



NORTH EAST SCOTLAND COLLEGE

EVALUATIVE REPORT 2017-18 AND ENHANCEMENT PLAN 2018-21

Introduction

North East Scotland College (NESCol) is committed to continuous quality improvement. The College recognises that the management of quality is the shared responsibility of every member of staff, with quality improvement processes supported by the collaborative working of cross-College teams.

The College's Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan forms part of the annual Outcome Agreement process. The College's Outcome Agreement demonstrates NESCol's impact on the region and its contribution to meeting Scottish Government priorities. The Outcome Agreement is also a funding contract between the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and the College, setting out what the College plans to deliver in return for its funding from the SFC. A copy of the College's Outcome Agreement can be accessed at <http://www.nescol.ac.uk/about/strategic-planning>

This Report evaluates the provision and services offered by NESCol against seven of the 12 quality indicators identified in the 'How good is our college?' Quality Framework, and provides high-level statements reflecting on the College's performance, including identification of positive practice and areas for development.

College Background

About

North East Scotland College is the only further-education college located within the North East of Scotland. The College provides a wide range of high quality education and training opportunities to meet the needs of individuals, communities and employers across the region in a flexible, engaging and accessible way.

The College serves an extensive geographical area, with three main campuses – two in Aberdeen and one in Fraserburgh – and a presence in regional centres: Ellon, Inverurie, and Peterhead. NESCol offers a varied portfolio of training, up to SCQF level 8, which is categorised into the following three 'Schools': Engineering, Science and Technology; Creative Industries, Computing and Business Enterprise; and Service Industries. Each of the Schools contain a number of specialised 'Faculties'. Figures from academic year 2017-18 show that 44% of NESCol students reside in Aberdeen City and 39% in Aberdeenshire with the remainder coming from outside the area, relatively evenly spread from 16 other Scottish local authorities.

In academic year 2017-18, the College enrolled 18,391 learners on SFC-funded programmes (6,704 studying full-time and 11,687 studying part-time). This was less than the previous academic year and resulted in the College not achieving its SFC-funded activity target – an outturn of 136,266 credits was recorded against a target of 138,161 credits (a shortfall of 1,895 credits).

In addition to its full-time provision, the College also delivers a range of Modern Apprenticeship programmes, and Foundation Apprenticeships in Care, Engineering, Creative Industries, Business, and Computing. Through the School-College Links Programme, the College offers a range of courses to school pupils across the region. Included within the programme offered are SQA Skills for Work Awards, City and Guilds Awards, National Progression Awards, National Certificate courses, a Professional Development Award and a Higher National Certificate course. Some programmes have been designed to allow pupils to complete an NC Award over their 4th and 5th year, allowing, where applicable, direct progression to HNC/D programmes.

The College plays a pivotal role in developing skills of people across the region. This includes working to integrate the Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) initiative and actively addressing skills shortages. Key elements of this work are implemented through the DYW Regional Collaborative Group, led by NESCol, which ensures a region wide approach is taken to all 39 recommendations of the report from the Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce. This work is supported through the continued strengthening of partnerships with the two local universities, the two local authorities, and a wide range of employers.

Another important aspect in meeting regional needs is curriculum planning – a continuous process which ensures the curriculum is constantly refreshed and updated to meet the needs of current and prospective learners, employers and the local economy. The College's curriculum planning process is informed by stakeholder engagement, government priorities and curriculum analysis. The approach adopted also ensures that the College is seeking to address key Scottish Government priorities in gender imbalance and widening access, whilst responding to changing demographics in the region and engaging those from areas of deprivation.

Regional context

The North East of Scotland has a population of approximately 492,400 (230,400 in Aberdeen City, 262,000 in Aberdeenshire) - approximately 9% of the Scottish total. The population continues to grow at over double the Scottish rate of growth over the last decade. Important changes in the age profile of the region's residents over the past decade have been recorded. The Skills Development Scotland (SDS) Aberdeen City & Shire Skills Assessment, published in January 2016, notes the region has experienced:

- An increase in school roll numbers in the next five years when they are falling across Scotland
- An increase in the number of adults aged 20 – 34 years old
- Mixed movements in some 'prime' working age groups
- A marked ageing of the population.

Regional labour market participation (2014-15) accounted for 80% of the working age population compared to 73% for Scotland and the UK. FE/HE leavers in the region are deemed more work-ready by employers than the national average although this is the reverse for school leavers.

Methodology

Following the publication of 'How Good is our college?' in December 2016, the College reviewed its approach to self-evaluation. New templates for Evaluative and Enhancement Plans, based on the new quality framework and focused around relevant quality indicators, were produced:

- College level [Senior Management Team], Faculty level [Faculty Managers], Course level Annual Programme Reviews [Curriculum & Quality Managers in liaison with their respective teaching teams], and Support teams [Heads of Departments in liaison with their teams].

The templates require a review of performance throughout the academic year to be completed, followed by the development of enhancement plans detailing improvement actions and how these relate to College annual priorities. The refreshed approach detailed above ensures that the College's process for self-evaluation and improvement planning is undertaken at all levels of the organisation.

To ensure that the self-evaluation process followed by NESCol is sound, the evidence collected was comprehensive and credible and the judgements contained in this Report are accurate, the College sought the views of the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership Group consisting of a number of key stakeholders. The Group is comprised of representatives from the Local Authority, Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce, Robert Gordon University, Skills Development Scotland, Opportunity North East, Job Centre Plus and the University of Aberdeen. The stakeholders were asked to share their views on the strengths, evidence and areas for development as to whether they are true and fair. At a meeting of the Group held at the beginning of October 2018, attendees confirmed that the College's conclusions presented in this document were accurate.

This document has also been considered by the College's Regional Board and was approved at a Board Meeting held on 29 October 2018.

Evaluative Report 2017-18

OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS

How good are we at ensuring the best outcomes for all our learners?

3.1 – Wellbeing, equality and inclusion

Areas of positive practice:

The College's inclusion and equality arrangements work **well** and support the College's ambitions to improve attainment for individuals and groups experiencing barriers to learning. In order to facilitate a culture of inclusion the College also promotes and celebrates diversity **well**. This is demonstrated through:

- The increasing volume and proportion, over a three-year period (AY2014-15 to AY2016-17), of credit-related activity for specific categories of 'at-risk' learners i.e. SIMD10 (0.5% increase); disabled (3.3% increase); BME (0.5%) and care experienced (1.0% increase).
- The increased proportion, over a three-year period (AY2014-15 to AY2016-17), of enrolled full-time FE, part-time FE and full-time HE learners from specific groups (under 16; 16-19; 20-24; 25 and over; male; female; SIMD10; Disabled; BME and Care experienced), successfully achieving a recognised qualification.
- The favourable comparison, against sector averages, of success rates (AY2016-17) for full-time FE learners categorised as SIMD10 and BME.
- The favourable comparison, against sector averages, of success rates (AY2016-17) for full-time HE learners categorised as disabled; BME and care experienced.
- The extensive internal review activities undertaken by College staff relating to pre-entry access arrangements and on-course support for all learners including those representative of specific 'at risk' groups such as care experienced learners and learners with low levels of resilience and confidence.
- The review, and enhancement, of the College's approaches to admissions for learners with disabilities and care experienced learners e.g. guarantee interviews.
- The unique existence of an Equality and Diversity Champion for the Regional Board whose role is to promote, shape and support the College's equality-related ambitions through the College's Equality Committee.
- The evolving dialogue and increased focus within the College's Leadership Team which aims to understand better, and improve, the outcomes and experiences of specific groups of learners including care experienced and disabled learners.
- The College having in place mandatory equality training arrangements for all staff and a developed equality impact process for policies, procedures and key decisions.
- The establishing of the College's Equality Action Team (EAT) which has responsibility for the development and implementation of the College's equality, diversity and inclusion approaches, overseeing the College's Equality Enhancement Plan (EEP).
- A revised approach to presenting and analysing equality data which has led to a more consistent approach being taken by curriculum teams to understanding and improving outcomes for learners with protected characteristics.
- The Equality Outcome Report 2017-21; Gender Action Plan 2017-21 and Access and Inclusion Strategy 2017-21, all of which are published on the College's website.
- The growing and effective partnership between the College and the Students' Association, and enshrined within a recently signed partnership agreement, has helped to advance equality of opportunity through enhancement activities such as Peer-led Reviews.
- Awareness-raising events such as 'Celebrate the Difference', through which both the College and the Students' Association actively promote and foster good relations between different people living, learning and working in the communities local to the College.

- The well-established relationships between the College's Business Community Development (BCD) Team and community/Third Sector partners which provide tailored part-time learning opportunities for individuals with significant support needs.
- The outcomes of the College's Attracting Diversity Projects in both computing and care which has assisted the College to consider more fully the prevalence of, and possible solutions to, the gender imbalances which exist within key curricula areas.
- The College's excellent partnerships with industry which enable collaborative, course-based activities to address gender imbalance within the energy sector e.g. NESCol/Shell 'Girls in Energy' programmes.

The College's planning of provision and services takes account **well** the changing needs of specific groups of prospective and existing learners, e.g. ESOL learners, learners with mental health issues, care experienced young people etc. This is demonstrated through:

- The College's community planning activities which enable it, through Local Outcome Improvement and Locality Planning activities with Community Planning Aberdeen (CPA) and Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership (ACPP) to work in partnership with others in order address the needs of individuals and groups at risk of continuing disadvantage.
- The College prioritising within its access and inclusion approaches the improvement of experiences and outcomes for students declaring a disability, young carers and learners who are care experienced.
- The College's commitment to digital inclusion which has comprehensively supported digital inclusion through its BYOD, Digital Futures and Digital Skills initiatives.
- The College's extensive internal review of support services for students and the subsequent and significant redesign for student support services which has, despite its relative infancy, already impacted positively on learner experiences.
- The College's well-embedded recruitment and induction approaches which ensure that new staff are fully aware of the College commitments to equality, access and inclusion.
- How effectively the needs of ESOL learners are met and how positive their experiences and outcomes are. This is assisted further through enhanced levels of employer engagement which have led to the tailored delivery of ESOL programmes which meet the needs of both learners and regional employers.
- The College's excellent, and long established, relationships with partner local authorities and schools which enable many school pupils to access College courses whilst still at school e.g. Foundation Apprenticeships.
- A robust and well-embedded approach to individual training and support planning which has helped students with specific learning difficulties, e.g. autism, to develop skills needed for future employment.
- Feedback, through internal reviews, from care experienced learners who have stated that they have been well supported in their time at College and their transition to it.

Areas for development:

However:

Although progress has been made to improve access and support arrangements for all students including those traditionally experiencing barriers to learning, the College should:

- Ensure that its admissions approaches continue to improve access to learning for specific 'at-risk' groups and that the gaps, currently SIMD10 (12% for AY2016-17); BME (2.2% for AY2016-17) and care experienced (1.6% for AY2016-17), between the College's target enrolments and sector average decrease.
- Ensure that success outcomes for full-time FE disabled (61.5% for AY2016-17); care experienced (34% for AY2016-17) and full-time HE SIMD10 (66.3% for AY2016-17) learners improve in line with the College's Outcome Agreement targets and align more closely with sector averages.
- Review and revise its Access and Inclusion Strategy in order to continue the improvement of outcomes and experiences for specific learners groups e.g. care experienced and disabled learners.

3.2 – Equity, attainment and achievement for all learners

Over a 3-year period [AY2014-15 to AY2016-17] National Measures produced by the SFC highlight that the College's credit delivery for age group 16-19 [decrease of 2.2%], age group 20-24 [decrease of 2.2%], and for age group 25 and over [2.6% increase]. This may suggest school pupils are deciding to continue their studies at school or progressing directly into university or employment.

Areas of positive practice:

In many subject areas, learner outcomes have improved overall. This is demonstrated through:

- Learner success rates when combining both full-time FE and part-time FE have performed very well over the past three years with success rates at 75.22% compared to 73.64% in AY2015-16. An increase of 1.58%.
- At the time of writing, full-time FE programmes have a completed success rate of 66.62%, with a further 10.40% of learners completing with partial success. This represents improvements of 0.45% on the previous academic year however, down by 1.08% for AY2015-16 and short of the target set by the SFC.
- Part-time FE programmes, have a completed success rate of 80.49%, with a further 12.50% of learners completing with partial success. This represents improvements of 2.75% compared to the previous academic year, and a 3.12% compared to AY2015-16.
- Many curriculum teams have improved learner success rates for full-time FE programmes compared to the previous year however KPI's are still low in a small number of areas.
- The table below highlights Key Performance Indicators for the previous three years:

College				
FE FT	Early Withdrawal	Further Withdrawal	Partial Success	Completed Successfully
2015-16	6.87%	15.83%	9.78%	67.53%
2016-17	7.95%	15.51%	10.36%	66.17%
2017-18	8.11%	14.88%	10.46%	66.61%
FE PT	Early Withdrawal	Further Withdrawal	Partial Success	Completed Successfully
2015-16	1.52%	3.33%	18.91%	76.51%
2016-17	2.11%	4.18%	17.03%	76.88%
2017-18	3.85%	4.80%	12.50%	80.49%

- Over a 3-year period [AY2014-15 to AY2016-17], success rates for enrolled SIMD10 students for full-time FE have increased by 5.3% and above the national average for AY2016-17, while success rates for part-time HE are above the national average [3.3%].
- Success rates for Senior Phase pupils studying a full-time FE programme was 60.0% in AY2016-17 – an increase of 3.2% compared to the national average for the same year.
- Success rates for full-time HE care experienced students are above the national average for AY2016-17.
- National benchmarking data for AY2017-18 is not available until January 2019.

The College's retention rates for FE level programmes [full-time and part-time] combined have performed **very well** with a total of 11,727 students achieved a success rate of 87.39% for either Partial Success or Completed Successfully.

- Retention rates for full-time FE performed well as out of 4,069 full time FE enrolled students, 76.92% achieved either a Partial Success or Completed Successfully at the end of their course.

The College is **above** the national average for attainment rates on FE level programmes. This is demonstrated through:

- Two Schools out of the three School structure improving their success rates compared to the previous academic year.
- The School of Creative Industries and Business achieved success rates of 68.95%, an improvement of 1.03% compared to the previous academic year.
- The School of Engineering and Science Technologies achieved success rates of 66.00%, an improvement of 2.94% compared to the previous year.
- The School of Service Industries dropped by 2.1% from 66.63% in AY2016-17 to 64.53% in AY2017-18.
- Contributing factors include; Bursary Issues, Financial, Health Reasons and Employment.

The College's retention rates for HE level programmes have performed **very well** and are above the national average. This is demonstrated through:

- At the time of writing, full-time HE programmes have achieved a success rate of 74.15%, with a further 9.83% of learners completing with partial success. This is above the national average of AY2016-17.
- Part-time HE programmes have a completed success rate of 79.57%, with a further 15.03% of learners completing with partial success. This represents improvements of 1.5% compared to the previous academic year, and a 1.29% compared to AY2015-16
- A total of 2,647 learners achieved either a Partial Success or Completed Successfully rate of 84.05%.

College				
HE FT	Early Withdrawal	Further Withdrawal	Partial Success	Completed Successfully
AY2015-16	3.23%	10.94%	8.66%	75.60%
AY2016-17	3.93%	11.53%	9.08%	75.00%
AY2017-18	4.02%	12.00%	9.83%	74.15%
HE PT	Early Withdrawal	Further Withdrawal	Partial Success	Completed Successfully
AY2015-16	1.08%	2.89%	17.75%	78.28%
AY2016-17	0.62%	1.78%	19.62%	77.99%
AY2017-18	0.61%	4.38%	15.26%	79.40%

The College has performed **very well** and is above the national average for attainment rates on HE level programmes. This is demonstrate through:

- The School of Engineering and Science Technologies performed very well with success rates of 70.64% - an improvement of 3.76% compared to the previous year
- The School of Service Industries dropped by 1.99% from 73.68% in AY2016-17 to 71.76% in AY2017-18.
- The Schools of Creative Industries and Business dropped by 4.47% from 78.96% to 74.49% in AY2017-18.

Curriculum teams have clear and **effective** arrangements in place to incorporate Essential Skills development within programmes. The College also performs very well in relation to Essential Skills attainment levels. This is demonstrated through:

- Curriculum teams ensuring that Essential Skills are signposted across all teams and that contextualised materials are made available for learners to develop their skills.
- Improvements in attainment of core skills over time and for most learners this has helped them to achieve their programme with achievement rates of 88% for Communication, 93% for ICT, 88% for Numeracy, 89% for Problem Solving, and 92% for Working with Others.

Curriculum teams across all campuses support equity of success for learners **very well**. This is demonstrated through:

- All applicants being invited to interview regardless of background.
- Curriculum teams making good use of student data to ensure that no groups of learners are experiencing barriers to learning because of protected characteristics.
- Guidance staff who met with each learner identified as being at risk and in collaboration with the individual learner, formulating a plan to support them with their studies.

Areas for development:

However:

Although progress has been made to improve learner attainment, retention and success rates in AY2017-18, the College should:

- Improve learner success rates at full-time FE level by carrying out a robust analysis as to why students do not achieve their qualification in Care, Business and Engineering, and to put in place, strong interventions to support students achieving once they reach the end of their course.
- Curriculum teams should improve learner success rates at full-time FE level using benchmarking data especially where KPI learner success rates are high in other colleges.
- Curriculum teams should improve their retention rates of full-time FE programmes through early interventions in reducing Early Withdrawal and Further Withdrawal rates.
- Retention and attainment rates should be improved through more robust and thorough extended support plans that will support the College in meeting its target set by the SFC.
- Curriculum teams should improve equity of success for all learners by reducing gender under-representation in specific subject areas.
- Over a 3-year period [AY2014-15 to AY2016-17], success rates for enrolled SIMD students for full-time HE have decreased by 5.7% and below the national average by 2.2%, and requires the College to carry out a detailed analysis of why learners within lower SIMD areas are not achieving.
- Over a 2-year period [AY2014-15 to AY2015-16], success rates for full-time FE care experienced students decreased by 13.4% and is 17.4% well below the national average for AY2016-17, and required the College to carry out a robust analysis as to why they do not achieve their qualification, and to implement action plans to support students throughout the academic year.

DELIVERY OF LEARNING AND SERVICES TO SUPPORT LEARNING
How good is the quality of the provision and services we deliver?

2.2 – Curriculum

Areas of positive practice:

The College has in place **effective** arrangements in the design and development of its curriculum. The curriculum and range of provision are based on analysis of a range of data, and takes account of national priorities and DYW when planning the curriculum. This is demonstrated through:

- Well-established Curriculum Area Development Plans that incorporate Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) activity across all curriculum areas.
- Curriculum teams engage with the Schools Liaison Team when planning their curriculum and this has led to 40 schools across the region gaining College experience away from school.
- Curriculum teams offer an extensive range of Senior Phase programmes including Foundation Apprenticeships and these offer full progression opportunities for school pupils to extend their study onto NC or HN where appropriate.

Curriculum teams use Labour Market Intelligence [LMI] **well** to plan its curriculum. This is demonstrated through:

- Effective curriculum planning processes with the course portfolio informed by utilising Economic Modelling Software [EMS] reports to inform curriculum planning to help meet local industry needs.
- Consideration is given to DYW and SDS strategies that may influence curriculum portfolio and these are evaluated at the end of each academic year.
- Curriculum teams consider changes to their portfolio based on regional trends resulting from the Regional Skills Strategy.

Curriculum teams elicit and incorporate the views of employers and industry **very well** to improve the curriculum. This is demonstrated through:

- Curriculum teams in partnership with industry, stakeholders, employers, charities and voluntary sectors, evidencing a wide range of activities, projects and interventions to support curriculum planning, learning and teaching.
- Curriculum teams involve employers and stakeholders in Course Committee Meetings, seeking the views on current delivery and any potential changes to the curriculum in the future.
- Curriculum teams engaging with university partners throughout the academic year in looking for ways to improve the curriculum.

Curriculum teams incorporate and plan work-based learning activities to develop employability. This is demonstrated through:

- Work placements are arranged in collaboration with employers. This has allowed learners to be assessed in the workplace and feedback is given to both learner and employer.
- The number of full-time learners with substantial work placement experience as part of their programme of study increased from 15.5% in AY2015-16 to 18.4% in AY2016-17 however, is below the national average by 6% for AY2016-17.
- Many teams deliver the Foundation Apprenticeship frameworks to school pupils allowing curriculum teams to liaise with employers in setting the work-based learning activities for the second year of the apprenticeships. These are assessed in the workplace and give learners opportunities to develop meaningful employability skills.

Curriculum teams have in place very effective arrangements that enable learners to acquire knowledge, understanding and skills that prepare learners **very well** for employment. This is demonstrated through:

- Curriculum teams ensure that programmes are balanced between vocational specific qualifications and subjects, and core and essential skills with most teams offering placement opportunities for learners to develop their employability skills. Feedback from employers is very positive.
- Curriculum teams ensure that employability skills are incorporated into course unit and overview planning documents.
- Feedback from learners' evidence show high levels of satisfaction across all teams in supporting learners in developing knowledge and skills for the workplace.

Curriculum teams incorporate and plan essential skills and career management services **very well** and this helps to support learners with employability and progression to further learning. This is demonstrated through:

- Clear learner pathways that support students on their learner journey from introductory programmes progressing to levels 5 and 6, from levels 5 and 6 into HN provision, and then onto either employment or degree level.
- Course and Unit Overviews signpost employability and progression opportunities that support learners as part of their learning journey.
- Programme Delivery Guidelines incorporate Essential and Core Skills and these are planned in all subjects.
- The College holds careers events each year where employers, universities and professional associations provide information and guidance to learners who are thinking about their next step.
- Curriculum teams work very well in partnership with universities that support progression into Higher Education and almost all HND learners progressing to a third year of a degree programme.
- The Degree-link programmes which generated significant levels of learner progression with advanced standing from College and direct entry into year 3 of a degree at Robert Gordon's University [RGU].

Curriculum teams plan and participate **very well** in CPD activities to meet College, Sector Skills Council, Awarding Body and Qualification requirements. This is demonstrated through:

- Curriculum staff have engaged **very well** in Staff Development Days and this has allowed teams to share good practice and discuss standardisation across all campuses.
- CPD requirements which are discussed during one-to-one I-Con training with staff undertaking a minimum of 36 hours of mandatory activity.

In many cases, curriculum teams use learner performance data **well** at programme and unit levels to improve learner performance rates. This is demonstrated through:

- Curriculum staff reviewing performance data at team level and with learners. Unit performance and attainment levels are reviewed, feedback is given by learners, and through Annual Programme Reviews, and actions are derived to improve the learner experience.

Areas for development:

However:

Although progress has been made to improve the use of Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) data and employability skills, the College should:

- Ensure curriculum teams undertake a more robust approach to analysing LMI that should help improve the curriculum planning process.
- Ensure curriculum teams improve employability skills within their curriculum areas by exploring all the options that are available through the Work Placement Standards Guidelines produced by the SFC.
- Ensure that curriculum teams undertake a more robust approach in the use of performance data to support improvements to learner performance rates.

2.3 – Learning, teaching and assessment

Areas of positive practice:

The College has in place a wide range of high-quality resources across all its campuses and all learners make very good use of these to develop the skills they need to further achieve their learning. This is demonstrated through:

- Curriculum staff gaining up-to-date subject specific knowledge through regular CPD activities whereby each staff complete a minimum of 36 hours CPD each academic year.
- Curriculum staff maintain links with their profession and use contacts very well to secure local employers to attend lectures and workshops to support learning.

Curriculum staff adjust their learning and teaching approaches **very well** to meet different learner needs. This is demonstrated through:

- Curriculum teams work well with learners to plan for learning by providing topic choices, group work and where appropriate, staff will receive feedback at the end of the lesson to determine what worked well and what could be improved.
- Curriculum teams contextualise learning activities very well and this helps promote learner understanding and enhances the learner experience.
- All curriculum staff use a wide range of teaching approaches very well and this supports learners in developing the skills, knowledge and understanding to engage in the subject area.
- Curriculum staff use their subject knowledge very well to motivate and engage learners.
- In some curriculum teams, staff engage well with learners by encouraging peer learning in the classroom.

Curriculum staff use the College's resources and digital technologies **very well** to support and enhance purposeful learning. This is demonstrated through:

- Curriculum teams support and enhance the learning experience very well by utilising two showcase classrooms and feedback from staff and students is very positive.
- Curriculum staff are skilled and confident in the use of digital technology and engage very well with learners in making lessons relevant and interesting.
- Curriculum teams use Turnitin very well to reduce the need for paper-based assessment submissions.
- Curriculum teams engage very well with the Digital Futures Team to help identify the range of digital tools that is available to help support any further enhancements to learning.

Curriculum staff reflect on the outcomes of their learning and teaching approaches **very well** to continuously improve the learner experience. This is demonstrated through:

- Curriculum staff reflecting very well on the outcomes of lesson observations taking recommendations into account and addressing any actions required.
- All curriculum staff reflect on feedback provided from learners very well, sharing good practices and making improvements where required.
- Curriculum teams embrace a quality culture around reflective practice and self-evaluation and these are discussed throughout the academic year.
- Curriculum staff ensure the internal verification processes are consistent and Faculty Managers and Curriculum Quality Managers engage well with staff in providing feedback.
- Curriculum staff adapt their lessons based on the needs, behaviours, interests and the learning style of the learner in their classes. This can be in terms of pace, methods of delivery, classroom activities and content.
- Curriculum staff deliver a variety of learning and teaching methods very well to meet the different learner needs through effective lesson planning.
- Curriculum staff use learner feedback very well and adjust teaching approaches where required.
- Curriculum staff review performance data well throughout the academic year. Unit performance and attainment levels are reviewed, and actions are derived to improve the learner experience.

Areas for development:

However:

Although progress has been made to introduce more dynamic approaches to teaching, this is yet to show the impact in some areas. The College should therefore:

- Ensure the learner experience be further improved by encouraging the Students' Association and class representatives to carry out peer-learning across all curriculum areas.
- Ensure that the learning and teaching approaches are improved by introducing more dynamic approaches that will improve the learning experience.

2.4 – Services to support learning

Areas of positive practice:

To provide learners with swift access to support facilities, College staff identify, and act upon, the support needs of learners quickly and **very well**. This is demonstrated through:

- Extensive internal review activities; the rapid, in-year, implementation of review report recommendations and the introduction of new structures, roles and approaches for improving the support of students.
- The College having effective arrangements in place that allow students to meet staff on a regular basis and this gives learners the opportunity to discuss progress and support needs with staff.
- Apprentice reviews which allow for learners undertaking MA provision to discuss their progress, and seek support, if required.
- The Learning Resources Team who have provided learners with access to a wide range of digital services to support learning, teaching and assessment and to ensure that students have every opportunity to achieve successfully.
- The creation of a Student Advice Centres for all main campuses which have assisted the College in its ambition to provide learners with better and more responsive support services.
- The College Learner Development Team, and other College support teams, who have established effective networks with external agencies in order to support learners with specific needs.
- The College's approaches to supporting and inducting care experienced students which ensure that such learners become familiar, in advance of their course starting, of the support available to them.
- The existence of 'Transition Days' which are held over the summer months for a range of students with additional support needs.
- Drop-in sessions and workshops for key skills such as numeracy, maths, communication and IT which are tailored to individual learning needs.

College staff work **very well** to adjust support approaches to take account of different learner needs and circumstances. This is demonstrated through:

- Changes which were instigated as a consequence of support-related internal reviews and which have provided more targeted and responsive support for those at greatest risk of not progressing.
- Arrangements made for BCD-related programmes which offer in-year, bespoke curriculum and support adjustments which enable learners with significant support needs to progress.
- The flexible design of College's Foundation Apprenticeship offer for Engineering which affords learners opportunities to gain a 'head-start' for further and earlier progression into employment.
- The ongoing, year-on-year enhancements to services which, support learner induction and admissions process.
- The extension of the College's 'one-stop shop', Student Advice Centre model to all main campuses.
- The provision, through the Student Advice Centres, of a unified, 'one-stop shop' student support service which simplifies and enhances the pre- and post-enrolment advice and support experience for learners.
- College staff who work regularly and well with learner representatives and actively engage with learners in evaluating additional services to support learning.
- College staff and students collaborating on digital, learner-centred projects, aimed at enhancing service delivery and the learner experience e.g. the MyNESCol student portal project.
- The consultation with, and collaboration between, support teams and representatives from the Students' Association on estates-related projects and service delivery projects e.g. Student Advice Centres.

- The well-embedded and effective arrangements for supporting the development of digital learning and skills through the Digital Futures initiative and Bring Your Own Device (BYOD).
- Cross-team collaboration which has assisted the development of additional, digital learning-related enhancements for services to students e.g. the multi-site student-run IT helpdesk.

College staff reflect **very well** on the outcomes of their approaches to continuously improve the learning experience and use learner performance data (recruitment, attendance, retention and attainment) **well** to make changes to improve learner performance rates. This is demonstrated through:

- The extensive amount of internal review activity and data analysis undertaken during AY2017-18 in order to improve all support services to existing and prospective students.
- Well-established support team self-evaluation approaches which routinely seek feedback from learners and internal customers through established approaches e.g. online surveys, focus groups, face-to-face interviews, etc.
- The extensive and comprehensive work undertaken by support team managers in the reviewing of both support for learning as well as pre-entry support and on-course support for students.
- College managers who regularly liaise with instructors and assessors to ensure that opportunities to improve experiences and outcomes for employed learners and employers are considered and implemented.
- Feedback from learners attending the Scottish Maritime Academy which is routinely positive and is used by the teaching staff to inform future delivery.
- The SDS Contracts Team which regularly evaluates candidate reviews and outcomes to ensure that opportunities to improve College delivery to apprentices are taken.
- Outcomes from programmes such as Project Search, Princes Trust and REACH which are evaluated jointly with partner organisations in order to facilitate year-on-year improvements to the courses offered.
- The use by curriculum staff, when completing Annual Programme Reviews, of performance data which helps aid discussion and action for improvement.
- The established collation and analysis, by some support teams, of KPI data which informs service improvements for students.
- Staff use performance data well to help devise action plans to support early retention, with the intended effect of leading to the improvement of key performance indicators.

Areas for development:

However:

Although extensive work and change has been undertaken and implemented to services to support learning the College should:

- Undertake an evaluation of the review-related, organisational changes implemented for AY2018-19 to establish if student access and support services improvements have been realised.
- Ensure it continues to build relationships with external agencies in order that learners with more complex needs are supported as fully as possible.
- Develop a more structured and targeted support approach for those learners exhibiting poor mental health.
- Raise awareness of safeguarding and child protection through College team meetings.
- Work with SDS managers to ensure that College ambitions to improve advice, information, support and progression for all learners are realised through closer collaborative working arrangements.

LEADERSHIP AND QUALITY CULTURE

How good is our leadership and approach to improvement?

1.1 – Governance and leadership of change

Over a 3-year period [AY2014-15 to AY2016-17] National Measures highlight that the College's credit delivery for age group 16-19 [decreased by 2.2%], age group 20-24 [a decrease of 2.2%], and for age group 25 and over [a 2.6% increase]. This may suggest school pupils are deciding to continue their studies at school or progressing directly into university or employment.

Areas of positive practice:

The Regional Board and managers across the College take account, **very well**, of local, regional and national priorities to develop College strategies. This is demonstrated through:

- An extensive programme of stakeholder engagement with employers, public sector partners, staff and students to create and publish a new strategic plan and set of supporting strategies for AY2018-19.
- The creation of a set of strategic objectives linked to national Scottish Government and SFC priorities and local CPP priorities for Aberdeen City and Shire.
- The volume and proportion of Credits delivered to learners enrolled on STEM courses in AY2016-17 was 30.10% with an increase of 5.3% on the previous year.

Curriculum teams reflect on priorities **very well** by taking an evidence-based approach using labour market intelligence when planning programmes. This is demonstrated through:

- The use of the Regional Skills Strategy for the creation of Curriculum Area Development Plans.
- The attendance of key staff members at local, regional and national events and meetings with external stakeholders.

The College takes the ambitions of DYW into account **very well** and has well-established partnerships with SDS, Local Authorities, schools and key stakeholders. This is demonstrated through:

- The College is proactively involved in improving the focus and prominence of DYW activities on CPPs, the Regional Economic Strategy Group and the DYWNES.
- The College, in partnership with SDS, has instigated the creation of a Regional Learning and Skills Partnership which, amongst other activities, drives further the ambitions of DYW regionally.
- The College leads on the DYW Regional Collaborative Group involving key stakeholders including SDS, LA's, Universities, AGCC, SQA and SFC. This group provides collaborative leadership and each partner has played a key role in identifying ways of delivering benefits to young people.
- Curriculum design has taken into account local labour market intelligence, requests from schools and pupils and College resources.
- Courses are aimed at pupils in S4, 5 and 6 and are designed to support development of essential skills and knowledge required by employers through delivery of accredited awards ranging from NPAs, City and Guilds Awards, Foundation Apprenticeships, Skills for Work Awards and Highers.

The College has in place a **robust** system of target setting, linked to Outcome Agreement targets, which is monitored at faculty and course level through the self-evaluation system. These targets are both realistic and stretching. This is demonstrated through:

- The creation of a set of Power BI data reports used by curriculum teams as key evidence which is analysed as part of the Annual Programme Review process.
- Effective planning for improvement through Faculty Level Evaluative Reports and Enhancement Plans.

- The linking of targets to ambitious targets contained in the Outcome Agreement.

The Regional Board provides **very effective** strategic support and challenge and regularly reviews performance and progress against outcomes leading to balanced and accurate self-evaluation reports. This ensures that high quality provision is maintained and that improvement is ongoing. This is demonstrated through:

- Clearly identified committee structures and responsibilities.
- Recently reviewed operation of Board and Committee Meetings and a revised approach to focused performance based reporting on quality of provision, achievement of targets and financial performance.
- Internal and external monitoring of Board effectiveness and appropriate training and development for Board Members.

The Regional Board has built **highly effective** relationships with the Students' Association leading to an improved understanding of the issues affecting learners at a Board level and strengthening the impact of the learner voice in decision making to improve outcomes.

This is demonstrated through:

- Students' Association representation on Board Committees and key College Committees.
- Inclusion of a standing item for the Students' Association at Board Strategy Events and each meeting of the Curriculum & Quality Committee.
- Monitoring of student satisfaction and use of student feedback to improve quality of services with 91% of learners satisfied with their College experience.

Leadership and management in the College is **strong and effective** and is focused on the improvement of the learner experience and outcomes. This is demonstrated through:

- The effective operation of a new College Leadership Team which is focussed on strategic development, collaboration and scrutiny of performance against agreed targets.
- The development of a robust evaluation report and enhancement plan which leads to effective planning for improved learner outcomes and which addresses areas of weakness.

The College has developed **strong, collaborative** relationships with partners through its on-going activities within Community Planning Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership and the Regional Economic Strategy Group. This enables managers in the College to be responsive to the needs of the region when planning provision across the areas served by the College. This is demonstrated through:

- Membership on local CPPs at Regional Chair and Senior management level, the creation of a regional skills strategy, membership of Opportunity North East and the development of the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership driven by the College.

Areas for development:

However:

Although the College achieved the core credit target of 135,126 for AY2017-18 there was a shortfall of 1,895 credits against the ESF target of 3,035 therefore:

- The Senior Management Team and the Regional Board should maintain a strong focus on College credit activity targets to assess risk and to ensure appropriate mitigating action is taken.
- The volume and proportion of credits delivered to male and female learners on STEM courses is 86.4% [male], and 13.46 [female], and the College should continue to try and close this gap.

Although College targets are realistic and stretching, in some cases not all targets are met each year and therefore:

- Performance against early withdrawal targets should be improved by curriculum and support teams working closely together in identifying those students at risk quickly after their enrolment.

Although the College has strong relationships with a wide range of external stakeholders this can be improved, therefore:

- The College should continue to deepen and strengthen relationships with employers through the delivery of the revised Business Development Strategy.
- The sharing of information by some managers could be improved to ensure all staff are well informed of local, regional and national priorities.

1.4 – Leadership of evaluation leading to improvement

Areas of positive practice:

Curriculum Managers direct and support staff **very well** in engaging in the evaluation to plan for improvement. This is demonstrated through:

- Faculty and Curriculum Quality Managers embracing a culture around reflective practice and evaluation through Annual Programme Reviews to discuss course design, performance and achievement with learner representatives.
- All managers review their provision very well through discussions with staff in planning for improvement, analysing survey results and implementing the action points from internal reviews. These lead to improvements in almost all areas.

Curriculum Managers ensure that evaluative processes are led **well** and these help to improve outcomes in many teams. This is demonstrated through:

- Managers using previous student performance information and trends well in analysing factors influencing outcomes and to plan for improvement.
- All Faculty and Curriculum Quality Managers ensure enhancement plans from self-evaluation activities are actioned throughout the academic year and this supports improvement for learners.
- All Curriculum Quality Managers evaluate feedback from internal audits and address any actions to support improvement.
- All Faculty Managers and Curriculum Quality Managers use feedback from external visits to share improvement across the faculty and address any actions to improve the learner experience.
- In most cases managers analyse KPI trend data well to determine what areas are below targets and these are shared with curriculum teams.

Most Support Team Managers are directed and supported **well** to use corporate data well in order to evaluate and plan for improvement. This is demonstrated through:

- All Support Team Managers review and evaluate their particular areas of service delivery through an established and ever-improving process of self-evaluation.
- The creation of College Action Teams has assisted Support Team Managers to focus on corporate data in order to plan for improvement.

All curriculum staff and learners engage **very well** in the review and planning processes. This is demonstrated through:

- Course Committee Meetings are held twice a year with learner representatives to support the evaluation of programmes, feedback on action points raised by learners and identify any further recommendations for improvement.
- The College's Students' Association engage very well with academic teams through the Peer-Led Reviews and feedback is given to curriculum teams that may help inform future planning.
- Curriculum teams offer a broad range of School/College programmes that fully meet the DYW agenda ranging from taster programmes, Higher and Advanced Higher programmes, and programmes at S5 and S6 leading into Higher National qualifications.

All curriculum teams incorporate DYW activity into their planning process **very well** through well-developed Curriculum Area Development Plans. This is demonstrated through:

- The School Liaison Manager works very well with all schools across the region in planning activity and working closely with curriculum teams to implement improvements agreed.
- Faculty Managers and Curriculum Quality Managers work very well in planning the School/College provision supporting over 1,300 school pupils each academic year.
- Some curriculum teams engage well with schools in subject specific areas and this helps to inform the curriculum planning process.

Areas for development:

However:

Although good progress has made on the leadership of evaluation leading to improvement, the College should:

- Engage directly with a number of schools as part of the planning and evaluation process.
- Ensure a more detailed and robust analysis of processes used for KPI trends in some curriculum teams and compare with national benchmarking data.
- Ensure some support team self-evaluation reports be more fully developed to reflect, more broadly, deeply and realistically, areas for improvement.
- Consider developing a 'live' dashboard for support data which allows managers to take more immediate action in order to improve outcomes and experiences for students.

Enhancement Plan 2017-18 – Progress Update

The following provides a progress update against each of the areas for development identified in the College's Enhancement Plan for 2017-18:

Leadership and Quality Culture					
Area for Development (Developmental Driver)	Impact (intended difference to be made)	Planned Actions for Improvement	Deadline	Developmental Driver Code	Update & Evaluation
The Regional Board should build on its existing Governance and Leadership in developing a shared vision for change and improvement	Improved effectiveness of the College and the way it meets its objectives	Further development on performance against a set of key strategic indicators and outcome agreement targets	July 2018	A1	The Regional Board has developed a new strategic plan containing a new set of strategic indicators. This was published in August 2018.
		Further develop strategies for engagement with staff and external stakeholders	July 2018	A1	A wide range of stakeholder engagement took place during AY2017-18 including strategic stakeholder dinners, whole College staff engagement events and strategic discussions with student groups.
		Improve understanding of the College's Vision and Values for non-promoted staff	July 2018	A1	In adopting the new Strategic Plan, the Board refreshed the College's Vision statement, reflecting upon the progress that has been made since the Vision was first set at the time of merger. Further work will be undertaken during 2018-19 as an annual priority with managers and staff on the promotion of the vision and values.
Although effective arrangements are in place for improving learning and teaching, in some areas these arrangements have yet to deliver the improvement in learner outcomes required by the College	Strengthen links with employers to influence a more systematic approach to employer engagement and curriculum	Curriculum teams to review the effectiveness of relationships with employers that will facilitate greater opportunities for employers to influence curriculum content and delivery	July 2018	AP8	Curriculum teams have engaged with employers to incorporate their views on the curriculum offer, product and delivery across a wide range of curriculum and subject areas. Further work will be undertaken during AY2018-19 as part of the Curriculum Review and Business Development Strategy.
		Provide more CLPL opportunities for extending digital capacity for staff as part of the Digital Futures project.	July 2018	AP8	Significant online self-study learning pathway resources are available to all staff through Lynda.com and supported by the Digital Futures Team who have delivered over 120 Digital Workshops to the majority of staff.

		Deliver a revised Admissions Policy and Procedure in line with the Internal Review	July 2018	AP9	Since October 2017 extensive activity has been undertaken to improve the admission approaches of the College. A new procedure was implemented and further review and evaluation of the this is due to be concluded imminently. It is expected that a further and refined version of the Admissions Policy and Procedure will be available by the end of October 2018.
Further engagement between support and curriculum teams is required to ensure that the College's ambitions for improving its services are extended to part-time learners and commercial clients	Improved quality of service to all learners regardless of mode of delivery	Review of processes for planning and improving services to support learners involving both support and curriculum areas	July 2018	AP9	The College has completed a restructure of both curriculum and support areas together with internal reviews of support areas to improve the quality of service to learners.
		Service teams to make more use of qualitative feedback that will enhance the service delivery to learners and internal customers	July 2018	AP9	Significant levels of qualitative data were gathered and analysed during the internal reviews for support services. This feedback from a variety of stakeholders, internal external to College, has helped with the restructuring of support services mentioned above.
Some action plans for improvement are not yet impacting on improving outcomes for learners	Stronger partnership working that will have a positive impact on learners, success and achievements	More effective collaboration between the College and Students' Association (SA) to ensure the new quality arrangements and The Framework for the Development of Strong and Effective College Students' Associations in Scotland are fully aligned	July 2018	AP10	The SA is now well-represented on various College Action Teams. Consequently, its representatives are now better placed to assist the College in improving its services for students.
		A more consistent approach to carrying out a robust analysis of intelligence and data sharing by curriculum teams with learner representatives for continuous improvement	July 2018	AP10	The College has developed a range of live data through the Power BI project for curriculum teams and this will be shared with learner representatives in AY2018-19.

		In partnership with the Students' Association and learner representatives, further develop existing processes in taking into account the views of learners to inform improvement	July 2018	AP10	The College has a well-established Student Engagement Enhancement Group with a clear focus in further enhancing processes involving the SA, Faculty and Class Representatives
		Deliver a revised Admissions Policy and Procedure in line with the Internal Review	July 2018	AP9	It is expected that a further and refined version of the Admissions Policy and Procedure will be available by the end of October 2018
Delivery of Learning and Services to Support Learning					
Area for Development (Developmental Driver)	Impact (intended difference to be made)	Planned Actions for Improvement	Deadline	Developmental Driver Code	Update & Evaluation
Further work is required to ensure the engagement of learners in awareness raising, and in the development of approaches, for safeguarding	Reduce risk of injury to staff, learners and other stakeholders	The College to further develop a variety of regional partnership initiatives relating to safeguarding	July 2018	A1	The College has been actively involved in developing a safeguarding initiative re: awareness raising and prevention of knife crime with Police Scotland. It is also working within CDN's Safeguarding CoP to share, develop and implement best practice.
		Greater engagement with the Police Scotland-initiated approach to dealing with 'Weapons Incidents involving Young People Under 18'	July 2018	A1	The College has played an active role on the Contest North East Multi-Agency Group and the multiagency Prevent Delivery Group which has established cross-agency mechanisms to ensure compliance with the Prevent Duty by sharing and pulling together resources, best practice and expertise.
A few programmes do not take sufficient account of the needs of employers and relevant data sources	Improved match between curriculum provision and industry needs	Improved input of employers to curriculum planning across all curriculum teams	July 2018	AP4	The College has strong industry engagement in all curriculum areas with a wide range of activities, projects and interventions to support curriculum planning, learning and teaching. Through the College's Curriculum Review and Future Campuses workstreams, further work will be undertaken during AY2018-19.
		Development and implementation of the College's Business Development Strategy	May 2018	AP4	The College's Business Development Strategy is due to be considered by the SMT on 04 September 2018, and will then be considered

		Curriculum teams to make full use of external data to plan and design curriculum programmes	July 2018	AP4	for approval by the Curriculum & Quality Committee on 26 September 2018. Curriculum teams make very good use of labour market data [EMSI] when designing new programmes as part of the Curriculum Planning process.
Further develop strategies to involve learners more effectively in evaluation of learning and teaching and ensure that, where learners express concerns about aspects of their programmes, staff consistently respond well to deal with the issues	Improved learner experience and outcomes	Further develop the selection and training of learner representatives that will enhance the use of the learner voice	February 2018	A1	Significant improvements have been made, by the SA, in the selection and training of Class Representatives. Whilst this has further enhanced the breadth and depth of the learner voice within College, more targeted work needs to be undertaken to ensure that the learner voice within all campuses is as effective and proportionate as it can be. Further support from curriculum managers will be required to realise this ambition.
		Development of digital skills for staff to ensure all learners have access to high quality enhanced learning	July 2018	A1	The Digital Futures project has supported teaching and support staff to undertake CPD sessions and has allowed staff to formally reflect on their digital capabilities.
		Gather information through Lesson Observations effectively to share good practice and drive wider achievement	July 2018	A1	The College has very strong processes in place through its formal lesson observations for both permanent and part-time staff which reflect a high quality of learning and teaching that is taking place.
Further work is required in the areas of admissions policy, application, funding and communication	Improved admissions process	Implementation of the internal review on Admissions, Funding and Applications	June 2018	AP9	Please see above.
		Significantly reduces the waiting times of students awaiting funding	July 2018	AP9	As a consequence of the internal review of Student Access and Support, significant improvements have now been implemented to the College's student funding procedure and for supporting students and prospective students wishing to apply for support funds. Students can apply sooner; can be assisted

		A phased three approach to identify any duplication of services	July 2018	AP9	more fully with required documentation and will receive their awards far sooner than in previous years. Duplication of services, particularly in relation to student advice, information and support have now been identified and eliminated through the implementation of new, post-Review, student support roles, structures and services.
Initial course KPIs for Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) programmes suggest that improvements to outcomes for both retention and attainment are required	Improved outcomes for retention and attainment	Review of the FA frameworks to determine whether correct content is on offer	July 2018	AP9	Curriculum teams have reviewed the FA frameworks and have made some adjustments that should improve outcomes.
		Review of strategies that will support pupils on their chosen framework	July 2018	AP9	Curriculum teams in partnership with the Schools Liaison Team have put in place further support methods for pupils enrolled on the FA programmes. This will be tested in AY2018-19.
		Further work with SDS, employers and schools to encourage pupils to continue with framework	July 2018	AP9	The Curriculum Design has taken into account local labour market intelligence, and has engaged with SDS, employers, schools and pupils to outline the benefits of progressing to the second year of the frameworks.
Not all College curriculum managers and teams engage consistently and effectively with local employers	Stronger partnerships that will help raise College profile	Curriculum and Business Community Development working together to further develop partnerships with employers	July 2018	AP4	The advent of the FWDF has assisted the College to develop enhanced links with employers. Whilst the generation of such links has been largely due to the efforts of the BCD Team, the delivery of FWDF activity by curriculum teams will assist the College further in its ambitions to develop relationships with employers and build opportunity for commercialisation.
		Further develop the role of the College as a lead partner within Aberdeenshire Community Planning	July 2018	AP4	The College has developed its role as a lead partner within Community Planning Aberdeen. It is active in addressing LOIP priorities and is well represented within the CPA's Board, Executive, Aberdeen Prospers and Integrated Children Services Groups. Further work is required to cement a more defined and meaningful College presence and contribution

					within Aberdeenshire Community Partnership which, in comparison to CPA, is less well developed.
Outcomes and Impact					
Area for Development (Developmental Driver)	Impact (intended difference to be made)	Planned Actions for Improvement	Deadline	Developmental Driver Code	Update & Evaluation
Further work is required to ensure that outcomes improve for learners with disabilities	Closing of attainment gap for learners with declared disabilities that will assist in Improvement of outcomes for learners	Review of strategies to target learner support more effectively that will support all learning regardless of their disability	July 2018	AP5	Comprehensive Internal Reviews for both student learning and student access and support identified the need to improve outcomes and experiences for learners with disabilities, as well as other 'at risk' learners e.g. care experienced and SIMD 10. Accordingly, support roles, structures and services have now been changed to ensure that a whole College model of student support provides better and more targeted support to areas of greatest need. The College will be conducting an on-going evaluation of impact of these changes and monitoring the success of them in relation to the student experiences and OA targets. The College is also committed to reviewing its Access and Inclusion Strategy in light of changes by April 2019.
		A detailed analysis of equality data to be carried out by all curriculum teams and address areas where outcomes are below targets	July 2018	AP5	Equality and OA Intensification measures data are now available live to promoted staff. Through the Faculty Reviews, Curriculum Managers evaluate data and identify actions for improvement in addressing the attainment gaps and gender imbalances.
A more consistent and targeted approach is required to meet the ambitions of the SFC and College's Gender Action Plan	Reduce Gender imbalance in Computing, Care, Engineering, Construction, and Hair & Beauty	Implement strategies as identified through the collaboration with the Equality Challenge Unit	July 2018	AP5	The College's involvement with the ECU on the Attracting Diversity Projects for Care and Computing was concluded in June 2018. Curriculum Teams continue to build on the work relating to these reports in order to improve gender balance on key curriculum course.
		A targeted marketing campaign to raise awareness	July 2018	AP5	The College has been working actively with Schools, including younger pupils, to promote

		of 'Women in IT', and 'Men into Care'			culture change around gendered career thinking, however, further work will be undertaken during AY2018-19 in recognising that there remains gender under-representation as identified in its Gender Action Plan in attempting to increase the number of Men into Care, and Women into STEM
Across some programmes, particularly SCQF level 4 provision, withdrawal rates are high and too few learners succeed and progress into further learning or employment	Incremental improvement in attainment across all three Schools	<p>Special measures to be introduced to support subject areas where KPIs are challenging</p> <p>Review of curriculum design to identify units that are causing those areas to have lower KPIs</p> <p>Curriculum teams to make better use of national benchmarking data in subject areas</p> <p>A more focussed approach to support all learners achieving their core skills unit</p> <p>Deliver a revised Admissions Policy and Procedure in line with the Internal Review</p>	<p>December 2017</p> <p>July 2018</p> <p>July 2018</p> <p>July 2018</p> <p>July 2018</p>	<p>A1</p> <p>A1</p> <p>A1</p> <p>A1</p> <p>AP9</p>	<p>The Special Measures report produced has identified areas where KPI's are low and were explored through the College's Performance Reviews process. Further work will be undertaken by curriculum teams in AY2018-19 to address poor performing areas.</p> <p>The Internal Review for Care was completed at the end of AY2017-18 and has identified a number of actions to take forward in addressing low KPI's.</p> <p>The SFC has made available a range of KPI data and these have been added to COLIN. Further benchmarking work will be undertaken by teams in AY2018-19 where subject areas are below national average.</p> <p>Core and Essential Skills is being delivered by specialised teaching staff, in meaningful vocational contexts and this has allowed learners to have regular access to dedicated Core Skills staff. As a result, KPI's in Communication, Numeracy and Higher English have improved on the previous year.</p> <p>Please see above.</p>

SIMD figures are not analysed efficiently to ensure learners from lower SIMD areas are achieving	Achieve Regional Outcome Agreement targets as agreed with SFC	A detailed analysis of SIMD to be carried out to identify areas of low attainment and ensure effective support measures are in place	July 2018	A1	Baseline data is readily available that allow curriculum teams to undertake a detailed analysis of SIMD data for their subject areas. Further work will be undertaken during AY2018-19 in addressing the attainment gaps.
--	---	--	-----------	----	---

Enhancement Plan 2018-19 to 2020-2021

This three year Enhancement Plan details actions, and their intended impact on College performance, to address the areas for development identified following the Evaluative Report. This Plan shall be reviewed annually.

It should be noted that this Enhancement Plan identifies areas for development for all twelve quality indicators from the Quality Framework - How good is our college ? - whereas the Evaluative Report, in line with SFC guidance, focuses on seven of the Framework's quality indicators.

Developmental Drivers are coded using the following:

Area for Development - Reference from Evaluative Report section (e.g.1.1)

Annual Priority - Reference number from Annual Priority Document 2018-19 (e.g. AP1)

Strategic Objective - Reference number from Strategic Plan 2018-2021 (e.g. SO1.1)

Supporting Strategy - Reference relevant Strategy

Re-establishing a previous strength or as a new development - Reference back to Education Scotland Quality *How Good Is Our College? 2016*

Strategic Risk - Reference risk from Strategic Risk Register (e.g. R2.1)

Equality - Reference the Equality Outcomes and/or Equality Enhancement Plan

Outcomes and impact				
Area for Development (Developmental Driver)	Impact (intended difference to be made)	Planned Actions for Improvement	Deadline	Developmental Driver Code
The Regional Board should maintain a strong focus on College credit activity targets to assess risk and to ensure appropriate mitigating action is taken.	Reduce the risk and impact associated with not achieving credit target.	Revised reporting process to be created. Risk-based approach to reporting at key milestone dates.	September 2018	1.1
The Regional Board should develop a systematic plan for engaging with staff and external stakeholders.	Improve the Regional Boards ability to respond to the needs of learners and external stakeholders.	Regional Board Annual Engagement Plan to be created.	October 2018	1.1
The College should continue to deepen and strengthen relationships with employers through the delivery of the revised Business Development Strategy.	To improve the responsiveness and relevance of the College offer and to support economic growth in the region.	Delivery of revised Business Development Strategy.	July 2019	1.1 AP3
		Development of College STEM Strategy and achievement of STEM Assured Status.	December 2018	
		Delivery of FWDF activity for 2018/19.	July 2019	

		Closer working relationship with ASET.		
CPD Plans should be developed in line with new strategic objectives and annual priorities to ensure delivery of improvements.	To enable all staff to be well prepared and well supported to delivery excellence in learning and teaching and in services to support learning.	<p>Revised annual CPD plan to be prepared.</p> <p>All staff conference to be held in January 2019 focused on sharing good practice and innovation.</p> <p>Specific activities to be developed in relation to leadership development, equalities and respect and mental health.</p> <p>Directors of Learning to lead on revised frameworks for management and for supporting students.</p>	<p>December 2018</p> <p>October 2018</p>	<p>1.2</p> <p>AP4</p>
New curriculum management structures and revised approaches to student support should be used to ensure better outcomes for learners.	To improve alignment between strategic priorities and core activity.	<p>Whole-college approach to supporting students to be delivered.</p> <p>Dedicated leadership and management training programme to be delivered to new curriculum managers.</p>	By July 2019	AP5
The College should, in conjunction with the Students' Association, develop an approach which promotes and supports a 'mentally healthy' environment for both students and staff.	To create a mentally healthier college for students and staff and to ensure that both are better supported in their learning and work.	Develop and implement a whole-college approach to improved mental wellbeing.	July 2019	ES QI 3.1 SO 2.5, 4.3 AP8
College managers should improve the understanding of legislative requirements across the College by ensuring that equalities-related discussions are routinely scheduled for, and undertaken in, team meetings.	To improve awareness or, and responses to, equality-related legislative requirements, the College Equality enhancement Plan and broader College equality-related commitments.	Develop, through the Leadership Team, a more targeted approach to equality-related awareness raising and action.	April 2019	ES QI 3.1 SO 2.4, 4.10 AP7

The College should ensure that outcomes for care experienced learners improve.	To improve both experiences and outcomes for care experienced learners in line with the College's Outcome Agreement.	Develop and implement a dedicated strategy for care experienced learners.	December 2018	ES QI 3.1 SO 1.1, 4.4, 4.10 AP4, 15
The College should ensure that a full evaluation of the changes implemented as a consequence of internal reviews is undertaken to establish if student support services have improved.	To ensure that the changes initiated by the support-related internal reviews have had the desired impact.	Conduct an on-going review process which allows in-year, 'live' improvements to be made. Conduct a full evaluation of the changes made and report back to Regional Board, SMT and Leadership Team.	On-going + June 2019	ES QI 3.1 SO 1.1, 4.4, 4.5 AP4, 15
The College should consider raising the profile of equality, access, inclusion and diversity across all campus and teams.	To create greater awareness of, and response to, the College's equality-related responsibilities, commitments and ambitions and to make the College a more equal, accessible, inclusive and diverse organisation.	Vice Principal – Access and Partnerships to lead on the development of a whole-college awareness-raising initiative based on the theme of 'respect'.	April 2019	ES QI 3.1 SO 2.4, 4.10 AP6, 7
Targets for Early Withdrawal could be improved if support and curriculum teams work closely together in identifying those students who are at risk.	To ensure that the new support and curriculum structures work together in identifying those students who are at risk.	Working in collaboration to ensure effective early intervention strategies are in place to support those at risk in order that the 5% Early Withdrawal target is met.	September 2018	SO1.1, 4.1, 4.2 AP15,17
In some teams KPI's could be improved through a more detailed analysis of data to identify subject areas that require improvement and implement SMART objectives to support this.	To ensure significant improvements are made in the College's KPI achievements especially at FE level.	Develop and implement a scoping statement to address challenging KPI data especially at Level 4.	December 2018	SO1.1, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3
Benchmarking in some teams could be improved to inform performance against the national average.	To improve the use of national data that will support teams in comparing their own subject areas performance against the sector.	Through the Heads of Faculty, develop a more targeted approach to understanding and comparing subject performance against national performance and to make better use of SFC data to inform improvements to be made.	February 2019	SO1.1, 4.2 AP14

Access to timely and accurate data can be improved to support planning for improvement.	To improve analysis of factors affecting successful student outcomes.	Systematic approach to data reporting to be introduced using Power BI reports at appropriate stages in the quality review process.	February 2019	
Further work is still required to ensure that outcomes improve for learners with disabilities.	Closing the attainment gap for learners with declared disabilities that will assist in improvement of outcomes for learners.	A detailed analysis of equality data to be carried out by curriculum teams with more effective learning support to address areas of low attainment.	January 2019	SO1.1, 1.2, 4.1, 4.2
Delivery of learning and services to support learning				
Area for Development (Developmental Driver)	Impact (intended difference to be made)	Planned Actions for Improvement	Deadline	Developmental Driver Code
Greater and more routine awareness raising of safeguarding and child protection should be promoted through College meetings.	To ensure that staff, student and stakeholder awareness and understanding of safeguarding and child protection is improved and comprehensive.	Develop and implement, through the Leadership Team, a standardised approach for all teams, learner representatives, students and stakeholders to discuss, communicate and understand more fully safeguarding and child protection.	April 2019	ES QI 2.1 SO 1.2 AP7
An evaluation of the changes implemented for information, advice, funding, admissions and support services for prospective and existing students should be undertaken during the course of AY2018-19 to ensure that the intended improvements and impacts have been realised.	To ensure that the changes initiated by the support-related internal reviews have had the desired impact.	Conduct an on-going review process which allows in-year, 'live' improvements to be made. Conduct a full evaluation of the changes made and report back to Regional Board, SMT and Leadership Team.	On-going and June 2019	ES QI 2.4 SO 1.2, 4.4, 4.5 AP4, 15
An evaluation of the College's revised Marketing and Communication Strategy should be undertaken during AY2018-19 to ensure that students and stakeholder information, advice and support needs are met.	To ensure that the strategy delivers an improved and targeted set of approaches and outcomes and supports fully the College's Strategic Plan 2018-21.	Greater consultation and liaison between M+C Team and internal/external stakeholders. Increased capacity to market the College through the promotion of 'marketing ambassadors'.	December 2018	ES QI 2.4 SO 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.5, 3.8 AP1, 3, 12

		Deliver a refreshed approach to internal and external communication.		
The College should ensure that it proactively builds relationships with more external agencies to ensure that additional support needs of learners can be fully met.	To develop and improve relationships with external agencies in order that the support available to students is appropriate, targeted and comprehensive.	Analysis of what support is required to be undertaken by Support Managers. Discussions with external agencies to be initiated by Student Access and Inclusion Manager.	December 2018	ES QI 2.4 SO 4.4, 4.5, 4.10 AP4, 15
College managers and staff should support fully the Students' Association's efforts to increase class representation and to progress, meaningfully, the ambitions of the SA/College Partnership Agreement.	To improve class representation and learner engagement across the College.	Heads of Faculty to liaise with curriculum teams and actively promote such approaches. SA to monitor, and report on, the success of the above approach.	December 2018	ES QI 2.4 SO 2.5, 4.3 AP7, 8, 12
College and SDS managers should work more closely to ensure such collaboration evolves in line with the College's ambitions to improve advice, information, support and progression for all learners.	To improve information, advice and support for learners in, or progressing to, College.	Director of Student Access and Information to lead on developing a closer working relationship with SDS. Memorandum of Understanding to be reviewed and revised to better reflect College's ambitions.	December 2018	ES QI 2.4, 2.5 SO 1.2, 1.3, 2.7, 3.1, 3.3, 3.5 AP12
The College should ensure that larger, more ambitious School-College Experiences for both school pupils and school staff are organised for AY2018-19 and become routine occurrences within the College calendar.	To improve awareness of what the College can offer and to create an enhanced approach to school-college links which fully reflects the ambitions of the College's Strategic Plan 2018-21.	School-College Experiences to be initiated for up to 1000 S1, S2, S3 school pupils from both City and Shire schools. P6 and P7 school-college experiences to be piloted. Heads of Faculty to develop relationships further with schools local to main campuses. Make use of the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership to develop to move forward on the learner	June 2019	ES QI 2.4, 2.5 SO 1.2, 3.4, 3.5 AP1, 10, 11, 12

		journey review and to deliver on the Regional Skills Strategy.		
The College should ensure that it improves its approaches to data collection, management and analysis of student-related information.	To improve the services, experiences, outcomes and progression opportunities of students.	The Leadership Team to ensure that the required data is identified, and that appropriate systems and processes and platforms are developed and easily accessible e.g. Power BI.	July 2019	ES QI 2.5 SO 2.6, 4.2, 4.5, 4.6, 4.9 AP14, 15, 20
College managers should undertake on-going and full evaluation of the changes initiated as a consequence of the AY2017-18 internal reviews.	To ensure that the ambitions of improved support services, and experiences, for existing and prospective learners are being met.	Admissions and student funding processes to be reviewed and, if necessary, revised. Processes relating to services to support learning to be reviewed and, if necessary, revised. The Academic Tutoring approach to be reviewed and, if necessary, revised. Student satisfaction of all support services to be gauged through various feedback mechanisms.	On-going and June 2019	ES QI 2.4, 2.5 SO 1.2, 4.4, 4.5 AP4, 14, 15, 20
The College should intensify its work with Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership (ACPP) to ensure that opportunities are not missed for it to have a similar impact within the Shire as it is having with Aberdeen City.	To ensure that opportunities are not missed for the College to have a similar impact within the Shire as it is having with Aberdeen City.	Vice Principal – Access and Partnerships to liaise with ACPP representatives on College involvement in LOIP groups, namely 'Tackling Child Poverty' and 'Connected and Cohesive Communities'. Maintain strong links and responses to priorities of Aberdeen City CPP.	April 2019	ES QI 2.6 SO 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5 AP10, 11
Although the Learner Voice is captured well, a few curriculum teams could involve the Students' Association more in	To improve collaboration and engagement between the Students' Association and curriculum teams that will lead to	Heads of Faculty and Curriculum Managers to ensure any feedback captured by the Students' Association is shared with all teams.	February 2019	SO1, 4.3 AP7,11,12

wide-ranging discussions around feedback and any follow-up actions.	continuous improvement through more effective feedback mechanisms.			
The College's portfolio of School/College provision could be improved by identifying gaps in the provision as part of the Curriculum Review.	To further develop the School/College provision that meets the needs of schools in both Aberdeen City and Shire.	School Liaison Team to work with Heads of Faculty and Head Teachers to refresh portfolio as part of the Curriculum Review.	June 2019	SO1.1, 3.4, 3.5
The use of digital technologies could be improved in a few areas that would support current learning and teaching practices.	To ensure that all curriculum areas are making full use of the digital tools that are available.	Curriculum Managers to work more closely with the Digital Futures Team to identify any gaps in the use of digital technologies.	June 2019	SO2.6, 5.4
Engagement directly with several schools could be improved as part of the planning and evaluation process of current activity.	To further develop the School/College provision that meets the needs of schools in both City and Shire regions.	School Liaison Team to work with Heads of Faculty and Head Teachers to refresh portfolio as part of the Curriculum Review.	June 2019	SO1.1, 3.4, 3.5
Some curriculum teams could improve their KPI's by revisiting their assessment schedules with a view to improving trends.	To ensure that those curriculum teams with low KPI's especially at level 4, to review their assessment strategies that will inform improvement.	Curriculum managers to work with their teams to better schedule assessments and support students with their time management of assessments.	January 2019	SO1
A small number of curriculum teams could improve employability skills within their curriculum areas by exploring all the options that are available through the Work Placement Standards Guidelines produced by the SFC.	To further develop a range of activity that compliments and adds value to course requirements.	Curriculum teams will develop closer partnerships with employers and other stakeholders to further enhance skills development for learners.	June 2019	SO1.1, 3.8
The Learner experience could be further improved by encouraging peer learning across all curriculum teams.	To support the Students' Association in extending the number of Peer Learning that takes place.	Develop in partnership with the Students' Association, further peer-led activity and respond to suggestions that will improve the learner experience.	June 2019	SO1, AP12

In some curriculum teams, learning and teaching approaches could be improved by introducing more dynamic approaches that will improve the learner experience.	To ensure that through the Heads of Faculty and their Managers, curriculum teams are delivering engaging lessons.	Developing and delivering a plan for NESCol @ Fraserburgh Campus and NESCol @ Altens Campus.	June 2019	SO1.3, 4.1 AP11
Leadership and quality culture				
Area for Development (Developmental Driver)	Impact (intended difference to be made)	Planned Actions for Improvement	Deadline	Developmental Driver Code
The College should, as a matter of priority, develop the corporate understanding of, and responses to, issues relating to the mental wellbeing of students and staff.	To improve awareness amongst students and staff of mental wellbeing. To improve the support of students and staff concerned about, or experiencing mental health issues.	The Student Access and Inclusion Manager to lead on an initiative to develop a 'mentally healthy college' and to work in collaboration with the Students' Association on related initiatives, including 'Think Positive'.	June 2019	ES QI 1.3 SO 2.4, 2.5, 4.4, 4.10 AP8
The College's Access and Inclusion Strategy should be reviewed and updated.	To ensure that the College adequately reflects, and responds to, the current and prospective needs of students from 'at risk', marginalised and disadvantaged groups.	An internal review to be undertaken to ensure a better understanding of needs, experiences and outcomes of care experienced learners. Improved approaches to data collection, management and analysis for care experienced, SIMD 10 and disabled learners to be developed through the work of the Leadership Team. The College's IT Strategy should reflect the College's ambition to become more digitally inclusive. The College's Marketing and Communications Strategy to better reflect, and target, 'at risk' learners.	On-going and July 2019	ES QI 1.3 SO 4.10 AP15
The College should ensure that the activities of Action Teams are	To ensure that the approaches taken by, and the impacts of, all Action Teams are openly	Minutes of Action Teams to be presented to both SMT and Leadership Teams.		ES QI 1.3 SO 2.4 AP6

understood more fully across the College.	communicated and meet the objectives of the College's Strategic Plan and Annual Priorities.	Summary versions of the activities and impacts of Actions Team to be communicated by Leadership Team members to staff, students and other stakeholders through various media, including COLIN.	December 2018	
Relationships and activities with schools and employers should be enhanced further by stronger and more regular engagement.	To ensure opportunities are maximised to increase awareness of the College offer and to increase the volume of those engaging with and attending College.	Campus Management Groups and the School Liaison Team to develop enhanced School-College Experiences for pupils and school staff. Heads of Faculty and the Director of Business Services to co-ordinate approaches which improve employer engagement and fulfil the aspirations of the Business Develop Strategy.	June 2109	ES QI 1.3 SO 3.4, 3.5, 3.8 AP1, 10, 11, 12
Support team self-evaluation reports should be enhanced to reflect, more broadly, deeply and realistically, areas for improvement.	To ensure opportunities for enhancing service delivery are maximised and that self-evaluation for quality improvement is both meaningful and targeted.	A review, to be led by the Head of Quality Enhancement and Transitions, of self-evaluation reporting and quality improvement and learner engagement approaches undertaken by support managers.	May 2019	ES QI 1.3 SO 4.6 AP4, 13, 14
Managers in both Support and Curriculum teams should ensure that engagement with the Students' Association is both meaningful and efficient use of time for Students' Association Representatives.	Stronger partnership working with the Students' Association that will have a positive impact on learners, success and achievements.	Through the restructure of both support and curriculum teams, review the processes to remove any duplication of Students' Association time spent in various groups that will allow for more effective collaboration and focus on the learner experience.	January 2019	SO1
Employer engagement in some areas could be improved that would support the development of learning and	Strengthening links with employers to influence a more systematic approach to employer	Develop strategies for engagement with external stakeholders to ensure current	June 2019	SO3.8 AP12

teaching to make it more relevant to industry needs.	engagement in matching curriculum and industry needs.	approaches are still relevant to industry needs.		
Curriculum teams could improve the planning for delivery of high-quality learning provision by involving the Students' Association and Employers more in the planning process.	Stronger partnership working that will have a positive impact on the curriculum and learners.	Through the Heads of Faculty, develop more effective collaboration between teams and stakeholders that will support the Curriculum Review and STEM developments.	June 2019	SO1.1 AP12
CPD plans should be developed in line with new Strategic Objectives and Annual Priorities in identifying any gaps that appear in the delivery of learning and teaching.	To ensure that curriculum teams have the appropriate skillset to support any new curriculum developments as part of the STEM/Curriculum Review.	Develop in partnership with the Organisational Development team, CPD activity where gaps have been identified.	June 2019	SO1.1, 2.1, 2.2 AP1, AP2
In some teams managers should carry out a more robust approach to analysing LMI data to help improve the Curriculum Planning Process.	To further develop the use of LMI Data from a wide range of sources.	Implement the STEM in Development and Curriculum Review outcomes.	June 2019	SO3
In some teams managers should discuss with staff on how to improve questioning techniques to inform whether objectives have been met as part of the learning experience.	To ensure CPD activity is offered to curriculum staff that may help to improve their lesson planning and delivery techniques.	Develop in partnership with the Organisational Development team, CPD activity to those staff identified through lesson observation feedback.	June 2019	SO4.1 AP13

Additional Enhancement Plan Actions to meet Annual Priorities for 2018-2019 not addressed above				
Area for Development (Developmental Driver)	Impact (intended difference to be made)	Planned Actions for Improvement	Deadline	Developmental Driver Code
The College should operate an academic year budget which utilises all available budget resources in line with fiscal year cash allocations.	Maintain financial security and sustainability.	<p>Improve links between curriculum planning and workforce planning using the new HR system position management function.</p> <p>Ensure effective staff utilisation following changes to terms and conditions for staff as a</p>	July 2019	AP16

		<p>consequence of national collective bargaining.</p> <p>Review budget mid-year to ensure effective identification of efficiency savings required to meet cost of living pay awards.</p> <p>Improve live reporting for budget holders to allow for better monitoring of in year spend.</p>		
The College should address backlog maintenance in line with available resources and agreed priorities.	To ensure appropriate standard of facilities to deliver the curriculum and enhance the learner experience.	<p>Create a backlog maintenance schedule for AY2018-19.</p> <p>Work in partnership with Mitie to deliver works on time and in budget.</p> <p>Align priorities with curriculum need and agree a programme of improvement works in advance for the academic year.</p>	July 2019	AP18
The College should develop a new estates strategy.	To deliver an updated campus for Aberdeen City and to ensure sustainability at Altens Campus.	<p>Engage with the Regional Board to review the requirements of the strategy.</p> <p>Undertake a wide stakeholder engagement with staff and students regarding what our facilities should offer.</p> <p>Liaise with SFC to progress a new approach to a phased development in line with our existing outline business case.</p> <p>Agree approach to disposing of surplus property.</p>	July 2019	AP19

The College should deliver a new IT service model following returning the service in-house.	Improved service to end users and increased cyber security and resilience.	Design the new team structure; review support services and update where applicable; develop staff; improve team interactions; commence activity; monitor and review progress. Consider alternatives to deliver further efficiency in print services.	July 2019	AP20
---	--	---	-----------	------

Grading Outcomes

The following grades have been identified from a six-point scale – Excellent, Very Good, Good, Satisfactory, Weak, and Unsatisfactory.

Principle	Grade	Justification
<p>Outcomes and impact: How good are we at ensuring the best possible outcomes for all our learners?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Wellbeing, equality and inclusion 3.2 Equity, attainment and achievement for all learners 	Good	<p>The College's inclusive culture and equality-related activities help promote, celebrate and support the ethos of inclusion with the College community, and arrangements for improving attainment work well for those who experience barriers to learning. The College takes account well its responsibilities in relation to statutory duties and, across the College, teams support equity of success for learners very well. The College will continue to focus on outcomes for care experienced learners and will continue to review strategies for access and inclusion.</p> <p>In many subject areas, learner outcomes have improved overall and remain above the national average. Retention rates for FE level programmes [full-time and part-time] combined have performed very well. Retention rates for full-time FE performed well and the College is above the national average for attainment rates on FE level programmes.</p> <p>The College has performed very well and above the national average for retention and attainment rates on HE level programmes.</p> <p>Curriculum teams have clear arrangements in place to incorporate essential skills development within programmes and attainment levels are high. The College will continue to improve learner success rates at full-time FE level, in particular focussing on early withdrawal.</p> <p>The College will continue to address gender under-representation in specific subject areas and will work to improve outcomes for learners within lower SIMD areas.</p>
<p>Leadership and quality culture: How good is our leadership and approach to improvement?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Governance and leadership of change 1.4 Evaluation leading to improvement 	Very Good	<p>Leadership and management in the College is strong and effective and is focused on the improvement of the learner experience and outcomes. The Regional Board provides very effective strategic support and challenge and regularly reviews performance and progress against outcomes leading to balanced and accurate self-evaluation reports. The Regional Board and managers across the College take account, very well, of local, regional and national priorities to develop College strategies,</p>

		<p>taking into account labour market intelligence and the ambitions of DYW. Across the College teams reflect very well on priorities taking an evidence based approach when planning programmes.</p> <p>The College has in place a robust system of target setting, linked to outcome agreement targets, which is monitored at faculty and course level through the self-evaluation system. This ensures that high quality provision is maintained and that improvement is ongoing.</p> <p>The College has developed strong, collaborative relationships with partners through its on-going activities within Community Planning Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership and the Regional Economic Strategy Group. This enables managers in the College to be responsive to the needs of the region when planning provision across the areas served by the College. The College will continue to improve relationships with employers through a revised Business Development Strategy.</p>
<p>Delivery of learning and services to support learning: How good is the quality of the provision and services we deliver?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.2 Curriculum • 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment • 2.4 Services to support learning 	Very Good	<p>The College has in place effective arrangements in the design and development of its curriculum. The curriculum and range of provision is based on analysis of a range of data, and takes account of national priorities, LMI and DYW when planning the curriculum.</p> <p>Across the College teams plan effective programmes and assessment methods to support successful outcomes. Teams also use work-based learning activities and essential skills very well to develop employability and support progression. College staff are well qualified and apply up-to-date knowledge of industry also applying digital technologies very well. The College will continue to improve the development of dynamic teaching approaches and will improve the use of data to inform planning for improvement. College staff identify, and act upon, the support needs of learners quickly and well adjusting approaches to take account of different learner needs and circumstances. The College will continue to build relationships with external agencies to support those with more complex needs and will develop a more structured and targeted approach to support for learners with poor mental health.</p>

Capacity to Improve Statement

The College is continuing its own Good to Great Journey of Towards' Excellence with a positive culture of self-reflection by all staff. Through the Support and Curriculum templates, there is a clear desire of continuous improvement to meet learner needs and support successful outcomes.

There are highly effective governance arrangements in place with the College's Regional Board, Principal, Senior Management Team, and Leadership Team who provide strong and effective leadership. College leaders and managers are highly committed to ongoing quality improvements that will support these developments.

Building on its success from the previous academic year, the College has identified several Annual Priorities for improvement that are linked to the learner experience, which have been shared by all staff. These will be carried forward into AY2018-19.

New Support and Curriculum structures have been created which will lead to improved access to information, guidance and support for all learners.

The College continues to enhance the arrangements to develop the influence of the Students' Association and wider learner voice in evaluating activities. Teaching staff are well inducted into the College and are encouraged to adopt innovative and interactive approaches to teaching and learning, especially in the use of digital technologies.

Curriculum areas are well resourced allowing learners' access to industry standard equipment and processes. Improved access to equality data is now available to managers and staff and this has helped identify evidence-based actions to address inequalities.

Services to support learning is strong with a culture of cross-campus team-working supporting a wide range of innovative approaches and which are captured in the College's Access and Inclusion Strategy, Gender Action Plan and Equality Outcomes.

The College will further develop the use of target setting and data management/analysis to support planning for improvement. The College will continue to engage with the Scottish Funding Council and Education Scotland in the development of meaningful outcome agreements, robust evaluative reports and highly effective enhancement plans.

OUTCOME AGREEMENT MEASURES

The following tables provide trend data on a number of the key measures included in the College's Outcome Agreement. The measures relate to the areas covered in the Evaluative Report section of this document.

National Measure 1(b) - Volume and proportion of Credits delivered to learners aged 16-19 and 20-24

Year	NESCol Credits 16-19	NESCol % 16-19	NESCol Credits 20-24	NESCol % 20-24	Scotland % Credits 16-19	Scotland % Credits 20-24
2014-15	70,045	52.9%	28,291	21.9%	47.7%	22.2%
2015-16	73,851	52.1%	30,179	21.3%	46.9%	21.8%
2016-17	70,074	50.7%	28,879	20.9%	46.6%	21.5%
2017-18	66,752	49.0%	27,483	20.2%	TBC	TBC

National Measure 1(b) - Volume and proportion of Credits delivered to full-time learners aged 16-19 and 20-24

Year	NESCol FT Credits 16-19	NESCol FT % 16-19	NESCol FT Credits 20-24	NESCol FT % 20-24	Scotland FT % Credits 16-19	Scotland FT % Credits 20-24
2014-15	56,156	58.1%	20,709	21.4%	52.3%	23.7%
2015-16	64,395	57.8%	23,646	21.2%	51.7%	23.1%
2016-17	60,748	56.1%	22,864	21.1%	51.6%	22.7%
2017-18	58,667	55.1%	22,703	21.3%	TBC	TBC

Percentage of Credits by age group

Year	% Credits Under 16	% Credits 16-19	% Credits 20-24	% Credits 25 and Over
2014-15	1.5%	52.9%	21.9%	23.7%
2015-16	1.8%	52.1%	21.3%	24.8%
2016-17	2.0%	50.7%	20.9%	26.3%
2017-18	2.2%	49.0%	20.2%	28.7%

National Measure 1(c) - Volume and proportion of Credits delivered to learners in the most deprived 10% postcode areas

Year	NESCol Credits SIMD10	NESCol % SIMD10	Scotland % SIMD10
2014-15	6,257	4.7%	16.7%
2015-16	6,587	4.6%	16.9%
2016-17	7,130	5.2%	17.2%
2017-18	2,958	2.2%	TBC

National Measure 1(d) - Proportion of Credits relating to learners from different protected characteristic groups and care experienced learners

Year	SIMD10 Credits	Male Credits	Female Credits	BME Credits	Disabled Credits	Under 16 Credits	16-19 Credits	20-24 Credits	25 and over Credits	Care experienced Credits
2014-15	6,257	65,715	66,611	4,935	18,229	1,990	70,045	28,921	31,370	16
2015-16	6,587	68,858	73,211	5,828	20,862	2,554	73,851	30,179	35,211	982
2016-17	7,130	67,268	70,860	5,857	23,608	2,830	70,074	28,879	36,411	1,314
2017-18	2,958	66,845	69,331	4,099	26,844	2,961	66,752	27,483	39,070	1,210

Year	% SIMD10	% Male	% Female	% BME	% Disabled	% Under 16	% 16-19	% 20-24	% 25 and over	% Care experienced
2014-15	4.7%	49.7%	50.3%	3.7%	13.8%	1.5%	52.9%	21.9%	23.7%	0.0%
2015-16	4.6%	48.4%	51.6%	4.1%	14.7%	1.8%	52.1%	21.3%	24.8%	0.7%
2016-17	5.2%	48.7%	51.3%	4.2%	17.1%	2.0%	50.7%	20.9%	26.3%	1.0%
2017-18	2.2%	49.1%	20.9%	3.0%	19.8%	2.2%	49.0%	20.2%	28.7%	0.9%

The volume and proportion of Credits delivered by gender

Year	NESCol Credits Male	NESCol % Male	NESCol Credits Female	NESCol % Female
2014-15	66,715	50.0%	66,611	50.0%
2015-16	68,585	48.4%	73,211	51.6%
2016-17	67,268	48.7%	70,860	51.3%
2017-18	66,845	49.1%	69,331	50.9%

The volume and proportion of overall Credits activity delivered to BME students

Year	NESCol BME	NESCol % BME	Scotland % BME
2014-15	4,935	3.7%	5.7%
2015-16	5,828	4.0%	6.0%
2016-17	5,857	4.2%	6.4%
2017-18	4,099	3.0%	TBC

The volume and proportion of overall Credits activity delivered to students with a known disability

Year	NESCol Disabled	NESCol % Disabled	Scotland % Disabled
2014-15	18,229	13.8%	16.0%
2015-16	20,862	16.8%	16.8%
2016-17	23,608	17.1%	17.1%
2017-18	26,944	19.8%	TBC

National Measure 4(a) - Percentage of enrolled students successfully achieving a recognised qualification

Year	NESCol % completed successfully	NESCol Enrolments	% completed successfully Scotland
Full-time FE			
2014-15	61.9%	3,973	64.0%
2015-16	67.4%	4,152	65.5%
2016-17	66.2%	4,001	65.3%
2017-18	66.6%	4,058	TBC
Part-time FE			
2014-15	62.2%	8,809	75.9%
2015-16	71.1%	5,827	74.3%
2016-17	71.2%	5,837	77.1%
2017-18	73.3%	7,819	TBC
Full-time HE			
2014-15	72.0%	2,616	71.3%
2015-16	77.1%	2,724	72.2%
2016-17	75.0%	2,847	71.6%
2017-18	77.3%	2,634	TBC
Part-time HE			
2014-15	82.8%	1,561	78.3%
2015-16	80.1%	1,554	78.8%
2016-17	80.1%	1,280	78.6%
2017-18	80.3%	934	TBC

National Measure 4(b) - Percentage of enrolled MD10 students successfully achieving a recognised qualification

Year	NESCol % completed successfully	NESCol Enrolments	% completed successfully Scotland
Full-time FE (MD10)			
2014-15	58.2%	232	60.9%
2015-16	63.1%	244	63.4%
2016-17	63.5%	255	62.0%
2017-18	77.6%	219	TBC
Part-time FE (MD10)			
2014-15	55.1%	470	71.5%
2015-16	61.2%	286	71.1%
2016-17	55.9%	338	73.8%
2017-18	20.5%	152	TBC
Full-time HE (MD10)			
2014-15	72.0%	82	66.8%
2015-16	74.4%	78	67.5%
2016-17	66.3%	83	68.5%
2017-18	65.2%	23	TBC
Part-time HE (MD10)			
2014-15	82.4%	34	73.0%
2015-16	74.3%	35	74.3%
2016-17	76.7%	30	73.4%
2017-18	90.0%	18	TBC

National Measure 4(c) - Percentage of senior phase age pupils successfully completing a vocational qualification delivered by colleges

Year	NESCol % completed successfully	NESCol Enrolments	% completed successfully Scotland
Full-time FE			
2014-15	-	0	50.0%
2015-16	-	0	70.7%
2016-17	60.0%	65	56.8%
2017-18	52.6%	38	TBC
Part-time FE			
2014-15	83.2%	143	66.1%
2015-16	72.6%	274	64.2%
2016-17	60.4%	346	63.1%
2017-18	77.6%	419	TBC
Full-time HE			
2014-15	-	0	52.5%
2015-16	-	0	77.9%
2016-17	-	0	62.8%
2017-18	-	0	TBC
Part-time HE			
2014-15	75.0%	8	59.0%
2015-16	66.7%	3	67.2%
2016-17	100%	1	73.0%
2017-18	-	0	TBC

National Measure 4(d) - Percentage of enrolled Care Experienced students successfully achieving a recognised qualification

Year	NESCol % completed successfully	NESCol Enrolments	% completed successfully Scotland
Full-time FE			
2014-15	0.0%	2	52.4%
2015-16	48.1%	54	52.7%
2016-17	34.7%	72	52.5%
2017-18	53.7%	41	TBC
Full-time HE			
2014-15	-	0	66.0%
2015-16	60.0%	5	64.6%
2016-17	75.0%	8	65.4%
2017-18	53.6%	28	TBC

National Measure 4(e) - Percentage of full-time FE enrolled students aged 16-19 successfully achieving a recognised qualification

Year	NESCol % completed successfully	NESCol Enrolments	% completed successfully Scotland
Full-time FE			
2014-15	58.9%	2,299	61.8%
2015-16	65.6%	2,435	63.2%
2016-17	63.1%	2,251	62.4%
2017-18	68.1%	2,113	TBC

National Measure 6 - Number of full-time learners with substantial 'work placement experience' as part of their programme of study

Year	NESCol Number of students	NESCol %	Scotland %
2015-16	623	9.0%	15.5%
2016-17	1,757	24.4%	18.4%
2017-18	TBC	TBC	TBC

National Measure 7* - The number and proportion of Scottish-domiciled learners articulating from college to degree level courses with advanced standing

Year	NESCol Number of AS articulating students	NESCol Number of HNC/HND leavers entering undergraduate programmes	NESCol % articulating with AS	Scotland % articulating with AS
2015-16	465	735	63.3%	TBC
2016-17	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
2017-18	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC

Data awaited from National Articulation Database

Data for 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17 provided by SFC. 2017-18 data is unaudited and unpublished at the time of writing.

2017-18 benchmarking data for Scotland will not be available until January 2019.