Item 09

6 August 2024

Derek Smeall
Principal and Chief Executive Officer
Glasgow Kelvin College

Dear Derek,

A team of HM Inspectors from Education Scotland visited Glasgow Kelvin College in May 2024 to undertake an annual engagement 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:

Learner progress and outcomes

Overall learner success rates for most modes of attendance were below national sector performance. Learner success rates for full-time and part-time further education (FE) programmes have increased. Learner withdrawal rates for full-time and part-time higher education (HE) programmes decreased. Overall success rates for some key groups of learners (learners who are care-experienced, identify as male, identify as female, are from an ethnic minority background or have declared a disability) have improved. All learners are encouraged to identify any additional needs on application to enable a support plan to be agreed before they begin their studies. Support services staff have improved support arrangements for learners to help ensure equity of success. The Students' Association (SA) organise a range of events in partnership with the college which help to promote diversity. The active campus coordinator is helping to improve the college environment and creating opportunities that support the physical and mental wellbeing of learners.

Approaches to assuring and enhancing the quality of learning and teaching including professional updating

Senior Teaching staff access support for learning and teaching through the professional development forum and teaching development leads. Senior managers have introduced new quality enhancement arrangements and communicated these effectively to staff. All teaching staff engage well in the annual professional development review process and professional learning activities during quality weeks. Curriculum managers use a good range of strategies to monitor and improve the quality of learning and teaching. College managers have introduced performance monitoring technology to provide staff with live feedback from learners. Staff use this feedback effectively to monitor learners' experience and plan improvements. Curriculum teams engage well with stakeholders and employers to provide teaching staff with updates to their professional knowledge and skills in line with new technologies and industry needs. Most curriculum teams have increased class representative participation at team meetings. In a few subject areas, skills are tracked, and evidence of their development is recorded.

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Learner Engagement

Managers operate effective risk-based approaches to identify and improve programme performance. Most learners can identify clear opportunities to influence improvements to learning and teaching. The student executive committee support the Students' Association (SA) effectively to conduct its activities. College staff work collaboratively with employers and external stakeholders to develop Modern Apprenticeship (MA) provision and bespoke programmes that meet the needs of business and industry. Curriculum team staff report they now have more ownership of their programmes and are more involved in the evaluation process. Almost all teaching staff have a good understanding of the strategies in this plan to improve the quality of learning and teaching. Almost all teaching staff have a good understanding of performance indicators and use them effectively to inform improvements. The college student satisfaction survey participation rate increased this year to 45% of full-time learners from 29% the previous year. The survey indicates an overall learner satisfaction rating of 95%. Managers use a good range of approaches to gather the views of learners. Almost all learners have positive relationships with staff and feel able to share feedback directly with staff about their learning experience.

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

- There is scope to improve learner representation on Modern Apprenticeship (MA) and employer led programmes.
- Learners are not sufficiently aware of their development of essential skills or meta skills.
- There is no college-wide approach to the recording of learners' wider skills, including meta skills.
- Less than half of learners are aware that the SA is a feedback route to improve the learner experience.
- Less than half of class representatives have undergone training and many class representatives are not clear about their role.

Main points for action

There are no main points for action.

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What happens next?

We are confident that the college has made satisfactory progress and has the capacity to continue to improve. We will continue to monitor progress with regular contact through the link HM Inspector.

Ian Beach
HM Inspector

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Annual Engagement Visit Report

Glasgow Kelvin College

30 July 2024

College Principal	**Derek Smeall**
Annual Engagement Visit Date	**14th May 2024**
College Nominee	**Robin Ashton**
Lead HMI	**Ian Beach**

1. Background

Annual Engagement Visits (AEVs) are planned collaboratively between the college, HM Inspectors, and the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). During the AEV, the team focussed on the progress made on improvement priorities and the outcomes of previous engagement with HM Inspectors. HM Inspectors met with staff, learners, and other stakeholders. This report outlines the findings from the visit, and includes aspects of positive practice, aspects for improvement, and any associated main points for action. The report 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 AEV the team explored the following overarching themes: learner progress and outcomes, approaches to assuring and enhancing the quality of learning and teaching including professional updating, and learner engagement.

The team also reviewed progress against actions identified during our engagement in academic year (AY) 2022-23.

2. The college and its context

Glasgow Kelvin College is an assigned college within the Glasgow Region, delivering further education (FE) and higher education (HE) programmes from four campuses across the northeast of Glasgow. It has a strong focus on the social and economic needs of its communities and provides community outreach programmes in more than thirty community centres. The college has a high proportion of learners who live in areas of high deprivation, with approximately one third of enrolments from Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 10 data zones. The college also has a relatively high number of part-time learners, many of which are from an ethnic minority, a care experienced background, or declare a disability.

Glasgow Kelvin College is contracted by the SFC to deliver 78,000 credits of activity each year and enrols approximately 14,000 learners. The college delivers a range of programmes from levels 2 to 8 on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). It is the only college in Scotland to provide the Higher National Certificate in Building Services Engineering.

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3. Summary of findings

3.1 Learner progress and outcomes

Summary of key performance indicator information

- In AY 2021-2022, overall learner success rates for most modes of attendance were below national sector performance. The overall success rate for full-time learners was seven percentage points below the national sector performance. The overall success rate for part-time FE learners was three percentage points below the national sector performance, and for part-time HE learners, was in line with the national sector performance.

- Published data for AY 2022-2023 indicates that the learner success rates for full-time and part-time FE programmes have increased. However, the learner success rate on part-time HE programmes decreased by 2.4% to 76%.

- In AY 2021-2022, learner withdrawal rates for most modes of attendance were above national performance levels. Published data for AY 2022-2023 indicates the learner withdrawal rate for full-time and part-time HE programmes decreased. However, the learner withdrawal rate for part-time FE programmes increased by 1.4% to 11.3%.

- Published data for AY 2022-2023 indicates that the majority of subject areas improved successful completion rates for learners on full-time FE and HE programmes.

- In AY 2021/22, overall success rates for some key groups of learners (learners who are care-experienced, identify as male, identify as female, are from an ethnic minority background or have declared a disability) were below national performance levels. Published data for AY 2022-2023 indicates that successful completion rates have improved for all these groups of learners.

Equity, attainment, and achievement for all learners (QI 3.2)

Areas of positive progress

- Curriculum teams deliver short introductory programmes within local communities. These programmes provide a supportive route for learners from socially disadvantaged backgrounds to progress into mainstream college programmes.

- Staff in the retention team contact learners who are identified as at risk of leaving their programme early and act promptly to arrange appropriate support. This is helping to reduce learner withdrawal rates.

- All learners are encouraged to identify any additional needs on application to enable a support plan to be agreed before they begin their studies. Learners and teaching staff can also refer learners with additional needs to support services during the academic year.

- Support services staff have improved support arrangements for learners to help ensure equity of success. These arrangements include a simplified funding application process, a specialist support staff member for speakers of languages other than English and three members of staff from Action for Children based within college campuses.

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- The Students' Association (SA) organise a range of events in partnership with the college which help to promote diversity.

- Curriculum teams use pre-enrolment activities effectively to introduce learners to their peers, meet college staff and become familiar with college facilities.

- Managers use data such as distance from home to college, availability of public transport, estimated school grades and learners' geographic location to predict class sizes. This risk-based approach has reduced waiting lists to a minimum and improved early retention.

- The active campus coordinator is helping to improve the college environment and creating opportunities that support the physical and mental wellbeing of learners. Learner satisfaction with college facilities has increased by fourteen percentage points, following historically poor satisfaction levels.

Areas for development

- None

3.2 Approaches to assuring and enhancing the quality of learning and teaching including professional updating.

Leadership for improvement of learning and teaching (QI 1.2)

Areas of positive progress

- Teaching staff access support for learning and teaching through the professional development forum and teaching development leads. These arrangements provide opportunities for staff to improve their teaching practice and share experiences with their peers.

- All teaching staff engage well in the annual professional development review process and professional learning activities during quality weeks. They share and reflect on their learning and teaching approaches in teaching activity groups, overseen by a teaching development coordinator.

- Senior managers have introduced new quality enhancement arrangements and communicated these effectively to staff. Staff understand the arrangements well and use them to reflect on their quality of learning and teaching. This has supported a more consistent approach to the improvement of teaching practice across the college.

- Curriculum managers use a good range of strategies to monitor and improve the quality of learning and teaching. These include targeted learner questionnaires, research papers, peer mentors, professional updating, sharing practice and analysis of programme performance.

Areas for development

- None

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Learning, teaching, and assessment (QI 2.3)

Areas of positive progress

- College managers have introduced performance monitoring technology to provide staff with live feedback from learners. Staff use this feedback effectively to monitor learners' experience and plan improvements. For example, learners reported poor connectivity at some campuses, and this was addressed quickly.

- Curriculum teams engage well with stakeholders and employers to provide teaching staff with updates to their professional knowledge and skills in line with new technologies and industry needs.

- Most curriculum teams have increased class representative participation at team meetings. This captures learner voice effectively and has led to improvements to the learner experience.

- Most teaching staff are aware that learners need to develop additional skills, including meta skills. In a few subject areas, skills are tracked, and evidence of their development is recorded. For example, when learners achieve a digital certificate, or when meta skills are embedded within the qualification.

Areas for development

- There is scope to improve learner representation on Modern Apprenticeship (MA) and employer led programmes.

- Learners are not sufficiently aware of their development of essential skills or meta skills.

- There is no college-wide approach to the recording of learners' wider skills, including meta skills.

3.3 Learner Engagement

Learners leading learning (QI 1.2)

Areas of positive progress

- Most learners can identify clear opportunities to influence improvements to learning and teaching. This includes direct feedback to teaching staff, representation at curriculum team meetings and Meet the Manager events.

- Managers operate effective risk-based approaches to identify and improve programme performance. For low performing programmes, curriculum teams organise additional learner focus groups to gather feedback. Managers use this feedback well during self-evaluation to make improvements such as introducing keep warm activities and revisions to programme content.

- The student executive committee support the Students' Association (SA) effectively to conduct its activities. Committee members meet regularly with staff and student officers to discuss learners' engagement in the development of learning and teaching.

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- Student members on the board of management report positive relationships with board members. They engage well with senior managers who take good account of their contribution to improving the learner experience.

- Student officers attend community hub evenings to engage with the local community. They work effectively with timetabling teams to ensure their officers are available to meet learners during the busiest times. The executive committee and student officers use feedback from these engagements to provide curriculum teams with suggestions to improve the learning experience.

- College staff work collaboratively with employers and external stakeholders to develop MA provision and bespoke programmes that meet the needs of business and industry.

Areas for development

- Less than half of learners are aware that the SA is a feedback route to improve the learner experience.

Evaluation leading to improvement (QI 1.4)

Areas of positive progress

- College managers take effective action at strategic level to improve low performing programmes. The new quality assurance arrangements use a red, amber, green rating based on a wide range of indicators. Curriculum teams use a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats analysis to identify interventions aimed at improving learner outcomes on low performing programmes.

- Curriculum team staff report they now have more ownership of their programmes and are more involved in the evaluation process. This proactive approach has enabled key policies and strategies for improving the delivery of learning and teaching to be implemented. These include ensuring learners are recruited to an appropriate programme, better preparation for transition to college through keep in touch events, a welcome week, and an extended induction process.

- A quality action plan based on the previous annual engagement visit by HM Inspectors has been communicated well to staff. Almost all teaching staff have a good understanding of the strategies in this plan to improve the quality of learning and teaching.

- Almost all teaching staff have a good understanding of performance indicators and use them effectively to inform improvements. This is contributing to improved success and withdrawal rates.

- The college student satisfaction survey participation rate increased this year to 45% of full-time learners from 29% the previous year. The survey indicates an overall learner satisfaction rating of 95%.

- Curriculum teams measure and evaluate learner outcomes well. They have improved performance on their programmes by introducing project-based learning, non-modular units and dividing the academic year into two 18-week semesters.

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Areas for development

- None

Learning teaching and assessment (QI 2.3)

Areas of positive progress

- Almost all learners have positive relationships with staff and feel able to share feedback directly with staff about their learning experience.

- Managers use a good range of approaches to gather the views of learners. These include three learner satisfaction surveys, class representative attendance at curriculum team meetings and learner focus groups. This feedback is used well by curriculum managers and teaching staff to reflect on teaching practice and to improve programme design.

- Learners have good opportunities to provide feedback on their experience through stop and check surveys, course team meetings and informal discussion with teaching staff. This feedback is used well by college managers to improve the learning experience.

- College managers work proactively with a range of stakeholders and partners to improve the learning experience and plan for improvement. For example, they have worked closely with the three local authorities to deliver the successful school-college programme. This programme has positive destinations for learners of almost 98%.

Areas for development

- Less than half of class representatives have undergone training and many class representatives are not clear about their role.

3.4 Update on previous Education Scotland evaluative activities AY 2022-23

The college has made good progress since the last progress visit. Published data for AY 2022-2023 indicates that rates of learner withdrawal and overall success rates for most modes of attendance improved over the past year. Managers have improved arrangements for learners to provide the evidence required by funding bodies to access student funding and resolved the issue with digital devices for learners at the Haghill campus. The new quality arrangements are effective and understood well by staff. This is helping teaching staff to identify and plan improvements to learning and teaching and the learner experience. There are no outstanding safeguarding areas for development.

There has been some progress made with raising learners' awareness of the SA, its role in improving the learner experience and class representative training. Managers have plans in place to progress these actions over the next academic year.

4. Main Points for Action

The following main points for action are required:

- None

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5. What happens next?

We are confident that the college has made satisfactory progress and has the capacity to continue to improve. We will continue to monitor progress with regular contact through the link HM Inspector.

Ian P Beach
HM Inspector

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Appendix 1 Evaluative Terms

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.

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Appendix 2

Full-time FE

College			
	Withdrawal	**Partial Success**	**Completed successfully**
2018-19	28.2%	8.0%	63.8%
2019-20	21.9%	9.3%	68.8%
2020-21	30.6%	11.9%	57.5%
2021-22	36.3%	11.7%	51.9%
National sector performance			
	Withdrawal	**Partial Success**	**Completed successfully**
2018-19	24.70%	10.10%	65.20%
2019-20	20.80%	13.20%	66.00%
2020-21	27.30%	11.70%	60.90%
2021-22	29.30%	11.70%	59.00%

Part-time FE

College			
	Withdrawal	**Partial Success**	**Completed successfully**
2018-19			
2019-20			
2020-21	6.7%	14.4%	79.0%
2021-22	9.9%	16.9%	73.2%
National sector performance			
	Withdrawal	**Partial Success**	**Completed successfully**
2018-19	9.30%	11.00%	79.70%
2019-20	9.50%	12.50%	78.00%
2020-21	10.10%	13.70%	76.20%
2021-22	10.70%	13.00%	76.30%

Full-time HE

College			
	Withdrawal	**Partial Success**	**Completed successfully**
2018-19	22.7%	10.7%	66.5%
2019-20	17.0%	10.6%	72.3%
2020-21	20.5%	10.3%	69.2%
2021-22	28.6%	15.9%	55.5%
National sector performance			
	Withdrawal	**Partial Success**	**Completed successfully**
2018-19	18.50%	11.70%	69.80%
2019-20	14.90%	11.70%	73.40%
2020-21	17.60%	10.90%	71.60%
2021-22	23.60%	13.90%	62.50%

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Part-time HE

College			
	Withdrawal	**Partial Success**	**Completed successfully**
2018-19			
2019-20			
2020-21	14.1%	10.1%	75.9%
2021-22	13.1%	8.5%	78.4%
National sector performance			
	Withdrawal	**Partial Success**	**Completed successfully**
2018-19	9.00%	12.10%	78.90%
2019-20	8.20%	13.70%	78.10%
2020-21	9.20%	9.90%	80.90%
2021-22	9.50%	11.70%	78.80%

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