
Board Meeting

Date of Meeting	Monday 06 October 2014
Paper Title	Curriculum and Estates Review - Glasgow Colleges' Strategic Partnership Strategic Plan - Full Version
Agenda Item	4
Paper Number	BM3-B Appendix 4a
Responsible Officer	Principals Lead – Alex Craig – Depute Principal, City of Glasgow College
Status	Disclosable
Action	For Decision

Glasgow Colleges' Strategic Plan 2015 - 2018

Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	3
2. THE WORLD WE ARE IN	4
2.1 EDUCATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT	4
2.2 THE NATIONAL ECONOMY.....	4
2.3 THE GLASGOW ECONOMY.....	5
2.4 NATIONAL POLICIES	6
2.5 MEETING EMPLOYERS’ SKILLS NEEDS	6
2.6 SOCIAL CONTEXT	6
2.7 SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT ALIGNMENT	7
3. WHAT DOES THE GLASGOW REGION REQUIRE FROM THE COLLEGES?	8
4. THE STATE WE ARE IN	8
5. VISION, MISSION AND VALUES	11
5.1 VISION	11
5.2 MISSION.....	11
5.3 VALUES	11
6. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK	12
6.1 CURRICULUM THEME	13
6.2 ACCESS AND PROGRESSION THEME	14
6.3 LEARNING AND TEACHING THEME.....	15
6.4 GOVERNANCE THEME	16
6.5 STAFF THEME	17
6.6 FINANCE, ESTATES AND RESOURCES THEME.....	18
7. STRATEGIC PLANNING CYCLE	19

1. Introduction

Glasgow's citizens are rightly proud of their city's long and world-renowned history of achievement and Glasgow's colleges have played, and will continue to play, a key role in the social, cultural and economic development of the city and beyond. In doing so, Glasgow's colleges, whilst respecting and drawing inspiration from their past, will remain loyal to the future, ensuring that their collective actions have maximum impact over the years to come.

The next few years will see a sea change in the fortunes of the Glasgow Region as a new world forms around it. There is plenty of scope for optimism about the future of Glasgow:-

- Commonwealth Games will leave a dowry for the future,
- commitment of UK/Scotland Governments to invest £1Billion via City Deals to develop transport infrastructure and create jobs;
- £6 Billion of investment across the private and public sectors in retail, construction, health, office development and infrastructure;
- record levels of investment in primary school infrastructure;
- substantial and sustained improvements in the achievements of secondary school leavers;
- the continued growth of the finance, tourism and events sectors.

These developments will bring unprecedented opportunities for our people and the good news is that Glasgow with creative and connected leadership in its agencies and its colleges, is ready with rigorous plans to grasp these opportunities with a determination to make economic wellbeing central to their purpose. This emerging skills hungry economy will find a Glasgow community impatient for advancement and a city already setting out to connect the two.

The Scottish Government policy of regionalisation constitutes a paradigm shift in national Further Education organisation and requires a new way of working between the Glasgow colleges and this Glasgow Colleges' Strategic Partnership plan for 2015 – 2018 represents a key step towards this new era of partnership working. The strategic goals contained within it look towards a future with a focus on joint regional aspirations, underpinned by measures and enablers to support achievement and illustrate how the future will look.

Bringing into being the strategic goals contained within this plan will present challenges and achievement will not come easily. However, the potential rewards in terms of improving and increasing opportunities and experiences for future learners will be significant and the plan lays out the commitment of Glasgow's colleges to this better future. The plan shows how Glasgow's colleges will work jointly in the provision of a single regional college service; a service which provides learners, wherever they may reside or study, with an enhanced and shared level of service; which promotes participation and real opportunity for all; which maximises achievement and celebrates success; and which aids progression into educational and employment life, enhancing life chances for all.

2. The World We Are In

2.1 Educational Policy Context

Improving life chances and delivering on ambitions for employment opportunities through economic growth are key drivers of the Scottish Government's education policy. A high performing education and skills system is an essential component of building the workforce for the future. The key focus for policy continues to be on efficient and effective learner journeys and enhanced opportunities for vocational learning and skills. Alongside this is a renewed emphasis on the importance of access to learning opportunities for all, particularly those in communities hardest to reach and furthest from the labour market, and improving achievement for all.

In 2011 the Scottish Government initiated a sector wide reform of post-16 education focused around Putting Learners at the Centre, tasking the sector and SFC to create a new network of regional colleges in Scotland that would help to deliver a stronger and more efficient college sector with a renewed focus on the skills and employability of its learners. In addition, the introduction of Outcome Agreements with the new college regions from 2012 onwards has been a major shift in the way SFC works with the sector to deliver on its key priorities. The Government and SFC are also committed to needs-based approach to funding moving forward.

Schools and colleges have already made changes to learning and teaching based on the priorities contained within a *Curriculum for Excellence*. All children and young people are experiencing the new enhanced curriculum and from 2014 the new qualifications. The Government's *Youth Employment Strategy* (2012) built on the reforms outlined above and *Opportunities for All* has continued to be a key driver for colleges to prioritise places for 16-19 year olds, and where appropriate the 20-24 year olds. This was balanced in 2013 by a clear message to the college sector to ensure a relevant range of provision for all other groups of learners, particularly women returners and those with disabilities.

The Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce (the Wood Review) has now reported with key recommendations which challenge schools, colleges and employers to work more effectively together, creating a real partnership approach between education and the world of work. Glasgow Region responded early to the Wood Review with key projects and this will need to gain momentum in the period between 2014 and 2017 as the Scottish Government continues to prioritise the learner journey from school to the workplace. This was clearly highlighted in the SFC's guidance from the Scottish Government in 2013 and is likely to remain a clear policy driver for the sector.

2.2 The National Economy

In common with the rest of the UK (RUK), Scotland entered recession over five years ago and the effects will continue to have an impact for some considerable time to come. However, the most recent state of the economy report concludes that the recovery in the Scottish economy is progressing and consolidating. This is based on economic growth of 1.6% during 2013. There is also growing confidence across the majority of sectors in Scotland and the outlook in key trading partners has improved over the last year. Labour market indicators report employment rising over the year

and employment falling. Employment is now at its highest level ever in Scotland. However, unemployment particularly youth unemployment remains high.

2.3 The Glasgow Economy

The Glasgow region has a service based economy with output mainly from real estate, financial and business services and the public sector. The sectoral structure base of Glasgow is broadly similar to Scotland as a whole but has higher share of firms in ICT, finance, property, health and arts and entertainment. Glasgow has a higher proportion of SME's than the rest of Scotland but less micro businesses (those with less than 10 employees). Significantly, company support services suggest that there are firms operating across a range of sectors, which have the potential for further growth.

In terms of future skills, the Regional Skills Assessment for the Glasgow Region forecasts that the greatest growth in employment opportunities will occur in health and social work, professional services and construction. The long term decline within traditional industries such as agriculture, manufacturing and mining is set to continue. There are also expected to be job reductions in public administration, defence and education. The majority of job openings over the next decade will require individuals with higher level skills and qualifications and there will be fewer opportunities for those with no qualifications at all.

Productivity is a UK-wide concern. Whilst Glasgow's productivity levels are respectable in a UK context, they are poor by European metropolitan standards. Glasgow's productivity (per employee) levels are similar to the average for UK cities but are less impressive compared with successful European cities. Productivity relates issues such as innovation, skills, enterprise, competition and investment. A priority for the city's economic development is therefore to achieve higher productivity through innovation, skills and creativity. To close the current production gap, a 43% increase in labour productivity along with a 50,000 increase in total employment would be necessary to rank Glasgow among the best performing international cities.

The Glasgow Economic Commission recently identified the following key growth industries for Glasgow and invited the Colleges to prioritise their curriculum to support their growth:-

- emerging sectors including low carbon industries and life sciences;
- traditional sectors including engineering, design and manufacturing; and
- new sectors including finance, business and tourism and events.

For Glasgow to grow its key sectors, boost innovation and employment, the Commission recommended that the Colleges and Universities are fully engaged with key sectors and working with businesses to produce the skills, knowledge, design and innovation to be world class.

The Commission also recommended that resources be targeted to supporting growth in modern apprenticeship opportunities and course provision for those furthest from the labour market.

It also recommended that Colleges should work with partner agencies to develop entrepreneurial skills through coursework to encourage self-employment as a worthwhile destination at the conclusion of their studies.

2.4 National Policies

The development of Scotland's economy is guided by a number of strategies. The Government's economic strategy aims to deliver faster sustainable economic growth with opportunities for all to flourish. The six strategic priorities are;

- supportive business environment;
- learning, skills and well-being;
- transition to low carbon economy;
- infrastructure, development and place;
- effective government; and
- equity.

The refreshed Skills Strategy 2010 sets out the Scottish Government's commitment to training and skills and aims for a flexible, responsive, partnership approach to meeting Scotland's skills needs. It has four themes and they may be summarised as follows:

1. empowering people to ensure they have access to the right advice, support and opportunities;
2. supporting employers by better assessing the skills they need and to ensure that the supply of skills is responsive to their needs;
3. simplifying the skills system to aid understanding by users; and
4. strengthening partnerships between public, private and third sectors to improve skills and the contribution they make to Scotland's social and economic aspirations.

There is also a national strategy to promote youth employment. This includes *Opportunity for All* which offers all 16 – 19 year olds not in work, education or training a place in learning or training.

2.5 Meeting Employers' Skills Needs

Economic growth may be constrained by skill shortages as the labour market responds to employer requirements. Whilst in most cases recruitment is successful, over a quarter in Scotland may be classified as hard to fill. The most common occupations, which fall into this category, are skilled trades, managers, professional and associate professional, caring, and leisure staff. Employers also continue to highlight shortcomings in written and oral communication, literacy and numeracy. Significantly, employers report that 48% of staff skills are under used.

2.6 Social Context

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is the Scottish Government's official tool for identifying those places in Scotland suffering from deprivation. It incorporates different aspects of deprivation including, employment, income, health, education, skills and training, geographic access to services, crime and housing combining them into a single index. Aside from the geographic access to services, Glasgow has significantly higher than average rates across all six of the remaining deprivation indicators with the city having almost a quarter of the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in Scotland and over two-fifths of the 5% most education deprived datazones.

18.1% of Glasgow College Region residents are classed as being income deprived and 11.1% as employment deprived.

As compared to Scotland as a whole, the Glasgow regional area is distinctive in terms of the large proportions of residents with low (SCQF levels 1-3) or no qualifications. For example, of all Glasgow City working aged residents aged 16-64, approximately 65,000 (15.9%) do not hold a qualification above SCQF level 3, and just under half (48%) of the city's population do not hold a qualification above SCQF level 5.

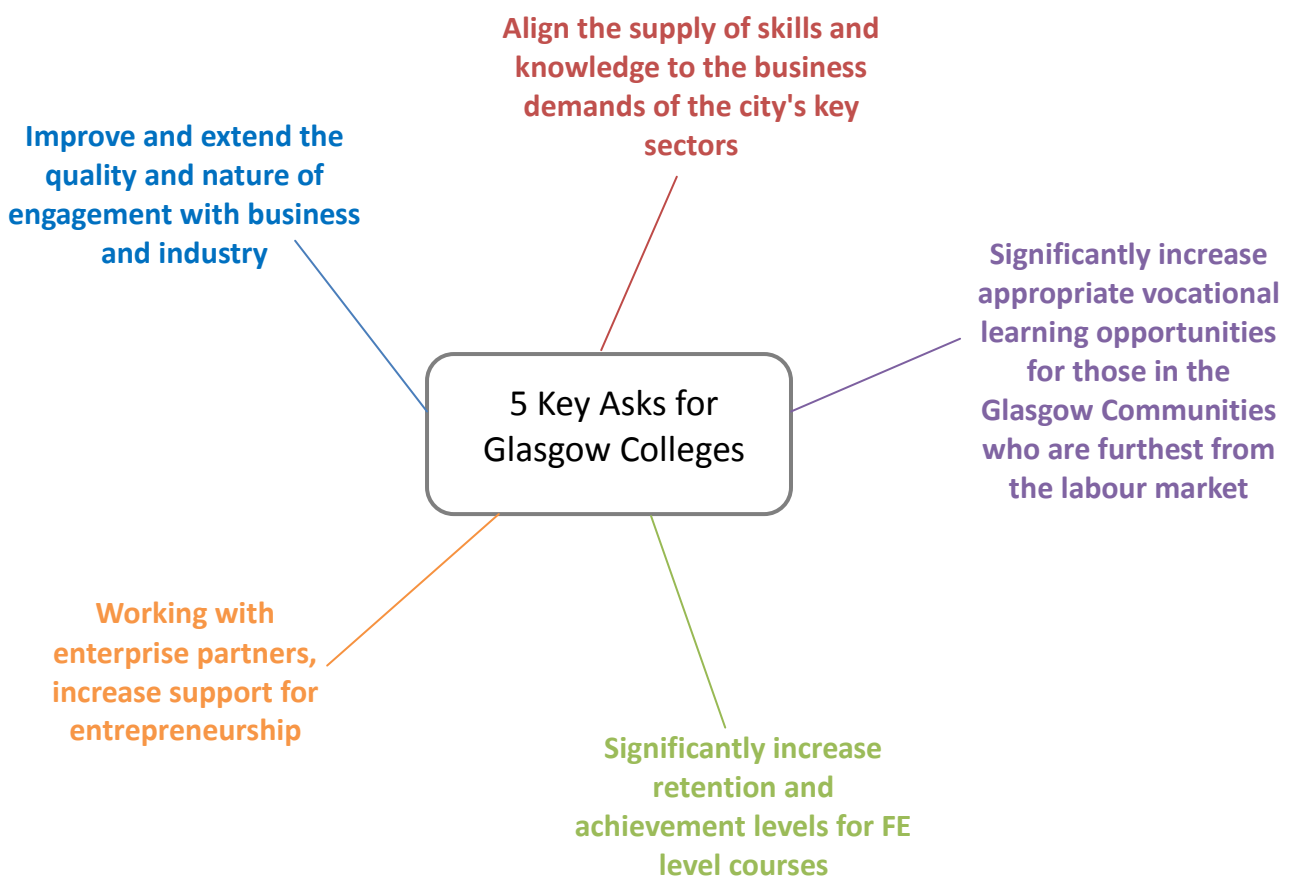
2.7 Single Outcome Agreement Alignment

As a large metropolitan centre, Glasgow Colleges work closely with a number of Community Planning Partnerships, including Glasgow City, East Renfrewshire and East Dunbartonshire. Alongside ongoing joint college/CPP work through established structures (for example, the Glasgow Youth Employability Partnership and associated structures), as part of the college regionalisation process, a new Glasgow College/ Glasgow Community Planning Partnership Regional Outcome Agreement Group was formed for representatives of Glasgow colleges and Glasgow Community Planning Partnership and partners to discuss delivery of the 2012/13 Glasgow Regional Outcome Agreement. Work undertaken by this group has included evaluation of service delivery and identification of quality enhancement actions which could be undertaken to improve service delivery of both organisations. The group has also considered as to how relationships between these two sets of groupings could be enhanced to support effective delivery of both college Regional Outcome Agreements and Glasgow's Single Outcome Agreement (with regard to the priority of Youth Employability), alongside providing a mechanism for consultation on, and input to, any new agreements.

3. What Does the Glasgow Region Require From the Colleges?

Underpinning this plan has been extensive research into the environmental aspects highlighted above, to clearly identify regional college stakeholder needs. This review analysed the requests of Government, local authorities, economic development agencies, employers, secondary schools and community partners. The results have been distilled and may be summarised as follows:

Figure 1. Summary of Key Asks for Glasgow Colleges



4. The State We Are In

Recent years have witnessed significant change to the college sector in Scotland. The publication of Putting Learners at the Centre in 2011 heralded in a Scottish Government policy shift which put regionalisation and a renewed focus on vocational study for young people at the top of the agenda for the college sector. Against a backdrop of substantial overall funding reductions, and supported by the introduction of Regional Outcome Agreements, significant structural changes were made to the national college structure, highlighted by the number of Scottish colleges reducing from 42 to 25 over two years.

Glasgow's colleges have a long history of working together to meet the learning needs of the Glasgow region and beyond. For many years Glasgow colleges worked under the auspices of Glasgow, and latterly Strathclyde, Regional Council and following incorporation in 1992, the colleges continued to work closely both informally and formally through the Glasgow Colleges' Group and more recently within the Glasgow Colleges Strategic Partnership (GCSP). The development of a Regional Outcome Agreements for each academic year since 2012/13 has facilitated even closer regional working and the development of a GCSP regional operational structure to support the joint development of the regional college offering.

This regional partnership working has facilitated a deep understanding of the Glasgow college curriculum, its current performance and areas for development. A lot of what we do is right for the needs of the region and Scotland, and right for the needs and ambitions of our learners. However, there are areas where evidence suggests we could improve:

- In terms of the curriculum on offer, whilst the majority of this is well aligned to economic needs, our recent Regional Curriculum Review (June 2014), suggests that some changes to subject volumes, types and modes of learning should be considered to further enhance vocational relevance.
- Data on learner performance and outcomes of learning suggests that at higher levels, Glasgow college learner attainment compares favourably to national levels but at lower Further Education levels, regional performance lags behind national norms and a significant contributory cause for this is higher than average non-completion rates.
- Progression data is incomplete, but that which exists shows good levels of progression into positive outcomes. This is more easily identified for those who progress on to further study at college or university and evidence of progression into employment is more limited. However, colleges are working with the SFC to improve this data set
- Glasgow region resident qualification levels are distinctive in the proportion of residents with low or no qualifications and there is scope within our regional college curriculum profile to better develop learning which meets the needs of this group, and those furthest from the labour market, which would support an increase in the participation of Glasgow region learners resident within deprived neighbourhoods.

The college sector in Glasgow is a fulcrum for those in the senior school, school leavers, adult returners, modern apprentices, international students and for those in work seeking to improve their skills. Glasgow Colleges have in place excellent partnership arrangements with Secondary Schools, Skills Development Scotland, local and national universities, community groups and a plethora of agencies representing under-represented groups. These partnerships should assist our future and current students move seamlessly between sectors and within training programmes to maximise their learning experience and achieve success.

Our partnership with secondary schools has been established for many years and recently pilot programmes have led to some secondary students achieving HNC qualifications whilst in S5/S6. Schools/College partnership arrangements will be further strengthened and expanded in the coming years as both sectors implement the recommendations arising from the Wood Commission.

Glasgow Colleges also enjoy very productive relationships with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and together the colleges manage and contribute to a full range of modern apprenticeships, skills for work and get ready for work programmes.

The Glasgow colleges also work closely with local and national Universities to ensure learners articulate and progress from their college-based experience into Universities. Increasingly this can be progression from HND to third year of a degree programme.

Looking forwards, the new landscape of the Glasgow college region provides a strong basis for continuing to develop the quality of college services on offer to learners. The three Glasgow colleges are now in post-merger states, confident in their direction and with the capacity to contribute fully to jointly addressing regional and national needs. Further, with the completion of the City of Glasgow new build in August 2016, the Glasgow colleges will oversee a world class resource base, capable of delivering the high quality 21st century learning experiences our learners should expect.

5. Vision, Mission and Values

5.1 Vision

Our regional vision is: *Enhancing life chances for all.*

5.2 Mission

Our regional mission is:

Working together and in partnership with others, the three Colleges will widen participation and support individuals through fitting, vibrant and challenging teaching and learning which maximises achievement and aids progression into educational and employment life.

5.3 Values

The values underpinning delivery of this regional strategy will be the nine key principles underpinning public life in Scotland identified within the Ethical Standards in Public Life etc. (Scotland) Act 2000 (and incorporating the seven Nolan Principles). These are:

1. *Public Service* - Holders of public office have a duty to act in the interests of the public body of which they are a Board member and to act in accordance with the core tasks of the body.
2. *Selflessness* – Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.
3. *Integrity* – Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.
4. *Objectivity* – In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
5. *Accountability* – Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
6. *Openness* – Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
7. *Honesty* – Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
8. *Leadership* – Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.
9. *Respect* – Holders of public office must respect fellow members of their public body and employees of the body and the role they play, treating them with courtesy at all times.

6. Strategic Framework

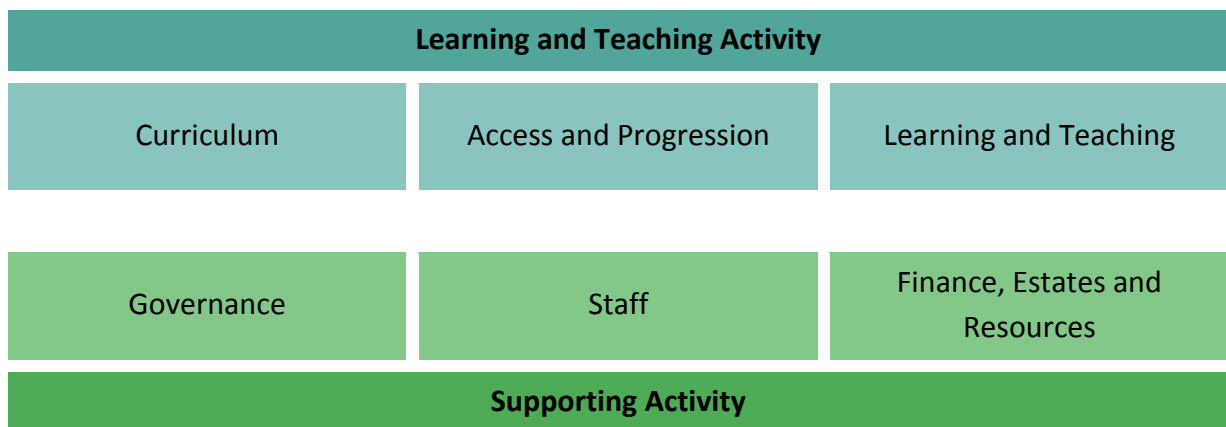
The Glasgow Colleges’ Strategic Partnership will ensure a coherent regional approach to delivery through a collaborative approach to strategic planning and operational delivery, and in doing so we will collectively share ownership of strategic goals and our future development.

Figure 1. Strategic Planning Framework



Six regional strategic themes have been identified within this plan: three directly related to learning and teaching delivery and three related to supporting college activity. These are outlined in the diagram below and expanded further in the following section.

Figure 2. Regional Strategic Themes



6.1 Curriculum Theme

Strategic Goals

- Our regional curriculum will respond to regional and national needs, improving the fit between the skills of the region’s population and those required by employment and industry sectors.
- We will deliver a regional curriculum which provides breadth and depth of learning opportunities, including regional and national centres of excellence, promoting aspiration and facilitating social mobility.
- We will work in partnership with schools, universities and employers to deliver a coherent curriculum to ensure more efficient and effective learner journeys.

Strategic Measures

- Percentages of delivery related to economic sectors.
- Percentages of delivery related to SCQF Levels.
- Numbers of learners articulating from school to college, from college to college and from college to Scottish universities.

Strategic Enablers

- Implement a region-wide, industry academy model, which leads Glasgow College curriculum design and delivery across all economic sectors, led by cross-college curriculum hubs and involving employers.
- Embed an annual cycle of development of joint regional curriculum plans, underpinned by a review process, and based on changing environmental conditions.
- Develop regional strategic partnership agreements with education partners which provide simplified interface for Glasgow college liaison and supersede individual college agreements.

6.2 Access and Progression Theme

Strategic Goals

- We will provide a varied and flexible curriculum which encourages participation from under-represented groups and those furthest from the labour market.
- We will provide an inclusive and consistent learner support service which provides high quality guidance, learner support and student funding.
- Our educational delivery will have clearly identified regional progression opportunities into work and further study, supporting all learners into positive post-course destinations.

Strategic Measures

- Percentages of learners progressing to work or further study.
- Percentages of activity related to SIMD residence and protected characteristics.
- Percentage of Glasgow region residents participating in college learning.

Strategic Enablers

- Establish a task and finish group to develop a one service, innovative and multi-agency partnership approach to fair access, reaching those residents in Glasgow communities furthest from the labour market and which provides meaningful progression pathways to achieve skills and qualifications leading to work readiness or further study.
- Develop a regional equalities unit to develop common policies, strategies and partnerships to progress fairness.
- Establish a single regional admissions and learner support service, including a Glasgow learner charter describing entitlements and expectations and a unified, high quality exit and progression service
- Develop a regional system which provides robust college leaver destination data for all college provision.

6.3 Learning and Teaching Theme

Strategic Goals

- We will promote innovation in learning and teaching and sharing of teaching practice across the Glasgow region, ensuring a high quality learning experience is provided to all learners.
- We will engage with learners to enhance our provision and drive improvements in regional qualification achievement rates, both in terms of increasing the proportion of successful learners and in terms of reducing the number of Glasgow region residents with limited or no qualifications.
- The development of learners' core and essential skills will be integral to our learning and teaching approaches and we will provide all learners with opportunities to develop skills for learning, life and work.

Strategic Measures

- Percentage of learners satisfied with learning and teaching delivery.
- Percentage of learners completing and achieving course awards.
- Percentage of learners developing core and essential skills.

Strategic Enablers

- Establish a Glasgow learning and teaching development unit which promotes and facilitates sharing and development of practice across the region's colleges and develops online teaching resources, accessible by all Glasgow college staff through a single portal.
- Develop and implement a common quality enhancement framework and arrangements.
- Develop a common strategy for learning, teaching and assessment which promotes the development of core and essential skills.
- Carry out a common annual cross-college student survey and identify actions to support increasing satisfaction levels year on year.

6.4 Governance Theme

Strategic Goals

- We will ensure the Glasgow Colleges' Strategic Partnership structures and groups fully support regional working.
- We will deliver clear, transparent and participative strategic and operational decision making.
- We will ensure that learner engagement is central to our delivery and enhance opportunities for learners to contribute to the life and work of colleges.

Strategic Measures

- Number of college staff participating in GCSP operational groups.
- Number of students from across the three colleges responding to common surveys.
- Minimum of 3 shared development opportunities for college Board members delivered annually.
- Number of college Board members and staff actively involved in Regional and National agencies.

Strategic Enablers

- Develop a programme of joint board development including induction, regular Board briefings, appraisal and an annual Boards conference.
- Review articles of governance and Board structures on an annual basis.
- Review Glasgow Colleges' Strategic Partnership structures and group remits on an annual basis, to ensure delivery of regional strategic objectives.
- Increase substantially FE representation on influential National/Regional Boards and Agencies.

6.5 Staff Theme

Strategic Goals

- We will ensure that comprehensive arrangements for regional organisational development exist, including enhanced opportunities for professional development.
- We will work in partnership with staff and their representatives to enhance levels of trust and support effective regional leadership.
- We will create a “one Glasgow” team ethos amongst Board members and college staff, ensuring all talents are used to the full within the region.

Strategic Measures

- Percentage of staff satisfied with working conditions.
- Percentage of staff appropriately qualified.
- Percentage of staff undertaking annually a minimum level of CPD.

Strategic Enablers

- Develop a common professional development and review model, including an individual entitlement to ongoing training.
- Establish and deliver an annual calendar of regional professional development events to support staff up-skilling.
- Undertake an annual regional staff satisfaction survey and implement the resultant improvement action plan.
- Develop in partnership with other training providers a regional programme of teacher training qualifications providing professional development opportunities for all lecturing staff.
- Develop common terms and conditions across the region.

6.6 Finance, Estates and Resources Theme

Strategic Goals

- We will support accessibility and provide the highest quality accommodation and resources for learning.
- We will operate on a financially sustainable basis through the delivery of high quality learning and teaching activity at the optimal level of efficiency.
- We will oversee needs-based and transparent inter-region funding arrangements which support learner access and maximise and sustain efficient use of college resources.

Strategic Measures

- Percentages of students satisfied with college resources.
- Gross carbon footprint.
- Non-SFC income as % of total income.
- Deliver break-even financial position annually.

Strategic Enablers

- Review estate conditions and utilisation and implement a regional estates development plan in line with curriculum ambitions.
- Identify opportunities for regional delivery of key services and undertake a cost benefit review of shared service options, including partnerships with external organisations and implement shared services where appropriate.
- Establish a task and finish group to review college funding arrangements within the Glasgow region.
- Work regionally to promote college services and develop key strategic partnerships on a regional basis.
- Develop an action plan to increase regional non SFC income by 2% per annum.

7. Strategic Planning Cycle

This diagram illustrates the cyclic nature of the planning process, in which the completion of one cycle informs the development of the following cycle.

Individual colleges will undertake performance reviews throughout the session, and an annual review at a point in the year to be determined. These annual reviews will provide insights contributing to the strategic context for development and refinement of the Regional Strategy and ROA.



This reflects an annual cycle of joint regional curriculum plans, underpinned by a review processes and based on changing environments