

Board of Management

Students, Staff & Equalities Committee

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 28 October 2020
Paper No.	SSEC1-F
Agenda Item	5.4
Subject of Paper	Student Recruitment and Admissions Review 2020/21
FOISA Status	Disclosable
Primary Contact	Gillian Plunkett Student Experience Director
Date of production	19 October 2020
Action	For Discussion

1. Recommendations

The Students, Staff and Equalities Committee (SSEC) is asked to discuss the contents of the Admissions Review (Annexe A) for the main full time intake in Academic Year (AY) 2020/21.

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 2020.

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 This is more important than ever given the current pandemic situation, and need for agility and responsiveness to the changing needs of our students and the economy.

3.3 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.

3.4 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.

- 3.5 At a College level application activity for 2020/21 has decreased by 3% compared to last year and this evident across the sector over the last 6-7 years. However, the applications received by the College (19,230) still represented a ratio of approximately 2.7:1 applications to places available (7,000).
- 3.6 A number of external factors have influenced this downturn in full time applications in 2020/21 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.
- 3.7 To ascertain customer satisfaction levels with the College's admissions service, a survey of all applicants at July 2020 is included in the review, and while results show a slight dip in satisfaction levels possibly attributed to college buildings closure and the swift move to home working, overall satisfaction levels have been maintained.
- 3.8 In addition, conversion from application to enrolment was up on last year. However, although early indications are that enrolment targets have been met our focus remains firmly on student retention, where student expectations of a mainly only learning and teaching experience may pose challenge.

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.
- 4.2 In addition, the Colleges' financial stability could be severely impacted if we failed to meet our recruitment and enrolment targets.

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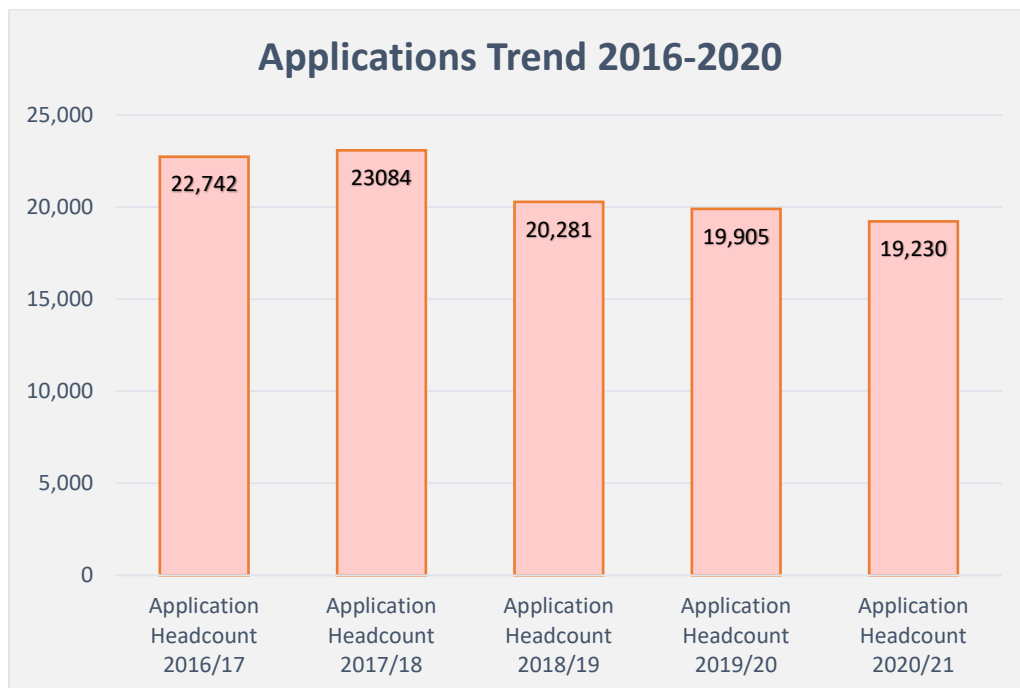
1. Application Data

1.1. Table 1 shows that applications for full time courses commencing in August (where entry is based on selection criteria including an interview) have steady decreased year on year. This year a decrease of 3% is noted in 1st choice (headcount) applications compared to the same period last year. A similar trend has been experienced across the Further Education (FE) Sector in Scotland.

1.2. 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; 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 2016-20



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- 1.3. However, with 19,230 full time applicants for approximately 7,000 places in 2020/21, City of Glasgow College continues to attract high numbers of school leavers with a ratio of approximately 2.7:1 applications to places available.

2. Admissions Survey – Customer Satisfaction

- 2.1. An annual admissions survey is undertaken to ascertain customer satisfaction levels with the admissions process, and Table 2 offers the results over a 5 year period 2016 – 2020. It was decided to retain the same survey questions as in previous years because, admissions was well underway by the time college buildings closed on 23rd march, with more than half of interview sessions complete.

Method

- Applicants are surveyed in June/July via survey monkey.
- All applicants (20,650, both year 1 and year 2 applicants) are surveyed.
- Both successful and unsuccessful applicants are surveyed.

Results

- Responses were received from 4,254 (20.6%) applicants which was a decrease on last year 2019 (26.9%), but still a significant increase from 2018 (12.2%).
- Results for the early part of the process such as navigating the website and completing the application form, remain high as these components are online and so there was little change in the experience for the students.
- Results for creating an account, booking an interview date and response times were lower than previous years as workarounds were put in place such as telephone interviews rather than face to

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face, and email responses were slower due to the volume of emails being fielded by staff and the move to home working.

- We are delighted that the overall experience of our applicants remains high at 89% given the very trying circumstances in which service delivery took place.

Table 2 – Admissions Survey 2020

2020 Admission Survey Questions	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Q1. How easy was it to find information on courses on the City of Glasgow College website?	90%	90%	92%	93%	90%
Q2. How easy was it to create an account online?	86%	91%	92%	94%	89%
Q3. How easy was it to complete the application form?	89%	88%	89%	90%	90%
Q4. How easy was it to book an interview date online?	78%	80%	82%	85%	75%
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%	88%
Q6. How would you rate your overall interview experience?	84%	84%	87%	91%	87%
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%	74%
Q8. How would you rate your overall experience with our application process?	83%	82%	85%	90%	89%

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3. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statistics

- 3.1. The following information compares Year 1 student application and enrolment data at September 2020 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 at application stage on 7 of the 9 protected characteristics excluding marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity.
- 3.2. The purpose in 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.

Table 3 – Age

Age Band	2018 Applications	2018 Enrolments	2019 Applications	2019 Enrolments	2020 Applications	2020 Enrolments
Under 16	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
16-19	59%	61%	59%	62%	58%	60%
20-24	22%	22%	21%	21%	22%	23%
25-39	15%	14%	15%	13%	16%	14%
over 40	3%	3%	4%	3%	4%	3%

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

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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	2020 Applications	2020 Enrolments
None	57%	57%	56%	56%	56%	57%
Christian: Protestant	9%	9%	9%	10%	9%	9%
Christian: Roman Catholic	19%	20%	19%	19%	18%	18%
Christian: Other	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%
Muslim	6%	6%	7%	6%	7%	6%
Buddhist	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Sikh	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Jewish	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Hindu	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Another religion or philosophical belief	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Information refused/Prefer not to say	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%

Disability

Table 4 shows an upward trend in those declaring a disability in both applications and enrolments. 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 early disclosure of disability, a significant number of students are referred to support services in year, which suggests there is also undisclosed need within the student population. This trend is likely to continue as the College drives forward the Government's access and inclusion agenda 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.

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Table 4 – Disability

Disability	2018 Applications	2018 Enrolments	2019 Applications	2019 Enrolments	2020 Applications	2020 Enrolments
No Disability	87%	86%	86%	83%	85%	82%
Disabled	13%	14%	14%	17%	15%	18%

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 Scotland². Gender/sex imbalances within curriculum areas are the focus of the College Gender Action Plan.

Table 6 - Sex

Sex	2018 Applications	2018 Enrolments	2019 Applications	2019 Enrolments	2020 Applications	2020 Enrolments
Female	56%	51%	55%	52%	55%	51%
Male	43%	48%	44%	47%	44%	48%
Did not say	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%

Sexuality

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

² [SFC College Statistics 2018/19](#)

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Table 7 - Sexuality

Sexuality	2018 Applications	2018 Enrolments	2019 Applications	2019 Enrolments	2020 Applications	2020 Enrolments
Heterosexual / Straight	86%	86%	85%	84%	85%	83%
Gay Man/Homosexual	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%
Gay Woman/Lesbian	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Bisexual	5%	5%	5%	6%	6%	7%
Other	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Prefer not to say	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%

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	2020 Applications	2020 Enrolments
Scottish	77%	78%	76%	76%	76%	77%
English	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Welsh	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Irish	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Any other white Background	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Any mixed background	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Any other Asian background	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
African, African Scottish or African British	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%
Other Black background	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%
Any other background	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Northern Irish	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
British	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Gypsy/Traveller	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Polish	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%
Arab	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%
Black, Black Scottish or Black British	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Prefer not to say	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%

Gender Identity

Table 9 offers information on gender identity and the data shows that there are 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	2020 Applications	2020 Enrolments
Same as birth	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%
Different from birth	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Prefer not to say	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%

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Widening Access Statistics

The following information compares Year 1 student application and enrolment data at September 2020 for care experienced students, employment status and SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) area to ensure that the College admissions procedures provides fair access to disadvantaged groups. These groups continue to be a priority for the Scottish Government and for the Glasgow Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA).

Care Experienced

This is the second year of reporting on applications and enrolments for care experienced students, and for entry to full time courses in 2020 there were 1,401 applications which is an increase of 17% (1,193) on applications for entry in 2020/21. This year we have seen a slight increase in applications from 7% to 8%. In terms of enrolments, the figure is the same as last year (though this figure is likely to increase throughout the year as more students enrol).

Care Experienced	2019 Applications	2019 Enrolments	2020 Applications	2020 Enrolments
Yes	7%	6%	8%	6%

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.

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Table 10 – Employment Status

Employment Status	2018 Applications	2018 Enrolments	2019 Applications	2019 Enrolments	2020 Applications	2020 Enrolments
Unemployed up to 6 months.	8%	6%	8%	6%	9%	8%
Unemployed 6 to 12 months.	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%
Unemployed 13 to 24 months.	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Unemployed 25 to 36 months.	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Unemployed over 3 years.	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%
Economically inactive up to 6 months.	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Economically inactive 6 to 12 months.	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Economically inactive 13 - 24 months.	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%
Economically inactive 25 - 36 months.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Economically inactive over 3 years.	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Workforce Returners.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Employed.	38%	35%	36%	34%	36%	33%
Self-employed.	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%
In education/training.	41%	47%	41%	46%	41%	46%

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. The

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data zones are divided into 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 2020 data is consistent with the previous years, however, this year there is a significant increase in the conversion from application to enrolment across all quintiles. College enrolments this year have been particularly buoyant.

The category 'Postcode not found' represents applications from outside Scotland (non international i.e. other UK area or EU).

Table 11 – All Application by Quintile

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%	

2020	Glasgow or Other Region	Quintile 1	Quintile 2	Quintile 3	Quintile 4	Quintile 5	Postcode Not Found
Applications	Glasgow City	4789	1244	782	474	267	
	Other	2323	2476	2100	1862	1965	948
Enrolments	Glasgow City	1713	479	329	193	128	
	Other	913	986	868	815	870	332
Enrolments as a % of Applications		37%	39%	42%	43%	45%	