



REGIONAL BOARD MEETING

Wednesday 17 June 2026

**To be held in G10 Boardroom,
City Campus at 1000hrs**

REGIONAL BOARD

NOTICE OF MEETING

There will be a meeting of the Regional Board of North East Scotland College on Wednesday 17 June 2026 at 10:00am, held in G10 Boardroom, City Campus

AGENDA

Agenda Item		Paper
74-25/26	Apologies for Absence (S Elston)	
75-25/26	Declaration of Any Potential Conflicts of Interest in Relation to Any Agenda Items (S Elston)	
76-25/26	Minute of the Previous Meeting (18/03/26) (S Elston)	X
77-25/26	Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting (18/03/26) (S Elston)	X
	Matters for Decision	
78-25/26	Programme of Business AY2026/27 (S Elston)	X
79-25/26	Schedule of Meetings AY2026/27 (S Elston)	X
80-25/26	Revised Terms of Reference – People and Culture Committee (ex HR Committee) (L McDermid)	X
	Reserved Matters for Decision	
81-25/26	Financial and Capital Budget 2026-27 (incl. SFC funding allocation) (S Thompson)	X
82-25/26	ASET Update (S Thompson) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance • Finance 	X
	Matter for Discussion	
83-25/26	Graduations 2026 (P Smith)	X
	Reserved Matters for Discussion	
84-25/26	Lessons Learned – verbal update (N Cowie)	
85-25/26	Effectiveness Review (Full Report) (D Archibald)	X
86-25/26	Strategic Risk Register (S Thompson)	X
87-25/26	Financial Budget 2025-26 Update (S Thompson)	X
88-25/26	Long-Term Financial Planning (S Thompson)	X
	Matters for Information	
89-25/26	Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (N Cowie)	X
90-25/26	Strategic Plan: Sub-Strategy Priority Update (N Cowie)	X
91-25/26	HMIE MA Report (D Abernethy)	X
92-25/26	Feedback on SEAP from SFC and QAA – verbal update (N Cowie)	
93-25/26	Report by the Regional Chair (S Elston) (Verbal update)	
94-25/26	Report by the Principal (N Cowie)	X
95-25/26	Report by Committee Chairs	X
	Reserved Matters for Information	
96-25/26	Opportunities Register (S Thompson)	X
97-25/26	Credit Activity Update and Forecast (N Cowie)	X
98-25/26	Any Other Business	
99-25/26	Summation of Actions and Date of Next Meeting	
	Private Reserved Matter for Information	

*Items in red denote reserved/private matters

100-25/26	Progress Update on Principal's Performance Management Objectives (S Elston)	X
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REGIONAL BOARD

MINUTE OF MEETING

DRAFT Minute of Meeting of the Regional Board of North East Scotland College held on Wednesday 18 March 2026 at 10:00am, in the Boardroom of Fraserburgh Campus

Agenda Item	<p>Present: Susan Elston, Regional Chair Jim Gifford, Vice Chair Iain Watt Mark Fotheringham Neil Cowie Averil Watt Ellie Zemani, from 10:12am Cindy Dempster Sheena Ross Duncan Cockburn</p> <p>Present Via Teams: Leona McDermid, Vice Chair Gerry Lawrie Emma Maclsaac</p> <p>In Attendance: Robin McGregor, Vice Principal, Curriculum & Quality Stuart Thompson, Vice Principal, Finance & Resources Susan Lawrance, Secretary to the Board Karen Fraser, Minute Secretary</p> <p>Guest Attendees: Sharon Scott, ASET General Manager (for Agenda Item 49-25/26) John Reid, ASET Board Chair (for Agenda Item 49-25/26) David Archibald, Partner, Henderson Loggie (as observer and for Agenda Item 61-25/26) Duncan Abernethy, Assistant Principal Curriculum & Commercial Development (for Agenda Item 68-25/26) Kimra Donnelly, Assistant Principal People Services (for Agenda Item 73-25/26)</p> <p>Regional Chair extended a welcome to all and to D Archibald in particular, in his capacity of meeting observer.</p>
	Guest Attendees S Scott and J Reid joined the Meeting at 10:04am
	Reserved Presentation
49-25/26	ASET Update (S Scott/J Reid)

	Guest Attendees S Scott and J Reid left the Meeting at 10:37am
50-25/26	Apologies for Absence (S Elston) Apologies were received in advance from C Laurenson, B Hutcheson, M Dugan and E Rattray.
51-25/26	Declaration of Any Potential Conflicts of Interest in Relation to Any Agenda Items (S Elston) J Gifford declared a potential conflict of interest by virtue of his position with Aberdeenshire Council. D Cockburn declared a potential conflict of interest by virtue of his position with RGU. L McDermid declared a potential conflict of interest by virtue of her position with Aberdeen Foyer.
52-25/26	Minute of the Previous Meeting (10/12/25) (S Elston) The Minute was approved as a true and accurate record.
53-25/26	Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting (10/12/25) (S Lawrance) Members noted the updates to the 2 Matters Arising captured in the shared report.
	Matters for Decision
54-25/26 (discussed after 55-25/26)	Annual Review of Governance Manual (S Lawrance) Minor adjustments to the Manual were specified in the accompanying cover paper to Appendix 1. Owing to the inclusion of Private Reserved Matters on today's Agenda, attention was drawn to point 3.74. Confirmation of this being in place and in alignment with the Act made by Scottish Government was provided. Repetition was noted in points 3.60 and 3.62 and a suggestion to amalgamate these was put forward. Action: Board Secretary to review and adjust. The specification of one meeting per year being held in person in some, but not all, of the Committees' Terms of Reference was queried. Decision = Subject to the combining of points 3.60 and 3,62, all proposed amendments were approved.
	Reserved Matters for Discussion
55-25/26 (discussed after 53-25/26)	ASET Update (S Thompson)

56-25/26	2025/26 Budget Update (S Thompson)
57-25/26	Lessons Learned Report Update (R McGregor) (Verbal Update)
	Matters for Information
58-25/26	Indicative Funding Allocation AY2026-27 (S Thompson) (Verbal Update) In addition to the points raised earlier in the meeting, S Thompson reiterated the high-level increase already announced and the face-to-face discussions held with SFC. Reference was made to the potential increase to capital funding, and SFC funding methodology changes. Action: An update on NESCol's allocation to be shared with Members following SFC's announcement on 27/03/26.
59-25/26	PREVENT Annual Report (R McGregor) R McGregor spotlighted the Report detailing the work undertaken to fulfill NESCol's responsibilities regarding its Prevent Duty, with no significant change highlighted. The completion of the Prevent Self-Assessment by the end of the month was confirmed. Members noted S Thompson's representation through CONTEST.
60-25/26	Sub-Strategies Progress Report (R McGregor) (Verbal Update) R McGregor provided an update on the embedding of the sub-strategies following feedback from the Winter Development Day Workshops (10/02/26) and the re-alignment of internal governance structure being undertaken by the SLT. Members noted the highlighted planned impacts including improvement of cross campus communication; better alignment between organisation plans and improved reporting lines. Reference was made to consolidation, time effectiveness, and visibility of the "golden thread", with positivity noted from feedback provided.

	<p>In reply to an observation regarding the overlap with Regional Board Committees, the inter-linkage was acknowledged. Action: SL to share the organogram with members once finalised.</p>
61-25/26	<p>Effectiveness Review Feedback (D Archibald) (Verbal Update) Having thanked the Chair for his meeting invitation and in advance of the full report being presented at the 17/06/26 meeting, preliminary observations were shared.</p> <p>Background context for the review was provided. Members noted its' mandatory nature as set by the SFC, and the suggested options for its' completion. D Archibald indicated that the option to speak to all members individually furnished him with the best outcomes, and gratitude was expressed to all for making the time to meet and being candid in their responses. Members were prompted to complete the subsequent questionnaire and return this to D Archibald at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>Reference was made to resulting themes from the 1:1 meetings having been identified, with key pillars clearly in place to facilitate effective governance. The existence of a committed Regional Board, depicting a wide range of experience and care for NESCol was noted. Ownership of high-level strategic priorities and engagement with the corporate planning process was evidenced. Clear understanding of being monitored and measured was portrayed. The presentation of an outward-looking organisation was depicted, alongside a clear message of confidence in the senior team and a willingness to interact in this.</p> <p>Closing remarks intimated that the fundamentals of good governance are in place at the College, with any recommendations put forward in the final report aimed at generating incremental improvements to the strong foundations already identified. Action: Final written report to be presented for information at 17/06/26 meeting.</p> <p>In response to a query regarding the possibility of grouping, D Archibald acknowledged recurring themes but reiterated having opted to converse with members on an individual basis.</p> <p>S Elston expressed thanks to all for their participation.</p>
62-25/26	<p>Report by the Regional Chair (S Elston) (Verbal Update) S Elston spotlighted her late paper, itemising meeting attendances from a different perspective to that of N Cowie. Job evaluation, the EIS-FELA pay claim, and the upcoming first NNC meeting were mentioned.</p> <p>S Elston also expressed congratulations to N Cowie on his 26 years of service to the College, which had been recognised prior to the meeting.</p>
63-25/26	<p>Report by the Principal (N Cowie) N Cowie referenced his submitted Report. Thanks were expressed to D Cockburn for the joint political engagement undertaken in February 2026. N Cowie stated his intention to continue the lobbying.</p>
64-25/26	<p>Report by Committee Chairs Members noted the Report by the Committee Chairs, with Chairs or representatives from all invited to highlight the salient points from Meetings held.</p> <p>On behalf of the C&Q Committee, R McGregor noted the discussed spotlight review and the deep-dive into SRR entries pertinent to curriculum and quality.</p> <p>As Chair of the F&R Committee, S Ross acknowledged a similar agenda content to much of today's', and noted consideration given to the Financial Regulations Policy. The next F&R Committee meeting was confirmed as having both in-person and online attendance options.</p> <p>S Elston referenced conversations held at the Remuneration Committee.</p> <p>Representing the A&R Committee, J Gifford drew attention to the Risk Management Policy review, internal audits, and the RRs of both NESCol and ASET having featured.</p> <p>From HR Committee discussions, L McDermid referenced the importance of any</p>

	<p>organisations people and culture, and the need to align the messaging to emphasise the link between strategy and “on the ground” practice. The ambitious nature of the People Services’ Enhancement Plan was also highlighted.</p> <p>Summarising the Chairs’ Committee, S Elston highlighted the re-launch of RB recruitment aimed specifically at those with a financial background and an ask of members to promote through their own networks; the approval of Policies; and the agreement of the ToRs. Expanding on RB recruitment, S Lawrance advised members of the resignation of teaching staff member P Butters on 05/03/26 with immediate effect, and the subsequent opening created.</p>
	Reserved Matters for Information
65-25/26	Credit Activity Update and Forecast (S Thompson)
66-25/26	Strategic Risk Register (S Thompson)
67-25/26	Opportunities Register (S Thompson)
	Guest Attendee D Abernethy joined the Meeting at 12:48pm
68-25/26	BCD Update (D Abernethy)

*Items in red denote reserved/private matters

	Guest Attendee D Abernethy left the Meeting at 1:03pm
69-25/26	Capital Projects and Estates Update (S Thompson)
70-25/26	Any Other Business Following a check-in with each individual member by the Chair, no other business was raised.
71-25/26	Summation of Actions and Date of Next Meeting S Lawrance summarised the agreed actions and confirmed the next Regional Board meeting as Wednesday 17/06/26 at City Campus.
	NESCol staff (incl Minute Secretary) and SA Member left the Meeting at 1:06pm
	Private Reserved Matters for Information
72-25/26	Progress Update to Principal's Performance Management Objectives (S Elston)
	Guest Attendee K Donnelly joined the meeting
73-25/26	Employee Related Matters

Actions from the Regional Board Meeting of 18 March 2026			
Agenda Item	Action	Responsible Person	Deadline
54-25/26	Governance Manual: Review the amalgamation of points 3.60 and 3.62 and adjust as appropriate.	Board Sec	Immediate
55-25/26	ASET Update:		
56-25/26	2025/26 Budget Update:		
57-25/26	Lessons Learned Report: f		
58-25/26	Indicative Funding Allocation AY2026-27: detail to be shared upon receipt.	S Thompson	27/03/26
60-25/26	Sub-Strategies: share organogram of internal governance structure once finalised.	Board Secretary	ASAP
61-25/26	Effectiveness Review: final written report to be presented for information.	D Archibald	03/06/26
66-25/26	SRR:		
72-25/26	Principal's Objectives:		

*Items in red denote reserved/private matters



Agenda Item 77-25/26

REGIONAL BOARD

An update on matters arising from the meeting of the Regional Board of North East Scotland College held on 18/03/26.

Agenda Item	
54-25/26	Action: Governance Manual: Review the amalgamation of points 3.60 and 3.62 and adjust as appropriate.
	Status: Complete. Points amalgamated and new Governance Manual uploaded to NESCol website.
55-25/26	Action:
	Status:
56-25/26	Action:
	Status:
57-25/26	Action:
	Status:
58-25/26	Action: Indicative Funding Allocation AY2026-27: detail to be shared upon receipt.
	Status: Complete. Shared via email.
60-25/26	Action: Sub-Strategies: share organogram of internal governance structure once finalised.
	Status: Complete. On agenda for June meeting plus January Strategy Event in Board schedule of meetings.
61-25/26	Action: Effectiveness Review: final written report to be presented for information.
	Status: Complete. On agenda for June meeting.
66-25/26	Action:
	Status:
72-25/26	Action:
	Status:

REGIONAL BOARD – PROGRAMME OF BUSINESS AY2026-27

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

17 September 2026
For Decision
Principal's Performance Management Objectives
Regional Board Terms of Reference
For Discussion
AY2025/26 Annual Accounts Update
AY2026/27 Budget Position and Financial Planning
Start of Year Position (including enrolments and projected credit activity)
ASET Update
Estates Update
SFC Published KPIs AY2024/25 Report
ASET Risk Register
Strategic Risk Register
Health and Safety Annual Report
Policies For Approval (if Any, e.g. Equalities)
For Information
Members Register of Interests (annual update)

09 December 2026
For Decision
Audited Financial Statements 2025-26 (including Letter of Representation)
Annual Audit Report prepared by Audit Scotland
For Discussion
ETSH Funding Update
ASET Annual Report by Chair
Opportunities Register
AY2026/27 Budget Update
Estates Update
Indicative Budget Review (if available)
Quality Activity Interim Report
For Information
Strategic Risk Register
Credit Activity Update and Forecast
First Impressions Survey Results AY2026-27

18 March 2027
For Decision
Equalities Mainstreaming Report
Annual Review of Governance Manual
For Discussion
AY2026/27 Budget Update
ASET Update
For Information
Strategic Risk Register
Opportunities Register
Credit Activity Update and Forecast
Principal's Performance Management Objectives - Progress Update
Capital Projects and Estates Update
PREVENT Annual Report
Indicative Funding Allocation AY2027-28

16 June 2027
For Decision
AY2026/27 Budget and Capital Plan
AY2027/28 Financial and Capital Budgets (including SFC's Funding Allocation)
Long-Term Financial Planning
Schedule of Meetings AY2027/28
Programme of Business AY2027/28
For Discussion
Strategic Risk Register
ASET Update
ETSH Update
KPI's 2025/26
Graduations 2027
Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey
For Information
Credit Activity Update and Forecast
Principal's Performance Management Objectives – Progress Update
Opportunities Register

STANDING ITEMS
Minute of Previous Meeting
Matters Arising from Previous Meeting
Report by the Regional Chair
Report by the Principal
Report by Committee Chairs

**Red denotes Reserved Item of Business*

Schedule of Meetings
Academic Year 2026-27 DRAFT

Agenda Item 79-25

Governance/Development Event		
Date	Time	
Wednesday 02 September 2026	Afternoon	Gate 63, City Campus

Strategy Event		
Date	Time	
Wednesday 27 January 2027	All Day TBC	Gate 63, City Campus

Regional Board Meetings		
Date	Time	In Person:
Thursday 17 September 2026	0930 hours	G10, City Campus
Wednesday 09 December 2026	0930 hours	Exhibition Space, ETSH
Thursday 18 March 2027	0930 hours	Boardroom, Fraserburgh Campus
Wednesday 16 June 2027	0930 hours	G10, City Campus

Audit & Risk Committee Meetings		
Date	Time	
Thursday 03 September 2026	1300 hours	Virtual via Microsoft Teams
*Wednesday 25 November 2026	1000 hours	Virtual via Microsoft Teams
Wednesday 24 February 2027	1000 hours	G10, City Campus
Wednesday 26 May 2027	1000 hours	Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Curriculum & Quality Committee Meetings		
Date	Time	
Thursday 26 November 2026	1300 hours	Virtual via Microsoft Teams
Wednesday 17 February 2027	1400 hours	Virtual via Microsoft Teams
Tuesday 18 May 2027	1400 hours	G10, City Campus

Finance & Resources Committee Meetings		
Date	Time	
Wednesday 02 September 2026	1000 hours	G10, City Campus
*Wednesday 25 November 2026	1130 hours	Virtual via Microsoft Teams
Wednesday 17 February 2027	1000 hours	Virtual via Microsoft Teams
Thursday 20 May 2027	1400 hours	Virtual via Microsoft Teams

People & Culture Committee Meetings		
Date	Time	
Wednesday 23 September 2026	1300 hours	G10, City Campus
Wednesday 24 February 2027	1400 hours	Virtual via Microsoft Teams
Wednesday 02 June 2027	1000 hours	Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Annual Chairs Meeting		
Date	Time	
Wednesday 16 June 2027	1300 hours	G10, City Campus

Governance and Nominations Committee Meetings		
Date	Time	
Wednesday 02 September 2026	1200 hours	Virtual via Microsoft Teams
Thursday 26 November 2026	1500 hours	Virtual via Microsoft Teams
Wednesday 24 February 2027	1200 hours	Virtual via Microsoft Teams
Thursday 20 May 2027	1600 hours	Virtual via Microsoft Teams

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

Schedule of Meetings - Academic Year 2026-27

Month	Date	Meeting	Time	Venue
2026				
September	02	Finance & Resources Committee	1000 hours	G10, City Campus
	02	Governance & Nominations Committee	1200 hours	G10, City Campus
	02	Governance/Development Event	1230 hours	Gate 63, City Campus
	03	Audit & Risk Committee	1300 hours	Virtual
	17	Regional Board Meeting	0930 hours	G10 City Campus
	23	People & Culture Committee	1300 hours	G10, City Campus
November	25	Audit & Risk Committee*	1000 hours	Virtual
	25	Finance & Resources Committee*	1130 hours	Virtual
	26	Curriculum & Quality Committee	1300 hours	Virtual
	26	Governance & Nominations Committee	1500 hours	Virtual
December	09	Regional Board Meeting	0930 hours	Exhibition Space, ETSH
2027				
January	27	Strategy Event	All Day TBC	Gate 63, City Campus
February	17	Finance & Resources Committee	1000 hours	Virtual
	17	Curriculum & Quality Committee	1400 hours	Virtual
	24	Audit & Risk Committee	1000 hours	G10, City Campus
	24	Governance & Nominations Committee	1200 hours	Virtual
	24	People & Culture Committee	1400 hours	Virtual
March	18	Regional Board Meeting	0930 hours	Boardroom, Fraserburgh Campus

May	18	Curriculum & Quality Committee	1400 hours	G10, City Campus
	20	Finance & Resources Committee	1400 hours	Virtual
	20	Governance & Nominations Committee	1600 hours	Virtual
	26	Audit & Risk Committee	1000 hours	Virtual
June	02	People & Culture Committee	1000 hours	Virtual
	16	Regional Board Meeting	0930 hours	G10, City Campus
	16	Annual Chairs Meeting	1300 hours	G10, City Campus

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



REGIONAL BOARD	
Meeting of 17 June 2026	
Title: HR Committee Terms of Reference/Remit enhancements (to become People and Culture Committee)	
Author: Kimra Donnelly, Assistant Principal People Services	Contributor(s): HR Committee; Susan Lawrance (Secretary to the Board)
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 seek the Regional Board's approval to enhance the Committee's remit, including Terms of Reference and a revised Committee name, (from HR Committee to People and Culture Committee). These proposed enhancements will strengthen governance of Our Colleague Sub-Strategy and related workstreams.	
Linked to Strategic Theme: 4. Delivering Excellence and Innovation	
Linked to Strategic Risk(s): 2.1,2.2,6.1,6.2	
Executive Summary: HR Committee have considered proposals set out to strengthen governance and oversight arrangements for delivery of the Our Colleagues Sub-Strategy within the College's Strategic Plan 2025-2030. Enhancements to Committee's remit, revision to its Terms of Reference and a change in Committee title to better reflect its expanding role in providing assurance around people, culture, organisational development, colleague engagement, wellbeing, and internal communications are outlined in the paper. These enhancements recognise the importance of integrated oversight in supporting the College's ambition to be a progressive employer and workplace of choice.	
Recommendation: It is recommended that the Regional Board approve the proposed revised Terms of Reference.	

Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval (if applicable): The proposal was approved by HR Committee arising from Enhancement Committee Oversight of the Our Colleagues Sub-Strategy Report presented to Committee in March 2026, with approval to present to Regional Board at May 2026 Committee.

Equality Impact Assessment:

Positive Impact

Negative Impact

No Impact

Evidence:

PEOPLE AND CULTURE COMMITTEE	
1.1	<p>Membership The Committee shall comprise a minimum of five members, one of which shall be appointed as Committee Chair in addition to: The Principal One Staff Member; and One Student Member</p>
1.2	<p>Quorum No less than one half of the members entitled to vote.</p>
1.3	<p>Remit</p> <p>General The Committee supports the Board in delivering the Our Colleagues Sub-Strategy by promoting a positive, inclusive, engaged and well-informed workforce, underpinned by effective leadership, fair work practices and strong internal communication.</p> <p>The Committee shall make recommendations and take decisions within its delegated authority, reporting these to the Regional Board, and shall conduct its business in accordance with the Standing Orders.</p> <p>Specific Duties The Committee shall operate at a strategic, governance and assurance level, ensuring alignment between the College’s people frameworks, organisational culture and overall performance. The Committee has responsibility for the direction and oversight of people and culture matters arising from the Regional Board’s role as employer of the College’s staff. The Committee shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide oversight of the Our Colleagues Sub-Strategy, ensuring it is aligned to the College Strategic Plan. • Oversee workforce engagement insights across the employee lifecycle and ensure learning is acted upon. • Provide oversight and assurance of the College’s internal communication approach, ensuring it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Is timely, clear, consistent and accessible ○ Supports strategic objectives and organisational change ○ Enables two-way communication and staff voice • Monitor staff feedback on the effectiveness of internal communication, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Understanding of strategic priorities ○ Confidence in leadership communication ○ Awareness of change and decision-making • Monitor key people-related performance indicators, trends and risks, ensuring management information is robust, transparent and used to support decision-making. • Oversee strategic workforce planning, ensuring future skills and capacity needs are identified and addressed. • Provide assurance that the College meets its public sector equality duties and promotes equality, diversity and inclusion. • Oversee workforce equality data, trends and improvement actions. Approve or recommend to the Board: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Equality Outcomes and associated plans ○ Equal Pay Statements and equality reporting • Seek assurance that Fair Work principles are embedded across policies, practices and culture.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure wellbeing is integrated into leadership practice, workforce planning and organisational culture. • Oversee the strategic approach to learning and development, leadership and management development and career pathways and internal progression. • Maintain strategic oversight of the College's employee relations environment. Including implementation of national collective bargaining agreements and operation of local negotiating structures, including LJNC. • Review and approve employment-related policies and frameworks. • Seek assurance that the College complies with employment, equality and health & safety legislation. • Monitor people-related risks within the Corporate Risk Register and escalate concerns to the Board where required.
1.4	<p>Meetings The People and Culture Committee will normally meet three times per year, with additional meetings convened if required.</p>
1.5	<p>Management Support 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. • Assistant Principal Planning & Communication



REGIONAL BOARD Meeting of 17 June 2026	
Title: NESCol Graduation 2026	
Author: Paul Smith, Assistant Principal Planning and Communication	Contributor(s):
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 update the Regional Board on planning for the NESCol Graduation ceremonies taking place in September and October 2026.	
Linked to Strategic Theme:	
Linked to Strategic Risk(s):	
Executive Summary:	
This paper provides and overview of the preparation for the ceremonies.	
Recommendation:	
It is recommended the board note the plans.	
Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval (if applicable):	
Equality Impact Assessment:	
Positive Impact	<input type="checkbox"/>
Negative Impact	<input type="checkbox"/>
No Impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Evidence:	



REGIONAL BOARD

1.0 Overview

The NESCol Graduation ceremonies for 2026 will take place on 19 September in Fraserburgh and 6 October in Aberdeen (two ceremonies, AM and PM).

The ceremonies are open to students completing HNC and HND qualifications in 2026 as well as to Modern Apprentices who have completed their qualification this year. The MA inclusion was first trialled in 2024 and is now established as part of the graduation package. A small number of staff who have gained work-related qualifications, primarily TQFE (eight individuals), will also be included in the ceremonies.

The planning cycle began in January and, following the summer break, regular meetings will be held to bring the Marketing and Communications team together with the wider organising group within the College.

The early planning was led by Lindsey Hatherley in her role as Events Officer, prior to her retirement in April.

Anna Forsyth, currently Events and Marketing Manager at Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce, has been appointed to the Events Officer role and will take up the post on 22 July 2026. The post has been expanded from part-time to full-time to increase capacity.

In the interim period, planning is being led by Paul Smith (Assistant Principal Planning and Communication) and Ian McDougall (Marketing and Communications Manager).

2.0 Projected participation

Planning has been based on the eligible pool of students and modelled on four-year trends for uptake (2025 figures listed for comparison).

Each graduand is provided with two free guest tickets and the option to purchase additional guest tickets at £5 per seat. Gown hire costs, via Ede and Ravenscroft, have been frozen at £37.

Graduation Eligibility Pool	2025	2026
Pool Fraserburgh	189	182
Attending	54	53
% uptake	29%	29%



Agenda Item 84-25

Graduation Eligibility Pool	2025	2026
Pool Aberdeen AM	874	754
Attending	144	120
% uptake	16%	16%
Pool Aberdeen PM	343	423
Attending	132	160
% uptake	38%	38%

At 9 June 2026, registrations were: Fraserburgh – 11; Aberdeen AM - 46; Aberdeen PM – 34.

These figures are in-line with expected uptake at this stage, with registrations remaining open until 4 September 2026 and many eligible students currently completing coursework or awaiting results. The first reminder email is scheduled to be issued w/c 15 June 2026. Further reminders are issued in late July and then a final message to eligible students at the end of August.

3.0 Venues and format

The Fraserburgh Ceremony will take place at Fraserburgh Campus. Set-up for 2026 will replicate 2025. The Aberdeen ceremonies will take place at the Music Hall, with a one and half day hire agreed with Aberdeen Performing Arts (allowing for half day set-up), and will also replicate the 2025 set-up.

4.0 Guest contributors

Fiona Stalker, of BBC Scotland, has been secured as the host for all three ceremonies.

The guest speaker for the Fraserburgh Ceremony is currently being finalised. Approaches are being made to Kirsty Langan (PDi Ltd), Taylor Erridge (James Fisher Decommissioning) and Abbie Thomson (Shell). Kirstie has supported the Girls in Energy (GiE) programme, with Taylor and Abbie both former GiE participants.

The guest speaker for both Aberdeen ceremonies is Johnny Brooks, founder of the Studio 10 creative agency and Black Tartan events company. Johnny is a podcast producer and a NESCol media graduate, who works with a number of leading brands including Union Square and Maki and Ramen.

5.0 Future planning

A post-event review will be conducted following the 2026 ceremonies to inform future planning and decisions, led by the new Events Officer.



REGIONAL BOARD	
Meeting of 17 JUNE 2026	
Title: Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey AY2025-26	
Author: Acting Director of Quality	Contributor(s): Senior Quality Co-ordinator
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: As presented at the C&Q Committee meeting on 21 May 2026. To enable the Regional Board to note the results of the Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey for the AY2025-26 student cohorts, a key quality improvement tool used to measure levels of student satisfaction.	
Linked to Strategic Theme: 4. Delivering Excellence and Innovation	
Linked to Strategic Risk(s): N/A	
Executive Summary: 	
Recommendation: It is recommended that the Regional Board members note the information provided.	
Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval (if applicable):	
Equality Impact Assessment: Positive Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Negative Impact

No Impact

Evidence:



CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE	
Meeting of 21 May 2026	
Title: Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey AY2025-26	
Author: Acting Director of Quality	Contributor(s): Senior Quality Co-ordinator
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 enable the Committee to note the results of the Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey for the AY2025-26 student cohorts, a key quality improvement tool used to measure levels of student satisfaction.	
Linked to Strategic Theme:	
4. Delivering Excellence and Innovation	
Linked to Strategic Risk(s):	
N/A	
Executive Summary:	
<p>The College conducts two key Student Surveys during each academic year, the First Impressions Survey in September/October and the Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey in March/April, which incorporates the Scottish Funding Councils (SFC) 13 mandatory national survey statements. The three-year trend data provided captures student survey outcomes for full-time, part-time, school link and distance/flexible students.</p> <p>The SFC set a sector target of 50% participation rate for the Student Satisfaction & Engagement survey for full-time and part-time further and higher education students. There is no participation target set for the distance/flexible learning students. Overall the College once again achieved a high level of engagement in both student response rates and satisfaction levels.</p> <p>The AY2025-26 Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey for full-time students recorded 4,199 responses in comparison to 4050 in AY2024-25. Overall, 91.8% of students are satisfied with the College, a slight increase of 1% in comparison to AY2024-25, and an overall 96% of students would recommend the College to others.</p>	

The AY2025-26 Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey for **part-time** students recorded 583 responses in comparison to 437 in AY2024-25. Overall, 91.9% of students are satisfied with the College, an increase of 2.1% in comparison to AY2024-25, and 94% of students would recommend the College to others.

The AY2025-26 Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey for **distance/flexible learning** students recorded 22 responses in comparison to 58 in AY2024-25. Overall, 80.9% of students are satisfied with the College, an increase of 3.9% in comparison to AY2024-25, and 91% of students would recommend the College to others.

The AY2025-26 Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey for **school-link** students recorded 670 responses in comparison to 430 in AY2024-25. Overall, 92.8% of students are satisfied with the College, an increase of 3.5% in comparison to AY2024-25, and an impressive 98% of students would recommend the College to others.

A breakdown at Sector, Team and course level can be accessed from the College's Power BI Report Server and is available for all college staff to access. The curriculum and support teams incorporate the data into self-evaluation activities, where it is reviewed, analysed and used as a tool to identifying areas for improvement and good practice.

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

Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval (if applicable):

Equality Impact Assessment:

Positive Impact

Negative Impact

No Impact

Evidence:



Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey Report

AY 2025-26

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Overview

The Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey (SS&ES) is a measure of satisfaction relating to college services and experiences issued near the end of the academic year. The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) use this national approach to monitor student satisfaction and engagement across all colleges in the sector. The College is required to submit the outcomes of the mandatory statements to the SFC which informs the full national sector-level satisfaction and response data report. The outcomes of the survey also supports colleges to evidence impact and improvement within outcome agreements.

Participation Target Figures

The Scottish Funding Council set a Student Satisfaction & Engagement survey sector target response rate of at least 50% for full-time (FT) and part-time (PT) further and higher education students. North East Scotland College (NESCol) achieved the following response rates for the AY 2025-26 survey:

- FT Further Education (FE) – 77.20% (AY24-25 - 81.11%)
- FT Higher Education (HE) – 76.04% (AY24-25 – 76.45%)

The full-time response target from SFC was exceeded for both FE and HE students. NESCol response rates decreased by 3.91% for FT FE, and although exceeding the SFC target, there was also a 0.41% decrease in the NESCol response rate for FT HE learners in comparison to AY2024-25

- PT Further Education (FE) – 69.40% (AY24-25 – 57.58%)
- PT Higher Education (HE) – 65.77% (AY24-25 – 68.86%)

The SFC part-time response target was exceeded for both FE and HE learners. NESCol response rates increased by 11.82% for PT FE, and although exceeding the SFC target, there was a 3.09% decrease in the NESCol response rate for PT HE learners in comparison to AY2024-25. Please note for the purpose of internal reporting that the part-time and school link outcomes are presented separately, but are combined for the SFC data submission.

The high levels in NESCol participation rates are credited to the staff who work tirelessly to engage and motivate the students to complete the survey, informing them how important their feedback is for future college delivery.

Although there is no SFC response target set for the distance/flexible learning students the college achieved a response rate of 5.15%, unfortunately this is a 9.42% decrease in comparison to the 14.57% response rate in the previous year. This mode of student is notoriously difficult to survey and there is no clear reason to why the response rate fell this year.

Mandatory SFC Statements & NESCol Statements

The Scottish Funding Council provide 13 mandatory statements that must be used in all college student satisfaction and engagement surveys. The data presented in this report has been broken down to display the SFC mandatory statements for each mode of qualification and also includes the statements set by the College, as they are combined into one student survey. The College set internal

levels of satisfaction to allow measures to be determined for improvements and to provide trend data of satisfaction which can be quantified across all service.

The results table show the number of full-time students who answered each of the SFC and college statements and the percentage of positive satisfaction results. Appendices 1-3 provide the satisfaction outcomes for part-time, school link and distance/flexible student results.

The overall positive satisfaction calculates the percentage of students who selected the *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* options in response to each question.

Any results that are below or equal to 85% positive satisfaction are highlighted in either Amber or Red. All satisfaction levels below 85% are addressed by the curriculum and service teams as part of their continuous self-evaluation activities.

College Measure of Satisfaction Level		85.01%+
		75.01-85.00%
		0-75.00%

Overall College Student Satisfaction Outcomes

The overall college satisfaction for the Student Satisfaction & Engagement survey data AY 2025-26 remains high at 92% improving again on the three year trend.

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Overall positive satisfaction	89.6%	90.3%	91.87%

Full Time Student Satisfaction Outcomes

The College continues to maintain a consistently high level of student satisfaction across the majority of the SFC and college statements, as illustrated in the three-year trend table below, reaching a strong 92%.

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Overall positive satisfaction	89.4%	90.8%	91.8%

The percentage of positive satisfaction achieving amber or red levels will be addressed by individual curriculum and support teams during their continuous self-evaluation activities.

Full Time Survey Results

Mandatory SFC Statements	2023-24		2024-25		2025-26	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Overall, I am satisfied with my college experience.	3917	93.1%	4050	95.23%	4199	94.78%
Staff regularly discuss my progress with me.	3907	87.4%	4048	89.50%	4197	89.47%
Staff encourage students to take responsibility for their learning.	3904	97.2%	4049	97.88%	4183	97.97%
I am able to influence learning on my course.	3894	90.3%	4046	92.02%	4181	91.15%
I receive useful feedback which informs my future learning.	3903	91.0%	4048	92.02%	4182	92.40%
The way I'm taught helps me learn.	3893	88.0%	4045	90.19%	4189	89.50%
My time at college has helped me develop knowledge and skills for the workplace.	3906	92.1%	4048	93.40%	4190	93.27%
I believe student suggestions are taken seriously.	3893	84.6%	4043	86.54%	4187	87.56%
I believe all students at the college are treated equally and fairly by staff.	3900	90.0%	4049	90.44%	4183	90.10%
Any change in my course or teaching has been communicated well.	3910	85.8%	4046	88.58%	4193	88.79%
The online learning materials for my course have helped me learn.	3904	90.3%	4043	91.79%	4187	92.19%
I feel that I am part of the college community.	3898	88.1%	4049	87.26%	4186	88.89%
The College Students' Association influences change for the better.	3647	91.6%	4020	93.51%	4186	93.06%
College Statements	2023-24		2024-25		2025-26	
Learning & Teaching	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Teaching and learning materials are helping me learn.	3913	95.8%	4050	96.25%	4193	95.90%
Staff help to motivate me with my learning.	3902	90.5%	4049	91.68%	4182	91.63%
The VLE (MyNESCol) is helping my learning.	3897	89.9%	4048	87.48%	4169	90.29%
I am told in advance if there are any changes to my timetable.	3899	83.7%	4048	86.51%	4187	87.13%
Teaching staff make use of a range of digital and multimedia technologies (e.g. online quizzes, videos) to enhance learning and teaching.	3900	90.9%	4047	91.75%	4182	91.49%

Assessment & Feedback	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Lessons prepare me well for assessments.	3880	93.0%	4048	93.85%	4190	93.99%
I am provided with opportunities to plan and personalise my own learning.	3894	89.6%	4045	90.88%	4182	91.06%
Assessment tasks are clearly explained.	3897	89.8%	4047	90.73%	4187	90.83%
I am informed where and when my assessments are taking place.	3889	96.0%	4044	96.51%	4184	96.73%
I know what to do if I don't agree with my assessment results.	3890	84.5%	4045	86.65%	4186	87.00%
The feedback that I receive following assessment is useful and helps me learn.	3896	92.4%	4044	93.77%	4182	93.83%
I receive feedback from assessments in a timely manner.	3896	87.3%	4046	88.80%	4176	87.31%
e-assessment (online assessment) was used as part of my course.	3844	85.5%	4045	85.54%	4156	85.23%
Quality Improvement	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
I have had the chance to provide my views on my learning experience e.g. questionnaires, focus groups, class representatives, peer-led review or course committee meetings.	3866	88.9%	4034	90.58%	4184	91.01%
I receive feedback on issues I raise.	3824	85.0%	4033	86.98%	4156	87.90%
Guidance & Support	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
I am able to access additional support or advice when I need it.	3883	94.7%	4035	95.42%	4189	95.08%
The information/help/support I am given is useful.	3874	93.9%	4032	95.01%	4182	94.40%
I am aware of the information and/or support available to help me to decide my next steps e.g. continuing education, seeking employment.	3880	90.6%	4037	91.85%	4178	90.59%
I am aware of extra-curricular opportunities within the College.	3885	79.8%	4034	84.21%	4185	84.78%
I am aware of events, activities and opportunities offered by the Students' Association.	3877	80.6%	4031	86.43%	4173	86.53%
Equipment & Facilities	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
I have been able to access my College IT account to use Microsoft 365 including: email and OneDrive.	3902	97.0%	4037	98.39%	4173	98.39%
I have been able to access all necessary computer hardware and software for my course.	3888	95.4%	4031	96.50%	4172	96.69%
Once I am connected, the College Wi-Fi network is reliable.	3777	78.2%	3888	85.44%	4186	85.69%
Classroom presentation facilities, e.g. data projector, speakers, interactive whiteboard, are effective.	3855	94.6%	3969	96.37%	4187	96.15%
I feel safe and secure on college premises.	3863	95.9%	4006	96.31%	4191	96.30%

College libraries provide a suitable learning environment.	3737	96.0%	3845	96.38%	4177	95.52%
College facilities are clean, tidy and well decorated.	3865	93.2%	4000	93.83%	4178	94.14%
Equality & Diversity	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
The College does enough to promote equality and diversity issues e.g. College events, literature.	3884	94.3%	4037	95.96%	4183	95.82%
I am aware of the College's Respect campaign.	3886	86.9%	4035	86.67%	4183	86.25%
I believe that College staff, students and contractors behave respectfully towards each other.	3891	94.5%	4035	95.76%	4180	95.29%
Recommendation	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
I would recommend North East Scotland College to others.	3855	95.3%	4030	95.26%	4193	96.02%

SFC Comment Box

In addition to the SFC statements, students are provided with a free-text comment box at the end of the mandatory multiple choice statements. Students are instructed that *"If you have any other comments about learning and teaching at the college, please write them in the box"*. Responding to this question is optional.

In total, 470 students elected to make a comment in the free-text box. All comments have been disseminated to the relevant curriculum and support areas for review, reflection and potential action.

Positive Qualitative Feedback

Padlet is a content curation platform that the College has used to collate and present feedback in an effective visual display. This Padlet displays instances of positive qualitative feedback provided by students in the AY 2025-26 Student Satisfaction & Engagement survey. The feedback is presented by sector, which hosts the positive feedback provided by full-time, part-time and distance/flexible learning students across all services and can be viewed in the link below.

[Positive Qualitative Feedback](#)

Appendix 1 Part Time Survey Satisfaction

Overall positive satisfaction	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
		92.0%	89.76%

Mandatory SFC Statements	2023-24		2024-25		2025-26	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Overall, I am satisfied with my college experience.	431	96.1%	437	92.91%	583	93.14%
Staff regularly discuss my progress with me.	430	89.1%	437	85.58%	582	87.80%
Staff encourage students to take responsibility for their learning.	429	97.4%	437	98.17%	582	97.94%
I am able to influence learning on my course.	431	94.7%	437	91.30%	577	92.37%
I receive useful feedback which informs my future learning.	431	90.7%	437	91.30%	579	91.19%
The way I'm taught helps me learn.	427	89.9%	436	88.53%	581	90.19%
My time at college has helped me develop knowledge and skills for the workplace.	430	92.1%	437	89.02%	583	91.25%
I believe student suggestions are taken seriously.	430	92.3%	437	88.10%	579	89.46%
I believe all students at the college are treated equally and fairly by staff.	430	97.7%	437	94.05%	582	95.70%
Any change in my course or teaching has been communicated well.	429	90.2%	437	89.70%	582	89.00%
The online learning materials for my course have helped me learn.	427	94.9%	437	92.45%	581	90.53%
I feel that I am part of the college community.	431	90.7%	437	84.67%	579	85.66%
The College Students' Association influences change for the better.	401	95.34%	434	95.62%	581	92.28%
College Statements	2023-24		2024-25		2025-26	
Learning & Teaching	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Teaching and learning materials are helping me learn.	431	96.1%	435	95.63%	581	95.35%
Staff help to motivate me with my learning.	429	93.0%	435	91.72%	581	92.94%
The VLE (MyNESCol) is helping my learning.	429	91.4%	435	86.67%	580	89.83%
I am told in advance if there are any changes to my timetable.	430	87.0%	435	87.13%	580	87.41%
Teaching staff make use of a range of digital and multimedia technologies (e.g. online quizzes, videos) to enhance learning and teaching.	430	89.3%	435	88.74%	581	91.39%

Assessment & Feedback	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Lessons prepare me well for assessments.	431	96.1%	435	93.56%	582	95.02%
I am provided with opportunities to plan and personalise my own learning.	430	93.0%	435	87.36%	579	89.64%
Assessment tasks are clearly explained.	430	95.4%	435	94.94%	581	93.80%
I am informed where and when my assessments are taking place.	428	97.7%	435	97.47%	583	97.26%
I know what to do if I don't agree with my assessment results.	429	91.6%	435	90.11%	582	90.38%
The feedback that I receive following assessment is useful and helps me learn.	429	93.9%	435	94.48%	579	94.30%
I receive feedback from assessments in a timely manner.	430	95.1%	435	94.02%	579	93.09%
e-assessment (online assessment) was used as part of my course.	428	81.1%	435	77.93%	579	84.11%
Quality Improvement	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
I have had the chance to provide my views on my learning experience e.g. questionnaires, focus groups, class representatives, peer-led review or course committee meetings.	426	86.2%	432	84.95%	578	88.93%
I receive feedback on issues I raise.	420	86.7%	432	86.81%	573	89.70%
Guidance & Support	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
I am able to access additional support or advice when I need it.	427	96.5%	433	93.30%	580	95.00%
The information/help/support I am given is useful.	427	95.6%	433	94.69%	581	94.84%
I am aware of the information and/or support available to help me to decide my next steps e.g. continuing education, seeking employment.	425	95.8%	433	91.45%	579	93.09%
I am aware of extra-curricular opportunities within the College.	425	83.1%	433	85.91%	581	87.44%
I am aware of events, activities and opportunities offered by the Students' Association.	424	81.8%	433	84.53%	577	85.44%
Equipment & Facilities	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
I have been able to access my College IT account to use Microsoft 365 including: email and OneDrive.	428	98.1%	433	95.84%	580	95.69%
I have been able to access all necessary computer hardware and software for my course.	428	98.1%	433	95.61%	580	96.21%
Once I am connected, the College Wi-Fi network is reliable	403	78.2%	389	82.01%	581	80.38%
Classroom presentation facilities, e.g. data projector, speakers, interactive whiteboard, are effective	422	96.2%	422	95.50%	580	95.00%
I feel safe and secure on college premises	424	97.2%	426	97.42%	579	96.55%
College libraries provide a suitable learning environment	407	96.3%	397	95.72%	577	94.97%
College facilities are clean, tidy and well decorated	422	96.7%	427	93.44%	578	94.98%

Equality & Diversity	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
The College does enough to promote equality and diversity issues e.g. College events, literature.	426	97.9%	432	95.83%	580	96.38%
I am aware of the College's Respect campaign.	426	91.1%	432	87.96%	575	87.83%
I believe that College staff, students and contractors behave respectfully towards each other.	428	98.4%	432	96.53%	580	96.90%
Recommendation	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
I would recommend North East Scotland College to others.	421	95.7%	433	92.61%	580	94.14%

Appendix 2 Distance/Flexible Satisfaction

Overall positive satisfaction	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
	84.4%	77.09%	80.99%

Mandatory SFC Statements	2023-24		2024-25		2025-26	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Overall, I am satisfied with my college experience.	131	97.7%	58	96.55%	22	90.91%
Staff regularly discuss my progress with me.	128	91.4%	58	89.66%	22	86.36%
Staff encourage students to take responsibility for their learning.	124	95.2%	58	93.10%	22	95.45%
I am able to influence learning on my course.	118	83.9%	58	79.31%	21	80.95%
I receive useful feedback which informs my future learning.	128	98.4%	58	93.10%	22	95.45%
The way I'm taught helps me learn.	123	94.3%	58	98.28%	21	85.71%
My time at college has helped me develop knowledge and skills for the workplace.	121	95.9%	58	96.55%	22	86.36%
I believe student suggestions are taken seriously.	103	92.2%	58	86.21%	21	76.19%
I believe all students at the college are treated equally and fairly by staff.	101	99.0%	58	96.55%	21	86.36%
Any change in my course or teaching has been communicated well.	113	94.7%	58	93.10%	22	86.36%
The online learning materials for my course have helped me learn.	130	95.4%	58	100.00%	22	90.91%
I feel that I am part of the college community.	104	70.2%	58	68.97%	21	61.90%
The College Students' Association influences change for the better.	112	100.00%	55	89.47%	21	92.31%
College Statements	2023-24		2024-25		2025-26	
Learning & Teaching	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Teaching and learning materials are helping me learn.	126	96.8%	89	95.51%	21	90.48%
Staff help to motivate me with my learning.	119	94.1%	89	84.27%	20	80.00%
The VLE (MyNESCOL) is helping my learning.	94	79.8%	89	79.78%	19	73.68%
I am told in advance if there are any changes to my timetable.	96	89.6%	89	87.64%	20	85.00%
Teaching staff make use of a range of digital and multimedia technologies (e.g. online quizzes, videos) to enhance learning and teaching.	102	87.3%	89	85.39%	21	76.19%

Assessment & Feedback	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Lessons prepare me well for assessments.	117	96.6%	89	95.51%	21	90.48%
I am provided with opportunities to plan and personalise my own learning.	118	94.1%	89	94.38%	21	85.71%
Assessment tasks are clearly explained.	124	95.2%	89	93.26%	22	86.36%
I am informed where and when my assessments are taking place.	108	99.1%	89	94.38%	21	95.24%
I know what to do if I don't agree with my assessment results.	112	92.0%	89	77.53%	21	76.19%
The feedback that I receive following assessment is useful and helps me learn.	124	98.4%	89	92.13%	21	90.48%
I receive feedback from assessments in a timely manner.	127	97.6%	89	95.51%	22	86.36%
e-assessment (online assessment) was used as part of my course.	123	95.9%	89	89.89%	21	80.95%
Quality Improvement	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
I have had the chance to provide my views on my learning experience e.g. questionnaires, focus groups, class representatives, peer-led review or course committee meetings.	102	74.5%	88	63.64%	21	47.62%
I receive feedback on issues I raise.	87	89.7%	88	77.27%	18	72.22%
Guidance & Support	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
I am able to access additional support or advice when I need it.	120	94.2%	89	94.38%	21	80.95%
The information/help/support I am given is useful.	115	96.5%	89	92.13%	21	85.71%
I am aware of the information and/or support available to help me to decide my next steps e.g. continuing education, seeking employment.	109	86.2%	89	79.78%	21	71.43%
I am aware of extra-curricular opportunities within the College.	95	60.0%	89	50.56%	20	50.00%
I am aware of events, activities and opportunities offered by the Students' Association.	94	56.4%	89	48.31%	20	50.00%
Equipment & Facilities	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
I have been able to access my College IT account to use Microsoft 365 including: email and OneDrive.	88	76.1%	88	67.05%	20	90.00%
I have been able to access all necessary computer hardware and software for my course.	97	89.7%	88	85.23%	20	80.00%
Once I am connected, the College Wi-Fi network is reliable	44	95.5%	28	100.00%	18	77.78%
Classroom presentation facilities, e.g. data projector, speakers, interactive whiteboard, are effective	35	85.7%	26	100.00%	18	77.78%
I feel safe and secure on college premises	38	86.8%	28	96.43%	18	83.33%
College libraries provide a suitable learning environment	32	84.4%	25	100.00%	17	82.35%
College facilities are clean, tidy and well decorated	38	86.8%	29	100.00%	17	82.35%

Equality & Diversity	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
The College does enough to promote equality and diversity issues e.g. College events, literature.	86	91.9%	87	83.91%	17	82.35%
I am aware of the College's Respect campaign.	85	64.7%	87	63.22%	19	57.89%
I believe that College staff, students and contractors behave respectfully towards each other.	84	97.6%	87	90.80%	17	82.35%
Recommendation	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
I would recommend North East Scotland College to others.	125	99.2%	89	96.63%	22	90.91%

Appendix 3 School Link Survey Satisfaction

Overall positive satisfaction	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
	90.0%	89.3%	92.83%

Mandatory SFC Statements	2023-24		2024-25		2025-26	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Overall, I am satisfied with my college experience.	544	97.4%	430	98.60%	670	97.01%
Staff regularly discuss my progress with me.	544	91.9%	430	93.26%	669	95.07%
Staff encourage students to take responsibility for their learning.	543	99.3%	430	100.00%	668	98.35%
I am able to influence learning on my course.	538	95.7%	430	93.49%	665	95.34%
I receive useful feedback which informs my future learning.	544	95.2%	430	94.88%	668	95.66%
The way I'm taught helps me learn.	544	93.8%	430	93.95%	666	94.44%
My time at college has helped me develop knowledge and skills for the workplace.	542	95.6%	430	95.81%	667	96.70%
I believe student suggestions are taken seriously.	539	91.7%	430	93.02%	665	93.53%
I believe all students at the college are treated equally and fairly by staff.	541	93.9%	430	93.49%	669	95.22%
Any change in my course or teaching has been communicated well.	540	93.9%	430	94.19%	667	91.75%
The online learning materials for my course have helped me learn.	542	90.2%	430	91.63%	661	92.59%
I feel that I am part of the college community.	536	89.0%	430	85.58%	668	90.57%
The College Students' Association influences change for the better.	467	95.80%	427	96.01%	668	97.47%
College Statements	2023-24		2024-25		2025-26	
Learning & Teaching	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Teaching and learning materials are helping me learn.	543	97.1%	430	96.98%	664	97.74%
Staff help to motivate me with my learning.	541	93.7%	430	92.56%	662	94.86%
The VLE (MyNESCol) is helping my learning.	531	85.1%	430	83.26%	654	92.66%
I am told in advance if there are any changes to my timetable.	531	90.0%	430	90.00%	658	90.43%
Teaching staff make use of a range of digital and multimedia technologies (e.g. online quizzes, videos) to enhance learning and teaching.	536	91.4%	430	89.53%	664	90.21%

Assessment & Feedback	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Lessons prepare me well for assessments.	535	94.2%	430	96.05%	664	95.93%
I am provided with opportunities to plan and personalise my own learning.	537	90.1%	430	91.40%	663	93.82%
Assessment tasks are clearly explained.	536	93.8%	430	93.49%	664	93.67%
I am informed where and when my assessments are taking place.	533	95.1%	430	96.74%	662	95.92%
I know what to do if I don't agree with my assessment results.	531	84.9%	430	87.21%	661	87.75%
The feedback that I receive following assessment is useful and helps me learn.	532	95.1%	430	96.05%	659	96.66%
I receive feedback from assessments in a timely manner.	534	92.0%	430	94.88%	663	96.08%
e-assessment (online assessment) was used as part of my course.	521	87.1%	430	82.79%	651	85.10%
Quality Improvement	No.	%	No.	%	No.657	%
I have had the chance to provide my views on my learning experience e.g. questionnaires, focus groups, class representatives, peer-led review or course committee meetings.	530	86.2%	428	86.68%	657	88.74%
I receive feedback on issues I raise.	523	89.5%	428	90.42%	656	92.53%
Guidance & Support	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
I am able to access additional support or advice when I need it.	537	95.0%	430	94.42%	665	96.09%
The information/help/support I am given is useful.	535	95.9%	430	96.98%	664	97.29%
I am aware of the information and/or support available to help me to decide my next steps e.g. continuing education, seeking employment.	537	92.6%	430	93.95%	664	94.13%
I am aware of extra-curricular opportunities within the College.	530	74.5%	430	74.65%	655	76.18%
I am aware of events, activities and opportunities offered by the Students' Association.	529	74.3%	430	74.65%	655	77.56%
Equipment & Facilities	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
I have been able to access my College IT account to use Microsoft 365 including: email and OneDrive.	529	92.4%	426	91.55%	655	93.44%
I have been able to access all necessary computer hardware and software for my course.	531	93.2%	426	94.84%	655	94.20%
Once I am connected, the College Wi-Fi network is reliable	464	83.6%	338	84.62%	655	80.31%
Classroom presentation facilities, e.g. data projector, speakers, interactive whiteboard, are effective	490	96.5%	378	95.50%	660	95.15%
I feel safe and secure on college premises	483	96.5%	363	98.62%	659	96.21%
College libraries provide a suitable learning environment	440	96.4%	319	96.87%	649	94.30%
College facilities are clean, tidy and well decorated	475	96.8%	355	94.37%	659	94.84%

Equality & Diversity	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
The College does enough to promote equality and diversity issues e.g. College events, literature.	523	92.9%	429	95.10%	654	95.41%
I am aware of the College's Respect campaign.	522	78.9%	429	76.22%	656	79.42%
I believe that College staff, students and contractors behave respectfully towards each other.	527	96.2%	429	96.74%	659	97.57%
Recommendation	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
I would recommend North East Scotland College to others.	527	97.2%	428	97.43%	662	97.73%



REGIONAL BOARD	
Meeting of 17 June 2026	
Title: Strategic Plan: Sub-Strategy Priority Update	
Author: Robin McGregor, Vice Principal: Curriculum & Quality	Contributor(s): AP's - Committee Chairs
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:	
<p>To provide the Regional Board with an overview of progress against the College's strategic new sub-strategy aligned priorities, highlighting key developments, emerging risks, and planned next steps, and to support assurance and informed discussion on delivery.</p>	
Linked to Strategic Theme:	
Choose an item.	
Linked to Strategic Risk(s):	
Executive Summary:	
<p>The purpose of sharing this paper with the Regional Board is to provide a comprehensive update on progress against the College's strategic priorities, with a particular focus on delivery across the key sub-strategies: Our Student Experience, Our Colleagues, Our Digital Ambition, Our Spaces, Our Secure Future, and Our Region. The paper outlines progress against a range of priority activity, including the development of the Learning and Teaching Futures Academy, internal communication review, data classification and governance, campus environment enhancement, sustainability activity, and regional engagement. It highlights key developments, emerging risks and dependencies, and planned next steps across these areas. The paper aims to enable the Board to gain assurance on progress and impact, while also supporting informed discussion, challenge, and guidance on the direction of travel and the effective prioritisation of resources to deliver the College's Strategic Plan.</p>	

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Regional Board members

Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval (if applicable):

Equality Impact Assessment:

Positive Impact

Negative Impact

No Impact

Evidence:

Sub-Strategy	Title	Principal Objective	Intended Impact	Owner	Start Date	End Date	Status	Progress Update May 26	Risks / Issues	Evidence of Impact	Next Steps
Our Student Experience	Learning and Teaching Futures Academy	To establish a new Strategic NESCol Learning and Teaching Leadership Body that drives continuous academic and pastoral development, fosters collaboration and innovation through shared practice, and enhances digital learning through the adoption of new technologies to deliver an inclusive, high-quality, and future-ready curriculum.	A more skilled, collaborative, and innovative teaching workforce, with enhanced digital capability, delivering an inclusive, high-quality, and future-focused curriculum that improves learner experience and outcomes.	Robin McGregor	Apr-26	Sep-26	Green	Progress continues on the development of the Learning and Teaching Futures Academy, with a clear emphasis on creating a structured and sustainable approach to quality enhancement, professional learning, innovation and collaboration across the College. The emerging model is being designed in close alignment with both the ongoing internal review of Quality and the review of People Services and Learning & Development. This collective work is reinforcing the need for a more coherent and integrated approach, ensuring that quality enhancement and assurance are effectively connected with staff development, mentoring, training and wider professional support. The Academy is therefore positioned as a key enabler in strengthening capability and consistency across the organisation, providing a clear mechanism to link quality activity with professional learning. In doing so, it will support the embedding of enhancement at scale, promote effective practice, and drive measurable improvement in learning, teaching and student outcomes. Subject to finalisation of the internal Quality review, the current intention is for the Academy to be launched at the beginning of the new academic year, ensuring full alignment with the College's revised quality operating model and strategic priorities.	Key risks identified include dependency on completion and alignment of parallel reviews, potential lack of clarity in roles and operating model, and capacity pressures ahead of planned launch. Additional risks relate to staff engagement and perceptions of centralisation, alongside ensuring balance between quality assurance and enhancement activity is maintained. Mitigation focus is on phased implementation, clear communication, alignment of structures, and strong engagement with curriculum teams.	TBC - It is anticipated that impact will be evidenced through improved student outcomes and satisfaction, enhanced staff capability and engagement in professional learning, increased collaboration and innovation in teaching practice, and clear alignment of learning and teaching activity with strategic priorities.	Target launch remains the start of the new academic year, subject to outcomes of reviews and readiness of the revised operating model.
Our Colleagues	Staff Recruitment	To review current recruitment processes, approaches, and practices, identify opportunities for improvement, and implement targeted enhancements based on these findings.	A more efficient, consistent, and candidate-focused recruitment approach that improves the quality and timeliness of hires, strengthens employer reputation, and better aligns staffing with organisational needs.	Kimra Donnelly / Paul Smith	Aug-26	Dec-27	Green	The level of resource available will directly determine both the scope and pace of this project and is therefore a critical dependency for the People Services structure review. The planned implementation date for the revised structure is August 2026, at which point a comprehensive scoping exercise will be undertaken to define the full extent of the transformation activity. As an initial step, total FTE within the HR Assistant team has been increased by 0.4. This additional capacity will support early preparatory work, including the review and documentation of current processes. This activity is intended to establish a robust baseline to inform the wider transformation programme. If helpful, I can tighten this further or align it stylistically with your previous internal communications piece so they read seamlessly as one section.	The College is currently undertaking a procurement exercise for a new HR and Payroll system. Should a decision be made to implement a new provider, this will result in a substantial increase in workload for the HR Team and the wider People Services function. This additional demand has the potential to place significant pressure on available capacity and may impact the ability to deliver the Staff Recruitment Project within the agreed timescales. To mitigate this risk, preparatory work is being prioritised to ensure processes are standardised and documented in advance. However, ongoing monitoring of capacity and delivery milestones will be required, alongside consideration of phased implementation approaches to the Staff Recruitment project, to ensure the successful delivery of both projects.	A review of recruitment processes and enhancement of the service provided to recruiting managers is expected to improve consistency, efficiency and overall service quality. This will support a more streamlined recruitment experience, reduce time to hire and strengthen the quality of recruitment decisions, while also improving data capture and management information. Collectively, these improvements will enhance the College's ability to attract and appoint high-quality candidates.	Recruitment of temporary additional resource into the HR Team to undertake preparatory work, including the review and documentation of current processes.
Our Colleagues	Internal Communication	To review internal communication provision—including channels, content, engagement, and staff feedback—identify improvement opportunities, and enhance delivery through refined approaches, new platforms, and appropriate resourcing.	More effective and engaging internal communications, with improved staff awareness, understanding, and participation, supported by relevant channels, high-quality content, and appropriate resourcing.	Paul Smith / Kimra Donnelly	Jun-26	Jul-26	Green	Initial discovery engagement with intranet provider interact is scheduled for June, following scoping discussions in May, to explore the long-term future of COLIN ahead of the current contract expiry in August 2027. An SLT session focused on the Employee Voice survey results was held in June, including insights on internal communication, to help inform future direction. The Our Colleagues Committee will hold its inaugural meeting in June, alongside an Employee Voice workshop, to support the ongoing development of the internal communication review. An all-staff survey, focusing on internal communication preferences and feedback, is planned for August. In addition, the NESCol Staff Bulletin is being refreshed for the start of the 2026/27 academic year and will be aligned to the sub-strategy themes, ensuring clarity of messaging and stronger alignment for all staff. If you'd like, I can tighten this further into a more concise, Board-ready version or adapt the tone slightly depending on the audience.	Ensuring capacity to respond to staff feedback will be crucial, based on managing workflows within existing staff resources (Marketing and Communications, ITTS, People Services).	Impact will be evidenced through improved staff survey results on awareness and communication effectiveness, increased engagement with key communication channels, stronger participation in two-way engagement activity, and clearer, more consistent messaging aligned to strategic priorities.	Intranet discovery session; Staff survey.
Our Digital Ambition	Data Classification	Initiate a Data Classification project to categorise data based on its sensitivity, value, and required protection levels. This initiative will ensure that sensitive or confidential information is appropriately handled, securely stored, and accessed exclusively by authorised personnel.	Improved data security and governance, with clear accountability and controls ensuring sensitive information is consistently protected, reducing risk and supporting compliance.	Scott Matthew	Oct-25	tbc	Green	The first stage of this project focused on the development of a new Data Governance and Handling Policy, providing a framework for the classification and management of data to ensure that appropriate levels of protection are applied across all information held by the College. The policy establishes clear guidance on how data should be accessed, handled, and retained, helping to ensure that sensitive and confidential information remains secure. (Policy approved May 2026). In addition, a Project Definition Document has been completed, providing a high-level overview of the project and clearly defining its scope. (Completed June 2026).	There is a risk that, without consistent implementation, resourcing, and staff adoption, the Data Classification project will not be effectively embedded, resulting in continued exposure to data security, compliance, and governance risks.	Evidencing impact will be reduction in number of data breaches. The number of data protection complaints will also be monitored.	The next step is to begin the more detailed planning for the implementation of the project.

Our Spaces	Improve & Enhance NESCol Spaces	To create welcoming, safe, supportive, and energising campus environments that enhance the overall experience for students, staff, and our communities.	We will improve the atmosphere and utilisation of campuses, celebrate their unique features, and foster deeper community engagement through innovative and inclusive design principles. By investing in and optimising campus spaces, this sub-strategy will support evolving demands while ensuring sustainability, accessibility, and wellbeing.	Adam Wilson	Apr-26		Green	The Our Spaces Committee held its inaugural meeting on 18 May, during which the Terms of Reference and membership were agreed. Initial priorities for the year ahead were discussed, alongside the importance of delivering against these objectives. The development of a longer-term estates plan was also identified as a key priority for the next six months. Committee members have been tasked with reviewing the strategic objectives and will bring feedback and proposals to the next meeting.	There is a risk that, due to resource constraints, delivery complexity, and inconsistent stakeholder engagement, campus improvements may not be implemented effectively or equitably, limiting their impact on experience, accessibility, and sustainability. The Our Spaces Committee will ensure a consistent approach is adopted for all campuses mitigating this risk considerably.	TBC - Impact will be evidenced through improved student and staff feedback on campus environment and wellbeing, increased utilisation of spaces, stronger community engagement, enhanced accessibility and sustainability measures, and a demonstrable improvement in the overall campus experience.	The next step is to begin the more detailed estates planning.
Our Secure Future	NESCol Sustainable Development Goals	To embed the UN Sustainable Development Goals within NESCol's operations and curriculum by prioritising a defined set of goals annually, aligning them to targeted activities and initiatives that influence positive stakeholder behaviours, and systematically capturing impact and learning to inform continuous improvement.	Increased awareness and adoption of sustainable practices across staff and students, with measurable contributions to priority UN Sustainable Development Goals and strengthened alignment between NESCol's activities, values, and global sustainability priorities.	Paul Smith/ Duncan Abernethy	Jun-26	Sep-26	Green	The Our Secure Future leads are scheduled to meet on 8 June to finalise the attendee list and agree the priority activities to be taken forward to the full committee. Meetings have been scheduled for the year ahead, and preparatory work is underway to develop a clearer understanding of existing sustainability activity, with a view to establishing baseline positions. Sustainability discussions captured through KPI meetings are also being used to help shape expectations for curriculum areas in the year ahead.	Key risks for this sub-strategy will include the organisation's capacity to implement behavioural change amongst the student population along with member availability/commitment and inconsistent values. All of which will be discussed in the initial meeting.	Baseline information being captured for the official launch of this sub strategy	Pre-meeting on 8th June followed by launch meeting 24/6/26 (tbc)
Our Region	NESCol Community Pledge	To strengthen NESCol's regional reputation and build trust within the wider community by increasing meaningful engagement between curriculum and support teams and external community groups, supporting our role as an anchor institution and good neighbour.	A stronger and more visible community presence, with enhanced relationships, increased trust, and greater recognition of NESCol's contribution as a valued and engaged anchor institution.	Duncan Abernethy / Kevin Bruce	Apr-26	Sep-26	Green	The Our Region committee will hold its initial meeting on Monday 22nd June to agree Terms of Reference and agree key priorities for the year ahead as well as confirming the membership and any potential omissions which would strengthen the ability to deliver on the objectives. Our Region will consider alignment with key reference material including the Regional Economic Strategy and Local Outcome Improvement Plans (City and Shire) to ensure consistency of ambition and stakeholder engagement."	Key risks in the early phases of the strategy launch include member availability/commitment; incompatible objectives and availability of resources to deliver priorities. All of which will be discussed in the initial meeting.	Evidencing impact will be discussed in the launch meeting	Launch meeting on Monday 22nd June and establish regular meeting schedule for 2026/27



REGIONAL BOARD

Meeting of 17 June 2026

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 Visit to NESCol of SFC Chief Executive, Francesca Osowska – 19 May 2026

In my absence (annual leave), the College - represented by Stuart Thompson and Robert Laird - recently hosted a visit from SFC's outgoing Chief Executive, Francesca Osowska.

The meeting focused on several key themes. Firstly, Francesca was keen to know more about the Energy Transition Skills Hub (ETSH), how it was funded and how future delivery within it should be funded. Stuart emphasised the ongoing challenges in completing the ETSH facilities and identified funding delays especially the Investment Zone application. The issue of a lack of Scottish Government or SFC delivery funding was raised as a significant concern and a potential barrier to the Hub's future success.

The recent and very welcomed funding increase for the sector and the College was raised. However, the continuing unfairness of our family group premium was highlighted, particularly in the context of the scale of our city and rural delivery. The geographical challenges we face were also discussed, particularly in the comparative context of others e.g., UHI Moray. No short term, alternative funding commitments or opportunities were offered by Francesca, although the funding model review was raised as a potential solution to our somewhat unique issue.

The College's delivery and cost profiles were raised, as were our outsourced services and ASET. There was also a specific discussion about our agency teaching contract. It was emphasised how important this contract was in helping to secure permanent lecturing roles and our financial sustainability. Further, Stuart indicated that our efficiency is extremely high due to management decisions, staff resources and these contracts. He also mentioned that our diverse range of 'levers' allowed us to subsidise the running of both our centres at Fraserburgh and Peterhead. This said, having to continue doing this, along with the lack of a fair funding formula, was limiting our ability to meet regional demands and impacting our success.

In terms of partnerships, community and regional support, the importance of delivering for the region and our commitment to community development and support was raised. Our significant and highly effective work with public and private partners to enhance our delivery, income and outcomes for the region was discussed at length, along with unfilled demand and increasing requirements from within the region to transform the energy economy.

Following these discussions, a tour of ETSH and the Altens Campus Mechanical Engineering, Automotive, Electrical Engineering, Joinery, and Brickwork workshops was undertaken. Francesca seemed genuinely impressed by the facilities and the scale and condition of our estate and facilities. It was highlighted that the recent £2m investment in Altens Mechanical and Electrical Engineering workshops had come from SFC capital funding.

Discussions concluded with an understanding that the SFC and the College would continue to work together in order to review and revise the future funding formula for colleges.

2 **Scottish Renewables Green Energy Supply Chain Awards – 28 May 2026**

On Thursday 28 May 2026 myself, Duncan Abernethy, Michele Burnett and Leann Tait attended the above. The College had been shortlisted, and subsequently won, an award for the work it had undertaken in the development of our Energy Transition Skills Hub (ETSH). Undoubtedly, we were delighted to have won as we felt the recognition evidenced an understanding of the considerable effort that has gone into this project since its inception.

I have taken the opportunity at our recent and on-going Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) staff information sessions to highlight not only this achievement but also the 10 other significant national and regional awards that the College has won over the last 5 years.

I also list them here for information and the benefit of Regional Board members. Such accolades and recognition are a by-product of the hard and innovative work of many within the College. This said, such accolades and recognition are always welcomed and motivate us all to continue enhancing our approaches for those we work with and for.

- **Green Gown Awards:** Next Generation Learning and Skills (March 2021)
- **Pearson HE Innovate Awards:** Most Innovative Approach to Widening Participation in the Curriculum - Gateway2Medicine (September 2021)
- **CDN College Awards:** Employer Connections - NESCol/Shell partnership (November 2022)
- **CDN College Awards:** Employer Connections - P&J Live partnership (November 2023)
- **CDN College Awards:** Skills Development - Aberdeen City Council meta-skills project (November 2023)
- **Herald Education Awards:** Partnership Award - NESA partnership (May 2025)
- **Northern Star Business Awards:** Staff Matter (April 2026)
- **Northern Star Business Awards,** Driving Sustainability (April 2026)
- **Herald Education Awards:** Widening Access - Gateway2Medicine (May 2026)

- **Scottish Renewables:** Green Energy Supply Chain Awards Judges Award – NESAs (August 2025)
- **Scottish Renewables:** Green Energy Supply Chain Awards - Energy Transition Skills Hub (May 2026)

3 UK Parliament Scottish Affairs Committee (SAC) – ‘Clean Power by 2030: A fair deal for Scotland’

In May 2025, I was asked – along with Jim Brown of the Energy Skills Partnership and Kenny McInnes of Forth Valley College - to give evidence to the UK Parliament's Scottish Affairs Committee (SAC).

The evidence session, one of many hosted by the SAC, was focusing on the energy industry, the economic impact of oil and gas decline and the transition to a greener energy economy within Scotland. A year later the SAC finally published its report ‘Clean Power: A fair deal for Scotland’.

Amongst its many themes, the report examines whether the UK Government's ambition to achieve a fully decarbonised electricity system by 2030 is achievable and, crucially, whether it delivers a fair outcome for Scotland. It finds that while Scotland is central to the UK's clean energy transition—thanks to its abundant renewable resources—the transition raises significant concerns around deliverability, cost, fairness, and community impact. The SAC report concludes that the 2030 target (CP30) is highly ambitious.

Scotland already generates a large proportion of low-carbon electricity and has over 1,000 renewable projects in the pipeline. However, achieving CP30 depends on overcoming barriers including grid capacity constraints, planning delays, supply chain limitations, workforce skills shortages, and the need for stronger coordination between UK and Scottish Governments. Public support is also critical, and there is a risk that missed targets or rising costs could undermine confidence, particularly in communities hosting infrastructure.

More specifically the report identifies a significant shortage of engineers, planners and technicians as a crucial barrier to the accelerated energy transition. It urges immediate collaboration between government and industry to bridge the skills gaps, aiming to secure local economic benefits and avoid potential pitfalls to a successful energy transition.

A major focus of the SAC report is Great British Energy (GBE), the new publicly owned energy company headquartered in Aberdeen. While GBE has significant funding (£8.3 billion) and ambitious objectives, the Committee finds it is still in an early stage and has not yet become the key delivery vehicle originally envisaged. It recommends that GBE must scale up rapidly, operate transparently, and avoid duplication with existing Scottish institutions.

A link to the full report is provided below:

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5902/cmselect/cm Scotaf/164/report.html>

4 Aberdeenshire Council - Accounts Commission Report - March 2026

In March the Accounts Commission published a best value report for Aberdeenshire Council. The report concluded that Aberdeenshire Council is a well-governed organisation with strong community engagement and generally solid performance. However, the report also indicated that the Council faces significant and growing financial challenges that require urgent and sustained action.

The report went on to comment that the Council's 5-year plan 2024–2029 sets out clear priorities shaped by stakeholder engagement and reflects local challenges such as geography and demographic change. Governance arrangements are described as effective, enabling informed and transparent decision-making.

A key strength identified within the report is the Council's commitment to community engagement and partnership working. It actively incorporates community views into decision-making and has begun developing local "Place Plans" to tailor services to local needs. Partnerships - locally, regionally, and nationally - are extensive and provide a strong foundation for future delivery. However, auditors stressed the need to prioritise partnerships that deliver meaningful transformation and financial benefits, especially given constrained resources.

Despite these strengths, the report also highlighted the serious financial pressures Aberdeenshire Council was facing. The Council has one of the largest projected funding gaps in Scotland, estimated at £81.4 million over the period to 2029/30. Past savings have not always been delivered as planned, and there is insufficient clarity about how future gaps will be closed. In 2024/25, only part of planned savings was achieved, and no transformation-related savings were delivered, contributing to an overspend.

The Council's Transformation Strategy was identified as being central to addressing these pressures. While a number of projects are under way, most remain at an early stage, and the programme lacks consistent governance, clear targets, and robust reporting. Auditors emphasised the need for more detailed planning, standardised oversight, and clearer measurement of financial and non-financial benefits to ensure the programme delivers sustainable outcomes.

The report also notes demographic pressures, particularly an ageing population, which will increase demand for services and associated costs. While the Council has managed financial pressures to date, auditors stress that it must now accelerate transformation and savings programmes to secure long-term sustainability.

In conclusion, the report indicated that Aberdeenshire Council has demonstrated strong governance, engagement, and areas of good performance, but its future effectiveness depends on its ability to deliver credible savings, strengthen transformation arrangements, and manage significant financial risks.

Further to the publication of this report, I have arranged a meeting with both Jim Savege (Aberdeenshire Council's Chief Executive) and Laurence Findlay (Director of Education and Children Services) to discuss the report and several key items of mutual interest. These include economic development within Fraserburgh and

Peterhead, improved partnership working, reform of the Senior Phase and Community Planning.

A further update on the meeting will be given to Regional Board members in due course, and a link to the full report is provided below:

https://audit.scot/uploads/2026-03/bv_260325_aberdeenshire_council.pdf

5 External engagements selected key meetings and events attended since the previous Regional Board meeting.

- Buchan Offshore Wind Office Opening (19.03.26.)
- Meeting with Jon Vincent (Glasgow Clyde College) (20.03.26.)
- Just Transitions Community Group Meeting (21.03.26.)
- Meet the Principal Session (25.03.26.)
- CECA Scotland Annual Dinner (26.03.26.)
- Meeting with Ian Sackree/Guy Walker (Talentia) (31.03.26.)
- Meeting with Benefactor (02.04.26.)
- Meeting with Shona Baker (Seven Incorporated Trades) (07.04.26.)
- Meeting with NESFEF Board members (10.04.26.)
- AGCC Business Breakfast (14.04.26.)
- CES Meeting (14.04.26.)
- MATMG Meeting (16.04.26.)
- Fraserburgh Scottish Parliament Hustings (17.04.26.)
- Meeting with Thistle Wind Partners (17.04.26.)
- Meeting with ES HMle (20.04.26.)
- Aberdeen Scottish Parliament Hustings (21.04.26.)
- Visit to Fife Learning Campus, Dunfermline (23.04.26.)
- Feedback Meeting ES HMle (24.04.26.)
- Regional Economic Partnership Group Meeting (28.04.26.)
- Meet the Principal Session (28.04.26.)
- Long Service Awards (City Campus) (29.04.26.)
- Meeting with Angela Scott (ACC) (05.05.26.)
- CS/CES Workforce of the Future Groups Meeting (08.05.26.)
- Meeting with Adam Wilson (AP Finance and Estates) (26.05.26.)
- Meet the Principal Session (26.05.26.)
- Project Search Graduation Ceremony (29.05.26.)
- P&J The Stooshie Podcast Hustings (30.05.26.)
- Staff Information Session (City) (02.06.26.)
- Meet the Principal Session (DYW) (02.06.26.)
- Staff information Session (Fraserburgh) (03.06.26.)
- Meeting with John Reid (ASET) (04.06.26.)
- CS Conference and Dinner (09/10.06.26.)
- Staff Information Session (Altens) (10.06.26.)
- AGCC Falklands Islands Delegation Meeting (11.06.26.)
- Go Celebrate! Awards Ceremony (12.06.26.)
- SAMH The Nook Official Opening (16.06.26.)



REGIONAL BOARD
Meeting of 17 June 2026

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.

Members are asked to note Channel No. 8 within Regional Board Team space – Board and Committee Action Log - where actions from all Board and Committee meetings, along with Action updates, can be found.

Members attention is also drawn to the various Committee channels within the Regional Board Team space where all associate papers as presented to Committee can be viewed.

1	<p>The following meetings have been held since the last meeting of the Regional Board:</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr style="background-color: #e0e0e0;"> <th style="padding: 5px;">Committee</th> <th style="padding: 5px;">Meeting Date</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">HR Committee</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">19 May 2026</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">C&Q Committee</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">21 May 2026</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">F&R Committee</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">25 May 2026</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">A&R Committee</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">03 June 2026</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Committee	Meeting Date	HR Committee	19 May 2026	C&Q Committee	21 May 2026	F&R Committee	25 May 2026	A&R Committee	03 June 2026
Committee	Meeting Date										
HR Committee	19 May 2026										
C&Q Committee	21 May 2026										
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A&R Committee	03 June 2026										

2	<p>HR Committee Meeting – 19 May 2026</p> <p>Summary of Key Business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR Committee Amended Terms of Reference Review of People Services' Risks on Strategic Risk Register People Services Enhancement Plan Progress Report National Collective Bargaining / LJNC Updates Employment Rights Act 2025 Job Evaluation Update People Services Contract Renewals SFC Staffing Data AY2024-25 <p>Agreed Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wording contained within the amended Terms of Reference to be revisited Terms of Reference to be reviewed within 6-12 months The associated mitigations of People Services' Risks on Strategic Risk Register to be reviewed and enhanced
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3	<p>C&Q Committee Meeting – 21 May 2026</p> <p>Summary of Key Business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of Activity and Credits Position AY2025-26 AY2026-27 Applications Update HMIE Inspection of Modern Apprenticeships Feedback
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Against Identified Risks • UNCRC Plan • Students' Association Activity Report • Quality Activity – Interim Update • Curriculum Planning Update (including ETSH forecast) • Student Support - Trauma Informed Practice Focus • Student Information System – EBS Update • Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey AY2025/26 Results • Curriculum Showcase - Computing/Animation <p>Agreed Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual progress update with sight of the UNCRC Plan to be incorporated into the Regional Board PoB • Formal report from HMIE Inspection to be shared with Regional Board on 17/06/26
4	<p>F&R Committee Meeting – 25 May 2026</p> <p>Summary of Key Business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AY2025/26 Budget Update • Draft Budget and Capital Plan 2026-27 • AY2025/26 Capital Projects and Estates Update • Long-Term Financial Planning • ASET Financial Update • Opportunities Register • Analysis of SFC's Final Funding Allocation AY2026/27 • AY2025-26 Credits Activity and Enrolments Update <p>Agreed Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review who and how best to advance discussions re: Investment Zone funding
5	<p>A&R Committee Meeting – 03 June 2026</p> <p>Summary of Key Business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft External Audit Plan AY2025/26 • Internal Audit Plan AY2026/27 • Internal Audit Reports • Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges (Compliance Review) • Strategic Risk Register • ASET Strategic Risk Register • Committee members-only discussion with Internal and External Auditors <p>Agreed Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NESCol's Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges to be shared with SFC • Additional wording in relation to NESCol's partnership working to be incorporated into the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges • Directional arrows to be added into Strategic Risk Register to illustrate score movement • Feedback on ASET's Risk Register to be shared with ASET's General Manager