

6 February 2024

Mr Simon Hewitt
Principal and Chief Executive
Dundee and Angus College
Kingsway
Dundee

Dear Simon,

A team of HM Inspectors from Education Scotland visited Dundee and Angus college in December 2023 to undertake an Annual Engagement Visit. During our visit, we talked to learners, staff and stakeholders, and worked closely with the senior managers.

The team found the following major strengths in the college's work:

Learner progress and outcomes

In almost all curriculum areas, FE and HE learner successful completion rates have been above the sector average for the last 5 years. Overall rates of completion with partial success for learners on FE programmes have been consistently better than the sector average over the last 5 years. Successful completion rates for learners from the most deprived backgrounds have improved and are well above the sector average. Rates of successful completion for learners with protected characteristics and from key groups are also above the sector average.

Most learners with additional support needs successfully achieve their programme and develop a broad range of relevant skills which help them gain employment. Learner progression to HE level provision and employment is high. Around 95% of learners achieve a positive destination upon completing their college programme.

The number of learners contributing to the SFC student satisfaction engagement survey has increased. The overall satisfaction level of full-time FE learners has improved and is above the sector norm.

A wide range of staff teams work collaboratively to support learners to stay on course and complete their programme. These include wellbeing student support staff, learner support staff and e-learning support staff. The college supports community-based learners well to progress to college located provision.

All curriculum managers make productive use of monthly meetings to reflect on curriculum activities with their peers, introduce new approaches to deliver learning and teaching, and share effective practice. Managers work collaboratively with other colleges to influence and shape national curriculum and adopt best practice.

Teaching staff work productively to generate new and improved approaches to learning and teaching which enhances the learner experience. Almost 90% of teaching staff hold the

Teaching Qualification in Further Education. Academic development staff gained accreditation from General Teaching Council Scotland to deliver Coaching for Success. All college departments are benefitting from having a group tutor to support staff to develop coaching techniques.

Managers provide all teaching staff with good opportunities to evaluate and enhance their pedagogical practice.

The college is continuing to refresh its curriculum portfolio to respond to opportunities emerging within the region. Curriculum staff engage effectively with stakeholders and regional employers to ensure the curriculum offer supports economic development in the region.

The college's community partnership staff work well with local and regional partners to reach out to young people and adults who are furthest away from engaging in education or employment. This is encouraging vulnerable learners to take incremental steps towards engaging fully with the college.

Learner Engagement

All learners value the support they receive from guidance tutors, teachers and support staff to progress well within their programmes. There are effective arrangements for ensuring learner representation are comprehensive and inclusive and lead to improvements for learners. Dundee and Angus Students' Association (DASA) are represented well at all levels within the college and deliver the learner voice effectively.

Arrangements for gathering learner feedback are comprehensive. Managers and staff draw productively on the findings within evaluation processes to plan actions that enhance the learner experience.

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

- Rates of learner withdrawal from full-time FE and HE programmes have increased in the last four years but remain below the sector norm. The number of learners who withdraw from part-time FE and HE programmes is above the sector average and has been for the previous 4 years.
- Meta skills are mapped well across all curricular areas. However, staff have not yet embedded them consistently in all programmes and are not signposting the development in these skills sufficiently to all learners.
- Some staff do not use My Progress effectively to ensure a consistent learning experiences for all learners.

Main points for action

- None identified

What happens next?

We are confident that the college has made satisfactory progress and has the capacity to continue to improve. We will continue to monitor progress through on-going engagement with the college link HM Inspector.

Peter B Connelly
HM Inspector