

GLASGOW KELVIN COLLEGE**Learning and Teaching Committee – 13 September 2023****Education Scotland Progress Report****Report by Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality Enhancement****1. Introduction**

In w/b 15th May, 2023, Education Scotland undertook a progress visit with the College as part of national quality arrangements for the Scotland's Colleges. The College has now received a formal report on the visit which is due to be published on Education Scotland's website.

2. Education Scotland Progress Report

The attached letter and Progress Visit report was provided to the College on the 8th September, 2023. The lead inspector, Barbara Nelson HMle and the College Link Inspector Iain Beech HMle have been invited to attend the October Board of Management meeting to present the findings of Education Scotland.

The report highlights a large number of areas of positive practice across all College departments. A small number of areas of development are identified, including the following two main points for action:

- college managers should improve rates of learner retention and attainment across all curriculum areas; and
- the college should raise learner awareness of the Students' Association and its role in improving the learning experience.

College quality enhancement and operational planning activity will address the points for development and action.

3. Impact on Students

The areas of improvement identified by Education Scotland are intended to improve services and outcomes for College learners.

4. Resource Implications

There are no resource implications arising directly from this report.

5. Equalities

There are no equality implications arising directly from this report.

6. Risk and Assurance

This report provides assurance that the College is addressing actions identified by Education Scotland to improve the quality of its services and outcomes for students.

7. Data Protection

There are no data protection implications arising directly from this report.

8. Environmental and Sustainability

There are no Environmental and Sustainability data protection implications arising directly from this report.

9. Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

- i. Consider and discuss the attached Education Scotland Progress Visit report.

10. Further Information

Members can obtain additional information on the contents of this report from Robin Ashton, Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality Enhancement (rashton@glasgowkelvin.ac.uk).

Glasgow Kelvin College
RA
08/09/2023

12 September 2023

Derek Smeall
Principal and Chief Executive
Glasgow Kelvin College

Dear Mr Smeall,

A team of HM Inspectors from Education Scotland visited Glasgow Kelvin College in May 2023 to undertake a Progress Visit. During our visit, we talked to learners, staff, and stakeholders, and worked closely with the senior managers.

The team found the following major strengths in the college's work:

Recruitment

Positive partnerships between college staff and stakeholders have increased awareness amongst potential learners of the opportunities available at the college. As a consequence, rates of learner recruitment have increased across most programme areas. Staff have made adjustments to recruitment arrangements, including the removal of the need for formal interview for some courses. This has resulted in potential learners benefitting from more timely responses to their applications and enables successful applicants to make early arrangements to accommodate commitments. There are good partnership arrangements in place with local charitable organisations to enable community learners to progress to mainstream programmes. A short online introduction to the use of digital resources is offered to all successful applicants before starting their college programme. This is supporting learners well to refresh and extend their digital skills in preparation for engaging in learning activities. The services to support learning team engages well with applicants who disclose a need for additional support. Staff coordinate support throughout the recruitment and initiate an independent learning plan. Learners report they feel more confident about starting their course as a result. More extensive and effective use of social media is raising the profile of the college amongst younger people, schools, and local communities. This has had a positive impact on improving recruitment to some programme areas. All curriculum teams have taken action to improve the recruitment of learners from hard-to-reach groups. This includes delivering a range of community projects that successfully attract and recruit speakers of other languages, care experienced young people, and learners from minority ethnic groups.

Retention

Rates of learner withdrawal for part-time Further Education (FE) programmes have been better than national performance level for the past three years. Senior leaders have identified learner retention as a key priority in supporting improvement in attainment. Staff in curriculum and support teams have responded well by implementing a range of approaches and interventions. In the early stages of programme delivery, curriculum teams support learners to transfer to a different level or type of programme. This is helping to ensure that learners are retained on a programme that is appropriate. The college Digital Transformation strategy is impacting positively on the learner experience. Almost all

learners have a good understanding of the Virtual Learning Environments available. Staff use an extended induction process well to support learners develop a range of skills and build resilience to cope with their programme. Staff make effective use of arrangements to monitor and track individual learner progress and identify those at risk of withdrawal. A recently appointed retention improvement manager monitors attendance and works productively with curriculum teams to identify and engage with learners at risk of withdrawal. Staff teams have drawn constructively on findings from previous evaluations to determine strategies to improve retention. Managers empower curriculum teams to make changes to course content and delivery arrangements to meet the needs of learners.

Attainment

Almost all curriculum areas have introduced changes to programme design that are helping to improve attainment. These include condensing programmes across fewer weeks, scheduling practical activity at the beginning of programmes, and increasing the use of integrated assessment and project-based learning. Learners are very complimentary about the high level of support they receive from teaching staff throughout their time at college. Almost all learners value the advice and insight they receive from visiting industry professionals and former learners to explore and widen their career aspirations and reinforce their commitment to succeed. The college has established productive partnerships with a wide range of local, regional, and national employers. Curriculum managers work effectively with these employers to design and offer programmes that benefit learners and industry. College managers have introduced comprehensive quality arrangements and a planning cycle to evaluate the learner experience and plan for improvement. This approach is working well across all curriculum and support areas.

Progression

College programmes offer a wide range of options for learners to progress from FE level programmes to higher levels of study. Partnership arrangements with universities and local colleges are providing learners with good opportunities to progress. The overall number of full-time college leavers who progressed to Higher Education (HE) programmes is better than the sector average. The Gradu8 programme is supporting S3 pupils well to make informed choices about undertaking a college programme. A range of taster sessions is supporting learners well to explore and work towards a pathway that meets their specific aspirations. Many learners on community-based programmes benefit from access to learning on college campuses. This is helping to build learner confidence to progress from informal to formal learning opportunities. A recently introduced management information system is producing useful real-time data to inform college strategies and improvements. Senior staff are making good use of this facility to inform future curriculum design, determine evaluation and review arrangements, and plan approaches to improve retention and attainment.

The following areas for improvement were identified by the team and discussed with the senior managers:

- Some learners, particularly those from the Easterhouse and East End campuses, experience difficulties in providing the evidence required by funding bodies to access student funding. This is impacting negatively on recruitment for these learners.

- Rates of learner withdrawal for full-time programmes, and part-time HE programmes have been higher than national average performance levels for the last three years.
- The Students' Association (SA) is not sufficiently visible to learners and is not able to fully represent their views.
- Class representatives are not sufficiently aware of their role and its intended purpose. Many class representatives have not yet accessed the online training available, and many were unaware of its existence.
- Most learners report that the MyKelvin app is difficult to use and unreliable. They highlight that the app sometimes provides inconsistent timetabling information which impacts negatively on their attendance.
- Overall rates of learner success are below national average performance levels.
- The overall rate of success for learners from an ethnic minority background, learners with a disability, and care-experienced learners is lower than the national average performance level.
- Staff awareness of the college's essential skills policy is not sufficiently comprehensive to fully support the development of meta skills across the curriculum.
- Arrangements to identify the development needs of teaching staff to inform and drive improvement in learning and teaching are not yet sufficiently comprehensive.
- Some learners at Haghill campus are using digital devices which they find unfit for purpose and complex to use.

The following main points for action are required:

- College managers should improve rates of learner retention and attainment across all curriculum areas.
- The college should raise learner awareness of the Students' Association and its role in improving the learning experience.

What happens next?

We recognise the progress made against most aspects for improvement, however further progress is required in a number of areas. We will ask for a report on progress on these areas for improvement to be provided to the college link HM Inspector within agreed timescales. Taking account of the progress report, we will then decide what further engagement with the college may be required.

Barbara Nelson
HM Inspector

College Progress Visit Report

Glasgow Kelvin College

5 September 2023

College Principal	Derek Smeall
Progress Visit Date	17 – 19 May 2023
College Nominee	Robin Ashton
Lead HMI	Barbara Nelson
College HMI	Ian Beach
Outcome of Progress Visit	The college has made satisfactory progress in a number of areas. However, further progress is required in improving outcomes for learners.

1. Background

Progress Visits (PVs) are planned collaboratively between the college, HM Inspectors, and the Scottish Funding Council. During the visit, the team engaged with staff, learners and other stakeholders and focused on progress made since the previous PV. This report outlines the findings from the visit and detail of any actions required. It will be shared with the college Principal, college Board of Management and/or Regional Strategic Body. An accompanying short report will be published on Education Scotland's website.

During the PV, the team explored four overarching themes linked to the college's enhancement plan and priorities around COVID-19 recovery. The themes are learner recruitment; retention; attainment; and progression.

2. The college and its context

Glasgow Kelvin College delivers further education (FE) and higher education (HE) from four campuses across the northeast of Glasgow. The college has a strong focus on the social and economic regeneration of its communities, especially those which are impacted by high levels of deprivation and health inequalities. Over a third of learners reside in the 10% most deprived data zones in Scotland. The learner profile reflects the college's local communities and includes an above average number of older learners. The college also has a relatively high proportion of learners from an ethnic minority background, learners who are care experienced, and learners with a disability.

The college is an assigned college of the Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board and works with the two other assigned colleges to align provision to the needs of the Glasgow region. As part of the region's outcome agreement with SFC in 2022-23, the college's credit target totalled 83,207.

3. Findings from the progress visit

3.1 Recruitment

Areas of positive progress

Learner progress and outcomes

- The new college website now makes effective use of student case studies and social media channels to support potential applicants to make informed choices about college programmes.
- Positive partnerships between college staff and stakeholders have increased awareness amongst potential learners of the opportunities and curriculum offer at the college. As a consequence, rates of learner recruitment have increased across most programme areas.

Curriculum, learning, teaching, and assessment

- Staff have made adjustments to recruitment arrangements, including the removal of the need for formal interview for some courses. This has resulted in potential learners benefitting from more timely responses to their applications and enables successful applicants to make early arrangements to accommodate childcare, caring, and work commitments.
- Staff work productively with local communities and external stakeholders to promote the range of provision and progression pathways available to learners. There are good partnership arrangements in place with local charitable organisations to enable community learners to use college facilities. This is encouraging learners from local communities to progress to mainstream programmes.
- Curriculum teams offer short, introductory programmes that encourage and ease learner recruitment to mainstream programmes.
- A short online introduction to the use of digital resources is offered to all successful applicants before starting their college programme. This is supporting learners well to refresh and extend their digital skills in preparation for engaging in learning activities.

Services to support learning

- The services to support learning team engages well with applicants who disclose a need for additional support. Staff coordinate support throughout the recruitment and draw on their communication with learners to initiate an independent learning plan (ILP). Learners report they feel more confident about starting their course as a result.
- More extensive and effective use of social media is raising the profile of the college amongst younger people, schools, and local communities. This has had a positive impact on improving recruitment to some programme areas.

Learner engagement

- Successful applicants make good use of pre-start support and pre-induction sessions to get to know college staff and their peers and familiarise themselves with departmental facilities and equipment.

Evaluation to facilitate improvement

- Curriculum staff make good use of employer events, labour market Intelligence (LMI), and feedback from external agencies to ensure the curriculum offer aligns with industry needs and priorities.
- A streamlined and simplified online application process for school-age learners (S3 to S6) has increased significantly the number of applications from this learner group.
- All curriculum teams have taken action to improve the recruitment of learners from hard-to-reach groups. This includes delivering a range of community projects that successfully attract and recruit speakers of other languages, care experienced young people, and learners from minority ethnic groups.

Areas for development

- Some learners, particularly those from the Easterhouse and East End campuses, experience difficulties in providing the evidence required by funding bodies to access student funding. This is impacting negatively on recruitment for these learners.

3.2 Retention

Areas of positive progress

Learner progress and outcomes

- Rates of learner withdrawal for part-time FE programmes have been better than national performance level for the past three years.
- The college student satisfaction survey participation rate has increased to 45% of full-time students from 29% the previous year. The survey indicated an overall satisfaction rating of 95%.

Curriculum, learning, teaching and assessment

- Senior leaders have identified learner retention as a key priority in supporting improvement in attainment. Staff in curriculum and support teams have responded well by implementing a range of approaches and interventions. However, although data for AY 2022/23 shows a slight reduction in early and further withdrawal, it is too early to assess fully the impact of these actions.
- In the early stages of programme delivery, curriculum teams support learners to transfer to a different level or type of programme. This is helping to ensure that learners are retained on a programme that is appropriate to their skill levels, needs and aspirations.

- The college Digital Transformation strategy is impacting positively on the learner experience. Almost all learners have a good understanding of the Virtual Learning Environments available to them and make good use of online resources to support class activities.

Services to support learning

- Staff use an extended induction process well to support learners to incrementally build positive relationships with peers and staff and develop a range of skills and build resilience to cope with their programme.
- The services to support learning team has integrated the provision of support to provide a seamless service for learners. Support facilities take good account of the high proportion of older learners, learners who are of an ethnic minority background, care experienced learners, and learners with a disability.
- Staff make effective use of arrangements to monitor and track individual learner progress and identify those at risk of withdrawal. A recently appointed retention improvement manager monitors attendance and works productively with curriculum teams to identify and engage with learners at risk of withdrawal.
- All learners have an identified course tutor and an ILP. They feel well supported throughout their programme and are comfortable about contacting staff when they need additional support.

Learner engagement

- Class representatives have developed positive relationships with curriculum staff. They feel able to raise concerns and are confident that issues are listened to and acted on appropriately.
- Learners value the flexibility of curriculum staff to make adaptations to programmes to accommodate changes to their personal circumstances.
- Almost all learners are comfortable in sharing feedback about their programme with teaching staff. They feel that their suggestions for improvement are implemented quickly. However, in some instances they are unclear about what happens with feedback after it is given.

Evaluation to facilitate improvement

- Staff teams have drawn constructively on findings from previous evaluations to determine strategies to improve retention.
- Regular course team meetings are used effectively by staff to monitor learners' attendance patterns. This includes drawing on data to identify the attendance patterns of individual learners, such as absence at key assessment times. The findings are used well by tutors to improve retention.
- Managers empower curriculum teams to make changes to course content and delivery arrangements to meet the needs of learners. They draw productively on the course approval process to enact changes quickly in response to learner needs.

Areas for development

- Rates of learner withdrawal for full-time programmes, and part-time HE programmes have been higher than national average performance levels for the last three years.
- The Students' Association (SA) is not sufficiently visible to learners and is not able to fully represent their views.
- Class representatives are not sufficiently aware of their role and its intended purpose. Many class representatives have not yet accessed the online training available, and many were unaware of its existence.
- Most learners report that the MyKelvin app is difficult to use and unreliable. They highlight that the app sometimes provides inconsistent timetabling information which impacts negatively on their attendance.

3.3 Attainment

Areas of Positive Practice

Learner progress and outcomes

Curriculum, learning, teaching and assessment

- Almost all curriculum areas have introduced changes to programme design that are helping to improve attainment. These include condensing programmes across fewer weeks, scheduling practical activity at the beginning of programmes, and increasing the use of integrated assessment and project-based learning.
- Good quality learning spaces and workshop facilities are supporting learners well to achieve their qualifications. Learners use these spaces productively and almost all are satisfied with the quality of learning resources.
- Staff build positive relationships that encourage and help learners to work towards achieving a qualification. Learners are very complimentary about the high level of support they receive from teaching staff throughout their time at college.
- Almost all learners value the advice and insight they receive from visiting industry professionals and former learners to explore and widen their career aspirations and reinforce their commitment to succeed.
- The college has established productive partnerships with a wide range of local, regional, and national employers. Curriculum managers work effectively with these employers to design and offer programmes that benefit learners and industry. There are many examples of curriculum teams working collaboratively to create innovative and successful programmes to meet industry needs.

Services to support learning

- Learning technicians provide a comprehensive range of training programmes to support curriculum staff to create online content. This is helping to enrich the quality of the learning experience and is making learning resources more accessible for learners.

Learner engagement

- Almost all learners report that support services are easy to access throughout their programme and that if required, they are able to access prompt, individualised support. They benefit from this support to achieve their programme goals.

Evaluation to facilitate improvement

- College managers have introduced comprehensive quality arrangements and a planning cycle to evaluate the learner experience and plan for improvement. This approach is working well across all curriculum and support areas.

Areas for Development

- Overall rates of learner success for full-time programmes have been below national average performance levels for the last three years.
- Overall rates of learner success for part-time HE programmes have been below national average performance levels for the last three years.
- Overall rates of learner success for part-time FE programmes are below national average performance levels.
- The overall rate of success for learners from an ethnic minority background, learners with a disability, and care-experienced learners is lower than the national average performance level.
- Staff awareness of the college's essential skills policy is not sufficiently comprehensive to fully support the development of meta skills across the curriculum.
- In a few curriculum areas, staff are making effective use of peer observation to improve learning and teaching. However, this is not yet consistent across the college. As a result, arrangements to identify the development needs of teaching staff to inform and drive improvement in learning and teaching are not yet sufficiently comprehensive.
- Some learners at Haghill campus are using digital devices which they find unfit for purpose and complex to use.

3.4 Progression

Areas of positive progress

Learner progress and outcomes

- College programmes offer a wide range of options for learners to progress from FE level programmes to higher levels of study. Partnership arrangements with universities and local colleges are providing learners with good opportunities to progress.
- The overall number of full-time college leavers who progressed to HE programmes is better than the sector average.

Curriculum, learning, teaching, and assessment

- Curriculum staff provide learners with helpful support and information about the range and types of progression opportunities available to them. This is particularly helpful to senior phase learners who are making option choices.
- The Gradu8 programme is supporting S3 pupils well to make informed choices about undertaking a college programme. A range of taster sessions is supporting learners well to explore and work towards a pathway that meets their specific aspirations.

Services to support learning

- Most learners are supported well by staff when making applications to universities, other colleges, or employment.

Learner engagement

- Many learners on community programmes benefit from access to learning on college campuses. This is helping to build learner confidence to progress from informal to formal learning opportunities.

Evaluation to facilitate improvement

- A recently introduced management information system is producing useful real-time data to inform college strategies and improvements. Senior staff are making good use of this facility to inform future curriculum design, determine evaluation and review arrangements, and plan approaches to improve retention and attainment.

Areas for development

- None identified

4. Main points for action

The following main points for action are required:

- College managers should improve rates of learner retention and attainment across all curriculum areas.
- The college should raise learner awareness of the Students' Association and its role in improving the learning experience.

5. What happens next?

We recognise the progress made against most aspects for improvement, however further progress is required in a number of areas. We will ask for a report on progress on these areas for improvement to be provided to the college link HM Inspector within agreed timescales. Taking account of the progress report, we will then decide what further engagement with the college may be required.

Barbara Nelson
HM Inspector