

GLASGOW KELVIN COLLEGE

Board of Management of 12 March 2025

2024-25 Student Withdrawal and Credit Activity Update Report

Report by Vice Principal of Curriculum and Quality and Director of Digital and Information Services

1. Introduction

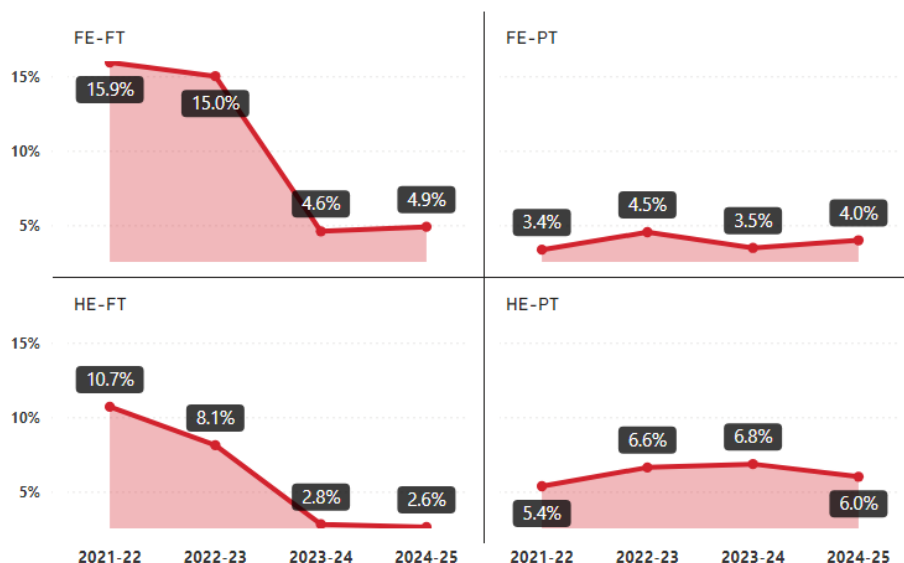
Historically, withdrawals have significantly impacted the College's performance and SFC Credit delivery, especially in full-time programs. During Covid, early withdrawal rates rose sharply, prompting retention measures. This report shows current student retention levels and SFC Credit delivery towards target.

2. Early Withdrawal Rates

Starting 2023-24, the Scottish Funding Council have brought forward the funding date so that colleges can now claim credits for FT students on courses lasting for over 20 weeks if they are still active after 5 weeks from the course start date. This means that the standard measure of recording Early Withdrawal is only comparable from 2023-24 onwards and not with previous years.

Figure 1 below compares historical Early Withdrawal rates to the current 2024-25 data. It shows Early Withdrawal rates are broadly similar from 2023-24 to 2024-25, although a small increase in FE-FT (0.3%) is noted. Part-time withdrawals continue throughout the year and so figures are subject to change for FE-PT and HE-PT.

Early Withdrawal Annual Trend



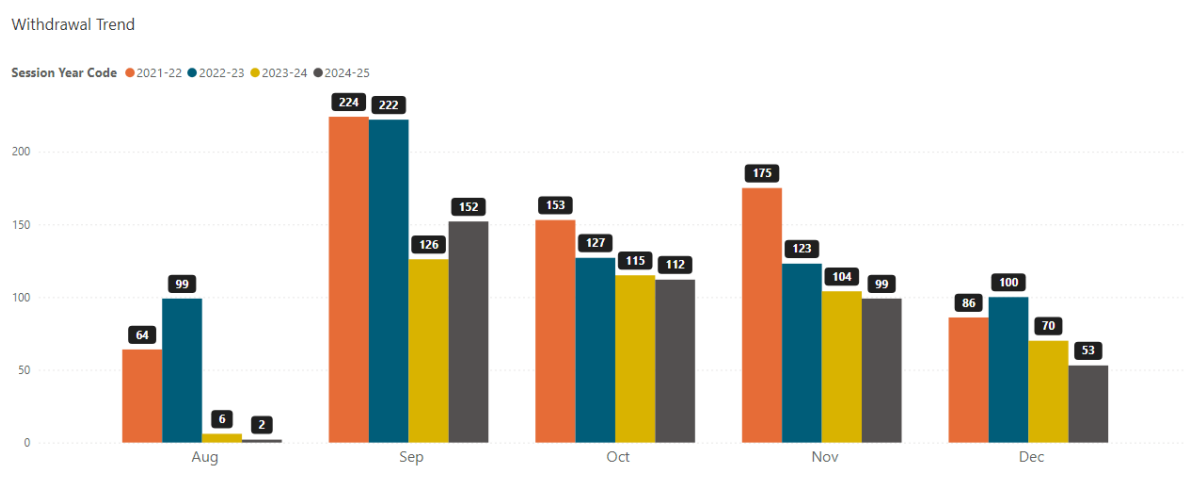
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Figure 1 - early withdrawal rates, annual trend comparison.

3. Monthly Withdrawal Rates

When comparing full-time student withdrawals by month (figure 2), it indicates that withdrawals in 2024-25 remained consistent with those in 2023-24. Although September experienced a slight increase in student leavers, these levels were significantly lower than those observed in 2021-22 and 2022-23. An analysis of student withdrawals during September 2024 revealed that more students left due to health-related issues and caring responsibilities compared to the previous year.

Further withdrawals from October to December were lower than in preceding years, resulting in an overall withdrawal total of 418 student leavers for 2024-25, as opposed to 421 from the previous year. This provides evidence to suggest that strategies aimed at reducing student withdrawal are proving effective and sustainable.



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Figure 2 - monthly comparison of full-time FE and HE student withdrawals.

Considering data from figures 1 and 2, it is projected that full-time withdrawal rates will remain similar to that of 2023-24, and vastly improved on the years prior to that.

Part-time student enrolments will continue throughout the year, making it difficult to compare year on year, however figures currently suggest a similar withdrawal rate to last year.

4. Withdrawal Reasons

Should a student choose to withdraw from the College, staff will engage with them to understand the rationale behind their decision. The Scottish Funding Council provides guidance to colleges for standardising the data collection. Figure 3 below presents a comparison of withdrawal reasons for the current academic session and the previous one, covering the period from August to December.

Withdrawal Reason	2023-24	2024-25
Non-attendance / college withdrew after lapse of time with no contact	440	376
Unknown	238	176
Health issues (including mental health)	91	75
To take up employment	55	43
Academic issues (unsatisfactory progress, engagement or performance)	43	48
Caring responsibilities	34	32
Financial issues (including refused bursary / additional student support funds)	30	25
Took up course offer at another institution (college or university)	25	18
Employer / Sponsor withdrew support - financial or time for attendance or redundancy or change of employer	29	7
Dissatisfied with course / content	9	6
Travel issues	8	5
Disciplinary / Exclusion (including Safeguarding / PVG related issues)		7
Estranged / homelessness	4	1
Deceased	2	
Dissatisfied with blended learning / on-line learning experience	1	1
Digital accessibility issues (problem accessing off campus internet and/or accessing a personal laptop or other device to undertake on-line learning activity)		1
Total	889	785

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Figure 3 - list of withdrawal reasons from August to December, over two academic years. Data include full-time and part-time enrolments.

A large proportion of students do not provide a reason for withdrawal, but those that do cite health issues, taking up employment, academic issues, caring responsibilities and financial issues as their main reason for withdrawing. It is worth noting that students can also select more than one reason for withdrawal. The College is always seeking to

improve student retention and provides a range of measures to reduce the reasons for students leaving. This includes:

- The significant College priority given to improving retention rates over the past 3 years, with an array of coordinated actions being implemented to improve retention. These have focussed on all elements of the student journey, from initial recruitment engagement through to ongoing course attendance.
- Delivery of a more effective and impactful pre-course keep warm and induction activity, with approximately 1,800 students participating in pre-course activities prior to 2024-25. This included regular contact and engagement opportunities between application and course attendance, a discrete pre-course welcome and freshers week, alongside an initial settling in engagement period prior to the start of teaching activity. A key element of this was establishing strong relationships between students and staff prior to the start of course instruction.
- A heightened focus on student engagement and responding to student feedback, ensuring that our course delivery meets the needs of as many students as possible.
- Restructuring of poorly performing full-time courses into shorter courses more closely matched to student needs and interests. A small number of full-time courses were disproportionately impacting on college success rates and these courses were prioritised for more radical curriculum redesign. Initial indications are that retention on these modified courses has significantly improved.
- Strengthening of mental health and well-being support for students, with a range of proactive initiatives across the start of the academic year.

5. Credit Delivery Position

The College has a single Credit target of 71,914 for 2024-25. In terms of target achievement, the figure 4 sets out the College's position.

Credit Target	Current Credits	% Target Achievement	Projected Year End Credits	% Target Achievement
71,941	70,751	98.3%	73,790	102.6%

Figure 4 - SFC Credits delivered towards target and year-end projection.

The College is currently on track to slightly exceed its Credit target based on the most recent planning intelligence. A key supportive factor in achieving this has been the sustained improvement in student retention rates which have led to an increased proportion of students being funded.

6. Impact on Students

This report provides evidence of a sustained low proportion of students withdrawing from their course in 2024-25 as compared to 2023-24 and previous years.

7. Resource Implications

The College is not funded for any students who leave before the SFC funding required date of their course.

8. Equalities

There are no equality implications arising directly from this report.

9. Risk and Assurance

Higher early withdrawal rates have a direct impact on the ability for the College to deliver the SFC Credit target efficiently. The SFC may claw-back funds in the College does not meet its target, although a 2% under delivery is permitted. This paper provides assurances that the College projects the target will be met.

10. Data Protection

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

11. Environmental and Sustainability

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

12. Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- i. Note the contents of the report.

13. Further Information

Members can obtain additional information on the contents of this report from Robin Ashton, Vice Principal of Curriculum and Quality and Jason Quinn, Director of Digital and Information Systems.

Glasgow Kelvin College
JQ
12/02/2025