

Item 11
For Approval/Endorsement

GLASGOW KELVIN COLLEGE

Board of Management Meeting of 11 October 2023

Student Outcomes Self-Evaluation and Quality Enhancement Priorities

Report by Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality Enhancement

1. Introduction

This report provides an overview and evaluation of learning and teaching related performance indicators and information relating to the 2022-23 academic year. This includes review of both quantitative student activity, outcome and satisfaction data, alongside more qualitative student feedback.

The data presented is provided prior to audit and closure and finalisation of our management information systems so could still be subject to minor change. Additionally, it is not currently possible to review student success rates due to ongoing industrial action affecting result entries for 2022-23.

Based on this evaluation and informed by the recent Education Scotland Progress Visit report, six college-level quality enhancement priorities are proposed for 2023-24. This evaluation and the resulting quality enhancement priorities were considered and endorsed by the Learning and Teaching Committee.

2. Review of Credit Delivery

A key performance metric for Colleges is the volume of Credits delivered. One Credit equates to 40 hours planned learning for an individual student. The table below highlights our expected outturn in relation to targets for 2022-23.

Indicative 2022-23 Credit Year End Positions

	Credit Target	Actual	Variance	% Target Achievement
Core Credits	77,614	76,359	-1,255	98.4%
Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) Credits	2,320	1,215	-1,105	52.4%
Total	79,934	77,574	-2,360	97.0%

As can be seen from the table above, the College was close to achieving full delivery of its Core Target and at 98.4% this was within the 2% leeway provided by SFC, within which SFC will not clawback funds. The main reason why the Core Credit target was not achieved was due to high full-time withdrawal rates prior to the SFC funding date. An analysis of withdrawal rates is set out in section 5 below.

In terms of FA Credits, there was a significant shortfall with only just over half of the Credit target achieved. The main reasons for the shortfall in target achievement were:

- The target set by the SFC was a stretch target and higher than achieved in previous years;
- There has been reduced levels of demand from school pupils and particularly FA courses since Covid restrictions during the preceding two years had a severe impact on enrolment levels. Whilst there were no restrictions in 2022-23, enrolment demand has not yet recovered to pre-Covid levels, despite increased resources invested by the College to stimulate FA demand;
- Skills Development Scotland are also funding private training providers to deliver FA programmes to schools in the North-East of the city and this competition is undermining College recruitment; and
- The College has only run groups of a viable number of students and closed classes where demand was not sufficient.

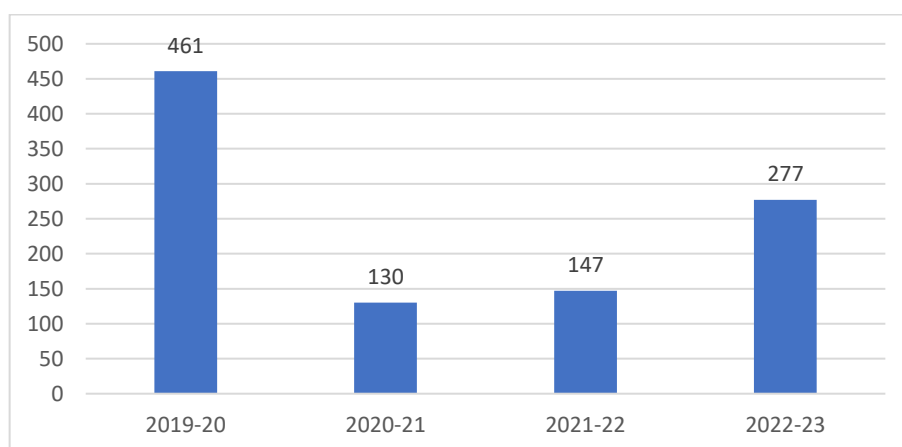
The potential for clawback of FA funds is therefore high and the College has set aside income sufficient to respond to an SFC clawback requirement.

3. Evaluation of Senior Phase Enrolment Levels

The Senior Phase activity reviewed here relates to Credits delivered to School Pupils studying college delivered courses, excluding Foundation Apprenticeship programmes.

As highlighted in the previous section, Covid related restrictions had a significant negative impact on school/college enrolment volumes, with pupils not keen and/or able to take up alternative online or blended study opportunities during the Covid pandemic. In 2022-23 all Senior Phase programmes were returned to fully on campus delivery and this supported an increase in enrolment levels as highlighted by the chart below.

Senior Phase Enrolment Levels (excluding Foundation Apprenticeships)



Whilst Senior Phase enrolment levels have not returned to pre-Covid levels, the trend is positive and the College will continue to prioritise growing Senior Phase engagement levels in 2023-24.

4. Evaluation of Widening Access Credit Levels

The table overleaf provides data for the main two widening access categories monitored by the SFC and the Glasgow College's Regional Board.

Performance Measure:	2020-21 Actual	2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Indicative	Change on Prior Year
Volume of credits delivered to SIMD10 learners	29,256	28,027	28,914	887
Proportion of credits delivered to SIMD10 learners	36.6%	34.9%	37.3%	2.4%
Volume of Credits delivered to students with Care Experience	6,475	5,288	7,920	2,632
Proportion of Credits delivered to students with Care Experience	8.1%	6.6%	10.2%	3.6%

The College has made positive steps in increasing the volume of both students recruited from SIMD10 datazones and/or those with a care experienced background. A key driver in achieving this has been the re-establishment and expansion of our community delivery, and in particular our Community Hub programmes. The College also continues to strengthen access for care leavers, providing enhanced financial support and working jointly with Action for Children to provide more tailored pastoral support.

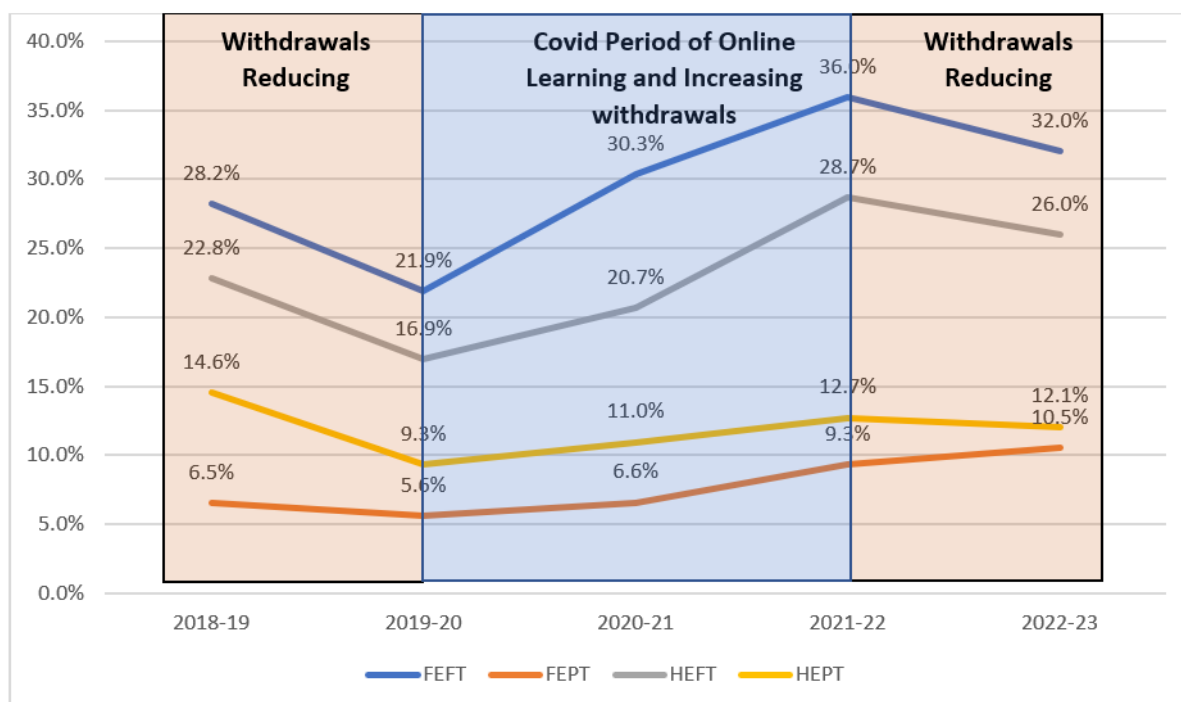
5. Review of Student Outcomes

The Scottish Funding Council and Education Scotland monitor student outcomes through measures of successful qualification completion, partial success (completed course but did not attain full qualification) or withdrawal (did not complete course). At College and national levels, these tend to be grouped by the four level/mode categories of full and part time Further Education (i.e. course at or below SCQF level 6) and full and part time Higher Education (courses at SCQF level 7 and above).

Due to ongoing industrial action, the College is presently unable to access robust course outcome action for 2022-23. However, for Glasgow Kelvin College, the most significant reason students do not successfully complete and achieve the course qualification is due to withdrawal issues with a substantial number of students withdrawing before the course end date. Changes to withdrawal levels therefore provide a strong indication of likely changes to overall student outcome levels.

The chart below provides an overview of indicative withdrawal levels for the four main mode and level categories of our curriculum provision. The chart shows withdrawal levels generally reducing prior to Covid related disruption, a significant increase in withdrawal levels during two years of online and blended learning, and a return to overall falling withdrawal levels in 2022-23.

Glasgow Kelvin College Student Withdrawal Level Trends



As highlighted by the chart, the improvement in withdrawal levels in 2022-23 suggest that overall student outcome levels may have improved after the significant fall in achievement levels during the Covid pandemic period. This improvement is most significant for our full-time groups and this is especially positive given that it is out full time outcome rates which have the largest gap to national average levels (circa 7% below national averages in 2021-22). Reasons for the reduction in withdrawal levels is most likely due to the return of almost all delivery to face to face on-campus activity, supported by increased pre-course student support and engagement, alongside significant improvements made to student facilities to enhance the student experience.

Whilst Part-Time Further Education withdrawal levels have shown an increase, we believe this is mainly due to a change in the profile of our delivery, with an increase in almost full-time courses where students are studying at least 80% of the units undertaken by full-times students. This performance levels of this type of substantial provision is therefore more in line with higher full-time withdrawal rates.

At the start of the previous academic year, the Board approved a set of performance improvement targets for student outcomes, including overall withdrawal levels. The table below highlights variances from target.

Variance from 2022-23 Withdrawal Performance Improvement Targets

	2022-23 Indicative Actual	2022-23 Target	Variance
Full-Time Further Education	32.0%	29.0%	-3.0%
Part-Time Further Education	10.1%	8.0%	-2.1%
Full-Time Higher Education	26.0%	23.0%	-3.0%
Part-Time Higher Education	11.9%	13.0%	1.2%

Considering the above variance from target whilst the indicative withdrawal data presented suggests an improving picture, the College still has a substantial way to go to recover its pre-Covid performance levels and achieve targeted improvements in withdrawal levels.

Further, more detailed analyses of 2023-24 curriculum performance are currently being undertaken by Faculty teams as part of College quality enhancement arrangements. This includes new Improving Performance and Course Transformation Plans and an At-Risk Process for those courses with retention significantly below College averages.

6. Review of Student Satisfaction

Across 2022-23, a range of methods were implemented to encourage students to feed back on college services. This included student surveys, focus groups and engagement with Class Representatives and the Students' Association.

A key element of this activity was implementation of the national Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey conducted at the request of the Scottish Funding Council. Thirteen questions are set by the Scottish Funding Council and the College added a further six questions to collect information related to wider college support services.

The survey was sent out to learners in April 2023, and a total of 1,275 responses were received across all modes of attendance. This represents a significant increase on the 711 responses that were returned last session.

Results for the SFC prescribed questions are set out below, with reductions highlighted in red, and improvements in green.

Prompt:	2022-23 Strongly Agree/ Agree %	2021-22 Strongly Agree/ Agree %
Overall, I am satisfied with my college experience	95	92
Staff regularly discuss my progress with me	92	88
Staff encourage students to take responsibility for their learning	98	99
I am able to influence learning on my course	93	92
I receive useful feedback which informs my future learning	94	93
The way I'm taught helps me learn	93	89
My time at college has helped me develop knowledge and skills for the workplace	95	91
I believe students suggestions are taken seriously	88	89
I believe all students are treated equally and fairly by staff	91	91
Any changes in my course or teaching has been communicated well	90	85
The online learning materials for my course have helped me learn	92	87
I feel that I am part of the college community	87	71
The College Students' Association influences change for the better	58	51

The College also set the following additional questions related to college services:

Prompt:	2022-23 Strongly Agree/ Agree %	2021-22 Strongly Agree/ Agree %
College Facilities met my needs (e.g refectory, social areas, toilets, etc.)	77	73
ICT Services met my needs (e.g., ICT support, laptop loan, etc.)	94	92
Admissions Services met my needs (e.g., College website, applications process, etc.)	97	96
Student Support Services met my needs (e.g., learner support, counselling, guidance, etc.)	93	96
College Library Services met my needs (e.g., library facilities, learning resources, etc.)	96	92
Student Funding and Finance Services met my needs (e.g. bursary, childcare, fees, etc.)	90	88

The results of the questions relating to college services are, once again, very positive. The only exception being Student Support Services with a reduction from 96% to 93%. This may be due to a change in the question format and the very high demand for counselling services which led at times to extended waiting times for access.

Learners were also given the opportunity to leave additional comments at the end of the survey and around 1,000 survey respondents made a comment on their College experience. This is a summary of their views:

A) Positive Aspects:

Supportive and helpful teachers/tutors: Students appreciated the dedication, support, and knowledge of their teachers and tutors. They valued the guidance and assistance received during their studies.

Enjoyable college experience: Many students had a great experience at the college, finding it enjoyable to study there. They felt comfortable on campus and appreciated the overall college atmosphere.

Responding to student feedback: A number of students responded positively to instances where lecturers had altered course delivery in response to student feedback.

Access to resources: Students mentioned the availability of tools, materials, and facilities that were beneficial for their studies, such as loaned laptops and library resources. These resources supported their learning and academic progress.

Personal support: Students received support from college staff during challenging times in their personal lives. They appreciated being able to discuss their circumstances and felt that the staff cared about their well-being.

B) Areas for Improvement:

Healthy food options: Students mentioned the lack of healthy food choices in the college canteen, including the absence of fruits and limited healthy options.

Overcrowding: Concerns were raised about limited spaces leading to overcrowding, especially the Springburn library.

Class management and student behaviour: Some students mentioned disciplinary issues, inappropriate student behaviours and asked for staff to better address negative classroom behaviours.

Communication and feedback: Students expressed the need for improved communication from student representatives and college staff regarding class updates and information, such as class cancellations. Some also asked for more constructive feedback on assessments.

Facilities and resources: Students mentioned areas that require improvement, with a particular focus on toilet facilities. Students also asked for access to hot water, and microwaves to make their own food and drinks.

Student feedback specific to each course area has been fed back directly to course teams and has been used to determine improvement actions across curricular areas.

7. Proposed 2023-24 High Level College Quality Enhancement Priorities

The following proposed high-level College quality enhancement priorities for 2023-24 are informed by the above evaluation of College-level student performance data, review of student feedback and the areas for action identified by Education Scotland resulting from their recent annual review:

1. Improve student recruitment performance and conversion of applicants to attending enrolments.

The College will continue to build on the improvements made to strengthen pre-enrolment engagement and support introduced in 2022-23. This includes a strong focus on regular contact with applicants across the recruitment period through Support Service and Faculty led 'keep warm' activity. In addition, we will initiate targeted recruitment and marketing activity at areas where recruitment conversion is low, including a specific focus on growing Senior Phase and Foundation Apprenticeship enrolments.

As this is a continuing priority, actions related to it are now embedded in operational plans.

2. Respond more effectively to student attendance issues.

We will also continue to extend our work to respond more rapidly and responsively to student attendance issues. This includes strengthening our data reporting on student attendance and delivering consistent and systematic interventions by lecturing and support staff. A key focus of this activity will be on targeting action at students most at risk of withdrawal.

As this is another continuing priority, actions related to it are now embedded in operational plans.

3. Strengthen Faculty Quality and Self-Evaluation Arrangements.

As we recover from the Covid pandemic we will rebuild our quality processes with a renewed focus on prioritising student engagement and success. We will do this by strengthening existing approaches to deliver more consistency and impact. Key new elements for 2023-24 will be the introduction of a risk-based approach with differing levels of quality enhancement activity dependent on the level of student outcomes relative to national averages. In addition, our new arrangements will give greater prominence and consistency to student representation activity ensuring all delivery takes account of learner feedback.

As this is a new priority, a high-level action improvement plan was presented to the recent meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee.

4. Strengthen Teaching Development Activity.

The quality of teaching is central to supporting the delivery of engaging and positive learning experiences and high levels of student success. In 2023-24, we will strengthen support for teaching practice through stronger leadership for teaching development activity, and through providing more structured and consistent opportunities for staff to share teaching practice and provide peer support.

Whilst some initial thinking has been undertaken as to how this priority could be progressed, as involvement and buy-in of lecturing staff will be key, the plans for this area will be discussed through staff forums early in the new academic year. A further report on this action will be presented to the next meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee.

5. Strengthen Student Engagement and Representation.

The severe restriction in face to face learning caused by the Covid pandemic had a very detrimental impact on the student experience. A significant aspect of this was a diminution of opportunities for student engagement and for student views to contribute to college service delivery. The College made substantial headway in recovering from this in 2022-23, with for example, record levels of students contributing to surveys. However, our Education Scotland progress visit highlighted weaknesses in the strength of relationship between the Students' Association, Class Representatives and Curriculum delivery teams. As a result, in 2023-24 we will improve the support for, and effectiveness of, College student representation activity.

As this is a new priority, a high-level action improvement plan was presented to the recent meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee.

6. Strengthen Student Health and Wellbeing Support.

Student feedback in 2022-23 provided evidence that health and wellbeing issues are the most significant contributor to student withdrawal. This was further reinforced by feedback from Lecturing and Guidance staff working directly with learners. Therefore, providing appropriate and sufficient health and wellbeing support to students is of critical importance and in academic year 2023-24 we will strengthen our support for students in this important area.

As this is a new priority, a high-level action improvement plan was presented to the recent meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee.

The table below highlights the strong overlap between the identified student outcome improvement projects and the goals of the College's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy.

	Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategic Aims				
	A) Deliver High Quality Learning and Teaching	B) Ensure assessment promotes effective learning	C) Value the Learner Voice	D) Embed Digital Innovation	E) Develop Wider and Transferrable Skills
1. Improve Student Recruitment Performance	X			X	
2. Respond More Effectively to Student Attendance Issues	X		X	X	
3. Strengthen Faculty Quality and Self-Evaluation Arrangements	X	X	X	X	X
4. Strengthen Teaching Development Activity	X	X		X	X
5. Strengthen Student Engagement and Representation	X		X		X
6. Strengthen Student Health and Wellbeing Support	X		X		

Actions across all of the quality enhancement priorities will to be integrated into, and monitored through, College operational planning and cross-college quality enhancement activity.

8. Impact on Students

This report highlights positive improvements the College has achieved in student retention rates and the increase in enrolments from students from SIMD10 datazones and/or with a care experienced background. However, the College continues to have relatively high withdrawal levels which contribute to lower than average success outcomes for College students. Improving withdrawal levels therefore remains a key quality enhancement priority for the College.

9. The areas for improvement identified through student feedback will be addressed through operational and quality enhancement planning during 2023-24.

The quality enhancement priorities set out in this report focus on improving outcomes and experiences for students.

10. Resource Implications

The shortfall between the College's Foundation Apprenticeship Credit delivery volumes and its target means there is a risk that the Scottish Funding Council clawback resource in future years. Currently, it is assessed that the value of this potential clawback is in the region of £362k. The College has therefore set aside a contingency for this amount. We would expect any decision on a clawback to be confirmed within the next two to three months.

11. Environmental and Sustainability

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

12. Equalities Implications

This report highlights evidence of increased levels of participation in college learning by priority and protected characteristic groups.

Some survey respondents asked for more support for asylum seekers and their specific needs. This will be further explored directly with students in this academic year.

13. Risk and Assurance

This report provides assurance that despite the extended impact of Covid-related disruption and the significant operational challenges involved in returning the majority of our curriculum delivery to on-campus modes, the College effectively delivered high quality learning and achieved 97% of its total Credit target and 98.4% of its Core Credit target.

This report provides assurance that the College is effectively reviewing its performance and identifying areas for improvement.

14. Data Protection

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

15. Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

- i. consider and discuss the student activity and outcome performance data;
and
- ii. agree the related quality enhancement priorities for 2023-24.

16. Further Information

Members can obtain additional information on the contents of this report from Robin Ashton, Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality Enhancement

Glasgow Kelvin College
RA
September 2023