Scottish Government – Programme for Government 2023/24 Analysis – September 2023

The Scottish Government published its Programme for Government 2023/24 on Tuesday 5 September 2023, with the First Minister setting out the Programme in the Scottish Parliament. The Programme for Government sets out the legislative priorities for the year ahead specifically and the direction of travel generally for the rest of this Parliament.

Headlines on Colleges and Tertiary Education

- Lead development of a new funding model for post-school education provision which continues free tuition and improves the parity of living cost support on offer for those wishing to study part time or flexibly, and which continues to promote post-16 education as a positive destination for widening access students.
- Scottish Government to launch a new Scottish Education Exchange Programme – building on an initial test and learn project that we are delivering in 2023-24, prioritising placements for disadvantaged groups and further demonstrate our commitment to EU and global partnerships with schools, colleges and universities including through working with these sectors.
- Scottish Government to work with colleges to promote good governance, including bringing forward a statutory instrument to ensure trade union representatives on college boards.

Skills and Training

- To support the reform agenda, Scottish Government will bring forward legislation to ensure that the right structures and organisations are in place to deliver the ambitions to make Scotland the best place in the world to be educated.
- Set out plans for implementing reform of education and skills bodies and put the voices of children, young people, and adult learners at their core, including responding to the recommendations of the Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment by Professor Hayward, the National Discussion on Education and the Independent Review of the Skills Delivery Landscape by James Withers, and the priorities arising from 'Purpose and Principles for Post-School Education, Skills and Research.
- Create more opportunities to acquire the green skills that our economy and workers need to thrive and transition to net zero, supported by an updated Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan.
- Continue to support rural skills, acting on recommendations from the Land-Based Learning Review and taking account of the wider reforms of the education and skills system that the Scottish Government will be implementing.

Early Years and Childcare, Primary and Secondary Education

- Scottish Government will expand access to funded childcare for 13,000 more children and families by the end of this Parliament as part of the long term programme of expansion and improvement to the childcare system in Scotland.
- Continue to support schools and local authorities to improve the attainment of children and young people impacted by poverty through our investment in the School Attainment Challenge, with a particular focus on literacy and numeracy – a progress update on ambitious local stretch

aims will be published later this year.

- Rejoin the Trends in International Mathematics and Science (TIMSS) and Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), adding to the current evidence on Scotland's education performance.
- Improve experiences and outcomes for children and young people with additional support needs by working with teachers to provide additional professional learning opportunities, continuing to support direct provision of services, and implementing and seeking to build on the Additional Support for Learning Action Plan.
- Develop a digital strategy to help ensure digital provision supports the wider aims of the education system.

Climate Change

- Develop a Green Industrial Strategy, setting out how the Scottish Government will help businesses and investors to realise the enormous economic opportunities of the global transition to net zero and create good, well-paid jobs across Scotland in sectors such as offshore wind and hydrogen, and support the development of sectoral Just Transition Plans.
- Publish and start implementing a new Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan, providing policy certainty for consumers, workers, businesses and investors by setting a clear direction for the future of Scotland's energy sector and the actions that the Scottish Government will take to maximise the economic and social benefits from our transition to a future energy system and to ensure our energy security.

Colleges Scotland
September 2023