

Board of Management Audit Committee

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 15 November 2017
Paper No.	AC2-E
Agenda Item	7.2
Subject of Paper	Internal Audit Report – Student Welfare – Duty of Care
FOISA Status	Disclosable
Primary Contact	Henderson Loggie
Date of production	8 November 2017
Action	For Discussion and Decision

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to consider and discuss the report and the management responses to the internal audit recommendations.

1. Purpose of report

The purpose of this review is to provide management and the Audit Committee with assurance on key controls relating to the curriculum and financial plans in place for City of Glasgow College and their alignment with the regional plan for Glasgow and the college student number targets.

2. Context and Discussion

Following the Audit Needs Assessment undertaken by Henderson Loggie in session 2016-17, and the consequent Internal Audit Strategic Plan 2016-2020, both approved by the Committee in March 2017, an operating plan was created for the year ended 31 July 2017.

This internal audit of Student Welfare – Duty of Care provides an outline of the objectives, scope, findings and graded recommendations as appropriate, together with management responses. This constitutes an action plan for improvement.

The Report includes a number of audit findings which are assessed and graded to denote the overall level of assurance that can be taken from the Report. The gradings are defined as follows:

Good	System meets control objectives.
Satisfactory	System meets control objectives with some weaknesses present.
Requires improvement	System has weaknesses that could prevent it achieving control objectives.
Unacceptable	System cannot meet control objectives.

3. Impact and implications

Refer to internal audit report.



City of Glasgow College

Student Welfare – Duty of Care



Audit Report No: 2017/07

Draft issued: 28 July 2017

2nd Draft issued: 27 October 2017

Final issued: 08 November 2017



LEVEL OF ASSURANCE

Satisfactory



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Level of Assurance

In addition to the grading of individual recommendations in the action plan, audit findings are assessed and graded on an overall basis to denote the level of assurance that can be taken from the report. Risk and materiality levels are considered in the assessment and grading process as well as the general quality of the procedures in place.

Gradings are defined as follows:

Good	System meets control objectives.
Satisfactory	System meets control objectives with some weaknesses present.
Requires improvement	System has weaknesses that could prevent it achieving control objectives.
Unacceptable	System cannot meet control objectives.

Action Grades

Priority 1	Issue subjecting the College to material risk and which requires to be brought to the attention of management and the Audit Committee.
Priority 2	Issue subjecting the College to significant risk and which should be addressed by management.
Priority 3	Matters subjecting the College to minor risk or which, if addressed, will enhance efficiency and effectiveness.

1. Overall Level of Assurance

Satisfactory

System meets control objectives with some weaknesses present.

2. Risk Assessment

This review focused on the controls in place to mitigate the following risk on the City of Glasgow College ('the College') Risk Register:

- Students: Failure of the College's Duty of Care to Students (net risk score 12).

3. Background

As part of the Internal Audit programme at the College for 2016/17 we carried out a review of the systems in place relating to the College's Duty of Care to students. The Audit Needs Assessment, completed in March 2017, identified this as an area where risk can arise and where Internal Audit can assist in providing assurances to the Board of Management and the Principal that the related control environment is operating effectively, ensuring risk is maintained at an acceptable level.

The College has a number of specific statutory duties related to the care of students:

- **College Prevent Duty** – the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 imposed a duty on further education colleges to 'have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism';
- **College Safeguarding Duty** – every adult in Scotland has a role in ensuring all our children, young people and adults at risk live safely and can reach their potential. The College is committed to collaboratively safeguarding the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and adults at risk who undertake study or employment with the College and takes all reasonable steps to safeguard students and staff.
- **College Corporate Parenting Duty** – The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 passed legislation relating to Corporate Parenting. Under the Act, Post-16 Education Bodies were considered to be 'corporate parents' from 1 April 2015. This involves carrying out a range of responsibilities to support children and young people who are, or were, looked after by local authorities. This duty only applies to this specific group of students; and

At the time of the audit the College had created a Corporate Care Short Life Working Group (SLWG) to review College arrangements covering the above three duties in a number of areas including: communications; training; policies and procedures; and reporting.

4. Scope, Objectives and Overall Findings

This audit reviewed the action the College is taking to meet its specific statutory duties related to the care of students under Prevent, Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding.

The specific objectives of the audit are set out in the table below:

Objective	Findings				Actions Already Planned
	Assurance	1	2	3	
The objective of this audit was to obtain reasonable assurance that the College has:		No. of Agreed Actions			
1. Duty of Care policies and documented procedures in place which are communicated to all staff	Satisfactory	0	0	2	✓
2. Appointed staff or groups with specific responsibilities to assist the College in meeting its statutory duties related to the care of students	Good	0	0	0	
3. A formal risk identification and assessment process	Good	0	0	0	
4. A Duty of Care training programme for staff which includes induction training and regular refresher training	Satisfactory	0	0	1	✓
5. Engaged with Prevent partners and collaborated with other Corporate Parents	Good	0	0	0	
6. Regular reporting of Duty of Care matters to senior management and to the Board of Management.	Satisfactory	0	0	0	✓
Overall Level of Assurance	Satisfactory	0	0	3	
		System meets control objectives with some weaknesses present.			

5. Audit Approach

From discussion with relevant managers and staff, and review of policies and procedures, we identified the internal controls in place and compared these with expected controls. We have reported on areas where expected controls were found to be absent or where controls could be further strengthened.

5. Audit Approach (Continued)

The following managers and staff were interviewed as part of this review:

- Paul Clark - College Secretary / Planning
- Lisa Hardy - Student Advice and Guidance Manager
- Joanna McGillivray - Vice Principal Student Experience
- Gillian Plunkett - Student Experience Director
- Fares Samara - Vice Principal Infrastructure
- Susan Sturrock – Student Advisor (Care Experienced Named Advisor)
- Martin Taylor – Head of Organisational Development

6. Summary of Main Findings

Strengths

- The College has created a SLWG to address potential issues with its Corporate Care arrangements.
- The main College Safeguarding Policy and Procedure has now been updated and approved by the Senior Management Team (SMT) and the Student, Staff and Equalities Committee. Further work will now be carried out to ensure that the existing risk assessment policies and procedures, which are already in place, take full cognisance of the Safeguarding and Prevent duties placed on the College when planning future events.
- An update was provided on Safeguarding to the October 2017 meetings of SMT and the Student, Staff and Equalities Committee and agreement was reached on annual reporting of safeguarding incidents.
- The College has established a detailed Corporate Parenting Plan, as required by The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 Act, and appropriate supporting procedures.
- Throughout the College, staff have been assigned specific responsibilities to assist the College in meeting the three statutory duties.
- The College has established links with various forums, which will enable it to more effectively carry out both its Prevent and Corporate Parenting duties.

Weaknesses

- Although some training has been delivered throughout the College there is a need to consider training requirements across the three duties and produce a detailed training plan. This forms part of the remit of the SLWG.

7. Acknowledgements

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff at the College who helped us during the course of our audit visit.

8. Main Findings and Action Plan

Objective 1: Duty of Care policies and documented procedures in place which are communicated to all staff

The College has a Safeguarding Policy and a Safeguarding Procedure in place. The Safeguarding Policy sets out the College's position on Safeguarding at a high-level, while the procedure sets out the responsibilities of various staff members and the process to be followed should a Safeguarding incident occur. The College also has two separate short guidance documents, one for staff and one for students, to help them approach any potential Safeguarding issues appropriately. The policy and procedure are due to be revised as part of a wider review of the Corporate Care area by the Corporate Care Short Life Working Group (SLWG). The College has a number of other policies that support the Safeguarding of students. These include an IT Acceptable Use Policy, which reduces the risk of harm being inflicted through College IT networks. The Admissions Policy and Procedure and Recruitment Policy and Procedure help ensure that individuals at risk of causing harm are risk assessed to minimise risks to students or staff. We noted that there was no mention of Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme checks within the Recruitment Policy. However, from attendance at the SLWG, it was confirmed that PVG procedures were within the scope of the Group and had been flagged as requiring review. One point discussed at the meeting was whether it was sufficient to consider PVG checks within recruitment procedures or whether separate documented PVG procedures are required. Another issue raised at the meeting was that the College does not have a documented procedure for reacting to any notifications from Disclosure Scotland and subsequently it is not clear what action should be taken in these scenarios. Implementation of the Prevent duty has not been straightforward. Nationally it has been perceived as discriminatory towards particular groups and restricting freedom of speech. This could therefore cause tension, particularly in a College with a multi-cultural body of staff and students. The College has therefore had to consider how best to meet its Prevent duty without introducing any divisive provisions. From review of current College policies and procedures there were some examples of provisions which deal with Prevent issues. For example, the IT Acceptable Use Policy confirms that the College's filtering and blocking systems should restrict the access to any material which may pose a security threat and explicitly states that storing or sending material over College systems that is likely to promote terrorism or violence will be considered misuse.

The College's main Corporate Parenting document is the Corporate Parenting Plan. Maintaining a plan is a requirement of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. The Corporate Parenting Plan correctly identifies the College's responsibilities under the legislation and sets out a range of actions to be completed in order to meet those responsibilities. Each action has a lead member of staff and a completion date attached. The College has opted not to introduce a policy as it has been advised by the Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland (CELCIS) and Who Cares? Scotland that a live document such as the plan is sufficient. The Corporate Parenting Plan is to be reviewed bi-annually. A Guide for Care Experienced Students has also been made available to students through the College website which highlights the support provided by the College.

Objective 1: Duty of Care policies and documented procedures in place which are communicated to all staff (Continued)

All of the above policies and procedures are made available to staff through the College network.

A significant number of the policies and procedures obtained during the course of our audit were past their review date. This is a wider College issue, not specific to Corporate Care. This has already been identified by the College and reported to the Senior Management Team, and a Policy and Procedure Review Tracker has been created to ensure that policies and procedures are brought up-to-date.

Observation	Risk	Recommendation	Management Response	
<p>The SLWG has produced an action plan detailing all key action points that require to be addressed and although responsibility for the completion of tasks has been assigned to responsible individuals, target implementation dates have not been set.</p> <p>No separate recommendations have been raised in relation to issues we have identified throughout the report where our attendance at the SLWG meeting confirmed that these issues have already been identified and are being dealt with via the SLWG. A formal follow up process has now been agreed for the completion of actions within the plan.</p>	<p>Issues identified by the SLWG may not be fully addressed due to failure to fully implement the action plan timeously leaving the College with insufficient Corporate Care arrangements.</p>	<p>R1 Update the SLWG Corporate Care Action Plan to include target completion dates for each of the actions. completion date.</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>To be actioned by: Vice Principal, Student Experience</p> <p>No Later Than: 30 January 2018</p>	
			<p>Grade</p>	<p>3</p>

Objective 1: Duty of Care policies and documented procedures in place which are communicated to all staff (Continued)			
Observation	Risk	Recommendation	Management Response
<p>There are a number of specific requirements of the College under the UK and Scottish Government 'Prevent Duty Guidance: for further education institutions in Scotland'. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> having policies and procedures in place for the management of events held on College premises. The College should also put in place a system for assessing and rating risks associated with any planned events; the College should have robust procedures both internally and externally for sharing information about vulnerable individuals (where appropriate to do so). This should include information sharing agreements where possible; and there should be policies and procedures for students and staff working on sensitive or extremism-related research. <p>While we accept that the College's general approach of incorporating the Prevent duty into its Safeguarding Policy and Procedure is reasonable and proportionate some of these provisions may also require the update of other interrelated College policies and procedures. The Safeguarding Policy covers data sharing for vulnerable adults on Supported Learning courses where external contacts, such as Glasgow City Council, act as the primary source of support. The Safeguarding Policy & Prevent action plans direct Faculty Directors to review curriculum content taking cognisance of sensitive or extremism related issues. However, further work is required to ensure that existing risk assessment policies and procedures take cognisance of the Safeguarding and Prevent duties when planning events.</p>	<p>The College fails to effectively implement its Prevent duty.</p>	<p>R2 Ensure that the existing risk assessment policies and procedures, which are already in place, take full cognisance of the Safeguarding and Prevent duties placed on the College when planning future events.</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>To be actioned by: College Secretary/Planning</p> <p>No Later Than: 30 June 2018</p>
			<p>Grade 3</p>

Objective 2: Appointed staff or groups with specific responsibilities to assist the College in meeting its statutory duties related to the care of students

Per the College Safeguarding Policy all staff have a duty of care to protect and safeguard children, young people and adults at risk. The College has also appointed a number of Safeguarding Co-ordinators throughout the College in both faculties and support services. They receive additional training and are responsible for providing advice to other staff members on any Safeguarding incidents that occur and, where relevant, reporting these to the College Lead on Safeguarding. The position of College Lead on Safeguarding is held by the Student Experience Director. Although the College Lead has overall responsibility for the development, implementation and monitoring of effective Safeguarding arrangements within the College, this is only possible with the assistance of a range of managers across the college in implementing the agreed Safeguarding policy and procedures.

As the College intends to incorporate Prevent within its current Safeguarding structures the safeguarding co-ordinators will also assume responsibility for the prevent duty. We consider this approach appropriate and note that additional Prevent training will be required for these staff. There will be no additional designated staff for Prevent with the exception of the College's single point of contact / College Lead for Prevent. This position is currently held by College Secretary. To date the College single point of contact has been involved in a number of external Prevent groups and has also had oversight for Prevent activity within the College.

The Student Experience Director is the College's lead on Corporate Parenting. This role is largely to provide oversight whilst day-to-day management of Corporate Parenting is carried out by the Student Advice and Guidance Manager. The Student Advice and Guidance Manager is responsible for liaising with other Corporate Parents, including attendance at forums. In addition, the College also has one Student Advisor who is the named advisor for care leavers. This gives all students who are care leavers a point of contact for support within the College. The named advisor also carries out some of the key day-to-day tasks required to ensure the College provides strong support to care leavers. Student Support staff also ensure that teaching staff are aware of which students are care leavers so that they can assist in providing support where required and can also monitor the students' progress, passing on any concerns to Student Support at an early stage.

Objective 3: A formal risk identification and assessment process

The College's Corporate Parenting Plan and procedures appropriately mitigate against key risks and should ensure that the College fulfils its duty. Individual care leavers are identified to ensure that the College monitors their progress and provides support to care leavers who may be at risk of failing to achieve the desired outcomes from their education. For example, care leavers attendance is monitored by Student Support so that if attendance is low this can be discussed with the student. Teaching staff are also aware of which students are care leavers enabling them to monitor the academic progress made by these students in that specific context.

As part of the College's Admissions for Applicants with Relevant Unspent Criminal Convictions Procedure students with unspent convictions will undergo a risk assessment to ensure that there is not an increased level of risk by admitting them to their chosen course. The College also makes use of PVG checks to consider if staff pose a risk but, as noted above, this procedure has not been documented. A recording mechanism has been initiated which will capture applicants with unspent criminal convictions and we have been advised that these will be reported to the Staff, Students and Equalities Committee going forward.

Student communication in the College Student Diary is issued to circa 15,000 students and on the Student Induction Module on My City which can be accessed by all students. A 'light touch' approach is consciously taken in the dissemination of information on the ways that students can report a safeguarding incident. A safeguarding email has been created to allow students to anonymously report any incidents or concerns they may have regarding a friend or fellow student. This email postbox is checked on a daily basis.

Objective 4: A Duty of Care training programme for staff which includes induction training and regular refresher training

Training is planned and delivered to all staff on Safeguarding. Basic information regarding the College’s Safeguarding principles and documentation is shared with all staff. Training is delivered through an online module. A revised Safeguarding module produced by the College Development Network (CDN) is currently being considered for delivery to staff as it is thought that this could potentially be more relevant than the current training provided. Safeguarding Co-ordinators carry out a second level of training online and also carry out regular refresher training. Six monthly workshops, with input from the CDN, allow the Safeguarding Co-ordinators to receive updates and also discuss any emerging issues and case studies.

Prevent training has yet to be rolled out in the College. The College has been developing a training module which takes a broader discussion based approach in order to achieve buy in from groups who may otherwise not engage in the process due to the contentious nature of the duty as detailed under Objective 1. The plan is to role this module out to all staff and students going forward. Further consideration will also have to be given to which staff require additional Prevent training beyond the basic awareness module.

Corporate Parenting training has been rolled out to the Board of Management, the Senior Management Team and the College Heads of Curriculum and was delivered by external providers Who Cares? Scotland. Going forward the College will need to consider what level of training is required for all staff and will need to decide how this is to be delivered. This has been discussed by the SLWG and it intends to produce a detailed training plan following analysis of training needs. Corporate Parenting training has been devolved to Student Support to date but as Organisational Development staff are involved in preparing the training plan for the SLWG they may have more involvement going forward.

Observation	Risk	Recommendation	Management Response	
Organisational Development staff monitor whether staff have completed online training, although have no mechanism to enforce the completion of this training other than sending out further reminders, which is currently a manual process.	Staff do not have the required knowledge of a particular area leading to a breach of legislation or best practice.	R3 Consider ways that the College can efficiently follow-up non-completion of online training and enforce completion where training is considered mandatory.	<p>Agreed</p> <p>To be actioned by: Performance & Improvement Director</p> <p>No Later Than: 30 June 2018</p>	
			Grade	3

Objective 5: Engaged with Prevent partners and collaborated with other Corporate Parents

The College Lead on Prevent acts as the single point of contact for the College and liaises with external partners. This has included attendance at the Glasgow City Council Co-ordination Group, which is made up of various local organisations and allows local Prevent arrangements to be discussed, as well as the CDN Prevent Group which has a Further Education Sector focus and facilitates discussion on what the Prevent duty means for colleges and how best to implement this. The College Lead for Prevent also has the details of the relevant Police contact for Prevent. The College maintains contact with local multi-agency Prevent and CONTEST (the UK's Counter Terrorism Strategy) groups. So far, the College has not had to pass on any Prevent related concerns to Police Scotland.

The College is involved with two external forums for Corporate Parents. These are the Glasgow Colleges' Corporate Parenting Forum and the West of Scotland Care Leavers Forum. These forums provide the College with an opportunity to discuss best practice and develop systems for sharing information on care leavers with other Corporate Parents. These forums also allow individual care leavers to be discussed with other Corporate Parents where required. The Glasgow Colleges' Corporate Parenting Forum involves a number of agencies such as social work or employment agencies who have contact with care leavers and are looking to help them attend College. The West of Scotland Care Leavers Forum also involves universities and helps the College to provide a smooth transition for care leavers looking to progress with studying.

Objective 6: Regular reporting of Duty of Care matters to senior management and to the Board of Management

The Corporate Parenting Plan was presented to the Staff, Students and Equalities Committee in May 2017. Going forward it has been agreed that progress reports against the plan and a report detailing the outcomes achieved by care leavers will be presented to the Committee.

The College collects information on Safeguarding incidents that occur and an update report on Safeguarding was considered by both SMT and the Staff, Students and Equalities Committee in October 2017, and it was agreed that Safeguarding will be reported annually to the Staff, Students and Equalities Committee going forward.

If a Safeguarding incident were to occur this would be escalated to the Executive Leadership Team and Board due to its seriousness.