FAQ's for Students Following Organisational Change Announcement on 3 May 2023

Q: Why is the College making redundancies?

A: The funding allocation recently announced by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) for the college sector is extremely challenging, reducing teaching credit allocations by 10% and leaving colleges with difficult decisions to make to balance their budgets. This means we will have to reduce the amount of courses we deliver.

The financial and funding pressures facing City of Glasgow College all stem from external factors: real-term funding cuts, rising inflation and increased energy costs. The vast bulk of our spending comes from payroll costs and it is with deep regret that these financial challenges means that the College is left with no alternative but to begin consultation with staff and trade unions on proposed organisational change.

Q: Will I be able to complete my course?

A: Yes. Every student who started a course in 2022-23 will be able to go onto the next stage and complete their course at City of Glasgow College as expected.

Q: Are all classes being forced to move online?

A: At no point will any student be forced into fully online courses. The College is committed to a 'blended learning' approach which is a mixture of onsite and online learning.

These approaches will be chosen and used by individual lecturing teams based on what they feel is best suited for their class. This means that lecturers have the flexibility to decide if they feel their class is more suited to online learning. If students feel that their class is better suited to in-person learning, this is up to the lecturing teams and not the College. Every course will have some elements of online learning, but no course will be all online.

Q: Will my lecturers still be here to teach me?

A: The College will ensure there are enough staff to deliver all courses. Sadly, subject to consultation with our trade unions, it is likely that some lecturers and other teaching staff will

lose their jobs due to us having a reduced credit target (meaning we will deliver less courses) and the financial and funding pressures arising from external factors: real-term funding cuts, rising inflation and increased energy costs.

Q: Will there still be student support to help me succeed in my course?

A: Yes. Although we are reorganising some of our support systems to make them work more efficiently, there will still be plenty of support to help you succeed.

Q: Can't we get more Government funding?

A: We have lobbied intensively behind the scenes to attempt to influence our funding allocation, talking with key Ministers, their senior officials, and also with opposition politicians, as well as with the SFC. We did this to really bring home to them in detail the impact that such a shortfall in our core funding would have on our particular College i.e. resulting in a reduction in teaching and putting many jobs at risk.

Our deep-seated concerns have now been realised, with no additional funding being allocated. On Tuesday 2 May colleges in Scotland were informed by the Scottish Funding Council that the additional £26 million that had been promised to the college sector in Scotland in the recent Scottish Government budget 'is not available for distribution and has been identified as a necessary saving'. The withdrawal of this funding exacerbates an already challenging financial landscape for the College.

Q: How many people will be impacted by the redundancies?

A: The college sector is under unprecedented pressure, and the scale of these challenges means that the College is left with no alternative but to begin consultation with staff and trade unions on the organisational change that will be required to safeguard the future of the college. It is forecast that up to 75 FTE (full time equivalent) roles will be affected.

However, we will seek to consult with our staff and trade unions to minimise the impact wherever possible. The consultation process began on Wednesday, 3 May 2023.

Our Student Support team are here to offer advice to students on Health and Wellbeing as well as guidance, support and counselling for maintaining good mental health too.

Q: **Why have no other colleges announced compulsory redundancies?**

A: We cannot comment directly on the specific finances of other colleges, but from our engagement with Colleges Scotland and GCRB it is clear City of Glasgow College is not alone in needing to reduce costs.

A number of other colleges have undertaken Voluntary Severance programmes and others are examining other ways of reducing costs with some looking at closing campuses and others thinking about mergers to reduce costs.

Q: **What will the impact of these decisions on courses and students?**

A: We will not be stopping any course part of the way through its delivery. E.g. If you are currently in year one of a two year HND your course will continue next year. The number of courses available for new students will be reduced next year so overall there will be fewer students in the college.

We know this may be a concerning time for students and our Student Support team are here to help students achieve their full potential. They can also offer advice on Health and Wellbeing as well as guidance, support and counselling for maintaining good mental health too.

Q: **Does this mean lecturers will be expected to take on extra work or deliver extra classes?**

A: There are no changes to lecturers terms and conditions, therefore no lecturer will be expected to work outwith the national terms and conditions, specifically 35 hours per week inclusive of 23+1 hours class contact time.

Q: **Why has the College spent so much on international travel?**

A: The College generates valuable income from both overseas and UK contracts. Our Principal plays a pivotal role in successfully developing and maintaining these external partnerships. For a modest investment in travel expenses of around £5,000 per year, we generate millions each year through these partnerships.

City of Glasgow College is a global player in professional and technological education with more than 100 international partnerships, with some 4,000 full-time and part-time international students from 150 nationalities benefitting from our world-class provision in Glasgow.

We train almost half of all the UK's Merchant Navy officers, working closely with the Merchant UK Navy Training Board and the world's top 20 shipping companies, many of which have

offices in London which require regular travel to build and maintain these income-generating partnerships.

Some of the money spent on international travel is also to support the development of student opportunities, including participation in events and competitions such as World Skills. The money spent on international travel also includes the costs of teaching staff, support staff and student travel during these events.

Q: Why did the College spend on supporting COP26 when jobs are at risk?

A: City of Glasgow College was proud to support the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference which opened up opportunities for revenue-generating projects and driving innovation. Over 90 students were involved in our activity at COP26, leading to valuable work experience and launching successful careers for a number of students. While not every single student benefited from this experience directly, the college did provide invaluable opportunities for students to engage with politicians and changemakers in a way that directly related to their course.

Many commercial opportunities have arisen directly from COP26 and are delivering tangible benefits for the College, generating almost £100,000 worth of income since the event

In 2021 the College was in a healthy budget position so comparisons between spend on COP26 and the current financial challenges facing the whole of the college sector in Scotland are irrelevant, since the way colleges are funded in Scotland means they cannot build up funds or carry over a budget surplus.

FAQ's relating to EIS-FELA Industrial Action

Q: Why are lecturers taking Action Short of a Strike (ASOS), and how will that affect me?

A: Trade Union EIS-FELA recently announced a programme of industrial action that will begin with ASOS on 9 May 2023. A key part of this is those lecturers undertaking ASOS will withhold student results from college systems, removal of learning materials from Canvas and a withdrawal of goodwill (with college lecturers no longer carrying out duties beyond contractual requirements).

Student experience is at the heart of what we do so we do not support this action. The College are working closely with directorates/faculties to ensure that this has no impact on progression to further study or employment where a student needs to evidence their achievements.