MAKING LEARNING WORK

Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan 2017-2018

Forth Valley College
Making Learning Work

FORTH VALLEY COLLEGE AND ITS OPERATING CONTEXT

Forth Valley College was established in 2005 as a merged regional College serving the needs of the three communities in Falkirk, Stirling and Clackmannanshire. In geographic and industrial terms, the Forth Valley region is very diverse, from the nationally significant oil, gas and chemical sectors in Grangemouth, to the hospitality, tourism and heritage sectors in Stirling and the rural communities. The College delivers programmes in three main campuses at Falkirk, Stirling and Alloa, and has a small presence on Raploch Community Campus in Stirling. The College is entering an exciting new phase, with the start of building work on its new £78m Falkirk Campus HQ which, by its opening in November 2019, will complete an ambitious estates programme that began with the completion of new campuses in Alloa in 2011 and in Stirling in 2012.

The College works in close partnership with the three local authorities of Falkirk, Clackmannanshire and Stirling. Negotiation is currently underway on a City Deal for Stirling and Clackmannanshire. An ambitious City Deal Masterplan has been prepared and the Principal has played an active role in its development, in his role as a Stirling City Commissioner. Forth Valley College is working closely with Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils to support the skills ambitions of the City Deal and, particularly, to maximise use of the partnership resources to extend opportunities for vocational learning for senior phase pupils.

In 2016-2017 the College enrolled around 17,000 students of whom 19% were studying full-time. Approximately 70% of enrolled students are based on the Falkirk campus, with 18% at Stirling (including Raploch) and 12% in Alloa. The College works with a range of strategic partners across the region and further afield, having links with many industries and businesses operating in Scotland, across the UK and internationally.

The College delivers an extensive range of vocational programmes. Full-time further education (FE) programmes at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Levels 1-6, are distributed across the three College campuses. The College has intentionally balanced its specialist resources, equipment and teaching expertise for higher education (HE) programmes at SCQF levels 7-10 across individual campuses to create a regional curriculum strategy matched to the region's demographic and economic profile.

Working closely with its three local authorities, the College has established a comprehensive range of school-College partnership activity. Around 200 pupils attend the School College Opportunities to Succeed (SCOTS) programme. This initiative supports S4 students at risk of not progressing onto a positive destination to experience study at college and then embark on a college programme. The College offers four fully integrated degree programmes with the University of Stirling and two associate student programmes with Heriot Watt and Strathclyde Universities.

The College is contracted with the Scottish Funding Council to deliver an overall target of 86,887 Credits in 2017-2018. It currently employs 620 members of staff and has a revenue budget of £32,957,956, of which 73% is grant-in-aid from SFC.

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METHODOLOGY USED TO EVALUATE THE QUALITY OF PROVISION AND SERVICES

EVIDENCE FOR EVALUATION
STUDENT SUCCESS PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Student retention and success rates are reported in real time, using an online data portal. Reports show three-year trends and comparisons against the most recent published sector average and high benchmark. Additional reports show enrolments, retention and success by equalities characteristics.

THE STUDENT VOICE

The College operates a systematic and comprehensive Listening to Learners process, whereby every class group takes part in two in-depth focus group discussions each year. Discussions are structured around a standard set of prompt questions, based on the challenge questions in the How good is our College? framework, with a strong focus on learning. Curriculum Managers feed back to class representatives on the outcomes of the Listening to Learners process.

Class representatives meet with members of the Senior Management Team (SMT) at two Student Council meetings per campus per year, arranged by the Forth Valley Student Association. The Student Council has a broad focus, covering all aspects of the College experience. Senior Management Team responses to

issues raised are collated and fed back to the student body. The Student Voice is also heard by the Forth Valley Student Association Sabbatical Officers, who attend various committees throughout the year and meet with the Principal once a month.

The College also uses online surveys to gather student feedback on specific aspects of their experience. Students are surveyed on their experiences from first contact with the College through to post-induction. The College uses the National Student Satisfaction Survey as a measure of general student satisfaction. Curriculum and support teams across the College also use a variety of approaches to gathering feedback from students on specific aspects of the student experience.

EVALUATION OF THE QUALITY OF LEARNING

In 2017-2018, the College strengthened its processes for evaluating learning and teaching by introducing the Learning and Teaching Enhancement programme. Four lecturers have been appointed as part-time Learning and Teaching Mentors and received training from Education Scotland on the evaluation of learning and teaching. The mentors work with individual lecturers, supporting them to evaluate their practice using a range of methods (including observation, feedback from students and feedback from employers/others) and to plan and implement enhancements. In 2017-2018, 50 lecturers were selected and took part in the process. The College plans to engage a further 100 lecturers in the Learning and Teaching Enhancement programme in 2018-2019 and for all lecturers to have taken part by the end of 2019-2020.
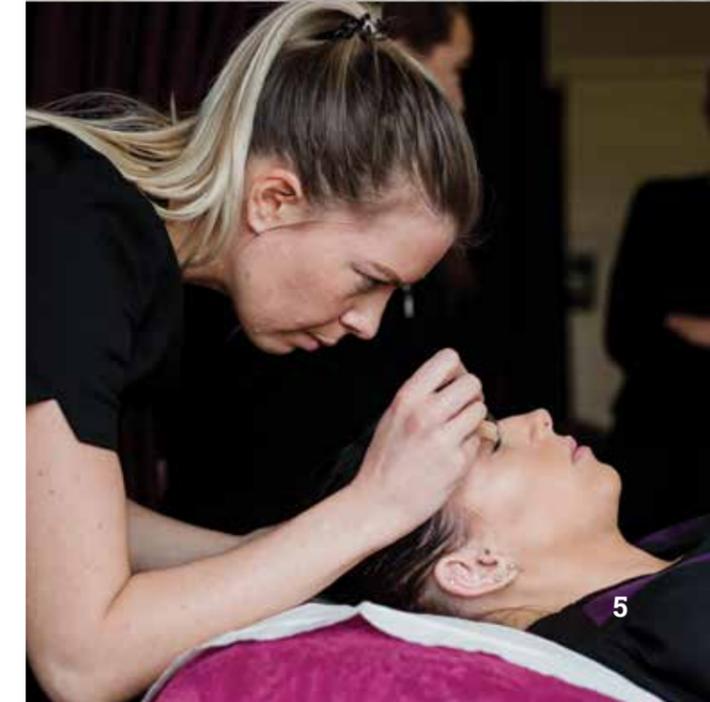
ENGAGEMENT WITH EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

Curriculum teams engage widely with employers to incorporate their views on the curriculum offer, product and delivery. The College does not impose a standardised approach to this, but rather empowers managers and teams to adopt the approaches that work best for their particular industry sectors, business types, disciplines and operating environment.

There is ongoing engagement at both strategic and operational levels with the three Local Authorities and 18 secondary schools in Forth Valley, to enable joint senior phase curriculum planning and evaluation and to support positive destinations for school pupils across the region.
Staff at all levels also systematically and proactively engage with other partners and stakeholders at both national and regional level. These engagements take a wide range of formats and include those with strategic as well as operational impact.

THE EVALUATION PROCESS

Programme teams meet formally at least twice each year to consider performance evidence and feedback from students and staff teams. Subject servicing staff (for example Maths and Core Skills lecturers) and support staff (including Learner Development Workers and Learning Development Facilitators) are an integral part of these teams. As well as participating in programme review meetings, support service teams hold their own regular review meetings.

At the end of each academic year, programme and support service teams produce annual evaluation reports. Senior managers review the reports and provide written feedback. The Learning and Quality team also review the reports and identify themes for consideration at College level. Each report is accompanied by an

enhancement plan, which identifies actions, responsibilities and timescales and progress towards these is monitored through team discussions throughout the year.

Department Heads, in conjunction with the Senior Management Team, carry out a detailed annual review of the curriculum offer, taking into consideration labour market information (such as Regional Skills Assessment data) and direct feedback from employers, as well as programme performance data.

Forth Valley Student Association carry out an annual self-evaluation against the How Good is your College Evaluation (SPARQS). A number of College managers and staff were invited to take part and supported them with their evaluation and action planning in academic year 2017/18.

The Chair of the Board of Management led self-evaluation and review of the Board's effectiveness. This involved the completion of an individual survey, based on the main areas of the Code of Good Governance, followed by an individual meeting with each non-executive Board member and a discussion of findings at a Board planning event in September 2018.

EXTERNAL SCRUTINY ACTIVITIES

During 2018, the College arranged a comprehensive programme of Annual Enhancement and Scrutiny with HMI John Laird. The scrutiny activity included observations of programme review and support team evaluation meetings; an observation of a Student Council Strategic Planning Session; and discussions with the Learning and Teaching Mentors and lecturers who had taken part in the Learning and Teaching Enhancement programme, to evaluate the success of the new process. Three evaluative thinking workshops were delivered by John Laird for all College Managers, who lead team evaluations. A range of professional discussions with College staff, including Senior Management Team, Curriculum Heads and Managers, teaching and support service staff, curriculum delivery teams and the Forth Valley Student Association team were held. As a result of these activities, Education Scotland provided feedback to the College which, has been used as one of the sources of evidence for this evaluation report.

OUTCOMES OF EVALUATION

The following sections set out the summary outcomes of the above evaluation processes for each of the three key principles in the How good is our College? quality framework, which are

Outcomes and impact;

Delivery of learning and services to support learning

Leadership and quality culture

These principles are underpinned by twelve Quality Indicators, seven of which are addressed in the following pages. The College has identified the key areas of positive practice and areas for development in relation to each Quality Indicator.

It is important to note that the areas for development identified in this report include opportunities for further enhancement, as well as issues that require improvement.

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OUTCOME AND IMPACT

3.1 Wellbeing, equality and inclusion

AREAS OF POSITIVE PRACTICE

How well are inclusion and equality arrangements improving attainment for individuals and groups experiencing barriers to learning?

- The College has in place well-established and effective arrangements for inclusion and equality and uses these well to support individuals experiencing barriers to learning, to achieve.

- The College has an effective, robust disclosure system for additional support needs, spanning pre-entry through to on-course, to enable students to tell us what they need. This ensures that students' needs are identified and staff can put arrangements in place at the earliest possible stage. In 2017-2018, a total of 608 students had Personal Learning and Support Plans with arrangements to support their learning.

- In almost every case, staff implement reasonable adjustments recommended for students fully and timeously, ensuring that individuals with specific needs do not experience these as barriers to learning.

- The Equalities and Inclusion team challenge their colleagues appropriately on matters relating to inclusiveness, reasonable adjustments and equity for students with additional support needs. Collaborative working and informal case conferencing with teaching staff ensure that students get the right support. The service has robust reporting systems to ensure students do not drop off the radar. The team have good working relationships with Curriculum Managers to flag any concerns about students.

- The College has campus-wide, networked assistive software available, which is available to all students and a large loan bank of assistive and enabling equipment for students who require it.

- The College successfully supports a wide range of students, adopting innovative solutions to maximise resource. Staff have been trialling the use of new technologies (such as Quizlet; Audio Notetaker; Dragon; Read and Write Gold; and LiveScribe) whilst working to support students. They have also been trialling different ways to capture more students at the same time. For example, workshops or in class support for groups of students, rather than always one to one appointments.

- The College provides enhanced support for care experienced students, including: support through pre-entry and application phase; summer pre-induction sessions; priority access for funding; guaranteed interview if applicants meet entry criteria; continued one to one support when attending College, including liaising with delivery staff, the Funding Team, Learner Advisors and Learner Development Workers.

- College staff make effective flexible and individualised arrangements for students experiencing challenging life circumstances, so that they can continue or re-engage with their learning in order to achieve their qualification aim. For example, in 2018-2019 40% of full-time HE students who were unable to complete their qualification in 2017-2018 have been supported to return to complete their qualification.

How well do arrangements for promoting and celebrating diversity facilitate a culture of inclusion?

- Staff engage well in Career Long Professional Learning designed to promote a culture of inclusion. In 2017-2018, examples include: refresher training in safeguarding and equality and diversity; Equalities Impact Assessment training; Autism awareness; and Unconscious Bias training.

- Online information for staff on equality, diversity and inclusion has been further enhanced, with the addition of information and links to external resources on a range of characteristics, such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation and age. As a result, staff feel better informed and more confident about promoting diversity with students.

- In 2017-2018 the College's internal auditors carried out an audit of the College's arrangements for reporting hate incidents. The College Hate Incident Monitoring process has been reviewed; a leaflet produced and staff awareness raising has taken place and is ongoing.

- Staff and students participated in awareness raising campaigns for LGBT Awareness; Safety Campaign; Sexual Harassment; Carers Can; and 16 Days of Action (gender based violence).

- In the Student Early Experience Survey carried out in October 2017, 96% of students stated that they were satisfied that the College promotes a culture of respect and 85% reported that they were aware of where to get support if they experienced any bullying or harassment. In the National Student Satisfaction Survey in 2018, 89% of students agreed that all students are treated equally and fairly by staff. In all cases these results have been at a very similar level over the past three years.

How well does planning of provision and services take account of the changing needs of specific groups of learners, e.g. ESOL learners, learners with mental health issues, care experienced young people?

- Teaching departments annually agree and budget hours for Extended Learning Support, based on volume of activity and the profile of students. These hours are allocated to designated lecturers (ELS Facilitators), who have remitted teaching time to provide support to students with additional support needs. The way in which these hours are used is determined at curriculum team level, to ensure that staff deliver this support in ways that works best for students in that subject area. These approaches include one-to-one sessions, subject-specific tutorials and drop in sessions. The ELS Facilitators work very closely with the Learning Support team, to ensure that students' specific additional support needs are met.

- In 2017, the College successfully secured funding from Falkirk Council's Integrated Care Fund, which has enabled the College to deliver a comprehensive package of support (prevention, early identification, intervention, support, sign posting) centred on the mental health and wellbeing needs of students. Students can access a self-referral form on My Moodle and send this straight to a 'wellbeing' inbox. There is now a 'Calm Room' within Student Services, which is utilised by students, the Wellbeing and Support Officer and Counsellors. The Wellbeing and Support Officer supported 492 students in 2017-2018 and, for many of these students, this enabled them to remain on course and achieve their qualification aim.

- The Learning Support team also provides support for students with poor mental health plus another or multiple additional support needs. In 2017-2018, 175 out of 597 (30%) students receiving learning support disclosed mental health needs. The team make good use of the College Wellbeing Project and Counselling service, to which 80 referrals were made in 2017-2018, with 273 counselling hours delivered. They also work very well with external agencies who support these students and regularly recommend different apps (such as HeadSpace and Dare - Break Free from Anxiety) to help students manage their mental health and stress levels. Students attending the College counselling service are also offered free gym membership for the duration of their counselling period.

- In addition, the Learner Adviser team had 1425 interactions with students in 2017-2018, providing first point of contact advice and guidance on a range of queries. Of these, 620 (43%) were related to mental health. This represents a 300% increase on the previous year. Learner Advisers provide rapid access to helpful information, including referral sources, which help students to take action to prevent their situation from escalating and enables them to stay on track.

- Forth Valley Student Association trained an additional 73 participants (students and staff) in Mental Health First Aid in 2017-2018, further developing the capacity of the College to respond to the increase in students disclosing mental ill-health.

- During 2017-2018 the College secured funding from the Robertson Trust to begin a mentoring project called Time4Me. The project aims to improve retention and success rates of young people transitioning to College who face additional barriers to fulfilling their potential. The project is specifically aimed at young people who are care experienced, have caring responsibilities for others and reside in areas of multiple deprivation. To date, 32 mentors have been trained, seven mentoring matches have been made and eight further referrals are in progress.

- All ESOL students are screened as part of the recruitment process to determine the appropriate level of study for their current English language ability. They are able to access ESOL classes and support in addition to their course timetable to support their continued English language development.

- In an innovative initiative, ESOL students and Care students were brought together to aid the integration of ESOL students in College and foster good relations between student groups. A Community Police Officer engaged with students to facilitate discussion around hate crime and domestic abuse laws, as these are often very different to the laws within the countries the students have previously lived in.

- The College has seen a significant increase in the numbers of students disclosing as care experienced over the last three years, from 225 in 2015-2016 to 344 in 2017-2018, a 53% increase. This increased disclosure is very positive, as it helps the College to target this enhanced support more effectively.

Areas for Development

- Whilst the College's wide range of support services and arrangements are very effective in supporting students and meeting their needs, the College has recognised that these could be further enhanced by being more "joined up". The College is developing a centralised Student Support System within its MIS, so that information about dialogues and interventions with individual students will be held centrally and

available to all staff supporting the individual. This will also enable more accurate evaluation of the impact of College services and interventions.

- The College is planning a review of the way in which it provides pastoral support to full-time students, to ensure that the available resources are being utilised to provide maximum impact on student success.

3.2 Equity, attainment and achievement for all learners

AREAS OF POSITIVE PRACTICE

How good is learner success over time on FE and HE level programmes, and what are the contributory factors?

How good are retention and attainment rates on FE and HE level programmes, and what are the contributory factors?

- The College continued to perform very well in relation to student success in 2017-2018, with three of the top level success performance indicators (full-time FE, part-time FE and part time HE) well above the sector average for 2016-2017 (latest published statistics).

- Student retention and success on full-time FE programmes show an upward overall trend and have remained above or well above the sector average over the last three years. The College's full-time FE 2017-2018 success rate of 71% is 6% better than the sector average for 2016-2017. In some subject areas, notably Languages and ESOL; Engineering; Care; and Hairdressing and Beauty; full-time FE success rates are very high. College managers have carried out a detailed analysis of the factors contributing to high success in each of these areas. These include project-based learning, including live project briefs; effectively planned mix of theory and practical learning with well-contextualised theoretical learning; and high levels of work-based learning. Curriculum Managers and teams are working in these areas with others across the College to share the practice that contributed to these high success rates.

- The three year trend for student success on full-time HE programmes has fluctuated, with the 71% success rate in 2017-2018 representing a 1% recovery from 70% in 2016-2017 and equating with the sector average for 2016-2017. Success rates in more than a few FT HE subject areas, are very high, with Art & Design; Media; Computing; Sport; and Hairdressing and Beauty performing particularly well. Once again, College managers have analysed the

contributory factors in detail and these are very consistent with those listed above for full-time FE. Curriculum Managers and teams are working with others across the College to share successful practice for embedding in less successful subject areas.

- In situations where mental health issues and/or complex personal circumstances prevented full-time HE students from fully achieving their qualification aim within the normal timescale, College staff made flexible and responsive arrangements to support these students to achieve their goals. This included supporting students to return to College in 2018-2019 on a part-time basis to complete the parts of their programme that they were unable to complete last year. A total of 46 students are currently benefitting from these arrangements. This accounts for 3% of all full-time HE students and 40% of those who achieved partial success in 2017-2018.

- Overall 5% of full-time FE students and 4% of full-time HE students withdrew from their course before completing to take up employment. Whilst this is a very positive outcome for the individuals concerned and demonstrates the positive impact their College experience had for their employability, it impacts negatively on the College's student retention performance indicators.

- Student retention and success on part-time FE and HE programmes over the past 3 years have remained very high. The 2017-2018 part-time success rates, at 91% (FE) and 87% (HE) are 14% and 8% above the sector average respectively.

How good are attainment rates for essential skills on FE and HE level programmes, and what are the contributory factors?

- All full-time FE courses include opportunities for students to develop and achieve accredited core skills. In most cases these are delivered through integrated projects, contextualised to the vocational area/industry of the students' course. The achievement rates across all five core skills at all levels are very high (88%-100% and averaging 94%) and have been so for the last three years.

- Learner Development Workers support full-time FE students well to develop and improve their essential skills and enhance their self-confidence. Students carry out a self-assessment against a set of essential skills at the start of their programme, then either select from a range of carefully designed projects, or are supported to design their own projects, to help them further develop their priority skills.

They track their skills development online and receive a College certificate confirming their achievements. The College has responded to numerous requests from other Colleges to share this practice.

- Many students gain additional certificates and awards , including computing vendor qualifications, and sports fitness awards and many participate in volunteering, fund-raising and community projects, which develop their citizenship skills and promote wider achievement.

- In 2017-2018, 681 full-time students benefitted from a high quality work placement, leading to certification, as part of their course. This was a 13% increase on the previous year.

- The College's innovative partnership with South East Regional College (SERC) in Northern Ireland provided seven groups of students from different disciplines with the opportunity to work on vocationally relevant collaborative projects with their peers in the partner College. Students recognised the positive impact that these opportunities brought, particularly in terms of the "21st Century Skills" of creativity, collaborative research and problem solving and remote digital communication in a professional setting.

How good is equity of success for all learners, and what are the contributory factors?

- The College uses student data well to ensure that no students experience barriers to participation or to learning because of protected characteristics. Where the data indicates any significant differences in enrolments, retention or success, managers and teams analyse this down to programme and individual student level and are diligent in investigating the specific reasons for this, to ensure that the learning experience remains equitable and inclusive. For example, detailed analysis of student success by protected characteristics indicates that Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) students on FE programmes; students with a declared disability on HE programmes; and students identifying as gay perform less well than the overall student population. Curriculum Managers and teams have carried out detailed analysis, down to individual student level, of the reasons for these students failing to achieve. This analysis has confirmed that the reasons were not related to the protected characteristic.

- In 2017-2018, the College delivered 45% of its Credit activity to students aged 16-19 and 22% to students aged 20-24. The actual overall activity for 16-19 year olds was higher, as it included Foundation Apprenticeships, which do not count as Credit activity. In terms of student success, 20-24 year olds performed better than

the overall student population on full-time HE and part-time FE and HE courses and at the same rate as the overall student population on full-time FE courses.

- The College delivered 11% of its activity to students from the 10% most deprived postcodes in Scotland. On full-time courses (FE and HE), students from SIMD 10 achieved exactly the same success rate as the overall student population and on part-time courses their success rates were 1% better than the overall student population.

- In 2017-2018, the College delivered 46% of its activity to female students and 53% to males. Whilst this differs slightly from the OA target for 2017-2018, overall female enrolments were up by 24% in 2017-2018. It is also very positive to note that there was a 20% increase in the number of females enrolled in courses in STEM subjects. Overall, there was no significant difference in the success rates of males and females. The College recognises that there is still gender underrepresentation in specific subject areas and specifically addresses this in its Gender Action Plan ambitions, which focus on increasing the numbers of women in STEM and men in care. The College is actively working with schools, including younger pupils, to promote culture change around gendered career thinking, and is actively promoting appropriate role modelling through this work and on social media.

- The College delivered 2% of its activity to students whose ethnicity is Black or Ethnic Minority (BME), however BME enrolments increased by 32% in 2017-2018 to 639. On HE programmes, BME students performed better than the overall student population.

- The College delivered 19% of its activity to students with a declared disability and overall enrolments from students with a disability increased by 13%. On FE programmes (both full-time and part-time), students with a disability performed 1% better than the overall student population.

- The College has seen a significant increase in the numbers of students disclosing as care experienced over the last three years, from 225 in 2015-2016 to 344 in 2017-2018, a 53% increase. The College delivered 3% of its activity to this group against a target of 2%. Whilst attainment rates for care experienced students remain lower than students who are not care experienced, the trends are positive. There was a 6% reduction in withdrawal amongst care experienced students over the last three years and an overall upward trend in achievement, to 70% in 2017-2018.

- Although fewer senior phase age pupils (354) studied vocational qualifications delivered by the College than the OA target of 380, the volume of credits delivered to senior phase pupils studying vocational qualifications (2.2%) and to pupils on school-College provision (9%) both exceeded target. The lower headcount was largely due to challenges in recruiting to Foundation Apprenticeships, which are not Credit funded. College staff made significant efforts during 2017-2018 to raise awareness of these programmes and increase applicant numbers and 185 new Foundation Apprentices enrolled in August 2018.

- The College has seen a significant increase in students identifying that they are carers over the last three years, from 392 in 2015-2016, to 472 in 2017-2018, a 20% increase. In 2017-2018, College staff and managers worked closely with Forth Valley Student Association to embed a Carers' Charter in the College, with an online campaign and information on Moodle. As a result, the differential in student success for carers and those who are not carers has dropped from 6% in 2016-2017, to 2% in 2017-2018.

Areas for Development

- Although, overall, the College's full-time student retention and success indicators are positive, there are a number of subject areas at both FE (Art and Design; Business; Construction; Hospitality and Media) and HE level (Construction, Engineering and Science) where student retention and success were low. College managers have carried out a detailed analysis of the contributory factors in each of these areas and Curriculum Managers and teams are taking appropriate action at programme level to address issues through their improvement action plans for 2018-2019.

- There has been a significant increase in the number of full-time FE and HE students presenting with complex mental health issues and/or life circumstances, which in many cases, created barriers to them completing or fully achieving all aspects of their course. In all such instances, curriculum and support teams did everything that they could to support the individual to stay on course and achieve their qualification aim; however these efforts were not always successful. As a result, the College plans to review the ways in which it provides pastoral support to full-time students, to ensure that the available resources are being utilised to provide maximum impact on student success, and to deliver improved information sharing through the new Student Support System.

- Younger students in the 16-19 year old age band performed less well than the overall student population on full-time FE courses, with 68% success as opposed to 71%, largely due to higher withdrawal rates. It is hoped that planned interventions, such as the Time4Me mentoring initiative, will have a positive impact on retention and success amongst younger students in future. The planned review of pastoral support for full-time students will also consider support for younger students.

- The College will continue to provide enhanced support for applicants and students who disclose care experience. This will include implementation of the Time4Me mentoring project and promotion of the increased bursary for care experienced students.

DELIVERY OF LEARNING AND SERVICES TO SUPPORT LEARNING

2.2 Curriculum

AREAS OF POSITIVE PRACTICE

How well do curriculum teams use labour market information (LMI) to plan the curriculum?

- The College delivers a carefully planned range of programmes from SCQF level 1-10. The curriculum offer is shaped by the Forth Valley Curriculum Strategy, which aligns the College curriculum with the business and industry profile of the region. Managers and senior managers review the curriculum annually, taking full account of available labour market and skills information. In 2017-2018, for example, this review led to an increased number of places for HNC Childhood Practice and HNC Care and Administrative Practice.

- Curriculum teams respond rapidly and effectively to national and local curriculum priorities. They are agile in flexing the curriculum offer to meet emerging needs, such as the increase in HNC Childhood Practice provision to meet the childcare expansion needs and the introduction and significant expansion of Foundation Apprenticeships.

- The College designs its HE curriculum carefully to support HN students to articulate to a wide range of vocational degree programmes with advanced standing. The College currently has articulation agreements in most subject areas with a number of universities across Scotland. The College has very successful associate student programmes, four of which are fully integrated degree programmes, in partnership with three universities.

How well do curriculum teams take account of national priorities and Developing the Young Workforce to plan the curriculum?

- The College has responded very well to the Developing the Young Workforce agenda and works very closely in partnership with the three local authorities and 18 secondary schools in the Forth Valley region to plan and deliver senior phase vocational pathways for school pupils. The College is frequently asked to attend events to disseminate its successful practice in relation to developing the Young Workforce and school-college partnerships.

- In 2017-2018, 598 places were made available for school pupils on vocational qualifications at SCQF Level 5 or above (Skills for Work, National Progression Awards, Foundation Apprenticeships and HNCs) and an additional 200 on the Schools College Opportunity to Succeed (SCOTS) course. In total 592 (74%) of these places were filled, 433 of these on vocational qualifications. The number of places offered and filled has been growing steadily over the past three years.

- During 2017-2018 the College worked closely with local authority partners to further increase the volume of senior phase vocational pathways for 2018-2019. In August 2018, 763 out of the offered 927 senior phase College places have been filled (82%), with 185 of these being new Foundation Apprenticeship starts.

- In 2017-2018 the College had 289 new starts on direct contracted apprenticeships. The College currently has around 900 Modern Apprentices in training and continues to evidence responsiveness to the needs of employers by requesting additional MA places in Engineering, where there was greater demand than the initial allocation.

How well do curriculum teams elicit and incorporate the views of employers and industry stakeholders to improve the curriculum?

- Curriculum teams engage very well with employers and other relevant external stakeholders to inform developments and improvements to the curriculum. Examples of resulting improvements to the curriculum include: tailored off-the-job training for Engineering MAs (Scottish Power and Ineos); bespoke workshop facilities to create realistic working environments (Alexander Dennis bus frames; Westfield Plant); Inclusive Sports Provision being added to the HN Sport curriculum; HNC Civil Engineering tailored to meet the needs of employers; and Clinical Skills or Essential Skills included in FE Care courses, which have been requested by employers to establish basic practical caring skills.

How well do curriculum teams incorporate and plan work-based learning activities to develop employability?

- Almost all full-time programmes include work-related learning, including realistic working environments, industry visits, employer talks and masterclasses and "live" project briefs. In 2017-2018, student conferences were held in Travel and Tourism and Accounting, enabling students to hear from influential industry speakers, gain in depth insights into the industries and network with local employers.

- An increasing number of full-time courses include a work experience placement, with 681 full-time students undertaking placements of at least 40 hours in 2017-2018, for which they received certification. Foundation Apprenticeships are designed to include a significant proportion of work-based learning and assessment, and the College has benefitted from very strong partnerships with local employers to enable this to be delivered to growing numbers of FAs.

How well do curriculum teams incorporate and plan development of employability skills within the curriculum?

How well do curriculum teams incorporate and plan essential skills, including Career Management Skills, to support employability and progression to further learning?

- Curriculum teams plan the development of employability skills very well, embedding employability learning across the whole College curriculum. In practical learning, employment standard behaviours and practices are expected of all students and, where at all possible, workshops are equipped and contextualised to replicate real onsite environments and situations to promote the development of employment standard skills.

- The College's innovative partnership with South East Regional College (SERC) in Northern Ireland provided groups of students from seven different disciplines with the opportunity to work on vocationally relevant collaborative projects with their peers in the partner College. Students recognised the positive impact that these opportunities brought, particularly in terms of the employability skills of creativity, collaborative research and problem solving and remote digital communication in a professional setting.

- Learner Development Workers further support skills development through contextualised and student centred essential skills projects; students use Personal Learning Plans to identify and track their personal skills development. Employability and creative thinking skills are embedded across within these projects and they

have been mapped to the Career Management Skills, so that students can clearly identify and articulate the skills that they are developing.

- All curriculum teams have responded very well to the College's commitment to support the development of students' skills for learning, life and work. Contextualised and integrated core skills are delivered at an appropriate level within all full time FE courses.

- Across all curriculum areas, teams create opportunities for their students to achieve more widely, through activities such as volunteering, inter-disciplinary projects and competitions, as well as work-related learning opportunities.

How well do curriculum teams plan and participate in Continuous Lifelong Professional Learning activities to ensure currency, knowledge of industry and professional practice?

- All college staff have annual Personal Review and Development (PRD) meetings with their line managers, in which they set personal objectives and plan how their personal development needs will be met through CLPL activities. The process works very effectively in cascading college strategic and operational objectives to individuals and to support the planning of relevant learning activities for staff.

- In 2017-2018, curriculum teams undertook development to enhance their skills in supporting student needs; to enhance their learning and teaching practice; and to update and enhance their specialist knowledge with industry experts. Additional activities recorded included attendance at conferences, professional updating, work based observation, shadowing, secondments and stretch activities to enhance experience.

- In August 2018, the annual Creative Learning Conference (this year a joint and simultaneous event with SERC in Northern Ireland) focused on key topical themes in learning and teaching, including student stress and resilience; cyber-security and internet safety; project-based learning to develop employability skills; and technology enhanced learning.

- In 2017-2018, in line with the College's Creative Learning and Technologies Strategy, the College carried out a skills audit of the digital competence of staff for technology enhanced learning. The outputs from this are now being used as a baseline for the development of CLPL resources for staff.

How well do curriculum teams use learner performance data at programme and unit levels to improve learner performance rates?

- Curriculum Managers and teams have ready

access to real time student performance data through an online Performance Indicator dashboard and they make good use of this to track progress and plan and implement interventions. Curriculum teams use student performance data and feedback from students diligently on an ongoing basis throughout the year. They analyse and discuss data are in team meetings, plan in-year improvements to programmes and put in place interventions where student progress is not as required.

- Curriculum Managers provide senior managers with formal predictions of student success twice a year and are required to set out recovery plans where student success is at risk. At the end of each academic year, teams carry out in depth analysis of student retention and success, including analysis by protected and other characteristics. These evaluations are formally recorded in team evaluation reports and action plans developed to improve performance

Areas for development

- The incorporation of the views of employers and industry stakeholders in curriculum team evaluations to improve the curriculum is not yet consistent across the College.

- The College plans to enhance the use of data by curriculum teams further, to improve student performance. In 2018-2019, the formal reporting of student success predictions will be increased to three times each year, making full use of the online Performance Indicator dashboard, to enable earlier identification at senior level of any emerging issues that may require action at department or College level. In addition, the College is introducing a progress "flag" into its online attendance registers, so that teaching staff can immediately identify students at risk of falling behind, to enable interventions to be put in place at an even earlier stage than at present.

DELIVERY OF LEARNING AND SERVICES TO SUPPORT LEARNING

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

AREAS OF POSITIVE PRACTICE

How well are learners motivated and engaged in enhancing their own learning?

- Through Listening to Learners feedback, almost all student groups report that they are happy with what and how they learn and are keen to keep learning. In the National Student Survey, 93% of students agree that staff encourage

students to take responsibility for their learning and 92% agree that they are able to influence learning on their course.

- The College's emphasis on creative, collaborative and project-based learning engages and motivates students very well. The College has responded to numerous requests from other colleges to share this practice and it has done so through visits and workshops in College and at national events.

How well do all learners make use of, high-quality resources and equipment, including digital technologies?

- Almost all students make good use of a range of appropriate resources to support their learning. In practical lessons, almost all students have access to high quality and well-equipped facilities with industry relevant equipment and in some cases supplied by local employers. This prepares students well for successful transition into the workplace.

- Almost all students make good use of digital technologies to support and enhance their learning. This includes the use of new platforms such as Onefile for digital portfolios, which has been well received by students. Most students continue to use Moodle effectively to access learning resources, submit assessments and in many cases, receive feedback. Students routinely use the internet for research and appropriate generalist and/or specialist software in their coursework.

How well do learners develop the skills they need to help them attain, achieve and progress to a positive destination?

- Across all curriculum areas, opportunities are made available for students to engage with a range of learning activities, including projects and work placements, which allows students to identify strengths and work on areas of interest. This has enriched the learning experience and provided students with vocationally relevant experience, which raises their awareness of the wider essential skills they are developing. In Listening to Learners focus groups, almost all students agree that their learning helps them to develop a wide range of skills and prepares them well for progression to employment or further study.

How well do learners influence their own learning and set goals to improve?

- Students across all curriculum areas are encouraged and enabled to influence their own learning through a range of activities, including the use of Personal Learning Plans. Through Listening to Learners, most students report that they are actively involved in planning

and shaping their own learning experiences in discussions about what and how they are taught.

How adept are teachers in adjusting learning and teaching approaches to meet different learner needs?

- Across all curriculum areas, staff demonstrate flexibility in adapting lessons to meet the needs of specific groups and individuals. Curriculum teams work well with learning support teams to track students' progress, engagement and attendance and use this information in conjunction with personal learning plans to ensure support for students is tailored to their needs within the classroom.

- The Learning and Teaching Enhancement mentoring programme has been effective in encouraging staff to reflect on and consider new approaches to take account of students' needs, which is then shared with other team members.

How well do teachers use resources and digital technologies to support and enhance purposeful learning?

- Staff use a wide range of technologies to support learning, which results in higher levels of engagement. Staff are further developing their practices in technology enhanced learning, making greater use of more advanced interactive features in Moodle and bringing new technology tools into their practice (for example Kahoot, Padlet, ebooks, BOB and Virtual reality).

- The Creative Learning and Technologies Strategy is focussing staff on the continual development and extended use of technology-enhanced learning and this is reflected in clear objectives in the College's operational plan. The College has also initiated a Learning Technologies Advancement Group, reporting to the Creative Learning and Technologies Committee. This group brings together representatives from curriculum areas and IT Services to explore developments in technologies to enhance learning. This innovative approach will ensure that new ideas for learning and teaching are evaluated, implemented and embedded more quickly into practice.

How well do staff use on-going and end-of-unit assessment to promote learning and affirm achievement?

How well do assessment approaches meet the needs of all learners?

- Assessments are well planned by almost all teaching staff and take good account of student needs to minimise assessment workload. In many instances, students are actively involved in agreeing assessment schedules and assessment scheduling is considered across a programme rather than by individual unit.

- Through Listening to Learners, most students agreed that they are well prepared for assessment and feedback is used effectively to promote further learning and to help students to understand how well they are progressing.

- The Learning Support team have worked effectively with teaching departments to explore other methods of assessments for students who struggle with more traditional forms of assessment. This flexibility has resulted in successful completion of courses for students using alternative assessment methods such as professional discussion and picture log books. Staff are flexible, supportive, approachable and open to making appropriate adjustments to lessons, units and assessments.

- A few curriculum teams have redesigned their overall assessment process to be more inclusive, so that fewer specific assessment arrangements are required for individual students. Some progress has been made to move students away from using reader/scribes towards utilising assistive technology.

How well do teachers use learner performance data at unit and programme levels (including surveys and evaluations) to improve learner performance rates?

- Most staff use student performance data and student feedback well to evaluate and to plan and monitor actions for improvement through team meetings. Programme teams, including support staff members, use this data to analyse patterns, identify potential factors affecting student success at subject and programme level and plan interventions or changes to curriculum delivery.

How well do staff involve learner representatives and stakeholders in evaluating the learning experience and planning for improvement?

- Listening to Learners feedback is used extensively by all curriculum teams to plan improvements to programme delivery. Class representatives work well with managers to support the focus groups and their involvement ensures that the feedback fully represents the views of the student group.

- Curriculum teams gather feedback from other stakeholders, including employers, in a variety of ways designed to suit the stakeholders' circumstances and priorities. Most curriculum teams use the feedback from students and other stakeholders very well to evaluate the learning experience and plan improvements.

How well do teachers reflect on the outcomes of their learning and teaching approaches to continuously improve the learning experience?

- Staff make good use of a variety of methods, including student feedback and performance data, to reflect on their practice through regular programme team discussions and robust team evaluation activities. Actions are identified and monitored, resulting in positive improvements to students' learning experiences.

- The Learning and Teaching Enhancement mentoring programme is proving effective in promoting and supporting reflection on individual practice and initiating enhancements. Several curriculum teams are already utilising feedback from mentoring activities to promote collective reflection on learning and teaching practice and to plan enhancements for learning and teaching within their areas.

Areas for Development

- The College will continue to develop its Learning and Teaching Enhancement mentoring programme and has a target for 100 further staff to engage in the process during 2018-2019. In 2018-2019, the focus will be on new staff, theory/knowledge teaching and technology enhanced learning.

- The actions to enhance the use of data set out in QI 2.2 will also support individual staff to use learner performance data more effectively to improve learner performance rates.

2.4 Services to support learning

AREAS OF POSITIVE PRACTICE

How effective are arrangements for providing potential and current learners with information, advice and support to make informed decisions about their learning?

- College staff provide potential students with clear and helpful information about College programmes and other important aspects of College life prior to commencing their studies. The College promotes programmes to potential students, parents and caregivers clearly, through a well-designed website, visits to the region's secondary schools and College information days. In the Early Student Experience Survey, 93% of students said that they found the information they received from the College before their course, helpful or very helpful.

- Staff ensure that current students are made aware of the comprehensive range of services to support their learning through a variety of means, including Moodle, posters and information leaflets and information provided at induction. Information, advice and support are available and easy to access on all campuses.

How quickly are support needs identified and acted on by staff, to provide individuals and groups of learners with swift access to support facilities?

- The College has an effective, robust disclosure system for additional support needs, spanning pre-entry through to on-course, to enable students to tell us what they need. This ensures that students' needs are identified and staff can put arrangements in place at the earliest possible stage. In 2017-2018, a total of 608 students had Personal Learning and Support Plans with arrangements to support their learning. In almost every case, staff implement reasonable adjustments recommended for students fully and timeously, ensuring that individuals with specific needs do not experience these as barriers to learning.

- Teaching departments annually agree and budget hours for Extended Learning Support, based on volume of activity and the profile of students. These hours are allocated to designated lecturers (ELS Facilitators), who have remitted teaching time to provide support to students with additional support needs. The way in which these hours are used is determined at curriculum team level, to ensure that staff deliver this support in ways that works best for students in that subject area. These approaches include one-to-one sessions, subject-specific tutorials and drop in sessions. The ELS Facilitators work very closely with the Learning Support team, to ensure that students' specific additional support needs are quickly met.

How effective are arrangements for disbursement of funds to support learning?

- Arrangements for disbursement of funds to support learning are very effective and the Student Funding team implement year on year enhancements to the process. Recent examples include: a move to fortnightly bursary payment; cash advances at the start of term and - for students transitioning from benefits to student support payments - a one week payment during the Christmas Period so that students have money to return to College in January; clearer information about where an application is in the process and what evidence still requires to be produced; more update emails throughout the application process; and more face to face access to funding staff for students. Students received these changes very positively. The student funding team also work very closely with the Forth Valley Student Association to deal with any issues raised directly with them and to ensure that any problems are resolved quickly.

How well do staff work with external agencies to enable learners to access additional services to support learning?

- Staff work very effectively with external agencies to extend and enhance the support available for students. There are strong links between the College and agencies which deal with crisis management, housing, social or financial difficulties. The Forth Valley Student Association is also active in signposting students to external partner agencies, such as Alcohol and Drug Partnership; Scottish Families against Alcohol and Drugs; Scottish Mental Health First Aid and Food Banks.

- College staff work well with Skills Development Scotland careers advisors, who are linked to each campus and provide careers advice and guidance to identified students, primarily those 16-18 and at risk of not progressing to a positive destination. These advisers also link well into Learner Development Worker workshops to provide careers advice to vulnerable groups.

How well do staff capture and draw on feedback from learners and stakeholders to improve the quality of services to support learning?

How well do staff involve learner representatives and stakeholders in evaluating the support service experience to plan for improvement?

- In addition to the feedback gathered through Listening to Learners and Student Council, support teams make good use of a range of other sources of feedback from students. These include an Early Student Experience Survey, capturing feedback on course information, application, selection, enrolment and induction processes; an annual Extended Learning Support Student Engagement Survey; and evaluation of workshops on funding, UCAS and Moving On. Teams make very good use of this information in their evaluation and operational planning processes and there are numerous examples of service enhancements introduced as a result.

How well do staff support learners to achieve a positive destination?

- Staff support students very well to achieve a positive destination. Examples include joint Moving On workshops with Skills Development Scotland and the local authorities; support for UCAS applications; workshops for students planning to progress to university; university bridging support for students on integrated degree programmes; Learner Development Worker workshops and Personal Learning Plan activities for full-time students focusing on job seeking skills.

How adept are staff at adjusting approaches to take account of different learner needs and circumstances?

- The Learning Support team have worked effectively with teaching departments to explore other methods of assessments for students who struggle with more traditional forms of assessment. This flexibility has resulted in successful completion of courses for students using alternative assessment methods such as professional discussion and picture log books. Staff are flexible, supportive, approachable and open to making appropriate adjustments to lessons, units and assessments.

- The Learning Support team have been trialling the use of new technologies (such as Quizlet; Audio Notetaker; Dragon; Read and Write Gold; and LiveScribe) whilst working to support students. They have also been trialling different ways to capture more students at the same time. For example, workshops or in class support for groups of students, rather than always one to one appointments. This has enabled them to support a larger number of students and also promotes fully inclusive practice and peer support.

How well do staff reflect on the outcomes of their approaches to continuously improve the learning experience?

- Support staff actively engage in team evaluation of the services and how they provide these. They reflect very well on the impact that their approaches and services have for students and how these link to student success. Teams gather feedback from students through surveys and also receive feedback through Listening to Learners focus groups. Examples of improvements as a result of this include the relocation of the Student Finance Team; improved accessibility of Moodle; and improvements to communication with applicants and students (text messages as well as email).

How well do staff use learner performance data (recruitment, attendance, retention and attainment) to make changes to improve learner performance rates?

- Most service areas within the College use student data well to make changes which contribute to student performance rates. For example, to improve information about courses to manage applicant expectations and to target under-represented groups; to improve school pupil attendance (and therefore achievement) on school-College partnership courses; to make recommendations to teaching departments on the level of ELS hours for each subject area each year.

Areas for development

- The actions to further enhance support for students set out in QI 3.1 are also relevant in this area.

LEADERSHIP AND QUALITY CULTURE

1.1   Governance and leadership of change

AREAS OF POSITIVE PRACTICE

How well do managers take account of local, regional and national priorities to develop College strategies?

- College management continued to lead the College very effectively in 2017-2018, planning the use of College resources very well to deliver 84,741 Credits, marginally exceeding its OA target.

- The College continues to deliver on its 2017-2022 Strategic Plan, which takes full account of national priorities (including Scotland's Economic strategy; Developing the Young Workforce; and tacking inequality) and regional/local priorities (including the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Deal; the future Grangemouth Vision; and Community Planning Partnership Single Outcome Agreements and Local Community Plans.

- Senior managers have well-established and productive working relationships with national and regional partners, which ensure that the development of strategies and provision of services take full cognisance of current and projected needs. This results in key priorities being conveyed clearly to curriculum and support areas and embedded in operational plans.

- Board members and senior managers make very good use of employer and community engagement to inform strategic decisions. In addition to the extensive activity undertaken by the Principal, Senior Management Team members and the Board Chair, individual members bring a range of relevant expertise and sit on a range of local fora. Staff and board members are engaged directly with three community planning partnerships across the Forth Valley Region.

- The Senior Management Team and other senior managers are very well represented on national strategic groups, including the Access Delivery Group; the Curriculum and Assessment Board; CBI Scotland Council; Jisc; Scottish Qualifications Authority committees and a range of reference and working groups. This enables them to keep colleagues fully up to date with emerging thinking and themes, to support agile and pro-active planning and decision-making.

- The College takes good account of the national priority for widening access to HE. The College delivered 11% of its activity to students from the most deprived 10% postcode areas and these students performed as well as the overall student population on full-time courses and 1% better on part-time courses. The College also delivered 19% of its HE activity to students from Schools for Higher Education Programme (SHEP).

- The College is responding very effectively to the Scottish Government's STEM Education Strategy. In 2017-2018 the College delivered 37% of its activity to students on STEM courses. The College has been proactive in initiating a Regional STEM Steering Group, with its local authority, university and Developing the Young Workforce partners and has ambitious plans to drive STEM education forward in the region, particularly in relation to building STEM capacity amongst primary school teachers providing STEM learning experiences for younger students. The College is also working to address gender imbalances in STEM subjects. The number of female students in Engineering and Science has been increasing steadily over the last three years, from 485 in 2015-2016 to 598 in 2017-2018. Student success Performance Indicators in Construction, Science and Computing show that, in these subject areas, females are performing better than males.

- The College has met, or is within 1% of, almost all of its Outcome Agreement targets for 2017-2018. In the three instances where there was a slightly larger deviation from target (Credit delivery to females; number of senior phase age pupils studying vocational qualifications; and HE FT student success) a full analysis and explanation, including further data, has been provided in the preceding pages.

How well does the College Board provide strategic support and challenge to secure high quality provision and ongoing improvement?

- The College has a skilled and experienced Board of Management that works very well with its senior management team and Board Secretary. Collectively they have strong processes and effective governance. As a result, College management are well-supported and robustly challenged to ensure that the College continues to deliver high quality provision and ongoing improvement.

How well does the College Board assure itself that evaluation and enhancement reports are accurate and balanced?

- The Board has reviewed its committee structure and has replaced its Strategic Development Committee with a new Learning and Student Experience Committee. The new Committee provides sharper focus on the curriculum;

high quality learning; the Regional Outcome Agreement; performance monitoring and the Forth Valley Student Association. The Committee actively contributes to and challenges College evaluation and enhancement reports. The remit and membership of the Learning and Student Experience Committee ensures that there is connectivity between and across College and Board sub-committees in relation to the quality of College provision and continuous improvement.

How well do College managers engage staff and the Students' Association in the ongoing development of College vision, aim and values?

How well are staff and the Students' Association involved in the process of change and planning for continuous improvement?

- The College has well-established and effective arrangements for engaging with staff and students in the ongoing development of its future direction, in line with its clear and well-articulated mission, Making Learning Work. The Principal holds regular meetings with the Forth Valley Student Association team and, as a result, they feel very well engaged in College visioning and planning.

- Forth Valley Student Association is always represented at the Board and relevant sub-committees and are encouraged to contribute and participate fully in areas relevant to learning, teaching and the student experience where, their views are respected.

- Managers work well with staff to align College objectives to meaningful individual objectives through the Personal Review and Development process. As a result, all staff clearly understand their individual roles in working towards continuous improvement.

How well do College strategies take account of the ambitions of Developing the Young Workforce?

- The ambitions of Developing the Young Workforce are fully embedded in the College's strategic objectives to deliver streamlined and successful learner journeys and to prepare our students to stand out in the future job market.

- This strategic commitment is clearly evidenced by the substantial growth in school-College partnership activity over the last few years. The College has increased the number of senior phase pupils undertaking vocational learning with the College by 62% since 2015-2016 and, in 2017-2018 delivered 9% of its Credits on school partnership activity.

- The College has made a strong strategic commitment to growing Foundation Apprenticeship provision in the Forth Valley Region, evidence by the 185 new FA starts in

August 2018. This is in spite of the challenging funding levels for these programmes, particularly where group sizes are sometimes still significantly smaller than would normally be acceptable in terms of course viability.

- The College further demonstrates its commitment to Developing the Young Workforce by acting as host employer for the Forth Valley Developing the Young Workforce Regional Team and is very active, along with employer and local authority partners, in directing the work of the Regional Group to advance the Developing the Young Workforce agenda across Forth Valley.

- College managers and senior managers are frequently asked to attend events to disseminate the College's highly effective practice in relation to Developing the Young Workforce and school-college partnerships to others, including the Association of Directors in Education Scotland, Scottish College for Educational Leadership, Building Our Curriculum Self Help Group and College Development Network.

How realistic and sufficiently stretching are targets at College and curriculum team levels?

- Senior managers engage well with curriculum and service managers to develop operational plans that are closely aligned to the College's strategic direction. These plans are also fully informed by team evaluations, which, in turn, are informed by extensive engagement with students and staff. As a result, operational plans and targets are produced with the full involvement of the whole College learning community and reflect clear plans for continuous improvement.

- The College believes that its Operational Agreement targets and targets set through its operational planning processes are realistic and sufficiently stretching and ambitious. Key targets from the Operational Agreement are cascaded very effectively to department managers. These include targets for Credit delivery, enrolments (overall and senior phase) and student success.

Areas for development

- In 2018-2019, the College plans to cascade the full range of its Operational Agreement targets more systematically, through Directors of Curriculum into curriculum teams, and to strengthen in-year monitoring of progress towards targets.

LEADERSHIP AND QUALITY CULTURE

1.4   Evaluation leading to improvement

AREAS OF POSITIVE PRACTICE

How well do staff and learners engage in review and planning processes?

- Almost all staff across curriculum and service teams, engage very well in the review and planning process. Staff understand that it is part of their role to feed into evaluations and plan for improvement. At College level, managers are fully involved in agreeing the final College evaluative report and enhancement plan.

- Recent Forth Valley Student Association training with class reps has encouraged greater engagement with Listening to Learners, allowing class groups to review their learning experience and plan future learning. Listening to Learners is an important source of evidence which, is used effectively for informing programme review and team evaluations, and to resolve any issues specifically related to students' learning experiences.

How well do managers direct and support staff to engage in evaluation to plan for improvement?

- All College managers support curriculum and service teams well to engage with and take ownership of evaluation of their area, which has resulted in inclusive and collaborative team evaluation activity happening across the College. Managers provide useful feedback to their teams on evaluation reports and ensure enhancement plans are used effectively to make improvements.

- College managers utilise effectively their experiences as Education Scotland Associate Assessors, to support the whole College evaluation process within their own teams and as part of the wider College Leadership Group.

How well do evaluative processes lead to improved outcomes for learners?

- The College's evaluative activities have supported teams to build and sustain generally high levels of student success over time. Team review and evaluation is ongoing throughout the academic year and teams are very aware of the specific and sometimes complex issues affecting the capacity of their students to succeed, both in the immediate term and in relation to wider societal trends. Teams make good judgements about actions to improve

students' chances whilst they are on their course and support them effectively to achieve long term success.

How well are staff directed and supported to use corporate data to evaluate and plan for improvement?

- College senior managers and managers support staff very well to use corporate data for evaluation and action planning. A range of live and interactive reports are readily available to all staff through a data dashboard, allowing for granular analysis of departmental and cross College data. This results in managers and staff being able to accurately reflect on performance and plan for improvement.

How well do curriculum teams take account of Developing the Young Workforce in evaluation and planning processes?

- Developing the Young Workforce is fully embedded in College evaluation and planning processes. Curriculum teams plan for and evaluate school-College partnership and senior phase vocational pathway courses alongside mainstream provision.

How well do managers engage schools and LAs in evaluation and planning processes?

- Senior managers and managers engage local authorities and schools very well in planning and evaluation processes. The partnership with all three local authorities is very strong and the College is fully engaged with all 18 secondary schools across the Forth Valley region. A formal partnership of the College and the three local authorities has been formed for the delivery of Foundation Apprenticeships.

- School and College staff participate in "shared learning" workshops to evaluate Developing the Young Workforce provision and, as a result, improvements are identified and implemented.

- The College is a partner with two Stirling secondary schools for Validated Self-Evaluation. Managers have taken part in Validated Self Evaluation reviews of the two schools and the process will be reciprocated, with teams from the schools carrying out a formal review of school-College partnership provision, during 2018-2019.

Areas for development

- The actions to enhance the use of data set out in QI 2.2 are also relevant here.

CAPACITY TO IMPROVE SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Forth Valley College has a strong and systematic focus on quality improvement and enhancement, which has consistently received very positive endorsement through Education Scotland review activities since the College's inception. The Board of Management, managers and staff at all levels are fully committed to the College's mission of Making Learning Work. The Principal and senior managers continue to provide strong and forward-thinking leadership, actively promote the College's commitment to innovation and empower managers and staff to identify and implement opportunities to enhance the student learning experience. The College has therefore clearly and consistently demonstrated its capacity to improve and is very well placed to deliver on the enhancement plan set out within this report.

GRADES

Key Principle	Grade
Outcomes and Impact: How good are we at ensuring the best possible outcomes for all our learners?	Very Good
Delivery of learning and services to support learning: How good is the quality of our provision and the service we deliver?	Very Good
Leadership and quality culture: How good is our leadership and approach to improvement?	Excellent

Commentary on Progress towards Targets in Current Year (2018-2019)

Recruitment for session 2018-2019 has been healthy at Forth Valley College. Overall we have recruited beyond targets, particularly for evening and part time courses. Full time enrolments are close to target, and there is an increase in both FE and HE compared to this time last session. Overall enrolments are higher for the current session compared to Session 2017-2018 at this time.

The number of early withdrawals are low, allowing us to predict that early withdrawal rates will be in line with the low rates we witnessed in session 2017-2018.

Forth Valley College

Making Learning Work

ENHANCEMENT PLAN: UPDATE ON ACTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT FROM 2016-2017

Ref	QI(s)	Action for Improvement	Lead	Date	Update on Actions from 2016-2017 Enhancement Plan
1	1.1	Review the agendas and remit of the Strategic Development Committee to ensure that the Board engages in even more substantive discussions of strategic issues related to the core business of learning and teaching and ongoing improvement	Chair of Board of Management	June 2018	Achieved: Strategic Development Committee renamed Learning and Student Experience Committee with renewed remit and focus on learning from 2018-2019.
2	1.2 1.4	Provide an initial 50 members of teaching staff with mentoring support for evaluation of learning and teaching and individual and team action planning for improvement/ enhancement and plan for the remaining teaching staff to receive mentoring support by June 2020.	Vice Principal Learning and Quality	June 2018	Achieved: 0.8FTE seconded Learning and Teaching Mentors in post; year 1 mentoring target met; plan in progress to engage all teaching staff in mentoring process by 2020.
3	1.2 2.2 2.6	Ensure that every team evaluation report contains specific evidence of external stakeholder/employer engagement in the evaluation process.	Vice Principal Learning and Quality	June 2021	Ongoing Action: some progress has been made, however this is not yet consistent across all curriculum teams. (2018-2021 Enhancement Plan Action 1)
4	1.3 2.4 3.1 3.2	Develop and implement strengthened and effective arrangements for attendance reporting, guidance and support for HE full-time students.	Senior Management Team	June 2018	Partially achieved: Initial review completed. New arrangements, have been implemented locally for 2018-2019. This will be further advanced through the review of full-time pastoral support in the forward Enhancement Plan (Action 5)
5	1.4 2.3	Provide all managers who lead team evaluation with appropriate access to Career Long Professional Learning on evaluative thinking	Head of Learning and Quality	June 2018	Achieved: HMI John Laird delivered a series of CLPL workshops for all College managers on evaluative thinking during 2017-2018.
6	1.4	Engage every Curriculum/Operations Manager in observing at least one Listening to Learners focus group facilitated by a peer manager.	Vice Principal Learning and Quality	June 2019	Not achieved: due to operational priorities this was not carried out across the board, however opportunities to discuss and share practice were provided through CM/OM meetings.
7	2.2	Increase staff participation in school information events relating to school-College partnership vocational courses and aim to fill 85% of places offered on these programmes for 2018-2019.	Vice Principal Learning and Quality	Sept 2018	Partially achieved: Engagement with school information events was significantly increased, through a planned programme of engagement. 82% of school places filled for 2018-2019.
8	2.2	Embed career management skills in student learning through Learner Development Worker workshops.	Vice Principal Learning and Quality	June 2018	Career Management Skills have been mapped to the Essential Skills Projects delivered through LDW workshops and information about the mapping made available to students.

Continued overleaf...

Ref	QI(s)	Action for Improvement	Lead	Date	Update on Actions from 2016-2017 Enhancement Plan
9	9.3	Carry out an audit of staff digital capability and provide all teaching staff with appropriate support and development to deliver an agreed baseline level of technology enhanced learning.	Vice Principal Learning and Quality	June 2018	Achieved: Outputs from the completed staff digital capability audit are now being used to inform CLPL and support for staff (2017-2018 Operational Plan Objective 12)
10	2.4 2.5	Increase the volume and quality of transition information provided by schools, through collaborative work with local authority partners.	Vice Principal Learning and Quality	August 2019	Ongoing Action: progress made, however further work to be done to achieve this for all schools (2018-2019 Operational Plan Objective 9 and 2018-2021 Enhancement Plan Action 2)
11	2.4 3.2	Provide additional support for students disclosing mental health issues, including increased opportunities for students to undertake Mental Health First Aid training.	Depute Principal and COO	June 2018	Achieved: 73 more staff and students completed MHFA; 492 students assisted through Wellbeing Project. Work on supporting mental wellbeing is ongoing.
		Develop a unified system for tracking and evaluating the impact of the interventions and support experienced by individual students.		Nov 2018	Ongoing Action: Student Support System in development. Beta version Sept 2018; testing and training end Oct 18; deployment Nov 18. (2018-2021 Enhancement Plan Action 4)
12	3.2	Monitor team action plans closely to ensure that teams are implementing appropriate and effective actions to address issues with full-time HE student retention and attainment at programme level and achieve full-time HE success Outcome Agreement target of 75% for 2017-2018.	Vice Principal Learning and Quality	June 2018	Ongoing Action: Team action plans were carefully monitored and additional processes were put in place to monitor predicted retention and attainment throughout the year. These have had some success, as FT HE success has increased by 2% in 2017-2018, however this falls short of the OA target and this work will continue throughout 2018-2019. (2018-2021 Enhancement Plan Action 6)
13	3.2	Influence school leaders across Forth Valley to ensure that pupils attend school-College courses regularly and prioritise these alongside their school curriculum.	Vice Principal Learning and Quality	April 2018	Ongoing Action: school pupil attendance now 73.3% and work ongoing to further improve.
14	3.2	Deliver Gender Action Plan targets for 2017-2018.	SMT	June 2018	Partially achieved: the College has met most of its GAP targets for 2017-2018, however this still requires focused action in relation to improving male and female participation and success in a range of programmes where there is a clear gender divide. (2018-2021 Enhancement Plan Action 3)

ACTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT FOR 2018-2021

Ref	QI(s)	Action for Improvement	Lead(s)	Date		
				2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
1	1.2 2.2 2.6	Ensure that every team evaluation report consistently contains specific evidence of external stakeholder/ employer engagement in the evaluation process.	Vice Principal Learning and Quality/ Directors of Curriculum	Implement		
2	2.4 2.5	Ensure that all schools provide full and accurate transition information for school leavers progressing to College.	Vice Principal Learning and Quality	Implement		
3	3.2	Deliver Gender Action Plan targets to improve male and female participation and success in a range of programmes where there is a clear gender divide	SMT	As per GAP	As per GAP	As per GAP

Ref	QI(s)	Action for Improvement	Lead(s)	Date		
				2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
4	3.1 3.2 2.4	Implement, evaluate and refine the centralised Student Support System (developed during 2017-2018) to allow real time access to and updating of individual student's support histories.	Depute Principal and COO	Implement	Evaluate and refine	
5	3.1 3.2 2.4	Review the way in which the College provides pastoral support to full-time students, to ensure that the available resources are being utilised to provide maximum impact on student success.	Depute Principal and COO	Carry out review	Implement new approaches	Evaluate and refine
6	3.2	Deliver on improvement actions at programme level to ensure that success rates on lower performing programmes improve and meet college targets.	Directors of Curriculum	Implement	Implement	Implement
7	3.1 3.2	Implement and evaluate the Time4Me mentoring programme and seek resource to make this initiative sustainable.	Depute Principal and COO	Implement and evaluate		
8	3.2 2.3 1.4	Strengthen the process for the formal reporting of student success predictions throughout the year, to enable earlier identification at senior level of any emerging issues that may require action at department or College level.	Vice Principal Learning and Quality Vice Principal Information Systems	Implement new process	Evaluate and refine	
9	3.2 2.3 1.4	Implement the progress "flag" in online attendance registers and maximise its use by Curriculum Managers to improve retention and student success.	Vice Principal Learning and Quality Vice Principal Information Systems	Implement and monitor	Evaluate and refine	
10	2.3	Engage a further 100 teaching staff in Learning and Teaching Mentoring	Vice Principal Learning and Quality	100 staff	100 staff	100 staff
11	1.1	Cascade the full range of OA targets systematically, through Directors of Curriculum into curriculum teams, and strengthen in-year monitoring of progress towards targets.	Senior Management Team	Implement	Review and refine	

Appendix 1: Outcome Agreement Targets

No	Measure	Actual 2016-17	Target 2017-18	Actual 2017-18
1a)	Credits Delivered: Core	83,926	84,647	84,741
	ESF	2,370	2,230	2,235
	Core + ESF	86,296	86,877	86,976
1b)	Volume of Credits delivered to learners aged 16-19	28,911	40,000	38,874
	Proportion of Credits delivered to learners aged 16-19	45%	46%	45%
	Volume of Credits delivered to learners aged 20-24	20,460	18,300	19,137
	Proportion of Credits delivered to learners aged 20-24	24%	21%	22%
1c)	Volume of Credits delivered to learners in the most deprived 10% postcode areas	9,052	10,000	9,399
	Proportion of Credits delivered to learners in the most deprived 10% postcode areas	11%	12%	11%
1d)	**Volume and proportion of Credits delivered to learners from protected characteristics:**			
	Volume of Credits delivered to students where ethnicity is Black or an Ethnic Minority	1,376	2,500	1,943
	Proportion of Credits delivered to students where ethnicity is Black or an Ethnic Minority	2%	3%	2%
	Volume of Credits delivered to students who are disabled	14,768	12,000	16,541
	Proportion of Credits delivered to students who are disabled	17%	14%	19%
	Volume of Credits delivered to females [2]	37,753	42,244	39,970
	Proportion of Credits delivered to females [2]	44%	49%	46%
	Volume of Credits delivered to males [2]	48,399	43,790	46,426
	Proportion of Credits delivered to males [2]	56%	51%	53%
	Volume of Credits delivered to Care Experienced Learners	1,903	1,700	2,178
	Proportion of Credits delivered to Care Experienced Learners	2%	2%	3%
2a)	Number of senior phase age pupils studying vocational qualification delivered by the College	322	380	354
2b)	Volume of Credits delivered to senior phase age pupils studying vocational qualification delivered by the College	1,891	1,850	1,916
	Proportion of Credits delivered to senior phase age pupils studying vocational qualification delivered by the College	2.20%	2.1%	2.2%
2c)	Volume of Credits delivered to learners at S3 and above as part of 'school-college' provision	7,014	5,100	7,427
	Proportion of Credits delivered to learners at S3 and above as part of 'school-college' provision	8%	6%	9%
2d)	Volume of Credits delivered at HE level to learners from SHEP schools	4,075	3,100	4,538
	Proportion of Credits delivered at HE level to learners from SHEP schools	18%	15%	19%
3)	Volume of Credits delivered to learners enrolled on STEM courses [3]	31,811	30,000	32,563
	Proportion of Credits delivered to learners enrolled on STEM courses [3]	37%	35%	37%
4a)	Proportion of enrolled students successfully achieving a recognised qualification:			
	FE Full Time	74%	71%	71%
	HE Full Time	70%	75%	72%
	FE Part Time	93%	91%	91%
	HE Part Time	87%	89%	87%
4b)	Proportion of enrolled SIMD10 students successfully achieving a recognised qualification:			
	FE Full Time	72%	71%	71%
	HE Full Time	69%	68%	73%
	FE Part Time	94%	91%	91%
	HE Part Time	78%	89%	88%
4c)	Proportion of senior phase age pupils successfully completing a vocational qualification delivered by the College	68%	70%	69%
5)	Number of starts for direct contracted apprenticeships (including industry bodies such as CITB and SECTT)	279	347	389
6)	Number of full time learners with high quality work placement or work place "experience" as part of their programme of study	670	600	681
7)	Number of successful learners who have achieved HNC or HND Qualification articulating to degree level courses with advanced standing		157	
	Proportion of successful learners who have achieved HNC or HND Qualification articulating to degree level courses with advanced standing		40%	
8)	Number of full time college qualifiers in work, training and/or further study 3-6 months after qualifying	1,444	1,575	1,269
	Proportion of full time college qualifiers in work, training and/or further study 3-6 months after qualifying	94%	94%	93%
9)	SSES Survey - The percentage of students overall, satisfied with their college experience	95%	95%	95%
10)	Gross carbon footprint	2,263 tCO2	2,221 tCO2	

Appendix 2: College Retention and Attainment Pls

		Early Withdrawal			Further Withdrawal			Partial Success			Success			QA Target	Sector
		2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2017-18	2016-17
FT	FE	4%	7%	3%	21%	15%	20%	6%	5%	6%	69%	73%	71%	71%	71%
PT	FE	0%	1%	0%	5%	4%	7%	4%	2%	2%	91%	93%	91%	91%	77%
FT	HE	2%	3%	3%	15%	15%	16%	8%	12%	8%	75%	70%	71%	75%	72%
PT	HE	1%	1%	0%	7%	5%	7%	4%	7%	6%	88%	87%	87%	89%	79%

Appendix 3: Sources of Evidence for Evaluation

Board and Committee papers: https://www.forthvalley.ac.uk/about-us/governance/board-of-management/

Governance Effectiveness Review 2017: https://www.forthvalley.ac.uk/media/2398/fvc-baord-effectiveness-review-final-2017-05-08.pdf

Feedback from Education Scotland Annual Enhancement and Scrutiny Activity 2017-2018

Strategic Plan 2017-2022: https://www.forthvalley.ac.uk/media/2838/strategic-plan-20172022.pdf

College Operational Plan 2017-2018

Department Operational Plans

Staff PRD Records

Listening to Learners Records

Forth Valley College Curriculum Strategy Roadmap

Creative Learning and Technologies Strategy 2018-2022 https://www.forthvalley.ac.uk/media/2998/creative-learning-technologies-strategy.pdf

Records of staff and student engagement in strategy development

CLLG/CLTC Minutes

Notes of Heads of Services meetings

Notes of Curriculum Manager meetings

FVC Quality Enhancement Procedures

Notes of Programme Review meetings

Curriculum and Support Team Evaluation Reports and Enhancement Plans

Staff CLPL records

Forth Valley College Prospectus

Records of essential skills projects and students' skills acquired (Enquirer)

Personal Learning Plans and Personal Learning Support Plans

MA Review records

Moodle usage statistics

Records of Assessment Arrangements

Records of work experience placements

Student Early Experience Survey results

Support team feedback from students

Records of meetings with schools

Records of Learner Adviser workshops (HE Funding, UCAS, Preparation for University)

Articulation Information

Feedback from partners

CPP/LEP papers

Records of employer engagement e.g. work placement records, live project briefs

Participation rates of individuals with protected characteristics and other characteristics (e.g. SIMD postcodes; care experienced)

Final Progress on Equalities Outcomes 2014-2017 https://www.forthvalley.ac.uk/media/2339/report-b-final-progress-on-equality-outcomes-2013-17.pdf

Equalities policy https://www.forthvalley.ac.uk/media/1344/equalities-policy.pdf

Equality at Forth Valley College https://www.forthvalley.ac.uk/media/2853/equalities-infographic-web.pdf

Gender Action Plan 2017-2020 https://www.forthvalley.ac.uk/media/2702/gender-action-plan-2017-20.pdf

College retention and success data for 2017-2018 and three-year trends b

College retention and success data for 2017-2018 by protected characteristics

Sector retention and success data for 2016-2017

College full-time leaver destination data 2016-2017

Forth Valley College

Making Learning Work

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