they are split between structural and operational themes:

Structural recommendations:

- To move responsibility for national skills planning from Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and Scottish Funding Council (SFC) to the Scottish Government.
- To establish a new single funding body, which brings together responsibility for all post-school learning and training funding functions from SFC, SDS and, potentially, the Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS).
- To give the new qualifications body a clear remit for overseeing development and accreditation of all publicly funded post-school qualifications and the underpinning skills frameworks and occupational standards.
- To substantively reform SDS to focus on the development of a national careers service, with a mission to embed careers advice and education within communities, educational settings and workplaces across Scotland.
- To give the enterprise agencies a clear remit for supporting businesses with workforce planning as an embedded and integrated part of business development and planning.

Operational Recommendations:

- To develop a new culture of leadership from Scottish Government.
- To define success and end the division in language and philosophy.
- To establish areas of strategic workforce opportunity and need and empower regional partners to develop their own solutions.
- To build a new model of funding for post-school learning provision, with simplicity and parity of esteem as core values.
- To provide funding options for living costs for those who want to study part-time/flexibly.
- To review post-school qualifications, using SCQF as a foundation, to create clear learning pathways underpinned by a universal s kills |

framework and occupational standards and to drive further modularisation.

- To develop a new, national, lifelong and digital training record to chart skills development through life, connecting into a revitalised careers service.
- To expand the remit of the existing DYW network to establish a national employer board and a series of regional employer boards which put employer views at the heart of skills planning, national strategy and the development of post-school learning system. In doing so, the Scottish Apprenticeship Advisory Board (SAAB) should be wound up.
- To explore greater private sector investment in the post-school learning system and, in particular, in the provision of in-work learning opportunities.
- To create a new, clear map to direct users into the system.

Whilst the review report has been well received by the college sector, its reception with Scottish Government has been somewhat subdued.
This is most likely due to the degree of implicit and explicit criticism of Scottish Government contained in the report along with scale of reform that the review report invites.

A link to the full report is provided below and further updates on any subsequent activity will be provided to Board members in due course.

https://www.gov.scot/publications/fit-future-developing-post-school-learning-system-fuel-economic-transformation/

2	**Four Nations College Alliance**
	In early May, the Four Nations College Alliance convened in Belfast to discuss, amongst other things, regional economic development, improving productivity and the redressing of post-pandemic social inequalities.
	The Alliance firmly believes that colleges have a central role to play as key institutions at the heart of their regional economies. Further, it believes that existing political systems within the UK fail to fully utilise or recognise the potential of colleges to address the economic needs nationally and regionally.
	This convention afforded those attending to learn from the distinct systems represented, to discuss how colleges can better articulate what they do and what more they could do, and debate what it would take from sector leaders and policymakers to ensure colleges are effectively utilised in their local/ regional economies.
	The event opened with an exploration of the productivity challenges facing national economies and the potential contribution of colleges in driving economic development. A college leader from each of the nations presented a brief overview of how their college had impacted their local economy, the systems they are working within, the opportunities that have arisen and challenges they have faced.
	The following session provided a small group-structured discussion on how those in attendance, namely colleges leaders and civil servants, can place

	colleges at the forefront of local economic strategy and policy. This session proved valuable as college principals were able to share perspectives and information that proved somewhat enlightening for those civil servants in attendance, particularly in relation to the scope of what colleges offer, the impact of the support that colleges give students and the decisions that are made away from colleges that adversely impact students and employers. Further updates on the work of the Four Nations College Alliance will be provided to Board members in due course.
3	**Education, Children and Young People Committee Debate: College Regionalisation** Just before the completion of this paper, a debate had taken place in Scottish Parliament relating to the work conducted by its Education, Children and Young People Committee. The debate centred on the Committee's report on College Regionalisation which had been published earlier this year. Committee Chair, Sue Webber, highlighted how impressed the Committee had been by the work conducted by Scotland's colleges and noted that regionalisation had offered colleges a stronger voice regionally. She went on to highlight how important colleges would be to the successful delivery of the National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET) and the future skills of both national and regional economies. On behalf of the Committee she also reflected on the challenging financial position colleges now found themselves in and noted that the continued and 'chronic underfunding' of colleges had not helped this position. On behalf of the Scottish Government, the Minister for Higher and Further Education, Graeme Dey, highlighted the unique role of colleges, the great partnerships colleges had developed regionally and the difficult financial climate in which they operate. This was quickly followed by claims that Scottish Government has invested well in colleges and continues to do so. The debate itself was interesting, at times fiery and most, if not all, contributors were extremely supportive of the college sector. In particular, many voiced concerns about college funding and the serious consequences of not addressing these. A link to the debate is provided below: https://www.scottishparliament.tv/meeting/education-children-and-young-people-committee-debate-college-regionalisation-june-13-2023 If time allows, some further discussion will take place at our Regional Board meeting on this debate and any subsequent reaction to it.
4	**Fraserburgh Campus – Industry Benefactor** A Fraserburgh-based benefactor has entered a third year of support for the College with a donation of £200,000 over and above the previously donated sum of £300,000. Whilst these donations started in 2021, the relationship had developed years before as a consequence of a shared contribution to the work of a Scottish

Government task force set up to mitigate the impacts of mass redundancies at a local fish-processing factory.

To date the very generous donations have been put good use with the initial £100,000 helping with the creation, in 2021, of the Future Skills Zone at the Fraserburgh campus. This innovative learning area showcases technology in areas including robotics and 3D printing.

The following year a £200,000 donation helped create the new Future Skills Workshop: a 'hands-on' facility which will underpin training in energy transition, including hydrogen and wind power technologies.

A third donation has now been confirmed and an additional £200,000 has been committed to enable a range of projects to be delivered at Fraserburgh Campus in 2023/24. These include:

- The creation of an Esports Arena.
- The purchase and installation of a new CNC plasma cutting system to help meet significant demand for qualified welders in the offshore wind sector.
- New training rigs for renewables related activity, expanding provision in the Future Skills Workshop.
- New equipment for the fitness suite.
- Enhancements to the hair and beauty salons.

The benefactor retains a keen interest in the activities of the College and is keen to continue the support of it. Accordingly, routine progress meetings are held between representatives from both the company and the College.

| 5 | **External Engagements/selected key meetings and events attended since the previous Regional Board meeting:**

- SFC Pathfinder - National Advisory Board Meeting (28th March)
- MSP Stakeholder Meetings (31st March)
- Aberdeen City Council Education Liaison Group (5th April)
- NESCol/RGU Joint Meeting of Executive Teams (18th April)
- SFC/NESCol Meeting (20th April)
- Meeting with Scottish Government Director General – Education and Justice (21st April)
- AGCC Stakeholder Meeting (24th April)
- CPG Meeting (25th April)
- AGCC Northern Star Awards (28th April)
- Four Nations College Alliance – Belfast (4th/5th May)
- CES Event (10th May)
- Scottish Government Purpose and Principles Outcomes Workshop (11th May)
- Fishing News Awards (11th May)
- Meet the Principal - 6 Months On Session (31st May)
- Meet the Principal – New Starts Session (1st June)
- Think the Unthinkable Convention 5 (6th June)
- Meet the Principal – 6 Months On Session (8th June)
- MSP Stakeholder Meeting (9th June)

| | | • Think the Unthinkable (Workstream 2) (14th June) |
| | | • ACC MATMG Meeting (20th June) |

REGIONAL BOARD

Meeting of 21 June 2023

REPORT BY COMMITTEE CHAIRS
The purpose of this report is to provide the Regional Board with information relating to business conducted at the most recent meetings of its Committees. Committee Chairs will be provided with an opportunity to bring matters considered at these meetings to the attention of Members. Members will also be provided with an opportunity to seek further information on business that has been transacted.

1	The following meetings have been held since the last meeting of the Regional Board:

Curriculum & Quality	24 May 2023
Human Resource	24 May 2023
Audit and Risk	31 May 2023
Finance and Resource	31 May 2023
Governance & Nominations	31 May 2023

Copies of the draft minutes from the above meetings are available in the Meeting Channel of the Regional Board Team space.

2	**Curriculum and Quality Committee – 24 May 2023** Summary of key business: - Credits Forecast AY2022/23 - Applications Update AY2023/24 - Business & Community Development Update - Student Support – Activity Report - Students' Association Activity Report and Enhancement Plan - Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey Results Agreed Actions: - SA Strategy for 2023/26 to be presented to Regional Board.

3	**Human Resource Committee – 24 May 2023** Summary of key business: - Equal Pay Policy and Statement - Gender and Ethnicity Pay Gap Report - Equalities Report - Equalities Action Plan presentation - Learning and Development Equalities Report - People Services Enhancement Plan – Progress Report - Learning Technologies Update - Staff Wellbeing update - National Collective Bargaining update - Job Evaluation update Agreed Actions:

	• Training on AI for HR (and possibly other Regional Board Members) to be explored.

4	**Audit and Risk Committee – 31 May 2023**
	
	Summary of Key Business:
	    • Internal Audit Reports covering:
	        o Final Nescol Financial Planning Audit Report
	        o Final IT – Digital Strategy Audit Report
	        o Final IA Follow up review Report
	        o Final 2021/22 Student Support Funds Report
	    • Internal Audit Contract extension
	    • Strategic Risk Register
	    • Code of Good Governance – review of compliance
	    • Annual Procurement Report
	
	Agreed Actions:
	    • Update on new layout and content of Strategic Risk Register to be shared with Committee.

5	**Finance and Resource Committee – 31 May 2023**
	
	Summary of Key Business:
	    • Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy
	    • Analysis of SFC Funding Allocation AY2023-24
	    • Schedule of business for F&R
	    • Capital expenditure/estates update
	    • Draft Budget and Capital Plan
	    • April 2023 Management Accounts
	    • VS Update
	    • Single Source Justifications
	
	Agreed Actions:
	    • Schedule of Meetings to be reviewed
	    • Budget to be prepared and presented to Regional Board (June)
	    • Feedback on Management Accounts layout to be provided
	    • SSJ to be signed by F&R Chair

6	**Governance and Nominations Committee – 31 May 2023**
	
	Summation of key business:
	    • Board Policies
	    • Board Recruitment
	    • Board Skills Matrix
	    • Committee Membership
	    • Joint Board Event – 21 June 2023
	
	Agreed actions:
	    • Board Policies to be presented to Regional Board (June)
	    • Committee Membership to be presented to Regional Board (June)

REGIONAL BOARD
Meeting of 21 June 2023

Title: Succession Planning Policy for Non-Executive Board Members

Author: Susan Lawrance	**Contributor(s):** Governance & Nominations Committee

Type of Agenda Item:

For Decision ☒

For Discussion ☐

For Information ☐

Reserved Item of Business ☐

Purpose: To enable the Board to consider a revised version of the Succession Planning Policy for Non-Executive Board Members.

Linked to Strategic Goal:

Linked to Annual Priority:

Executive Summary:
The Succession Planning Policy for Non-Executive Board Members is due for review. Attached as Appendix 1 is a track-changed version of the Policy highlighting amendments proposed by the Governance and Nominations Committee.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that the Board consider and, if so minded, approve the revised Succession Planning Policy for Non-Executive Board Members.

Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval (if applicable)**:**
None.

Equality Impact Assessment:

Positive Impact ☒

Negative Impact ☐

No Impact ☐

Evidence: The Policy references the Board's commitment to diversity in relation to its membership.

Succession Planning Policy for non – Executive Board Members

Review Date: ~~June 2023~~ ~~October 2021~~

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Succession Planning Policy for Board Members

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Responsibility for the effective governance of North East Scotland College rests with the Regional Board. Board Members are appointed in accordance with the Board's Recruitment and Selection Policy, with all non-executive Member appointments subject to formal ministerial approval before taking up office.

1.2 Members normally serve for an initial term of 4 years but may be considered for reappointment for a further period.

1.3 Strong, accountable governance requires Board Members who reflect Scotland's diverse population with the right skills, knowledge, experience and attributes to make a valuable contribution to an effective Board. It is therefore essential that the Regional Board takes a planned and considered approach to the appointment/re-appointment of Members.

2.0 Policy Aims

2.1 This Policy seeks to provide a framework for the planned succession of Members of the Regional Board. In doing so the Board will ensure balance in the skills and expertise which all Members bring and will consider the diversity of its membership.

3.0 Policy Implementation

3.1 Recruitment and Selection

    3.1.1 As per existing policy.

3.2 Induction

    3.2.1 As per existing policy.

3.3 Continuing Professional Development

    3.3.1 As per existing Induction Policy and as identified as part of the Board's evaluation process through Annual Board Member Development Meetings.

3.4   Succession Planning and Continuity

3.4.1   The Board should aim to appoint no more than 25% ~~three~~ of its total number of new non-Executive ~~new~~ Members during any academic year.

3.4.2   Consideration of possible re-appointment of existing Members will commence six months in advance of the end of a Member's term of office.

3.4.3   The terms of office of current Board Members and upcoming changes to membership are detailed in Appendix 1.

3.5   Office Bearers and Committee Membership

3.5.1   The Regional Chair will discuss succession planning in terms of the offices of Vice Chairs, Committee Chair and Committee Vice Chair and Committee membership as part of the Annual Board Member Development Meeting process. Any proposed changes will then be considered by the Board's ~~Selection and Appointments Committee~~ Governance and Nominations Committee who will then advise the Regional Board as appropriate.

4.0   Roles and Responsibilities

4.1   Oversight and management of this process will rest with the Board's ~~Governance Steering Group,~~Governance and Nominations Committee who will make recommendations in relation to Members terms of office to the Regional Board.

Status:	Approved by Regional Board
Date of version:	~~October 2018~~ June 2023
Responsibility for Policy:	Regional Board
Responsibility for implementation:	Regional Chair and Secretary to the Board
Responsibility for review:	Regional Board

Review date: ~~October 2021~~ June 2026

REGIONAL BOARD
Meeting of 21 June 2023

Title: Recruitment & Selection Policy for Board Members

Author: Susan Lawrance	**Contributor(s):** Governance & Nominations Committee

Type of Agenda Item:

For Decision ☒

For Discussion ☐

For Information ☐

Reserved Item of Business ☐

Purpose: To enable the Board to consider a revised version of the Recruitment & Selection Policy for Board Members.

Linked to Strategic Goal:

Linked to Annual Priority:

Executive Summary:
The Recruitment & Selection Policy for Board Members is due for review. Attached as Appendix 1 is a track-changed version of the Policy highlighting amendments proposed by the Governance and Nominations Committee.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that the Board consider and, if so minded, approve the revised Recruitment & Selection Policy for Board Members.

Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval (if applicable)**:**
None.

Equality Impact Assessment:

Positive   Impact ☒

Negative   Impact ☐

No Impact ☐

Evidence: The Policy references the Board's commitment to diversity in relation to its membership.

Recruitment and Selection Policy for Board Members

Review Date: June ~~2021~~2023

Recruitment and Selection Policy for Board Members

1.0   Introduction

1.1   The Model Code of Conduct for Public Bodies, 2014 states that the Board of a Scottish Public Body should consist of "board members who reflect Scotland's diverse population with the right skills, knowledge, experience and attributes to make a valuable contribution to an effective board."

1.2   The Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges states that "The board must seek to reflect in its membership, the make-up of the community through offering maximum opportunity of membership to a range of potential members and removing potential barriers to membership."

1.3   The Regional Board acknowledges that it is critical to ensure that an effective and open and transparent recruitment and selection policy is followed to:
- maintain public accountability
- ensure that the Board is properly equipped to perform its role and to achieve positive outcomes
- encourage participation from a wide and representative group of individuals.

1.4   The Regional Board will ensure that its recruitment and selection process is undertaken in a manner that encourages equal opportunities and, in particular, observes Scottish Government Policy in relation to the gender equality on the boards of public bodies.

1.5   This Policy relates to the recruitment and selection of non-executive Board Members.

1.6   The recruitment and selection of the following categories of Board Members is undertaken by other formal processes:
- the principal of the college
- a person appointed by being elected by the teaching staff of the college from among their own number
- a person appointed by being elected by the non-teaching staff of the college from among their own number
- two persons appointed by being nominated by the students' association of the college from among the students of the college.

2.0   Legislation

2.1   In meeting the requirements of the Post 16 Education (Scotland) Act 2013 "Every post-16 education body and regional strategic body must, when making appointments to its governing body or exercising any of its other functions, do so in a manner which encourages equal opportunities and in particular the observance of the equal opportunities requirements."

2.2   In line with the Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018, the Board will seek to improve the representation of women in non-executive positions on public boards, noting the

'gender representation objective' – a target that women should make up 50% of non-executive board membership. The Board will take positive action in relation to Board Member recruitment to encourage applications from a diverse cross-section of the region's population, striving for a 50/50 gender balance in terms of its membership but also taking cognisance of all other protected characteristics as part of its recruitment and appointment process. The Board will however always, above all other considerations, appoint the person who has the skills required at that time.

2.3   As defined in the Post 16 Education (Scotland) Act 2013 "In appointing members ……… and in extending the period of appointment of any member so appointed, the board ……… must have regard to any guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers in relation to the making of such appointments (including any guidance on the desirability of appointing members with particular skills and experience)."

2.4   Eligibility for appointment to the Regional Board of North East Scotland College is as set out in the Further and Higher Education Acts 1992 and 2005, and the Post-16 Education (Scotland) Act 2013.

2.5   An appointment has effect only if approved by the Regional Chair and Scottish Ministers.

3.0   College Sector Board Appointments: Ministerial Guidance
3.1   The Ministerial Guidance:
- identifies the skills, knowledge, experience and attributes of board members to enable college sector boards to perform effectively; and
- outlines, in general terms, the process by which appointments should be made or extended to support a robust, effective and transparent system in which learners, staff, business, wider society and Ministers will have confidence.

3.2   The current Ministerial Guidance can be accessed on the Scottish Government website –
http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Education/UniversitiesColleges/17135/CollegeGovernance

4.0   Skills Matrix
4.1   A non-executive Board Member Skills Matrix is maintained to ensure that the Board has, within its composition, the appropriate coverage of skills, qualities and expertise required to effectively govern the College.

4.2   The Skills Matrix is used to identify possible gaps which could be addressed by the recruitment and selection process.

5.0   Recruitment Process

5.1   The key stages of the recruitment process can be summarised as follows:

- The Governance ~~Steering Group~~ and Nominations Committee will agree the timescales to be adopted for the recruitment and selection process following consideration of the Board's Skills Matrix, and the Board's Succession Planning Policy for Board Members
- The Principal & Chief Executive will be consulted on skills and experience aligned to the College's future strategy that it would be desirable for new Board Members to have
- The Secretary to the Board will prepare an advertisement which will highlight desirable skills and experience
- The advertisement will be placed on appropriate websites, and in online bulletins including ~~Scottish Government Public Appointments,~~ College Development Network, Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce (AGCC), ~~Scottish Council for Development and Industry (SCDI),~~ Women onto Boards, Change the Chemistry and Community Planning Partnerships
- The advertisement will also be highlighted through the College's various social media channels
- A microsite will be created on the College website to make available the application form, person specification, Board Member terms and conditions, and information pack along with key supporting information.
- Targeted emails may also be issued to organisations and businesses which relate to particular skills or sectors from which applications are particularly welcomed
- Board Members will be asked to highlight the opportunity to join the Regional Board to their existing networks
- Fellows and past Guest Speakers will be asked to highlight the vacancies to their networks
- College staff will be asked to highlight the vacancies to employer contacts
- A shortlist of applicants will be agreed by the Board's Governance ~~Steering Group~~ and Nominations Committee and the Independent Person. The shortlisting of applicants will be undertaken with anonymised applications i.e. names and dates of birth will be removed, to help avoid any unconscious biases
- The Secretary to the Board will establish an interview schedule.

6.0   Selection Process

6.1   The key stages of the selection process can be summarised as follows:

- Shortlisted applicants will be interviewed by the Regional Chair, ~~one of the Board's Vice Chairs~~ the Principal, and the Independent Person,~~ with the Secretary to the Board in attendance~~
- Applicants will be asked an agreed set of interview questions
- Applicants will individually meet with the Vice Principal
- A list of preferred candidates will be agreed by the Regional Chair, the Principal ~~and~~ the Independent Person
- Consideration will also be given to the identification of highly regarded candidates for which there is no immediate position i.e.

observing Board meetings prior to a future vacancy arising, co-option to a Standing Committee

- A letter from the Regional Chair seeking approval of the appointments, along with a supporting letter from the Independent Person, will be sent to the ~~Deputy Director, Colleges, SFC and Young Workforce~~ Scottish Government.
- The Secretary to the Board will inform unsuccessful candidates after all Interviews have taken place
- Upon receipt of approval of the appointments, the Secretary to the Board will inform successful ~~and unsuccessful~~ candidates
- If any preferred candidates do not receive Scottish Ministers approval a further recruitment process will be undertaken to appoint to any remaining vacancies.

Status: Approved by Regional Board
Date of version: June 2020~~3~~
Responsibility for Policy: Regional Board
Responsibility for implementation: Regional Chair and Secretary to the Board
Responsibility for review: Regional Board
Review date: June 2021~~4~~

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Board Member	Date of Appointment	Expiry of Term of Office	Succession Planning
Non-Executive Members			
Neil McLennan	01/08/2022	31/07/2026	Serving second term of office, cannot be reappointed
Sheena Ross	01/09/2019	31/08/2023	Serving first term of office
Jim Gifford	02/05/2021	03/05/2025	Serving first term of office
Leona McDermid	02/05/2021	03/05/2025	Serving first term of office
Andrew Rodden	02/05/2021	03/05/2025	Serving first term of office
Bryan Hutcheson	15/08/2022	14/08/2026	Serving first term of office
Iain Watt	31/01/2023	30/01/2027	Serving first term of office
Duncan Cockburn	31/01/2023	30/01/2027	Serving first term of office
Mark Fotheringham	31/03/2023	30/03/2027	Serving first term of office
Staff Members			
Cindy Dempster (Support Staff)	28/03/2023	27/03/2027	Eligible to stand for reappointment (following election)
David Blackhall (Teaching Staff)	08/05/2021	07/05/2025	Eligible to stand for reappointment (following election)
Student Members			
Nicole Matthews	01/08/2022	31/07/2023	Serving first term of office as SA President
Carrie Beaton	01/08/2022	31/07/2023	Serving first term of office as SA Depute President
Other			
Susan Elston (Regional Chair)	01/11/2022	31/10/2024	Serving first term of office
Neil Cowie (Principal)	20/12/2019		
Co-opted Committee Members			
Dave Anderson	31/03/2023	30/03/2025	Co-opted to Audit and Risk Committee
Future Board Vacancies			
Current Vacancy AY2022-23	01/11/2022		Created following end of John Henderson tenure
Current Vacancy AY2022-23	01/03/2023		Created following end of David Anderson tenure
Future Vacancy AY2022-23	01/06/2023		Created following end of Andrew Russell tenure

June 2023

REGIONAL BOARD
Meeting of 21 June 2023

Title: Board Committee Membership	
Author: Susan Lawrance, Secretary to the Board	**Contributor(s):** Governance and Nominations Committee

Type of Agenda Item:
For Decision ☐
For Discussion ☐
For Information ☒
Reserved Item of Business ☐

Purpose: To enable the Regional Board to discuss and note the proposed changed recommended by the Governance and Nominations Committee and the Membership changes as will be outlined by the Regional Chair, to reflect the end of tenure of Drew Russell and the Board Membership of Mark Fotheringham.

Linked to Strategic Theme:
4. Delivering Excellence and Innovation

Linked to Strategic Risk(s):
n/a

Executive Summary:
The Governance and Nominations Committee acknowledged the changes required following the end of Drew Russell's tenure as not only a Board Member but also the Chair of Audit and Risk and Curriculum and Quality Committee.
The Regional Chair will (if she has not done so already) be in contact with all Board Members who are being requested to join or change Committee membership or to take on additional Committee Roles.

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

Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval (if applicable)**:** Governance and Nominations Committee (31.05.23)

Equality Impact Assessment:

Template Version: August 2021

Positive Impact	☒
Negative Impact	☐
No Impact	☐
Evidence:	

REGIONAL BOARD - COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Audit & Risk Committee (6)
Susan Elston
Jim Gifford (~~Vice~~ Chair)
~~Drew Russell (Chair)~~
Leona McDermid
Bryan Hutcheson
Iain Watt (Vice Chair)
David Anderson (Co-opted Member)
Andy Rodden

Curriculum & Quality (9)
Carrie Beaton
David Blackhall
Nicole Matthews
Neil Cowie
Andy Rodden (~~Vice~~ Chair)
~~Drew Russell (Chair)~~
Cindy Dempster
Duncan Cockburn
Bryan Hutcheson (Vice Chair)
Mark Fotheringham

Finance & Resources Committee (8)
David Blackhall
Neil Cowie
Carrie Beaton
Nicole Matthews
Jim Gifford
Sheena Ross (Chair)
Iain Watt
Neil McLennan (Vice Chair)
Mark Fotheringham

Human Resources Committee (8)
Neil Cowie
Susan Elston
Jim Gifford (Vice Chair)
Neil McLennan
Carrie Beaton
Cindy Dempster
Leona McDermid (Chair)
Duncan Cockburn

Remuneration Committee (6)
Nicole Matthews
Gwen Watt
Sheena Ross
~~Drew Russell~~
Susan Elston
Leona McDermid (Committee Chair)
<mark>Andy Rodden</mark>

Governance and Nominations Committee (5)
Neil Cowie
Susan Elston
Sheena Ross
~~Drew Russell~~
Leona McDermid
<mark>Andy Rodden (as Chair of C&Q)</mark>

Chairs Committee (5)
Susan Elston
Sheena Ross
~~Drew Russell~~
Neil Cowie
Leona McDermid
<mark>Andy Rodden (as Chair of C&Q)</mark>

1 June 2023

REGIONAL BOARD
Meeting of 21 June 2023

Title: Trade Union Observer Status - Update

Author: Susan Lawrance, Board Secretary	**Contributor(s):**

Type of Agenda Item:

For Decision ☐

For Discussion ☐

For Information ☒

Reserved Item of Business ☐

Purpose: To provide an update on the Trade Union observer status on Regional Boards.

Linked to Strategic Theme:

1. Being Agile and Responsive

Linked to Strategic Risk(s):

n/a

Executive Summary:
Background
The Regional Board at their meeting of 24 June 2020 considered and approved the proposal to have two Trade Union Nominees attend Regional Board Meetings in an observer's capacity. At that time planned new legislation changes was expected within 2020, to bring the college sector into line with changes made in universities by the Higher Education Governance Act 2016, and to build on the fundamental principles of the Fair Work Convention, an agenda supported by the Scottish Government, which recognises the positive impact of trade unions at individual, workplace, sector and national level and the unions' role in promoting progressive workplace practices that contribution to the health of the economy and civil society in Scotland.

The new legislation was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, however the task of the Good Governance Steering group remained to produce guidance for the election of the members (a representation from rather than for their respective groups), defining:

- Criteria for selection of candidates
- Stages of the Election process leading to appointment to a College Board.

Members are asked to note that the interim arrangement currently in place will cease following the enactment of the full legislation.

Template Version: August 2021

The Governance Professionals discussed the nomination process and endorsement of applications at their recent meeting, where the importance of a robust induction and training process was recognised.

Next Steps
A Good Governance Steering Group Short Life Working Group has been set up to look at timescales, procedures, process, induction and training in respect of trade union members joining Regional Boards, with the intention to have full Regional Board Membership in place within January 2024.

Members are asked to note this paper for information.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Board note the paper for information. Further updates will be provided when available.

Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval (if applicable): Regional Board June 2020

Equality Impact Assessment:

Positive Impact   ☒

Negative Impact   ☐

No Impact   ☐

Evidence:

REGIONAL BOARD
Meeting of 23nd of May 2023

Title: NESCol Students' Association 2023– 2026 Strategic Plan

Author: Kirsty Pettitt (Student Engagement and Wellbeing Manager)	**Contributor(s):** Nicole Matthews (Regional President), Carrie Beaton (Depute President), Student Representative Committee, Class Reps

Type of Agenda Item:

For Decision ☐

For Discussion ☒

For Information ☐

Reserved Item of Business ☐

Purpose: To present the NESCol SA Strategic Plan 23-26 to the board for their feedback.

Linked to Strategic Theme:

3. Advancing Partnership Working

Linked to Strategic Risk(s):

Executive Summary: To outline the purpose, process of creation and contents of the NESCol SA Strategic Plan and how it will impact our ongoing work into 2023 – 2026.

Recommendation: Please note the information provided and provide feedback.

Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval (if applicable)**:**

Equality Impact Assessment:

Positive Impact ☒

Negative Impact ☐

No Impact ☐

Evidence:

Introduction

We are presenting our completed NESCol Students' Association 2023– 2026 Strategic Plan. This document has been created in collaboration and with approval from members our Student Representative Committee, Class Reps and with NUS Scotland.

The creation of the Strategy was one of the key projects laid out at the beginning of the Academic year, in the Student Partnership Agreement. The finalised document will be launched during our upcoming Annual General Meeting and will be made available through myNESCol, Social Media and on notice boards across our campuses.

In addition, once our new presidents are in post an action plan will be created for the coming year, highlighting the areas of work to be undertaken. This document will also be made available on myNESCol and updated as we progress throughout the year.

Process

The SA were supported by the NUS Scotland Developing College Students' Associations service (DSCA) to carry out consultation with students. We also took part in a full day session with the DSCA to review our findings and outline our strategy. The SA team, Student Representative Committee and over 400 class reps were invited to take part in a S.W.O.T analysis of the SA through Padlet, where we received 92 responses.

Our SWOT findings :

Strengths
Class Reps feel valued and listened to
We are responsive and easily contactable
Students are supportive of our selected projects and initiatives
We are inclusive, friendly and relatable

Weaknesses
Advertising our purpose
Effective promotion of our services, events, projects and successes
Appropriate representation on each campus
Clear structure and processes for class reps, exec officers and volunteers

Opportunities
Building stronger relationships with staff teams
More effective social media presence
Being more confident within the current roles
Stronger relationships with NUS & SPARQS and local Universities

Threats
Not having enough student engagement in available roles
Cost of Living Crisis
Funding Cuts
College Staff Workloads may limit our opportunities

We were interested to find that the feedback we provided as a team was very much aligned with the feedback we received from our students. We used this data as well as the feedback that we have collated through-out the year from our Class Reps and other feedback avenues to inform our Mission, Vision and Our Values and then develop the areas of work we wanted to focus on through out the strategy.

Additionally we also used the NUS Developing College Students' Associations Framework for the Development of Strong and Effective College Students' Associations in Scotland (DSECSA) to structure our areas of work in alignment with other institutions in Scotland. As a result we have separated out work in the below areas.

- Shaping the Life and Work of the College
- Governance and Democracy
- Aware and Active Students
- Sustainable Resources
- Value and Impact

This is recommended by NUS to ensure strong partnership working between the SA and the college. It also provides consistency and shared vision across all Scottish colleges. Using this framework will also ensure continuity between our teams each year, allowing us to continue to develop work year on year as we welcome new Presidents into role.

We then completed a draft of the Strategic Plan which has been shared with the staff team and Student Representative Committee, SEAG and Class Reps for feedback, which currently has full support. The completed document will then be launched at our upcoming AGM and shared with the wider student body via myNESCol and accompanying action plan on completion.

STRATEGIC PLAN

2023 - 2026

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the NESCol Students' Association (SA) Strategic Plan. This plan was created in collaboration with NUS Scotland and our wider student community. The Strategic Plan shows how we see the SA working and developing in the coming years to best represent our student community at NESCol, ensuring that we are always keeping our students at the heart of the SA and championing student voice.

Using the sector approved NUS Framework for the <u>Development of Strong and Effective College Students' Associations</u>, this strategy sets out our areas of work over the next three years. To demonstrate the effectiveness of our work we will set out an annual action plan.

OUR MISSION

We are committed to representing, empowering and celebrating all NESCol students

OUR VISION

We will work with students to become truly representative and understanding of the needs and wants of our diverse student community

OUR VALUES

Sustainable - Accessible - Transparent - Partnered - Vibrant

Shaping the life + work of the college

Develop partnerships locally and nationally to benefit students

- We will develop understanding of the SA and positive relationships with staff at all levels in all NESCol Campuses

- We will work in collaboration with local and national organisations and universities to represent and benefit NESCol students

Enhance Student Representation

- Provide more opportunities for student representation in groups and forums

- We will develop our Class Representatives to make positive changes in NESCol

Governance + Democracy

Create democratic structures representative of and accessible to all NESCol students

- We will strive towards a diverse representation of students in our annual elections that is reflective of our student community

- We will ensure our constitution is accessible and student focused

Aware + Active Students

Students on all campuses understand and value the work of the SA

- We will develop a communication and engagement plan

- We will develop our presence in physical spaces on each campus and in online spaces

Sustainable Resources

Have appropriate resources to meet the needs of students

- We will review and develop the role of the Executive Officers to ensure students are empowered to make positive change in NESCol

- The SA will evaluate staffing resource within the SA and make appropriate recommendations to NESCol

The SA will create engaging volunteering opportunities for NESCol students

- We will review and develop volunteering roles within the SA

- We will create a volunteering process within the SA

Value + Impact

Ensure work of the SA is responding to student need

- We will develop accessible and transparent evaluation and reporting of our work each year

Increased opportunities for engagement

- Increase the offer of extra curricular activities on each campus

THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone who has collaborated with us to create our Strategic Plan. You can follow along with our progress by heading to myNESCol where you will be able to find more information about the NESCol Students' Association and our current action plan.

nescolsa

nescolstudentsassociation

NESColSA

NESColSA

NESCol
Students'
Association

DRAFT - Schedule of Meetings
Academic Year 2023-24

Strategy Events		
Date	Time	
Wednesday 22 & Thursday 23 November 2023 - TBC	TBC	Venue TBC
April 2024 TBC		

Regional Board Meetings		
Date	Time	
Wednesday 11 October 2023	1000 hours	G10, Aberdeen City Campus
Wednesday 13 December 2023	1000 hours	MEG01, Aberdeen Altens Campus
Wednesday 20 March 2024	1000 hours	Boardroom, Fraserburgh Campus
Wednesday 19 June 2024	1000 hours	G10, Aberdeen City Campus

Audit & Risk Committee Meetings		
Date	Time	
Wednesday 20 September 2023	1000 hours	Virtual through Microsoft Teams
*Wednesday 29 November 2023	1000 hours	Virtual through Microsoft Teams
Wednesday 29 May 2024	1000 hours	Virtual through Microsoft Teams

Curriculum & Quality Committee Meetings		
Date	Time	
Thursday 30 November 2023	1000 hours	Virtual through Microsoft Teams
Wednesday 21 February 2024	1000 hours	Virtual through Microsoft Teams
Wednesday 22 May 2024	1000 hours	Virtual through Microsoft Teams

Finance & Resources Committee Meetings		
Date	Time	
Wednesday 27 September 2023	1400 hours	Virtual through Microsoft Teams
*Wednesday 29 November 2023	1100 hours	Virtual through Microsoft Teams
Wednesday 21 February 2024	1300 hours	Virtual through Microsoft Teams
Wednesday 29 May 2024	1300 hours	Virtual through Microsoft Teams

Human Resources Committee Meetings		
Date	Time	
Wednesday 27 September 2023	1000 hours	Virtual through Microsoft Teams
Wednesday 31 January 2024	1000 hours	Virtual through Microsoft Teams
Wednesday 22 May 2024	1300 hours	Virtual through Microsoft Teams

Annual Chairs Meeting		
Date	**Time**	
Wednesday 19 June 2024	1300 hours	Boardroom, Fraserburgh Campus

Governance and Nominations Committee Meetings		
Date	**Time**	
Wednesday 13 September 2023	1400 hours	Virtual through Microsoft Teams
Thursday 30 November 2023	1400 hours	Virtual through Microsoft Teams
Wednesday 21 February 2024	1600 hours	Virtual through Microsoft Teams
Wednesday 22 May 2024	1600 hours	Virtual through Microsoft Teams

*The Audit & Risk Committee and Finance & Resources Committee will jointly consider the College's Financial Statements
Note additional meetings for F&R/HR Committee for AY2023/24

Programme of Meetings - Academic Year 2023-24

Month	Date	Meeting	Time	Venue
September	13	Governance & Nominations	1400 hours	Virtual
	20	Audit & Risk Committee	1000 hours	Virtual
	27	Human Resources Committee	1000 hours	Virtual
	27	Finance & Resources Committee	1400 hours	Virtual
October	11	Regional Board Meeting	1000 hours	G10, Aberdeen City Campus
	16-27	October Break		
November	22 & 23	Strategy Event	Tbc	tbc
	29	Audit & Risk Committee*	1000 hours	Virtual
	29	Finance & Resources Committee*	1100 hours	Virtual
	30	Curriculum & Quality Committee	1000 hours	Virtual
	30	Governance & Nominations	1400 hours	Virtual
December	13	Regional Board Meeting	1000 hours	MEG01, Aberdeen Altens Campus
January	31	Human Resources Committee	1000 hours	Virtual
February	21	Curriculum & Quality Committee	1000 hours	Virtual
	21	Finance & Resources Committee	1300 hours	Virtual
	21	Governance & Nominations	1600 hours	Virtual
March	20	Regional Board Meeting	1000 hours	Boardroom, Fraserburgh Campus
April	01-12	Easter Break		
	TBC	Strategy Event	TBC	TBC
May	22	Curriculum & Quality Committee	1000 hours	Virtual
	22	Human Resources Committee	1300 hours	Virtual
	22	Governance & Nominations	1600 hours	Virtual

	29	Audit & Risk Committee	1000 hours	Virtual
	29	Finance & Resources Committee	1300 hours	Virtual
June	19	Regional Board Meeting	1000 hours	G10, Aberdeen City Campus
	19	Annual Chairs Meeting	1300 hours	
July				
August				

The Audit & Risk Committee and Finance & Resources Committee will jointly consider the College's Financial Statements

NESCol Regional Board
Meeting of 21 June 2023

Title: NESCol Graduations 2023/Fellow Nominations	
Author: Paul Smith	**Contributor(s):**

Type of Agenda Item:

For Decision ☐

For Discussion ☒

For Information ☒

Reserved Item of Business ☐

Purpose:

To provide the Regional Board with an update on planning for 2023 graduations and invite nominations and feedback in relation to fellows

Linked to Strategic Goal:

4. Deliver an excellent learning environment and experience leading to successful outcomes for all learners.

Click here to enter text.

Linked to Annual Priority:

N/A

Choose an item.

Executive Summary:

Preparations for in-person NESCol Graduations in Fraserburgh and Aberdeen in September and October 2023 are well advanced.

The Regional Board is invited to input to the nomination of Fellows.

Recommendation:

Board members notify the Board Secretary of nominations for further consideration.

Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval (if applicable)**:**

N/A

Template Version: August 2019

Equality Impact Assessment:

Positive   Impact   ☒

Negative   Impact   ☐

No Impact   ☐

Evidence:

Venues have been selected to ensure access for all.

NESCol graduation ceremonies 2023

Background

NEScol graduation ceremonies were held in-person in 2022 for the first time since 2019, due to pandemic restrictions.

The ceremonies in Fraserburgh and at Aberdeen Music Hall, a new venue for the College, ran as planned and were the subject of positive feedback.

The events attracted 392 students and a total audience of 1,262. The combined cost to the College of accommodating students and guests was £26 per head and provision has been made in the provisional Marketing and Communications budget for 2023/24 to maintain delivery.

A post-event survey was issued to all graduates. Response rates were low (Fraserburgh 7%, Aberdeen 5%). Feedback included:

- Fraserburgh: Respondents were 100% satisfied with the length of ceremony, the welcome and assistance from staff, information provided and the general ambiance.
- Fraserburgh: Catering was rated excellent (33%) or good (66%)
- Fraserburgh: Ede and Ravenscroft services were rated excellent (66%), Good (17%) or Satisfactory (17%).
- Fraserburgh: Described as a "terrific" event.
- Aberdeen: 82% felt they were provided with adequate information. Issues highlighted with advance information primarily related to the use of the automated e-ticket system. Some negative feedback (8%) on the E&R portal for booking tickets/robes was also received, which has been addressed in planning for 2023.
- Aberdeen: The Music Hall was rated excellent (73%), good (25%) or satisfactory (2%). Ambiance was rated excellent (76%), good (19%) or satisfactory (5%). Staff (NESCol and APA) were rated excellent 80% or good (20%). Catering feedback was positive.
- Aberdeen: 79% felt the ceremony length was just right, with 16% too long and 5% too short.
- Aberdeen: Very positive comments on the success of the events, expressing thanks and praise – an "amazing event", "incredible event", "guest speakers, piper and singer were all outstanding", "great experience".
- Aberdeen: Graduates noted the importance of having more lecturers present to share the occasion and also highlighted a need for a better understanding of what to expect on the day.

A cross-college graduation planning group has once again been established and meets regularly to implement improvements based on feedback from students and staff.

Planning for 2023 is well advanced and registrations opened to eligible students on 1 June.

2023 Dates and venues

Fraserburgh Campus: Saturday, 23 September 2023 (single ceremony).

Aberdeen Music Hall (City Campus and Altens Campus graduations): Tuesday and Wednesday, 3-4 October 2023 (provisional plans for two ceremonies per day, morning and afternoon, but with flexibility to adapt depending on registration numbers).

Format:

Fraserburgh and Aberdeen graduations will follow the same format as 2023, with some enhancements based on feedback. All ceremonies will feature a professional host, following the successful introduction in 2022. Fiona Stalker, of BBC Scotland, has been provisionally booked.

Guest speakers are in the process of being secured. James Bream (Chair of DYW North East) is the first to be confirmed (3 October ceremonies) and approaches have been made to additional speakers with sport, business and tourism backgrounds.

To mark NESCol's 10th anniversary, the ceremonies and contributions from speakers (internal and external) will be themed to reflect that milestone.

Fellows:

The 2022 ceremonies included the return to the tradition of incorporating a North East Scotland College Award, the highest honour bestowed by NESCol and designed to reflect a special contribution to the institution and to the wider region.

The 2022 recipients were Ann Bell MBE and Ken Milroy MBE.

Input from Regional board members is invited to identify potential Fellows for the 2023 graduation ceremony. Nominations should be forwarded to Susan Lawrance.

REGIONAL BOARD
Meeting of 21 June 2023

Title: Strategy Event – Next Steps

Author: S Lawrance	**Contributor(s):**

Type of Agenda Item:

For Decision ☐

For Discussion ☐

For Information ☒

Reserved Item of Business ☐

Purpose: To provide an update on "next steps" following Regional Board Strategy Event, held in City Campus on 27 April 2023.

Linked to Strategic Theme:

1. Being Agile and Responsive

Linked to Strategic Risk(s):

Executive Summary:
Attached is a summary of the key comments captured at the recent Board Strategy Event.

In line with discussions at the Strategy Event work will begin on the development of the Strategic Plan at the start of the next Academic Year, with key milestones:

- Regional Board Strategy Event (November 2023)
- Consultations with staff and stakeholders – including Regional Board input (November to Easter 2024)
- Consolidation of findings and writing of Strategic Plan (Easter to Summer 2024)
- Strategic Plan Launch (for the start of AY2024/25)

Further updates on the progress of this work will be presented to the Board in due course.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Board note the next planned Strategy Event (November 2023).

Equality Impact Assessment:

Positive Impact ☒

Negative Impact ☐

No Impact ☐

Evidence:

Template Version: August 2021

Board Strategy Event: Thursday 27 April 2023

Group Feedback from Session 1: Our College

You Said	We Do	We Plan to Do
How can the College influence its perception – "lobbying power (equal to universities), prioritise key influencers, (parents, teachers, guidance staff. Confident and aggressive marketing required.	Regular stakeholder engagement undertaken MPs and MSP invited to meet with Principal and Chair Increased engagement this AY with local schools. Increased school pupils coming along for "taster session"	Increase engagement Try to reach guidance staff and parents through increased engagement with schools
Accurate long term planning and forecasting.	Current Strategic Plan still "fit for purpose"	New Strategic Plan to begin AY2023/24 with wide consultation with staff, stakeholders.
Chance to be re-active and pro-active		New Strategic Plan to begin AY2023/24 with wide consultation with staff, stakeholders.
Cannot lose sight of social responsibilities and supporting economy, employers and employees	Wellbeing of staff priority – engagement with local stakeholders	Continue engagement with stakeholders – remain agile and as responsive as possible.

College has powerful place in Community – family friendly, inclusive.	Offer differing routes and accessibility	
Promote what the College can do. Champion pathways and promotion of transferrable knowledge and skills. Key influencers have no lived experience of College.	Stakeholder briefings sent to more than 600+ employers. Highlight graduate and student stories.	Ensure greater visibility of offer.
The College understands its risks but what about its opportunities – should there be an Opportunities Register also.	Strategic Risk Register to be reviewed. Monthly seen by LT.	Create Opportunities Register
Is the college provision right – deliver less expensive courses? Consider the impact. Perhaps offer different courses, learn to …..	Curriculum Planning team meet regularly. Provision being flexed to reflect financial situation.	Additional thought to future curriculum, impact and availability of resource.
Lost learners can't be seen – positive experience to those dis-engaged. What does the next 5/10 years look like?	Support teams engage directly with pupils and through referrals. Support for staff and students critical.	
Commercial opportunities important – "sweat" our assets - maximize opportunities from facilities and resources. Opportunities driven by relationships. Trade off between education and commercial activities.	ASET already deliver FWDF and other courses.	
Funding from other sources – consider resource for "bid writing" for additional funds. Invest to save.	ET considered resource required.	

Grow income – no wish to be in a spiral of contraction -	College locally and nationally highlighting financial situation with stakeholders, SG,	
Sponsorship – start/ increase sponsorship for courses, cohorts.		
"Commercialise" the brand – improve brand recognition – understand collective staff experience. Create spreadsheet of available skills.	"Goodies" given out at Open Day.	Merchandising opportunity?
Consider evening/ weekend opening to increase flexibility of learner – roll on/roll off learning. Change of delivery model post covid – hybrid, traditional.	Curriculum Planning considering options.	
Need to remain financially sustainable – improve efficiency.		

Closing Summary: (SE): Health discussions and crossover from group feedback, agreed importance of College as an anchor institution for region still required. College requires to focus on maintaining its role as an inclusive and student centred, first choice, institution.

Challenges around flexibility and agility recognized.

Being a sustainable, reactive college key, alongside increased commercialization and increased income which are also key to sustainability.

Group Feedback from Session 2: Our Future Focused Curriculum

You Said	We Do	We Plan to Do
Massive overlap in delivery – who decides key demographics and key target markets? More aggressive marketing.	Try to offer as wide a portfolio as possible to as many people as possible, include criteria set by SFC (Demographics etc).	
Be more efficient with schools and stakeholder engagement – take the College out to the people – knock on doors. Let employers know how the college could support them.	Continue to strive to increase awareness. School Programmes already exist.	
Offer short 4 or 6 week course – looking at multi-skilling – people perhaps do not know what they want – give them a taster. Aim at S5/S6 pupils – tell them about their options.	Core skills already embedded.	
Future Ambition – is the college brave enough to do things differently? Course delivery times – Summer School - set strategy to whichever choice you want to make.		
Consider rental of college estate as income generation, eg barbering course – use of Hair/Beauty department. Sports hall. Studios. Promote these option more widely.	Some external use already through estates department.	
Could an "ASET 2" be set up – same model as ASET or deliver different courses to core	Already recognise role commercial income has to play.	

curriculum – offer Income generation courses?		
Increased partnership – Wood Foundation Accelerate Programme – option for credit swapping?	Already recognise role commercial income has to play.	
Review of campuses – review resource to offer different modes of delivery to offer financial saving? Consider increasing BCD model and closer connections with ASET. Review MoA for ASET. Review and/or broaden ASET offer – does resource allow.		
Need to identify red lines – recongnise the constraints and challenges.	Fraserburgh recognized as a Community Hub – remains a prioroity.	
Identify Risk Appetite – is the College willing to run a deficit to allow growth?		
Alternative models – value in commercial development? Partnerships expansion.		
What matrix is going to be used for decision making?		

Summary of Feedback: (SE): Great conversations – interesting no group landed a list of priorities – need to understand considerations need to be made to identify priorities – especially regarding commitment to Region. Flexibility on delivery identified.

Existing ASET model and potential of looking to duplicate or changing capacity of existing ASET utilization interesting.

Group Feedback from Session 3: Our People, Our Places

You Said	We Do	We Plan to Do
Time and resource required to increase CPD opportunities – people need to be included in offer.	Staff full engaged with choices for CPD events. Calendar of events circulated for discussion.	
Value to course delivery of staff secondment to industry. What opportunities to staff have?	Regular CPD opportunities explored – opportunities provided where business needs allow.	
Opportunity Register for staff. Invest in the College and your future.		
Workforce planning – talent management alongside identifying danger signs. Clear strategic development needs required including re-skilling around energy transition.	Support managers to identify and manage problems.	
Opportunity to share best practice around College to standardize.		
Ensure staff morale is considered, especially around VS Scheme.	Staff wellbeing remains priority. Respect/wellbeing matters/social groups. Managers asked to engage with their staff regularly. ICON2.	
Strategy Themes – Income and commercialization – use of grants. This sits under Agility and Responsiveness.		
Estates: Clinterty? Can current delivery be delivered elsewhere? Financial saving? Sale		

of Balgownie – ask SFC if land sale money could be retained?		
AI biggest challenge for the future.	TurnItIn already updated in light of AI. Internal training for staff being undertaken. Use AI as part of the future.	

Summary of Feedback (SE): Identified already lots of great things happening within CPD and the College remain mandated to maintain this level. Need to continue to engage with workforce planning/succession planning.

Value of culture of CPD critical for all staff.

Lots of similar questions in use of estate, including Clinterty.

Next Steps:

- How do we activity pursue the discussion points and take these forward?
- Summary of Strategy Event and what the next steps are (including follow-up Event in November) when broader conversations to be held to shape Strategy Development with additional external stakeholder participation.
- In summary, the Regional Chair and Neil thanked all Board Members for their engagement, and high energy levels that remained throughout all sessions.
- ET and Leadership Team to reflect on discussions and incorporate into planning for next Strategic Plan consultations.