Board of Management

Date of Meeting	10 December 2025
Paper No.	BoM2-G
Agenda Item	4.2
Subject of Paper	Principal's Report: December 2025
FOISA Status	Disclosable
Primary Contact	Dr Paul Little CBE DL Principal and Chief Executive
Date of production	01 December 2025
Action	For Discussion & Noting

1. Recommendations

1.1. To discuss the Principal's quarterly report to the Board of Management.

2. Purpose

2.1. To update the Board of Management on the College's work and key matters of interest since the last meeting of the Board.

3. Consultation

3.1. In progressing the matters outlined in the report, ELT colleagues in the College and across the sector, as well as regional, national and international partners, have been engaged.

4. Key Insights

4.1. The Principal is responsible for the operational management of the College, as outlined in the Scheme of Delegation, subject to the strategic and policy direction of the Board.

4.2. The Board has the responsibility of setting the strategic direction of the College. The College's Strategic Plan 2021-30, refreshed in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, outlines our collective Purpose to "Let Learning Flourish" through our City Way of "inspiration, excellence and innovation" of our teaching, student and enabled by our world-class facilities. Planning has recently begun on the 2040 Strategic Plan. Our eight Strategic Priorities are mapped across four Strategic Themes:

- **Students**
  Priorities 1 and 2
- **Growth and Development**
  Priorities 3 and 4
- **People and Processes**
  Priorities 5 and 6
- **Finance**
  Priorities 7 and 8

4.3. Five supporting strategies – Student Academic Experience, People & Culture, Corporate Development, Digital and Sustainability – and detailed Operational Plans have been developed to deliver the Strategic Plan. Progress is measured and tracked through the College's Balanced Scorecard approach and the Principal and Board are responsible for the Level One Scorecard.

4.4. By delivering on our strategic priorities, the College will build opportunities for our students, support industry, support our communities and, in so doing, affect positive change in people's lives in the city whose name we are proud to bear as a highly respected anchor institution and beyond as a national % international centre of excellence.

5. Impact and Implications

5.1. The Principal's report ensures that Board members are regularly informed throughout the academic year with salient facts on the operations of the College, progress in the delivery of the Strategic Plan and emerging key developments affecting the College and the sector.

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Principal's Report

Principal's Report to the Board of Management: December 2025

Strategic Positioning

1. City of Glasgow College continues to demonstrate sector-leading performance, delivering 56% of all SFC credits in Higher Education - more than double the volume of any other college and accounting for 22% of total HE provision across the sector.

2. Work with IT is advancing the development of real-time dashboard reporting, with benchmarking confirming that City dashboards are recognised as sector-leading tools for strategic decision-making and trend analysis.

3. The College is also hosting MIS colleagues from across the sector at the UNITe User Group meeting in December, whilst engaging with the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) to drive improvements in data sharing and reporting across tertiary education.

4. The development of Centres of Excellence is progressing with a strong focus on high-level skills, and updates on Operational Plans have been submitted to the Performance Team to ensure alignment with strategic priorities.

5. The College held its Annual Winter Graduation at the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall on 24 November 2025. The event was a great success with over 1,100 students graduating from three ceremonies.

6. The College has extended its global reach further to 40 countries as I signed two MOUs with top tertiary maritime institutions in Japan - Toba Institute of Technology and Tokyo University of Marine Science &Technology, this will also position us as college leaders in autonomous shipping, maritime technology and offshore wind.

7. Our shipping, shipbuilding and innovation credentials were further burnished when we hosted a Defence Growth Deal briefing seminar to advise stakeholder of some £50M coming to Scotland with a significant amount being allocated to skills to support the Scottish Defence supply chain (upskilling and reskilling).

Students

8. The credit allocation from the SFC for City of Glasgow College in session 2025/26 is 157,800, consistent with 2024/25, equating to 228 courses and 438 full time cohorts.

9. Enrolment conversion (as of 28 November 2025) is at 100% against projection, increasing from 97% in the same period last session. Our credit target projection currently stands at 104%.

10. AY 2025/26 total 1st choice applications are up 5%.

11. AY 2025/26 total enrolments to date stand at a healthy 19,452 with additional enrolments expected before the end of the 25/26 AY.

12. To date, 8,866 full-time students have attended classes on campus. This is an increase of 461 from the same time last session.

13. Our full-time international student recruitment is currently at its strongest position since 2018 with 200 applications for AY 2026/27 reflecting a 66% increase in applications. The College has successfully recruited an additional 45 students for a February 2026 intake from BP Marine and CFMA.

14. The Halls of Residence are currently at 83% capacity, with 95+ expected from January 2026.

15. The 3-month Brazilian Homestay project for some of the most disadvantaged school leavers was successfully delivered. The Secretary of Education for Brazillia came to our College to mark this occasion.

16. An additional cohort was recruited from our Chinese partner ZJITE taking our year 1 intake to 60.

17. In AY 2024/25, the College saw FT outcomes improve such that our FT HE completion rate now sits within the current sector average. FT FE Completion remains in line with our projections.

Successful Completion Rate	AY 23-24	AY 24-25	Change
FE FT	59%	**63%**	+4pp
FE PT	80%	**79%**	-1pp
HE FT	65%	**72%**	+7pp
HE PT	77%	**79%**	+2pp

18. Student satisfaction and survey engagement have shown strong growth. In AY 2024/25, over 2,000 more students participated in the internal MSES survey, driving a record response rate of 57% (up 21 percentage points from 2023/24). Satisfaction also rose by 12 points to reach 92%. Momentum has continued into AY 2025/26, with more than 6,000 students responding, setting a record response rate of 66% and achieving an overall satisfaction level of 96%.

Growth & Development

19. Our IT Network refresh contract has now been awarded and work on the project has commenced.

20. We continue to build international momentum and system leadership hosting high-level engagement, including hosting delegations from Henan Province (with 40 leaders from across Engineering, Maritime, STEM and Business), also through formal MOUs with Brazil and Japan, evaluating six business proposals from Libya, and the delivery of a £500k+ pipeline form the partner CFMA which we helped establish in Angola.

21. We support 230 industry sectors and sub sectors, with recent support for NEBOSH training and aviation with Prime Flight to Stewart Travel and trauma-informed practice.

22. Demonstrated strong innovation leadership through pioneering programmes such as College Local Innovation Centres (CLIC), the NoCode initiative, impACT, INSPIRE, and the Digital Health project, all of which reinforce our commitment to continued growth and collaboration. We are hoping to conclude discussions on a 10-year strategic partnership with the UK's Institute for Innovation & Knowledge Exchange.

23. Our HR team is focusing on delivering the implementation plan for the new integrated HR system with MHR, which will be reviewed and signed off by the Project Board.

24. A key part of our annual performance calendar, in November 2025, the College completed its Portfolio Review meetings with all four faculties, making recommendations on courses to stop, continue and to modernise. Amongst other things, the process helps to ensure we are addressing underperformance and planning the distribution of credits to meet financial targets. The process also supports considerations related to capital needs.

25. As part of this process each Faculty produced a SEAP (self-evaluation action plan) in support of the enhancement of academic quality and from this we produced a City of Glasgow College SEAP which was submitted to the SFC at the end of November. The

SEAP is a key document in our contract of funding with the SFC.

26. As part of the new quality arrangements, the College completed two Institution Led Quality reviews (ILQRs) reviewing the quality of provision within Sport & Fitness and Engineering.

27. All of which means, this year, the College has comprehensively embedded the new TQFE quality arrangements.

People & Processes

28. The College successfully won four awards at the 2025 Scottish GO Awards, including:

    - Procurement Team of the Year
    - Future Leader (Rachel Park)
    - Individual of the Year (Deborah Fagan)
    - Supplier of the Year (BaxterStorey Partnership)

29. Performance across key areas remains strong, with SDS (MA) achieving 79% of starts and 61% of the £1.2m allocation used, alongside steady progress towards the 75%+ leaver/achiever benchmark.

30. The meta-skills and graduate attributes rollout are advancing, supported by the successful completion of the HubSpot CRM pilot.

31. Our early BCA submission demonstrates proactive planning, although UKVI reforms continue to present a medium-term compliance risk.

32. External visibility has been high, with coverage on BBC Scotland and BBC Alba, a keynote at Holyrood, and an award-nominated Graduation film.

33. Our succession management and renewal was again in evidence by the seamless recruitment of two new members to our Senior Management Team with the appointment of Lorraine Quinn, formerly of the University of the West of Scotland (UWS), to replace Vice Principal Siobhan Wilson as the new Dean for the Faculty of Hospitality & Leisure; Lorraine is to join the College on 2 February 2026. We also appointed an HR Director, Lauren Perrie from the Cabinet Office, who is also expected in February.

34. The Wellbeing team continue to work with managers to implement wellbeing action plan improvements identified from the Robertson Cooper Good Day at Work Survey. A campaign entitled *Voice to Vision* has been created to share information on cross-college improvements since the Robertson Cooper Survey. An area has been created on MyConnect to share an overview of improvements to date, and a slideshow with further details on each area of development.

35. Quality assurance remains robust, with both the BSI ISO9001 audit and the EAL (Excellence Awards Limited) audit successfully completed, ensuring retention of the quality mark and awarding body status.

36. In addition, the College has also been shortlisted for an Association of Colleges Beacon Award and for the City & Guilds Awards for our engagement with employers through the CLIC project. The impact of the CLIC project, funded by Innovate UK, also helped the Glasgow City Innovation District (GCID) win the Outstanding Business Engagement in Colleges Award at the 2025 Herald HE Awards.

Finance

37. As Accountable Officer I am pleased to report that for the year ended 31 July 2025, the

unqualified Annual Accounts & Financial Statements show a surplus of £59,000 with an impressive 99.8% of credits successfully delivered in 2024/25. *[N.B. We are only obliged by the Scottish Funding Council to meet a 98% target before any financial clawback]*

38. Q1 City Enterprises' income reached £210k, driven by new contracts with the City of Edinburgh Council, CalMac (£50k), and PeoplePlus. Additional revenue streams included £47k from Bridges to the World and a £12k uplift from ZJTIE, while £55k was secured from funded projects, notably SEEP (£25k) and Uganda (£30k).

39. Accommodation remains financially positive, though St Luke's maintenance and early-exit discussions present future cost pressure.

40. Looking ahead, significant forward commercial value is anticipated through the £500k+ Angola Officer Conversion, through a Nigerian based shipping Line and a US LNG Fleet Training programme.

41. The current expectation that the College will meet its AY 2025/26 SFC credit target.

Forward Look

42. International recruitment and commercial income generation are set to be the primary drivers of financial stability in 2026/27 given that the SFC continue to give our College the lowest funding allocation in the sector. We raised this with the Chair and CEO of SFC on their recent visit and with the Minister for Higher and Further Education.

43. The nearing completion of the Riverside Innovation Centre business case will play a pivotal role in shaping estates strategy, accommodation growth, workforce innovation and wider commercial diversification.

44. The rollout of a CRM system, together with new partnerships in Africa and across the Middle East are expected to sustain income generation.

45. A strong internal focus on improving attainment and reviewing the structure of Nautical & STEM will ensure resilience and alignment with future priorities.

46. Diary Dates – Burns Supper - Thursday, 22 January 2026, Learning & Teaching Conference - Tuesday, 20 January 2026, Maritime Security conference (April/May 2026, date to be confirmed).