

## Board of Management Learning and Teaching Committee

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>Tuesday 19 September 2017</b>
<b>Paper No.</b>	<b>LTC1-H</b>
<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Subject of Paper</b>	<b>Regional Curriculum Update</b>
<b>FOISA Status</b>	<b>Disclosable</b>
<b>Primary Contact</b>	<b>Joanna McGillivray, Vice Principal – Student Experience</b>
<b>Date of production</b>	<b>12 September 2017</b>
<b>Action</b>	<b>For Noting</b>

### 1. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note this paper which outlines the current position in relation to the regional curriculum for Glasgow.

## 2. Glasgow Region Strategy for College Learning 2017-2022

The overarching ambition of the Glasgow Region Strategic Plan for College Education 2017-2022 is to deliver Scotland's most inclusive, most responsive and most effective regional college system. Achievement of this will be based on developing operational activity which delivers the strategic aims set in the plan within the two sections of the regional plan which set out our collective ambitions for learners and for colleges.

At its May 22 meeting, the GCRB Board approved the Glasgow Region Strategy for College Learning 2017-2022 (Appendix 1) which set objectives and outcomes which would be delivered across the region over the 5-year planning period. The strategy will be supported in its realisation by 5 regional leads who will work with GCRB Executive to take forward the 5 year ambition for the region. The leads commenced activity in August 2017.

The GCRB Regional Leads are as follows:

Role	Lead	Designation
Regional CPD Lead	Audrey Miller	Vice Principal, Human Resources and Organisational Development, Glasgow Kelvin College
Regional Student Experience Lead	Gillian Plunkett	Student Experience Director, City of Glasgow College
Regional Developing the Young Workforce Lead	John Rafferty	Assistant Principal, Glasgow Clyde College
Regional Curriculum and Quality Lead	Joanna McGillivray	Vice Principal: Student Experience, City of Glasgow College
Regional Student Data Lead	Brian Gallagher	Head of MIS, Glasgow Clyde College

## 3. Regional Curriculum

The regional Curriculum and Estates strategy is due to be refreshed at the end of 2017/18. In preparation for this the 6 curriculum hubs will be focusing much of their work on developing curriculum to reflect variances to key economic priorities for Glasgow, Scottish Government initiatives such as Early Learning Childcare and the Commission on Widening Access (COWA), regional skills assessments and skills investment plans.

### Curriculum Hubs

Curriculum Hubs have been realigned and now cover the following areas:

Sector	Hub Members
Administration, Financial and Business Services	Marion McNab Iain Abercrombie Robert Anderson (chair)
Creative and Cultural Industries	Iain Abercrombie (chair) Sandra Gunn Robert Anderson
Energy, Engineering, Construction, Manufacturing and Land-Based Industries	David Innes Carol Murray Anne Porter (chair)
Food, Drink Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure	Jill Weatherill (chair) John Rafferty Stephen Smith
Health Care and Education Life and Chemical Sciences	John Rafferty Kay Sheridan (chair) Stephen Smith
Community, Transitions and Special Programmes	Margaret Gilroy (chair) Stephen Smith Craig Green Kay Sheridan

Activity within the hubs is based around the regional strategic aims with milestones and deliverables at key dates throughout the year. The activity is based around five key activities:

- *Curriculum Review and Development*

Reviews of current regional delivery corresponding to economic sectors and considering curriculum fit to regional economic and social needs, and learner outcomes and efficient and effective learner journeys.

- *Curriculum Mapping*

Updating curriculum maps, creating regional “skills hubs” aligned to relevant economic sector i.e. Digital Technology, Finance and Business Services, Creative Industries, Low Carbon, Health and Life Sciences, Engineering, Design and Advanced Manufacturing, Tourism and Events.

- *Transitions and Widening Access*

Alignment of curriculum content with degree level articulation and transition to support curriculum, reviews of current articulation arrangements and identification of opportunities to strengthen, and simplify where appropriate, university partnership arrangements.

- *Stakeholder Engagement*

Building capacity for employer engagement i.e. contributions of employers to particular schemes that are established (work experience, employment packages for HNC / HND, internship, mentoring, Modern Apprenticeship).

- *Sharing Best Practice*

Creation of joint curriculum CPD opportunities; including innovation and pedagogy.

#### **4. ESOL**

The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) has provided £1.45m annually to Further Education Sector in Scotland to support the delivery of this strategy. This funding has been allocated to local authority areas, and has been coordinated by Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs), with Glasgow in receipt of around £300k annually. The majority of this additional funding has gone to the three Glasgow colleges, with allocations also being made to Glasgow Life (a Glasgow City Council ALEO), Workers Educational Association, and the Glasgow ESOL Forum.

Oversight of these funds has been managed by the Glasgow CPP, with a regional plan developed across the partners and progress reported to Scottish Government agencies.

For practical purposes, as the additional ESOL funding was routed by the Scottish Government through the SFC, the funds flowed from SFC to Glasgow Clyde College and on to all partners.

For City of Glasgow College this spend amounts to £34,381. From 2018/19 all ESOL provision would be resourced from core funding. This would result in a funding reduction of c. £300K at a time when there was still unmet demand for ESOL provision in the Glasgow region. It has been agreed that GCRB would make representation to SFC for an increased proportion of the £1.5M ESOL funding to be allocated to the Glasgow region.

## 6. Flexible Workforce Development Fund

In December 2016 the Scottish Government announced the introduction of a new Flexible Workforce Development Fund (FWDF) to provide employers with workforce development training to up-skill and re-skill their existing workforce.

The Fund is in direct response to feedback from the Scottish Government's consultation on the introduction of the UK Government Apprenticeship Levy. The purpose of the FWDF is to provide employers with flexible workforce development training opportunities to support inclusive economic growth through up-skilling or re-skilling of employees.

The Scottish Government will provide £10 million to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) for the FWDF. The main policy drivers for the FWDF are:

- Supporting the needs of levy payers
- Supporting workforce development in line with the aims of the Scottish Government's Labour Market Strategy, particularly in the areas of upskilling and reskilling workers, and consistent with the ambitions to raise productivity
- Ensuring the Fund further strengthens College engagement with industry.

The funding allocated to Glasgow Region is £1.9million based on 18% of levy payers being based in Glasgow region. A cap of £10,000 per employer has been specified and the anticipated allocation for Glasgow is £1,919,275 for City of Glasgow College is expected to be £865,000 (circa) based on our proportion of grant in aid. There is no credit target allocated to the activity. It is anticipated that this will be full cost activity however this will be recorded in the FES return to SFC. Further guidance is outlined in **Appendix 2**.

Employers have the flexibility to train members of their workforce through college provision to bring the greatest benefit to their business. Within this, and again in line with Scottish Government priorities, employers are encouraged to give due consideration to specific groups such as older workers, those in low-skilled jobs, those working regularly with younger workers/apprentices, veterans/early service leavers, and those who identify as belonging to equality groups. Colleges should be aware of these priorities when consulting with employers on training needs and skills gaps.

## Delivering the Glasgow Region Strategic Plan for College Education, 2017-2022

### 1. Introduction

At its May 2017 meeting, the GCRB Board approved the Glasgow Region Strategic Plan for College Education with an overarching ambition to deliver Scotland’s most inclusive, most responsive and most effective regional college system.

Members requested the GCRB Executive Director to work with college managers to develop an operational plan for its consideration, which set out activities and outcomes in support of our strategic ambitions.

The proposal contained within this report are based on discussions between the GCRB Executive Director, college Principals and Regional Leads, and developed in the context of existing commitments within the 2017/18 Regional Outcome Agreement.

The intention is that following discussion and comment by members of these proposals, Regional Leads will develop with the GCRB Executive Director more detailed operational plans which set out expected outcomes, milestones, risks, resource needs and performance measures.

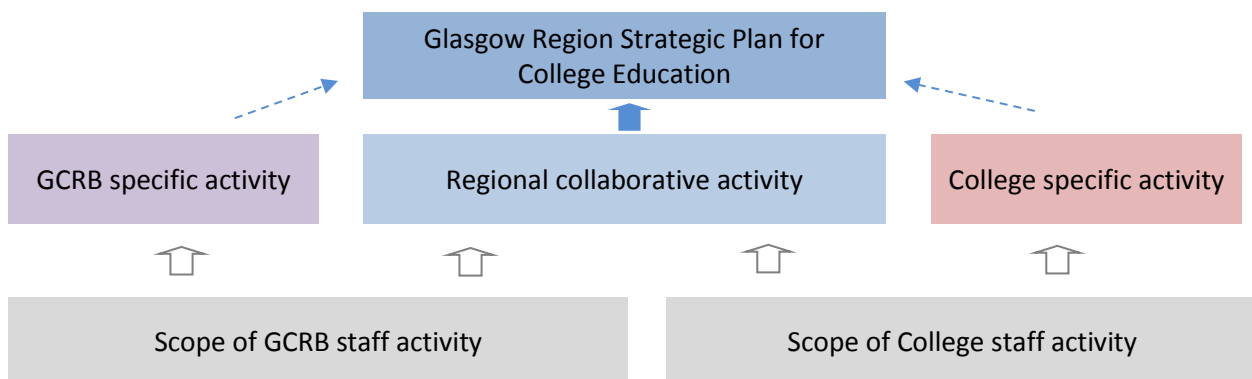
Further progress on delivering our strategic ambitions and related operational objectives will be reported regularly to the GCRB Board and its Committees.

### 2. Strategy Delivery Context

Members should note that alongside supporting delivery of our collective strategic ambitions, both GCRB and the colleges have a range other functional requirements to fulfil and this requires a range of complementary operational activity.

For GCRB this includes significant work relating to servicing the GCRB Board and Committees, development and delivery of an effective governance framework, funding and financial management activity, curriculum planning and monitoring, risk assessment and mitigation, internal and external stakeholder engagement and the development of collaborative relationships at both a national and regional level.

This means that the collaborative operational planning considered within this paper, sits within a context of wider operational activity, which the following diagram seeks to illustrate.

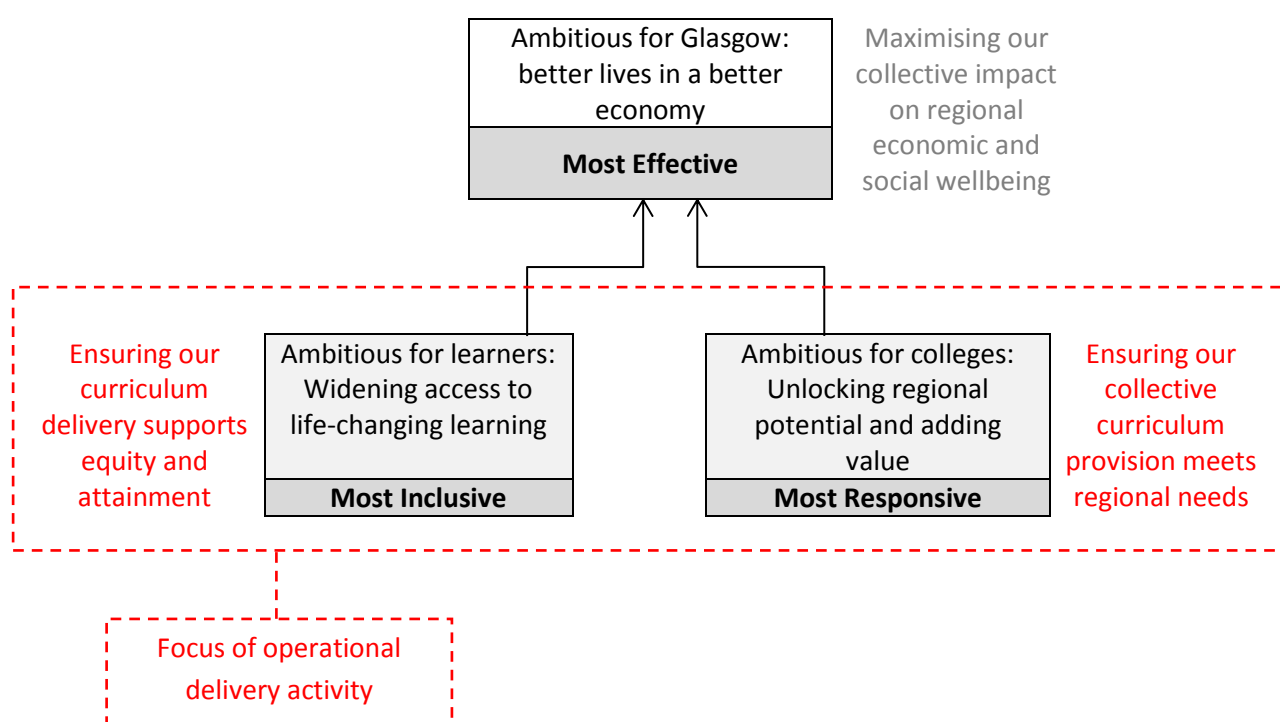


### 3. Proposed structure of regional operational planning

The Glasgow Region Strategic Plan for Education, 2017-2022, sets out strategic ambitions in two sections:

- **ambitions for learners** – the section sets out seven strategic learning priorities; and
- **ambitions for colleges** – this section sets out four added value drivers with 10 related collaborative strategic ambitions.

Delivery of our strategic ambitions will therefore be based on operational activity related to the strategic ambitions set out within these two sections of the regional plan as illustrated in the diagram below.



Based on this planning structure, the following two sections of this document set out proposals as to how we can develop operational actions and outcomes related to our ambitions for learners and our ambitions for colleges.

### 4. Operational planning to deliver our ambitions for learners

This section of the regional strategic plan sets out seven strategic learning priorities with a focus on widening access to life-changing learning:

1. engage with all our communities and provide the highest quality facilities and resources for learning;
2. offer engaging learning experiences to develop skills for learning, work and life;
3. promote high quality and innovative learning, teaching and assessment;
4. deliver an inclusive and supportive student experience for all learners, including excellent guidance and learner support;
5. encourage all students to enhance their learning as individuals, as representatives, and as officers in strong and effective student associations;

6. provide more opportunities for learners to develop their skills in real work environments; and
7. offer clear pathways into work and further study; supporting every learner into a positive post-course destination.

Given the extent of existing planning and monitoring relating to these areas (including that related to college quality and regional outcome agreement frameworks), it is proposed that GCRB draws assurance on the achievement of these seven regional learning priorities from individual college planning and reporting structures.

Within a context of enhanced regional collaboration and coordination, the use of individual college plans to evidence achievement of these learning related strategic goals should lessen the requirement for an additional layer of operational planning with respect to this section of the regional strategic plan.

Supported and complimented by regional work, it is proposed that the seven strategic learning priorities are reflected in individual college-level strategies and plans, including:

College strategic plans including learning and teaching strategies	College evaluative reports and enhancement plans	College access and inclusion strategies	College gender action plans	College equality and diversity plans
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This approach will also maximise the regional coherence and impact of the new quality framework for colleges as this is fully implemented across Scotland.

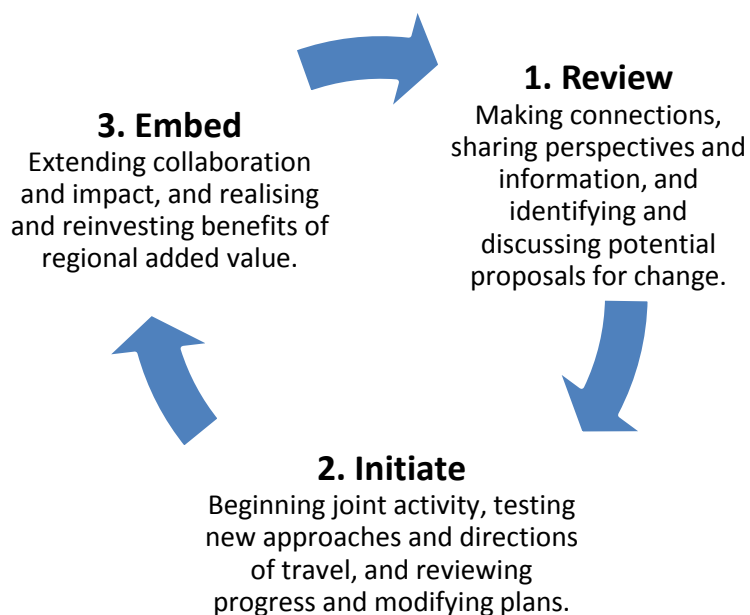
Based on the regional aspiration to widen access to life-changing learning through delivery of seven strategic learning priorities, two key performance targets for our collective ambitions for learners over the five year period of this plan should be to:

- **improve regional course retention and attainment rates;** and
- **increase participation and improve outcomes of learners from deprived postcodes and other priority groups.**



## 5. Operational planning to deliver our ambitions for colleges

Recognising that this is the first Glasgow Region Strategy for College Education, operational activity will be guided by a review/initiate/embed change process which maximises opportunities for regional collaboration and promotes flexible, informed and consensual decision-making.



The tables overleaf set out proposed priority objectives for each of the plan’s strategic goals, and which are intended to exemplify our collective ambitions and set a clear direction of travel. These have been developed based on existing ROA commitments and discussions between the GCRB Executive Director, Principals and regional leads.

Given the collective and regional focus of the strategic goals contained within this section of the regional plan, it is proposed that responsibility for unlocking regional potential will be led jointly by regional leads from across the colleges and GCRB and the tables overleaf therefore identify staff lead(s) for each of the operational objectives.

Added Value Driver	Strategic Ambition	Key Objective	Regional Lead
	<p>A.1) Nurturing our professional learning community, sharing good practice and developing learning resources.</p>	<p><b>We will create a regional learning community, which promotes self-directed development and provides for all staff access to a comprehensive regional CPD offer.</b> This offer will pool, extend and complement individual college CPD activity, supported by online access and include accredited professional qualifications and regionally consistent support for staff industry placement opportunities.</p>	<p>CPD Lead</p>
<p><b>A) Sharing Skills and Knowledge</b></p>	<p>A.2) Promoting and embedding Fair Work values and behaviours to develop the relationships between learners and staff and to improve our services for learners.</p>	<p><b>We will ensure that the Fair Work Framework is at the heart of working relationships and that all Glasgow colleges and GCRB are living wage accredited employers.</b> The Fair Work values of effective voice, opportunity, security, fulfilment, and respect will be fully embedded in college and GCRB working arrangements.</p>	<p>GCRB Executive Director and Principals</p>
	<p>A.3) Adding value by unlocking our joint potential and opening up the full regional curriculum and resources to all our learners.</p>	<p><b>We will develop a regional approach to student data management to support the quality and impact of this information on services provided to learners and stakeholders, supporting improved learner outcomes.</b> This work will support the development of a regional admissions system, which provides learners with access to, and progression within, the full regional curriculum.</p>	<p>Student Data and Student Experience Leads</p>

Added Value Driver	Strategic Ambition	Key Objective	Regional Lead
	<p>B.1) Building clear and flexible vocational learning pathways to widen access, support inter-college progression and break the link between deprivation and attainment.</p>	<p><b>We will reduce barriers to access and increase inter-college progression.</b> We will improve the ease and equity with which learners can progress through their learning, with all learners supported to access to the full range of courses within the regional college system, increasing the proportion of students moving from college to college.</p>	<p>Student Experience Lead</p>
<p><b>B) Offering a coherent and consistent student experience</b></p>	<p>B.2) Offering students inclusive support services, learning facilities and resources consistently across the region. These will develop our learners' confidence, support their well-being, and build lasting skills for their work and life.</p>	<p><b>We will create common student support policies which ensure that all students have equal access to support, whilst still allowing local flexibility to need.</b> We will strive to simplify information and access to student support by providing clear and regionally consistent student support services.</p>	<p>Student Experience Lead</p>
		<p><b>We will take a strategic approach to regional estates and ICT development to ensure that our estates and resources fully support successful learner outcomes.</b> We will develop strategies for estates and ICT which ensure equity of access to the highest quality facilities and resources.</p>	<p>GCRB Finance and Resources Director</p>

Added Value Driver	Strategic Ambition	Key Objective	Regional Lead
<p><b>C) Developing a regionally responsive curriculum</b></p>	<p>C.1) Offering a curriculum that responds to economic and social needs. It will develop skills, meet the needs of employers and key industries, and support the growth of our regional economy.</p>	<p><b>We will establish Regional Skills Hubs to lead employer and stakeholder engagement and ensure we respond effectively to regional and national skills needs.</b> Corresponding to key economic sectors, each of the Regional Skills Hubs will bring together curriculum leads from across the region and act as a focal point for regional engagement and ensure that our collective curriculum aligns to current and future employment needs.</p>	<p>GCRB Executive Director &amp; Curriculum and Quality Lead</p>
	<p>C.2) Advancing an integrated regional curriculum, with each college offering a breadth and depth of inter-linked learning opportunities to support barrier-free progression.</p>	<p><b>We will deliver a coherent and high quality regional curriculum which supports more efficient, effective and successful learner journeys.</b> Through continual review and refinement we will strengthen vocational learning pathways across the regional curriculum, reducing duplication and harmonising delivery across educational partners and improving the regional alignment and coherence of the 15-24 learner journey.</p>	<p>GCRB Executive Director &amp; Curriculum and Quality Lead</p>
	<p>C.3) Building closer partnerships with industries across the region to create more opportunities for learners to develop skills in real work environments.</p>	<p><b>We will deliver a significant increase in work-based learning activity across our entire curriculum.</b> We will work to ensure that all courses increase opportunities for learners to extend their personal experience of the world of work and that Senior Phase work experience aligns to college vocational pathways.</p>	<p>GCRB Executive Director &amp; Curriculum and Quality Lead</p>

Added Value Driver	Strategic Ambition	Key Objective	Regional Lead
D) Building efficient Regional Structures	D.1) Strengthening regional partnerships with schools, universities and employers to enhance flexible vocational pathways and successful learner journeys.	<p><b>We will deliver more coherent Senior Phase pathways and extend early intervention approaches so that all regional school pupils can experience college before they make their Senior Phase subject choices.</b> An extensive regional Foundation Apprenticeship programme delivered in partnership with regional employers will form a significant element of our regional school/college offer.</p>	Developing the Young Workforce and Foundation Apprenticeship Leads
	D.2) Developing needs-based regional funding arrangements to support regional strategic goals and make efficient use of resources. The value we add regionally will improve experiences and outcomes for learners, staff and stakeholders.	<p><b>We will strengthen articulation arrangements with universities, increasing opportunities for college learners to progress seamlessly and successfully to degree level study.</b> We will further develop regional strategic partnership agreements to provide a simplified interface for Glasgow college liaison.</p>	GCRB Executive Director and Curriculum and Quality Lead
	<p><b>We will ensure that regional funding fully supports delivery of our regional mission, maximising opportunities for collaboration and efficient use of public funding.</b> Through continual refinement of funding approaches and resource use, we will deliver a stronger alignment of funding to achievement of regional strategic goals and enhanced institutional sustainability.</p>	GCRB Finance and Resources Director	

## 6. Key Performance Indicators

Given the focus of our strategic plan on creating added value through regional collaboration, monitoring and evaluating the delivery of our ambitions will draw on a wide range of activities and outputs. Regular reports drawing on both qualitative and quantitative evidence sources will be provided to the GCRB board and its committees.

In terms of solely numerical performance indicators, it is proposed that we maximise use of existing national and regional performance measures to support and evidence achievement of our regional strategic goals, with other regional measures developed as appropriate as the plan is implemented.

Currently, as part of the Regional Outcome Agreement development process, we set annual regional and college targets for the measures set out below which have been mapped to our two areas of strategic ambition.

### **A) Measuring our ambitions for learners: widening access to life-changing learning**

#### SFC National Measures

- Volume and proportion of Credits delivered to learners aged 16-19 and 20-24
- Volume and proportion of Credits delivered to learners in the most deprived 10% postcode areas
- Volume and proportion of Credits relating to learners from different protected characteristic groups and care leavers
- Volume and proportion of Credits delivered at HE level to learners from SHEP schools (i.e. Secondary schools with consistently low rates of progression to higher education)
- Proportion of enrolled students successfully achieving a recognised qualification
- Proportion of enrolled MD10 students successfully achieving a recognised qualification
- Proportion of senior phase age pupils successfully completing a vocational qualification delivered by colleges
- The number and proportion of full-time college qualifiers in work, training and/or further study 3-6 months after qualifying
- The percentage of students overall, satisfied with their college experience (SSES survey)

#### Regional Measures

- The volume of Credits delivered at Further Education levels

### **B) Measuring our ambitions for colleges: unlocking regional potential and adding value**

#### SFC National Measures

- The volume of Credits delivered
- The number of senior phase pupils studying vocational qualifications delivered by colleges
- Volume and proportion of Credits delivered to senior phase age pupils studying vocational qualifications delivered by colleges
- Volume and proportion of Credits delivered to learners at S3 and above as part of 'school-college' provision
- Volume and proportion of Credits delivered to learners enrolled on STEM courses
- The number of starts for direct contracted apprenticeships (including industry bodies such as CITB and SECTT)
- Number of full-time learners with substantial 'work placement experience' as part of their programme of study
- The number and proportion of successful students who have achieved HNC or HND qualifications articulating to degree level courses with advanced standing

#### Regional Measures

- The volume and proportion of Credits delivered in relation to economic sectors

## 7. Delivery Resources

Once high level objectives are agreed, regional leads will work with the GCRB Executive Director to develop operational work plans which will include detail on actions, measures, timescales, resource needs and risks.

Based on the review/initiate/embed approach to delivery outlined earlier in this paper, it is likely that year 1 activity will require relatively minimal levels of additional resources. However, the following areas of collaborative activity will likely require additional resources in 2017-18:

- Development of an online platform which provides access to regional CPD opportunities (strategic ambition A.1)
- Specification and procurement of a student information system (strategic ambition A.3)
- Development of strategies for estates and ICT (strategic ambition B.2)

Members will recall that within the agreed Regional Capital Funding Policy for 2017-18, resources were set aside for emerging regional needs. The above activities they would fall within the scope of capital funding rules and therefore these activities could be supported by 2017-18 Capital funds.

More detailed funding proposals for these activities will be developed and presented to the GCRB Performance and Resources Committee. Members will recall that the Board delegated authority to this Committee to oversee the allocation of the 2017-18 capital funds within the context of the regional Capital Funding Policy agreed by the Board.

In terms of sufficient staff resources, at its February 2017 meeting the Board agreed staffing proposals for fully-operational fundable body status. This sought to minimise the volume of directly employed GCRB staffing and supplement this through implementation of a collaborative management approach to regional staffing. Regional leads have been identified for the following areas:

- Regional CPD Lead – Audrey Miller, Vice Principal Human Resources and Organisational Development, Glasgow Kelvin College
- Regional Student Experience Lead – Gillian Plunkett, Head of Admissions and Student Support, City of Glasgow College
- Regional Developing the Young Workforce Lead – John Rafferty, Assistant Principal, Glasgow Clyde College
- Regional Curriculum and Quality Lead - Joanna McGillivray, Vice Principal Student Experience, City of Glasgow College
- Regional Student Data Lead – Brian Gallagher, Head of MIS, Glasgow Clyde College

The expected time commitment for these leads is to be approximately one day per week.

The proposals contained within this paper and related year 1 operational plans will reflect these agreed regional staffing arrangements. However, should any further staffing resource requirements be identified, these will be also brought to the attention of the colleges and the Board.

## Annex A: Summary of Proposed Key Regional Objectives 2017-2022

The tables below set out a summary of the high level objectives described within this report.

### A) Our ambitions for learners: widening access to life-changing learning

<p>Improve regional course retention and attainment rates.</p>	<p>Increase participation rates and improve outcomes of learners from deprived postcodes and other priority groups.</p>
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### B) Our ambitions for colleges: unlocking regional potential and adding value

Sharing Skills and Knowledge	Offering a coherent and consistent student experience	Developing a regionally responsive curriculum	Building efficient Regional Structures
<p>Create a regional learning community, which promotes self-directed development and provides for all staff access to a comprehensive regional CPD offer.</p>	<p>Reduce barriers to access and increase inter-college progression.</p>	<p>Establish Regional Skills Hubs to lead employer and stakeholder engagement and ensure we respond effectively to regional and national skills needs.</p>	<p>Deliver more coherent Senior Phase pathways and extend early intervention approaches so that all regional school pupils can experience college before they make their Senior Phase subject choices</p>
<p>Ensure that the Fair Work Framework is at the heart of working relationships and that all Glasgow colleges and GCRB are living wage accredited employers.</p>	<p>Create common student support policies which ensure that all students have equal access to support, whilst still allowing local flexibility to need.</p>	<p>Deliver a coherent and high quality regional curriculum which supports more efficient, effective and successful learner journeys.</p>	<p>Strengthen articulation arrangements with universities, increasing opportunities for college learners to progress seamlessly and successfully to degree level study.</p>
<p>Develop a regional approach to student data management to support the quality and impact of this information on services provided to learners and stakeholders, supporting improved learner outcomes.</p>	<p>Establish a strategic approach to regional estates and ICT development to ensure that our estates and resources fully support successful learner outcomes.</p>	<p>Deliver a significant increase in work-based learning activity across our entire curriculum.</p>	<p>Ensure that regional funding fully supports delivery of our regional mission, maximising opportunities for collaboration and efficient use of public funding.</p>



## **Flexible Workforce Development Fund 2017-18**

### **Allocations and guidance to colleges**

#### **Purpose**

1. I am writing to provide you with details on the new Flexible Workforce Development Fund and to set out funding allocations to each Regional College and Regional Strategic Body (RSB), to enable them to deliver the outcomes expected by the Scottish Government.

#### **Background**

2. In December 2016 the Scottish Government announced the introduction of a new Flexible Workforce Development Fund (FWDF) to provide employers with workforce development training to up-skill and re-skill their existing workforce. The Fund is in direct response to feedback from the Scottish Government's consultation on the introduction of the UK Government Apprenticeship Levy.
3. The purpose of the FWDF is to provide employers with flexible workforce development training opportunities to support inclusive economic growth through up-skilling or re-skilling of employees. The Fund is in addition to apprenticeship support, access to which is available to all employers in Scotland; and Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), which provide eligible individuals with the opportunity to undertake learning opportunities to develop their skills for employment. The FWDF fund may be particularly beneficial in addressing skills gaps and training needs of the older workforce.
4. The Scottish Government will provide £10 million to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) for the FWDF.

#### **Policy drivers**

5. The main policy drivers for the FWDF are:
  - Supporting the needs of levy payers.
  - Supporting workforce development in line with the aims of the Scottish Government's Labour Market Strategy, particularly in the areas of upskilling and reskilling workers, and consistent with the ambitions to raise productivity.
  - Ensuring the Fund further strengthens college engagement with industry.

## **National Outcomes and Regional Outcome Agreements**

6. The FWDF will additionally support the delivery of SFC's strategic outcome of greater innovation in the economy. And it supports the Scottish Government's strategic priority of high quality learning in a learning system which is seamlessly connected for the learner, including learning which prepares people well for the world of work and successful long-term careers, prioritising provision that meets known skills gaps in the economy.
7. Finally, the Fund also contributes to the following Scottish Government priorities, anchored in Scotland's Economic and Labour Market Strategies:
  - A strong labour market that drives inclusive, sustainable economic growth.
  - A skilled productive and engaged workforce capable of meeting the needs of employers.
  - Equality of opportunity to access work and to progress to ensure everyone is able to maximise their potential.
  - Increasing productivity.

## **National and regional skills priorities**

8. In addition to increasing business capacity and increasing the productivity of levy-paying employers, the Fund should also address known skills gaps (at national and regional levels) where there is a recognised demand from employers. Based on national labour market information and employer feedback, the Scottish Government recognises several key skills needs that are common across the labour market in Scotland, in particular: the need to invest in employer infrastructure, specifically in the areas of workplace coaching and mentoring, and HR-related support activities; and addressing specific skills gaps including unmet digital skills needs (such as digital literacy and big data interpretation) and essential skills such as communication/inter-personal skills.
9. Regional Colleges and assigned colleges, (under the guidance of their RSB), are required to develop a regional suite of training provision available at their institution in support of the FWDF. That 'offer' should be developed in line with the national priorities outlined above and be informed by local Labour Market Intelligence (LMI), Regional Skills Assessments, and Skills Investment Plans. We expect this will be further enhanced by previous experience of working with employers in the region. The offer should be produced as the basis of a list of possible provision and should not be presented as an exhaustive or prescriptive 'offer' to employers. Colleges should ensure that due consideration is given to the ethos of the FWDF; a fund driven by employers who can access provision to meet their recognised skills gaps and increase productivity.

## Eligibility

10. The FWDF will be available to all levy-paying employers in Scotland across the private, public and third sector, and will be led by employer demand. SFC will provide the funds to colleges and RSB's to enable them to respond to employer demand both at a regional and national level.
11. Employers are required to submit evidence of their eligibility to pay the levy alongside their FWDF application. This should take the form of a copy of the relevant part of the most recent Employer Payment Summary (EPS) which reports the level of Apprenticeship Levy contribution. (See paragraph 24)
12. The FWDF will not support provision of qualifications/training required by legislation.

## Access for employers

13. Colleges will work with levy-paying employers in their region to identify the training they require that will make a demonstrable return on investment. This may be commonly understood as a 'training needs analysis' and should be proportionate in nature. The analysis should form the basis of the employer's application, and colleges should work with employers to support the application process. An application template will be provided for employers to submit to colleges with their identified training needs.
14. With the aim of managing initial employer demand, applications can be submitted to regional colleges during the period 11 September to 15 December 2017. Providing that the employer and the training identified meets FWDF eligibility criteria, regional colleges and RSB's will allocate the funds on a **'first-come first-served'** basis. Any underspend of funds after 15 December will be redistributed to college regions where there is evidence of unmet demand.
15. Employers operating on a Scotland-wide basis or across more than one college region may submit only one application to the Fund at a college of their choice. On application employers will be required to declare that their application is on behalf of the whole company and that this is the only application to the fund. If colleges require confirmation of the status of the application they should discuss this with SFC in advance of entering into a commercial agreement. If through the SFC's national aggregation of applications it is found an employer has made more than one application, SFC will contact the college and advise on next steps.
16. It is estimated there are around 4,000 levy payers operating in Scotland across the private, public and third sector. In this pilot year, and against the background of the £10m allocation, Ministers have agreed that **each levy payer will be able to access up to a maximum total of £10,000 in 2017-18.**

## **Priority groups**

17. Employers have the flexibility to train members of their workforce through college provision to bring the greatest benefit to their business. Within this, and again in line with Scottish Government priorities, employers are encouraged to give due consideration to specific groups such as older workers, those in low-skilled jobs, those working regularly with younger workers/apprentices, veterans/early service leavers, and those who identify as belonging to equality groups. Colleges should be aware of these priorities when consulting with employers on training needs and skills gaps.

## **Accreditation**

18. Research highlights that secure, well-paid jobs which give fulfilment and offer opportunities for progression in organisations where employees have an effective voice are the key to increasing workplace innovation. We believe that this, in turn, can help to deliver a measurable shift in productivity. Provision of accredited training is one way to support this.
19. Colleges will ensure certification is provided for each employee participating in funded activity. They will make every practicable effort to deliver training recognised by the SCQF framework and /or, training that meets the requirements of an appropriate industry or employer standard. At the absolute minimum, the application form will require details of the projected developmental goal for the employees involved.
20. Allocation of funding to Regional Colleges and Regional Strategic Bodies
21. Consistent with principles established by the Scottish Government, SFC has allocated funding to Regional Colleges and RSB's as set out in Annex A. This allocation is based on the estimated number of levy-paying employers, and their employees, in college regions. For example, we have estimated that there are some 1,500 levy-paying employers operating in the Glasgow region employing just over 300,000 people - around 18% of total employees in Scotland. We have therefore allocated around 18% of the FWDF to that region. In multi college regions, the RSB is responsible for the allocation of funds to their assigned Colleges.
22. These funds are in addition to the Final College Outcome Agreement Funding allocations announced on 5 May 2017 (SFC/AN/08/2017) and 10 July 2017 (SFC/AN/10/2017).
23. SFC will pay FWDF to colleges and RSB's quarterly, starting in October 2017, and then in January, April and July 2018. This will ensure we do not pay in advance of need and are able, if necessary, to redistribute funds between college

regions. We can discuss with colleges a potential variation of that payment profile if it is required and justified.

### **Application process**

24. Colleges must work with levy-paying employers in their region to identify the training employers require to make a demonstrable return on investment; colleges should support employers in developing applications. Providing that the employer and training identified meets FWDF eligibility criteria, colleges must allocate funds (within their regional allocations) to employers on a first-come first-served basis.
25. Employers are required to submit evidence of their eligibility to pay the levy to accompany their FWDF application. This should take the form of a copy of the relevant part of the most recent Employer Payment Summary (EPS) which reports the level of Apprenticeship Levy contribution. HM Revenue & Customs guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-payroll-information-to-report-to-hmrc#eps-what-to-report>.
26. In addition to evidence of employer levy eligibility, the following information is required in all funding applications:
  - Company name and sector.
  - Company registration detail and number.
  - Details of skills gap to be addressed (based on skills gap analysis, see paragraph 5).
  - Impact of training on productivity.
  - Cost of training.
  - Training identified/to be delivered.
  - Timescale for training delivery.
  - Number of employees to be enrolled.
  - Number and level of qualifications to be achieved.
  - Number of notional hours of study.
  - Course / delivery employer evaluation.
27. Further guidance on Further Education Statistics (FES) reporting requirements can be found in Annex D.
28. SFC has provided an application template and process flow-chart at Annex B. Colleges may use their own application form, but must include in all applications the information detailed above and on the template.
29. Where demand from employers is greater than their regional allocation, colleges should create a waiting list and include this in their reporting process to SFC (see Annex C).

30. If a college is unable to provide the training provision an employer requires, the college should advise the employer of the most appropriate college to meet their identified training needs and broker contact between the employer and that college.
31. Employers have the right to appeal a decision made by the college on their application for training. In practical terms an appeal is only likely to arise where there are insufficient funds available to enable the college to undertake the training or where an application does not meet the eligibility criteria. Colleges should direct employers to appeal through the SFC mailbox [fwdfappeals@sfc.ac.uk](mailto:fwdfappeals@sfc.ac.uk).

## **Monitoring and reporting**

### ***Monitoring the use of funds***

32. While there is no credit target associated with the delivery of FWDF, SFC will monitor the uptake of activity through its FES return. We will need data on the employers, the training delivered, the number of students (employees) enrolled, the number/level of qualifications achieved and the notional hours of study. Further guidance on data requirements is included in the reporting template in Annex C.
33. In addition to using this data to monitor the use of funds, SFC will use student data to calculate a Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) student figure to contribute to the circa 116,000 FTEs sector activity target.

### ***Reporting to SFC***

34. In order to establish that the FWDF is meeting the needs of employers and addressing Scottish Government priorities, colleges must report to SFC on activity at the end of October 2017. A 'live' reporting template (shown in Annex C) will be made available on SFC's secure intranet for each college/RSB to complete on an ongoing basis when an application has been received and training has been agreed with the employer.
35. Colleges should use the template provided to report the level of demand at the end of October, and SFC will seek regular updates on this position until 15 December 2017. This reporting process will ensure that both SFC and the Scottish Government are able to evidence the level of employer demand in each college region and use this to inform any redistribution of funds between regions.
36. SFC will set up user accounts for college staff to access the reporting template. College regions are therefore asked to contact SFC with their staff details. We

have established a specific mailbox ([fwdf@sfc.ac.uk](mailto:fwdf@sfc.ac.uk)) that colleges should use when providing staff contact details and any other general queries.

37. In this pilot year SFC and the Scottish Government are also interested in monitoring unmet demand. If any college region is unable to meet the demand from employers due to a depletion of funds, colleges should develop a waiting list and this information should be reported back to SFC on the reporting template provided (Annex C).
38. As Academic Year (AY) 2017-18 is the first year of the delivery of the FWDF, an evidence base will need to be developed to capture information about employer requirements and the ability of the college sector to meet them in a responsive and agile manner. Therefore there is a requirement for colleges to retain the employer application information for the purpose of ongoing and future reporting to SFC and the Scottish Government.

### **Further information**

39. We have provided a 'Frequently Asked Questions' (FAQ) list as an appendix to this document. We have also attached a copy of the guidance to employers issued by the Scottish Government which we would that you download for your information.
40. In addition to this guidance, the following annexes are available to support this process:
  - Annex A: Funding allocations to Colleges and Regional Strategic Bodies.
  - Annex B: Application template and process flow chart.
  - Annex C: Reporting template.
  - Annex D: FES reporting requirements.
  - Annex E: Scottish Government Employers Guidance and FAQ's.
41. Any other queries/requests for additional information should be directed to the FWDF mailbox [fwdf@sfc.ac.uk](mailto:fwdf@sfc.ac.uk), in the first instance.
42. Please contact Martin Smith, Chief Funding and Information Officer, for further information, tel: 0131 313 6528, email: [msmith@sfc.ac.uk](mailto:msmith@sfc.ac.uk).



**Lorna MacDonald**  
Director of Finance

## Appendix

### Flexible Workforce Development Fund 2017-18

#### Frequently Asked Questions - colleges

**Q1. *Why is it only UK Government Apprenticeship Levy payers who can access the FWDF?***

Establishing the new fund is in direct response to the level of employer support expressed in the consultation the Scottish Government undertook last year. The pilot Flexible Workforce Development Fund is a further expansion of the package of skills and training measures available in Scotland to support employers develop their workforce.

**Q2. *Will SFC provide a list of levy payers in each college region?***

This information is currently unavailable because the levy is not collected by the Scottish Government. Evidence of employer eligibility can be found at the link provided in Q3 below.

**Q3. *What evidence is required from employers to demonstrate eligibility?***

Employers are required to submit evidence of their eligibility to pay the levy to accompany their FWDF application. This should take the form of a copy of the relevant part of the most recent Employer Payment Summary (EPS) which reports the level of Apprenticeship Levy contribution. HMRC guidance is available at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-payroll-information-to-report-to-hmrc#eps-what-to-report>

**Q4. *Why is an employer cap applied to FWDF?***

The FWDF is designed to maximise the potential number of levy-paying employers who are able to access the fund in this pilot year, while providing a degree of simplicity for employers and colleges. The Scottish Government do not have access to HMRC data to enable access to the fund on a proportionate basis. We expect this to be reviewed as part of the analysis of the pilot year of the fund.

**Q5. *Are public funded bodies eligible for FWDF?***

The fund is available to all levy-paying employers in Scotland across the private, public and third sectors.



**Q6. *How were the college allocations of FWDF devised?***

Allocations are based on the estimated number of levy-paying employers, and their employees, in each college region.

**Q7. *What is the timeframe for funded activity to take place under FWDF?***

Funded activity must take place from the FWDF launch on 7 September 2017 until no later than the end of June 2018.

**Q8. *Why doesn't the fund cover training required by law?***

The Scottish Government expects employers to meet their mandatory responsibilities.

**Q9. *What happens if the cost of an employer's training needs exceeds the capped amount capped amount for the FWDF?***

FWDF can be used as part-payment towards training of a higher cost.

**Q10. *Can Colleges use the FWDF to support development costs?***

No. As discussed with the SFC College Funding Group, all funds will be used for the delivery of training to meet employer needs.

**Q11. *Can a college use other training providers to deliver on their behalf?***

No, this is outwith the scope of FWDF.

**Q12. *How are the Scottish Government and SFC going to monitor the success of the fund in its first year of operation?***

There will be two main methods used to gather evidence of fund performance: regular college reporting on the quantitative outputs of the Fund using the SFC reporting template provided; and employer feedback on their qualitative experience. The second will be an independent evaluation of the pilot fund delivery model.

**Q13. *What happens if the College declines an employer's FWDF application?***

The 'training needs analysis' undertaken between the college and employer should ensure an employer's identified training needs reflect the Fund criteria and priorities. Employers should be notified by the college, in writing, if their

application has been unsuccessful. It may be that as a result of high demand for the Fund, the application was unsuccessful; if so, the employer's application would be held on a waiting list until funds were redistributed or until future rounds of funding became available. If an employer wishes to appeal a decision taken by a college they should make an approach to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) in the first instance (see further information in Employer Guidance). Approaches will be handled on a case-by-case basis and led by an overseeing group of SFC and Scottish Government officials.