

Board of Management

Students, Staff & Equalities Committee

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 23 October 2019
Paper No.	SSEC1-F
Agenda Item	10
Subject of Paper	Student Recruitment and Admissions Review 2019/20
FOISA Status	Disclosable
Primary Contact	Gillian Plunkett, Student Experience Director
Date of production	11 October 2019
Action	For Noting

1. Recommendations

The Students, Staff and Equalities Committee (SSEC) is asked to note the contents of the Admissions Review (Annexe A) for the main full time intake in Academic Year (AY) 2019/20.

2. Purpose of Report

To provide members the SSEC with:-

- a high level summary of student recruitment activity for full time courses where entry is based on selection criteria, including a competitive interview;
- an applicant satisfaction survey and;
- equality, diversity and inclusion, and widening access statistics for both full time applications and full time enrolments at October 2019.

3. Strategic Context and Key Points

3.1 Achievement of student recruitment and enrolment targets supports the College's *Strategic Priority 1 - To be an inspirational place of learning* where the College is the first choice destination for individuals, and monitoring demand for course provision is a valuable measure of this popularity and the reputation of the College.

3.2 Evaluation of our performance in student recruitment in relation to equality, diversity and inclusiveness is also an indication of how well we meet our Student Experience Strategy objectives to ensure that *'Individual needs are anticipated at every step of the student journey and are met in a proactive and meaningful way.* While monitoring the diversity of our applicant population, conversion rates and retention of priority groups ensures that we meet our Regional Outcome Agreement objectives in relation to widening access and participation.

3.3 Robust monitoring of student recruitment targets is maintained throughout the admissions period (January to September) with regular reports on applications received, offers made and acceptances available via Connected in addition to regular updates at SMT.

3.4 At a College level application activity for 2019/20 has decreased by 1.8% compared to last year and there is evidence that all FE colleges in Scotland have

experienced a similar dip in full time application numbers. However, the applications received by the College (19,905) still represented a ratio of approximately 3:1 applications to places available (7,000).

3.5 A number of external factors have influenced this downturn in full time applications in 2019/20 including a change in demographics, the impact of widening access policies currently being implemented by universities, and the various Government youth employment strategies spearheaded by Developing the Young Workforce.

3.6 To ascertain customer satisfaction levels with the College's admissions service, a survey of all applicants at July 2019 is included in the review and results show improved satisfaction levels in all areas.

4. Impact and Implications

4.1 Failing to provide fair access to the College could result in a breach of the College's Public Sector Equality Duty and Regional Outcome Agreement. The College's core values include the recognition and achievement of equality, diversity and inclusiveness and publication of statistics on applications and enrolments offers transparency in our approach to widening access. In addition, the Colleges' financial stability could be severely impacted if we failed to meet our recruitment and enrolment targets.

Student Recruitment and Admissions Review 2019/20 – Annexe A

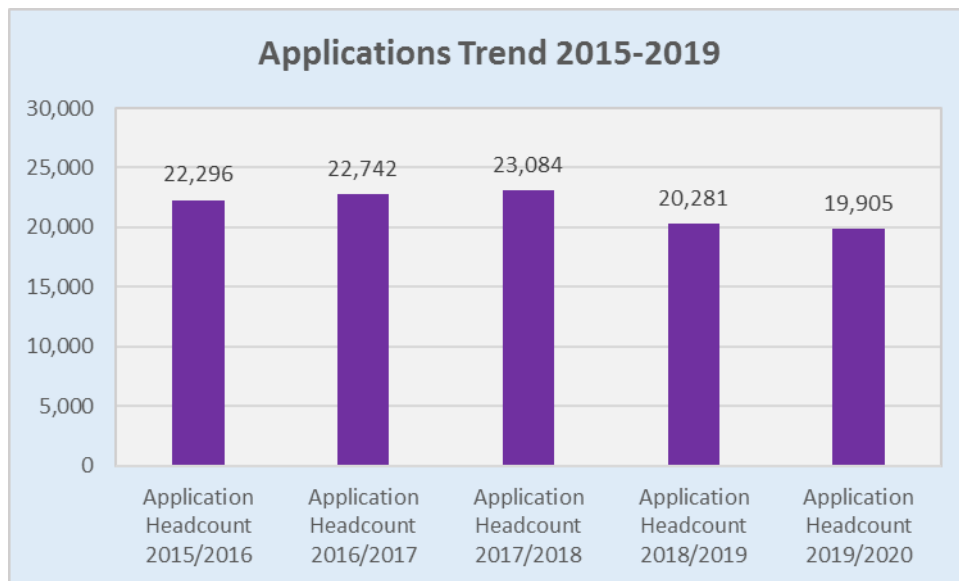
Application Data

Table 1 provides a 5 year trend in application data for full time courses (where entry is based on selection criteria including an interview) and shows a decrease of 10.6% in 1st choice (headcount) applications over the period 2015 – 2019. A similar trend has been experienced across the Further Education (FE) Sector in Scotland.

Factors likely to have influenced this downturn in full time applications include;-

- a change in demographics with the number of young people in Scotland (particularly Glasgow) continuing to decline;
- the impact of widening access policies currently being implemented by universities which target the traditional FE College market (in 2019 UCAS reported a rise in university applications for the first time in 3 years mainly in England); and
- the impact of Government youth employment strategies which offer part time access to college for school pupils studying in the Senior Phase.

Table 1 – 5 Year Applications Trend 2015-19



However, with 19,905 full time applicants for approximately 7,000 places in 2019/20, City of Glasgow College continues to attract high numbers of school leavers with a ratio of approximately 3:1 applications to places available.

Admissions Survey – Customer Satisfaction

An annual admissions survey is undertaken to ascertain customer satisfaction levels with the admissions process and Table 2 offers the results over a 4 year period 2016 – 2019. All applicants (19,300 at July 2019) were surveyed including successful and unsuccessful applicants with responses received from 5,186 (26.9%) applicants which was a significant increase on previous years 2018 (12.24%), 2017 (11.65%) and 2016 (10.04%).

Table 2 – Admissions Survey 2019

2019 Admission Survey Questions	2016	2017	2018	2019
Q1. How easy was it to find information on courses on the City of Glasgow College website?	90%	90%	92%	93%
Q2. How easy was it to create an account online?	86%	91%	92%	94%
Q3. How easy was it to complete the application form?	89%	88%	89%	90%
Q4. How easy was it to book an interview date online?	78%	80%	82%	85%
Q5. How would you rate the interview information you received when you booked your interview e.g. interview details, date, time, what to bring to interview etc.?	86%	86%	88%	92%
Q6. How would you rate your overall interview experience?	84%	84%	87%	91%
Q7. After the interview how quickly did we get back to you with the outcome of your interview? (Response is for less than 4 weeks)	79%	79%	83%	84%
Q8. How would you rate your overall experience with our application process?	83%	82%	85%	90%

The survey trend shows an overall improvement from last year in all areas, with ‘interview information’ (Q5) and ‘overall experience’ (Q4) showing the most improvement this year.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statistics

The following information compares Year 1 student application and enrolment data at September 2019 by protected characteristic. The data refers to full time courses only, where entry is based on selection criteria, including an interview. The College collects information on 7 protected characteristics excluding marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity. The purpose of reviewing this data is to provide evidence that the College is meeting its public sector Equality Duty¹ by ensuring that the admissions procedures offer fair access to protected groups, and also to evidence the College's commitment to the Glasgow Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA) targets and priorities.

Age

Table 3 offers information on the protected characteristic of 'age' and shows that the 16-19 year old and 20-24 year old age groups, continue to be the main source of applications and enrolments, in line with national priorities with little variation between the percentage applying and enrolling. However, over the next few years the young Scottish population (18 to 24) is projected to reduce, which will likely result in fewer young students at college².

Table 3 - Age

Age Band	2018 Applications	2018 Enrolments	2019 Applications	2019 Enrolments
Under 16	1%	1%	1%	1%
16-19	59%	61%	59%	62%
20-24	22%	22%	21%	21%
25-39	15%	14%	15%	13%
over 40	3%	3%	4%	3%

¹ [Public Sector Equality Duty in Scotland](#)

² [SFC College Statistics 2017/18](#)

Disability

Table 4 shows that the number of people declaring a disability has increased particularly in enrolments with a 3% increase in 2019, compared to 2018. This equates to 210 additional students with a disability however, as these figures represent full time applications only, the number of students declaring a disability across all enrolments is likely to be higher.

In addition to those declaring a disability at application and enrolment stages, a significant number of students are referred to support services throughout the year as requiring learning support suggesting that there is undisclosed demand and need for support within the student population. This trend is likely to continue as the College drives forward the Government's access and inclusion agenda by targeting those residing in the most deprived areas where quality of life indicators such as disability and additional support need (for example care experienced students) are likely to be more prevalent.

Table 4 - Disability

Disability	2018 Applications	2018 Enrolments	2019 Applications	2019 Enrolments
No Disability	87%	86%	86%	83%
Disabled	13%	14%	14%	17%

Religion

There is no significant variation between those applying and those enrolling for this characteristic.

Table 5 - Religion

Religion	2018 Applications	2018 Enrolments	2019 Applications	2019 Enrolments
None	56.9%	57%	55.9%	55.5%
Christian: Protestant	9.3%	9%	9.2%	9.7%
Christian: Roman Catholic	19.1%	19.8%	18.6%	18.6%
Christian: Other	3.4%	3.2%	3.4%	3.5%
Muslim	5.9%	5.5%	6.8%	6.2%
Buddhist	0.3%	0.2%	0.4%	0.4%
Sikh	0.4%	0.3%	0.4%	0.5%
Jewish	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Hindu	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.3%
Another religion or philosophical belief	0.8%	0.9%	1.0%	1.2%
Information refused/Prefer not to say	3.6%	3.9%	4.0%	4.0%

Sex

Table 6 shows that the College continues to receive more applications from females although this is redressed slightly at the enrolment stage which is similar to the trend across all FE Colleges in Scotland³. Gender/sex imbalances within curriculum areas are the focus of the College Gender Action Plan.

³ [SFC College Statistics 2017/18](#)

Table 6 - Sex

Sex	2018 Applications	2018 Enrolments	2019 Applications	2019 Enrolments
Female	56.0%	51.4%	54.8%	52.3%
Male	43.1%	48.2%	43.8%	47.3%
Did not say	0.9%	0.4%	1.4%	0.4%

Sexuality

There is no significant variation between those applying and those enrolling for this characteristic.

Table 7 - Sexuality

Sexuality	2018 Applications	2018 Enrolments	2019 Applications	2019 Enrolments
Heterosexual / Straight	86.4%	85.8%	84.7%	84.1%
Gay Man/Homosexual	2.3%	2.4%	2.3%	2.4%
Gay Woman/Lesbian	1.5%	1.5%	1.6%	1.6%
Bisexual	4.5%	4.6%	5.4%	5.9%
Other	0.8%	0.8%	0.9%	0.9%
Prefer not to say	4.5%	4.9%	5.1%	5.1%

Ethnicity

There is no significant variation between those applying and those enrolling for this characteristic.

Table 8 - Ethnicity

Ethnicity	2018 Applications	2018 Enrolments	2019 Applications	2019 Enrolments
Scottish	77.2%	77.8%	75.8%	75.9%
English	2.0%	1.8%	2.2%	2.2%
Welsh	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Irish	0.4%	0.5%	0.4%	0.5%
Any other white Background	2.7%	3.1%	2.9%	3.1%
Any mixed background	1.0%	1.0%	1.1%	1.2%
Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British	0.6%	0.4%	0.8%	0.7%
Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British	3.2%	3.1%	3.7%	3.8%
Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British	0.5%	0.7%	0.4%	0.5%
Any other Asian background	0.9%	0.9%	1.0%	1.0%
Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
African, African Scottish or African British	2.4%	1.8%	2.5%	1.7%
Other Black background	0.5%	0.3%	0.7%	0.4%
Any other background	0.4%	0.3%	0.6%	0.5%
Northern Irish	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%
British	3.9%	4.3%	3.7%	4.0%
Gypsy/Traveller	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Polish	2.2%	2.2%	2.2%	2.5%

Arab	0.7%	0.6%	0.7%	0.8%
Black, Black Scottish or Black British	0.3%	0.2%	0.4%	0.4%
Prefer not to say	0.5%	0.5%	0.4%	0.4%

Gender Identity

Table 9 offers information on gender identity and the 2019 data shows a small increase in the numbers declaring that their gender is different from that at birth, compared to 2018, and with a corresponding decrease in the category 'prefer not to say' this may indicate an increased willingness to provide information. There is no significant variation between those applying and those enrolling for this characteristic.

Table 9 – Gender Identity

Gender Identity	2018 Applications	2018 Enrolments	2019 Applications	2019 Enrolments
Same as birth	98.3%	98.3%	98.0%	97.8%
Different from birth	0.7%	1.3%	1.5%	1.3%
Prefer not to say	1.0%	0.4%	0.5%	0.9%

Widening Access Statistics

The following information compares Year 1 student application and enrolment data at September 2019 for care experienced students, employment status and SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) area to ensure that the College admissions procedures provide fair access to disadvantaged groups. These groups continue to be a priority for the Scottish Government as detailed in the Ministerial Letter⁴ (July 2019) and for the Glasgow Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA).

⁴ [Ministerial Letter July 2019](#)

Care Experienced

This is the first year of reporting on applications and enrolments for care experienced students, and for entry to full time courses in 2019/20 there were 1,401 applications which is an increase of 17% (1,193) on applications for entry in 2018/19. In terms of enrolments, 454 care experienced students have enrolled on full time courses at October 2019 (this figure is likely to increase for January start courses) which is an increase of 83% (248) compared to 2018.

Employment Status

The information provided in Table 10 relates to the employment/unemployment status of an applicant immediately before coming to College. The highest category of 'in education/training' suggests that most students applying and enrolling were school leavers or students progressing from a lower level to a higher level course at the College. The second highest category were 'employed' before coming to College which is likely to be continuing students with part time employment.

Table 10 – Employment Status

Employment Status	2018 Applications	2018 Enrolments	2019 Applications	2019 Enrolments
Unemployed up to 6 months.	8.0%	5.7%	8.4%	6.2%
Unemployed 6 to 12 months.	2.4%	2.1%	2.4%	2.2%
Unemployed 13 to 24 months.	1.1%	1.1%	1.5%	1.2%
Unemployed 25 to 36 months.	0.6%	0.4%	0.7%	0.6%

Unemployed over 3 years.	2.9%	2.5%	3.2%	2.6%
Economically inactive up to 6 months.	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%	1.8%
Economically inactive 6 to 12 months.	0.7%	1.0%	0.7%	1.0%
Economically inactive 13 - 24 months.	0.6%	0.7%	0.6%	0.8%
Economically inactive 25 - 36 months.	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
Economically inactive over 3 years.	0.9%	0.8%	0.9%	1.0%
Workforce Returners.	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%
Employed.	37.8%	34.9%	36.2%	34.3%
Self-employed.	2.1%	1.9%	2.2%	1.8%
In education/training.	40.9%	46.9%	41.1%	46.2%

SIMD

Table 11 provides information related to areas of deprivation through the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). This measure uses 38 quality of life indicators to identify small area concentrations of multiple deprivations across Scotland via postcode. Postcodes are divided into 5 quintiles with quintile 1 representing the 20% most deprived postcode areas in Scotland.

The table compares full time applications and full time enrolments by quintile and location i.e. Glasgow region and other (out with Glasgow).

The 2019 data is consistent with the previous year and shows that the College attracts a high number of applications and enrolments from those residing in quintile 1 areas with around 50% from the Glasgow area. Around one third of applicants from all quintiles go on to enrol with those from quintile 3 most likely to enrol.

The category 'Postcode not found' represents applications from outside Scotland (non international i.e. other UK area or EU) and it is interesting to note that applications in this category have increased by 50% in 2019.

Table 11 - SIMD

2018	Glasgow or Other Region	Quintile 1	Quintile 2	Quintile 3	Quintile 4	Quintile 5	Postcode Not Found
Applications	Glasgow	5039	1329	878	564	292	0
	Other	2629	2563	2240	1988	2032	727
Enrolments	Glasgow	1612	502	300	216	107	0
	Other	824	846	802	709	718	182
Enrolments as a % of Applications		32%	35%	35%	36%	35%	

2019	Glasgow or Other Region	Quintile 1	Quintile 2	Quintile 3	Quintile 4	Quintile 5	Postcode Not Found
Applications	Glasgow	4986	1333	857	562	283	0
	Other	2452	2450	2088	1877	1929	1088
Enrolments	Glasgow	1558	486	303	219	122	0
	Other	802	825	763	681	737	251
Enrolments as a % of Applications		32%	35%	35%	36%	35%	