



Evaluative
Report and
Capacity to
Improve
Statement
2017-18

October 31

2018

Contents

Section 1- Background Information about the college and its operating context	2
Section 2- Methodology used to evaluate the quality of provision and services.....	3
Section 3- Outcomes of evaluation.....	4
3.1 Outcomes and Impact.....	4
3.1.1 Wellbeing, equality and inclusion.....	4
3.1.2 Equity, attainment and achievement for all learners.....	5
3.2 Delivery of Learning and Services to Support Learning.....	7
3.2.1 Curriculum	7
3.2.2 Learning, teaching and assessment.....	9
3.2.3 Services to support learning	10
3.3 Leadership and Quality Culture.....	12
3.3.1 Governance and leadership of change.....	12
3.3.2 Leadership of evaluation leading to improvement.....	13
Section 4- Capacity for Improvement Supporting Statement	15

Section 1- Background Information about the college and its operating context

Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) is a designated higher education institution that delivers further education and is recognised by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) as a Small Specialist Institution with approximately 5067 students and 1329 employees. SRUC also receives funding from SFC (Research Excellent Grant) and the Scottish Government Rural and Environmental Science and Analytical Services Division for research and consulting activity and has close links with industry across all education, research and consulting activities.

SRUC operates its main education activities from six campuses, including four education farms: Aberdeen, Ayr, Barony (nine miles from Dumfries), Edinburgh, Elmwood (in Cupar, Fife) and Oatridge (in Ecclesmachan, West Lothian). All but one of SRUC's taught degree programmes are validated by the University of Glasgow under an accreditation agreement and, since 2010; we have had a similar accreditation agreement with the University of Edinburgh which validates the remaining degree programme. SRUC has approximately 100 postgraduate research students with degrees being awarded by ten different universities, including Glasgow and Edinburgh.

SRUC's FE activity is focused at our Aberdeen, Barony, Elmwood and Oatridge campuses where provision runs from Access level to National Certificate covering a wide range of vocational and work-based learning qualifications including Modern Apprenticeships. The subject areas available are diverse including: Agriculture, Animal Care, Countryside Management, Environment, Horse Care, Veterinary Nursing, Garden Design, Golf, Horticulture and Sports Coaching.

SRUC launched its' new Strategic Plan for 2018-22 in May 2018. Principles underpinning the new strategy include reasserting SRUC's status as the National Institution for research, teaching and advice, creating a model for collaborative team working within SRUC and across Scotland and bringing an international focus to all we do. Three new regional Deans have been appointed and have been tasked by the Executive Leadership Team to collaborate in the ongoing development of a new regional structure for the organisation. This will bring together the current Education and Research divisions and create three new faculties, in the North, Central and South West of Scotland.

Section 2- Methodology used to evaluate the quality of provision and services.

All programmes, whether exclusively run by SRUC or in conjunction with partner institutions, adopt a team approach to annual programme monitoring culminating in an annual programme report, which includes a quality enhancement plan. The procedure is described in the SRUC Education Manual and this is supported by the SRUC Quality Calendar, which provides a schedule of key quality enhancement and assurance activities to prompt staff engagement.

The annual programme monitoring reports are submitted to the relevant Head of Department and Department Quality Enhancement Coordinator (DQEC) who then collate key themes into a single Department annual monitoring report and Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). These QEPs, both at programme and department level, are live documents that are continually reviewed and appropriately revised throughout the academic year. The Department QEPs are scrutinised by the Academic Development Team and used to inform the annual quality dialogues between a panel of Senior Managers; Academic Development Team members; Learner Engagement Officer and Student Representative and the department team. A report from these dialogues is circulated and departments are expected to engage with any resulting actions.

Periodic (every six years) Institution-led Review (part of the Quality Enhancement Framework in Scotland¹) complements the annual process and should be a culmination of the preceding annual monitoring reports. All Institution-led Reviews include both FE and HE provision. Note that SRUC will undergo Enhancement-led Institutional Review in 2018-19, another part of the Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework.

SRUC is a member of LANDEX (Land Based Colleges Aspiring to Excellence) and benefits from an annual Peer Review process, which provides an external view of teaching and learning within the institution. In 2017-18, SRUC also took the opportunity to engage the services of an Education Scotland Student Team Member who met with students on two sites to gather feedback about their experience in relation to the student voice and careers support. This activity is being repeated in 2018-19 and will address support for progression and student induction. Further to this, the incoming SRUCSA representatives were engaged in a review activity relating to the “How Good is Our College” student engagement questions as part of their induction process. Staff feedback relating to the key quality indicators identified for review this year, was sought through a series of focus groups undertaken during the annual Academic Development Team roadshows.

Annual institutional monitoring of quality conducted by the Academic Development Team is an overarching process that takes into consideration quality activities and outcomes across all academic departments and associated student support services. This creates an holistic view of quality matters and an opportunity to reflect on both quality assurance and quality enhancement activities at an institutional level. This group manages the review and update of the overarching quality action plan, which includes the enhancement plan for the institution.

Areas for development highlighted within this report are not all weaknesses but are areas we wish to prioritise for enhancement. It should also be noted that SRUC has submitted a separate Outcome Agreement evaluation report as per Higher Education Institution requirements and its annual report to the SFC on Institution-led Review of Quality.

¹ <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us/scotland/development-and-enhancement>

Section 3- Outcomes of evaluation

3.1 Outcomes and Impact

3.1.1 Wellbeing, equality and inclusion

Areas of positive practice

- In 2017-18, 68.3% of FE full time students successfully achieved a recognised qualification. This is 2.3pp above the target (66%) for the institution. It is also 3pp above the sector outcome for 2016-17, which was 65.3%. This indicates that FE full time students enrolled on programmes at SRUC have a higher than average likelihood of achieving a recognised qualification. SRUC has consistently performed above average for the sector in this measure for the past three years.
- Achievement rates for full time National Certificate (NC) Agriculture programmes were consistently above 70% with one site achieving over 83%. Other subject areas that achieved a better than satisfactory outcome (i.e. >75%) included NC Gamekeeping, Certificate in Professional Golf, Advanced Certificate in Horse Care and SVQ 3 Parks and Gardens.
- For the past three years, part time FE enrolled students at SRUC have consistently achieved over 91% success rates with the figure for 2017-18 being 91.8%. This is 3.8pp above the target for the institution, which was 88%.
- The percentage of full time FE students aged 16-19 achieving a recognised qualification increased from 68% in 2016-17 to 74% in 2017-18, which is 5.7pp above the achievement rate for FE FT students as a whole.
- Achievement rates for full time female students has decreased slightly from 74.5% to 73.4%² however this is still above the college average for FE FT students of 68.3% and continues the 3 year trend of over 71% for female students. Achievement rates for male students have increased to 73% which is a significant improvement of 5.2pp over the previous year and reverses the decline in success for male students from 2015-16 to 2016-17.
- In 2017-18 the achievement rate for FE students with a recognised disability increased to 73.4% which reverses the previous fall in success from 2015-16 to 2016-17 when it dropped from 71% to 67%. The improvement this year is 6.4pp and this outcome is also above the achievement rate for FE FT students. This highlights that there are inclusive processes in place to enable students to disclose their needs and for staff to recognise, assess and support these. Students have also recognised this as a strength within the institution.
- SRUC continues to have effective strategies and action plans in place in response to statutory requirements including Equality and Diversity, Gender and Corporate Parenting. These are being updated to include emerging priorities including Gender Based Violence and British Sign Language.

² Note: this success PI includes FE full time and short full time.

Areas for development

- Despite the fact that the achievement rate for FE FT students continues to be above target and above the sector average, the trend in achievement rates for the past three years is decreasing i.e. from 71.4% in 2015/16 to 70.1% in 2016/17 down to 68.3% in 2017/18.
- In 2017-18, SRUC's official return for care experienced students indicates relatively low numbers i.e. 7 declared at enrolment with 4 being successful. However internal figures suggest the actual rates are higher and that SRUC experienced a significant increase in the number of FE students declaring that they were care experienced i.e. 46, of which, 24 (52%) successfully achieved their qualifications. Unfortunately, a high proportion of these students withdrew from their programmes, which ultimately affected the success rates for the group, which is 5.2pp below the sector outcome (57.2%) for 2016-17. Reasons for the discrepancy in recording (and potentially the high withdrawal rates) warrants further investigation and follow up action.

3.1.2 Equity, attainment and achievement for all learners

Areas of positive practice

- Credit delivery for learners aged 20-24 remains virtually on target at 19.3%; however, the proportion of credits delivered to 16-19 year olds has decreased slightly by 1.3 percentage points (pp) to 55.6%, which is behind the institutional target of 62% for this group. The nature of SRUC programmes appears to attract a higher proportion of adult returners which SRUC views as a strength and actively promotes through the "Change your Path" marketing campaign (<https://cultivate.sruc.ac.uk/change-your-path/>).
- The proportion of credits to Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) learners has been relatively consistent over the past three years and is currently at 0.8%, which is 0.2pp ahead of the institutional target.
- The proportion of credits delivered to male and female students altered significantly in 2016-17 as compared to 2015-16 due to the transfer in of North East Scotland and Edinburgh Animal Care and Veterinary Nursing students. This evened up the relative proportions to 55.3% male versus 44.7% female. This has remained consistent in 2017-18 at 55.2% versus 44.5%, with a further 0.3% of credits delivered to other learners. This does however mask some programmes that have a significant gender bias, the institution is aware of this and continues to address it through the Gender Action Plan.
- The percentage of MD10 PT FE enrolled students successfully achieving a recognised qualification in 2017-18 was 90%, which is 2pp above the institutional target of 88%.
- Actual numbers of Senior Phase PT FE enrolled students increased to 70 however this included a significant proportion who were not on recognised qualifications.
- Retention rates on FE FT programmes are generally very good with the majority of programmes having a lower than average number of withdrawals. Overall the withdrawal rate for 2017-18 was 17.7% which is further broken down to 4.2% early withdrawal and a 13.5% late withdrawal rate as compared with the sector outcome for 2016-17 which was 25.1%, comprising 9% early and 16.1% late withdrawal. High retention rates are reflective of the role of the Year Tutor and Support Staff in providing individual support for students

within programmes that are highly vocational in nature. A new report detailing withdrawals in year, has been developed and is accessible to all staff to assist in monitoring retention.

- All programmes incorporate opportunities to develop core skills appropriate to the individual learner (according to their entry profile) thereby facilitating effective progression. Achievement rates for communications and numeracy in 2016-17 were 73 and 70% respectively, in 2017-18 this has dropped slightly to 68 and 70%. In most cases students who do not achieve have withdrawn rather than failed to achieve the units.
- Almost all learners continue to benefit from opportunities to develop their vocational practical skills by accessing high quality practical resources on site e.g. the Scottish National Equestrian Centre, the Barony and Oatridge farms, the Elmwood Golf course and the Bush Estate.

Areas for development

- The proportion of credits delivered to learners in the most deprived postcode areas (SIMD10) has decreased by 0.5pp and is currently 1.7pp behind the institutional target. SRUC strives to meet recruitment targets with limited opportunities for implementing specific selection criteria above the minimum entry requirements. Almost all students who meet these standards are accepted for admission. SRUC recognises the need to expand provision to this target group within the constraints of the rural nature of land based provision. Unfortunately, the achievement rate for FE FT students in this category dropped from 61.4% in 16-17 to 56.6%, which is 9.4pp behind the institutional target of 66%.
- Within a few FE FT programme areas e.g. NC Introduction to Horticulture, NC Introduction to Land Based Engineering and Advanced Certificate in Arboriculture and Forestry, the average achievement rates are below the Scottish national average resulting in some learners not achieving successful outcomes. These programmes will be subject to ongoing scrutiny as part of the annual monitoring process which should ultimately improve the consistency of outcomes for all learners.
- SRUC is actively developing and promoting school/college partnerships across the regions with the intention of meeting and potentially exceeding the target credit delivery to S3 and Senior Phase pupils in 2018-19 and beyond.

3.2 Delivery of Learning and Services to Support Learning

3.2.1 Curriculum

Areas of positive practice

- All staff are aware of national priorities relating to equality and diversity and particularly gender priorities. Awareness of Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) has improved and this is supported by the fact that there has been an increase in the delivery of credits to S3 and Senior Phase pupils with some very good examples of additional schools programmes being developed and delivered across the campuses e.g. Rural Skills in Ayr.
- SRUC continues to offer a range of work based programmes across eight subject areas including Agriculture, Trees and Timber and Engineering. In 2017-18 the number of new starts increased to 190 from 130 in the previous year. This is 45 starts more than the contracted starts initially awarded by Skills Development Scotland and further highlights the importance of DYW to the institution.
- All programme teams are effective at engaging with employers and industry stakeholders through a range of formal (e.g. Industry Liaison Meetings) and informal (e.g. during work placement visits etc.) routes. These strong links with industry coupled with student applications help to determine market need. Additionally a high proportion of staff are members of external industry committees and all of these mechanisms are used to inform and enhance programme design and development and to promote positive destinations for students.
- Almost all learners feel lecturers are open to them studying via various methods. Learners are on most occasions, able to decide how they would like to learn and identify their own style via independent study, group work or discussion.
- Almost all FE programmes including Hospitality, Veterinary Nursing and Horticulture incorporate work-based learning activities through the inclusion of work experience or placement units undertaken within a network of trusted industry partners e.g. Scottish National Heritage, regional veterinary practices, farms and equine yards, thereby improving students' employability skills. In 2017-18, 437 FE students were enrolled on work experience units achieving a success rate of 78%. Some programmes encourage students to undertake work experience during their holidays as opposed to entering them in formal units.
- A range of employability skills are developed while learners are at SRUC. This is facilitated by the use of a range of teaching and assessment methods and also promoted by reinforcing expected behaviours during classroom and practical activities. In some programmes additional added value courses are offered e.g. Barista and pesticides training.
- In 2017-18, 1108 participants in SRUC Skills Training courses were students from a range of full time, part time and work based learning programmes. This is an increase of 239 on the previous year. These courses include a range of statutory certificates, which directly improve the employability prospects of students graduating from SRUC.
- Programme teams are effective at raising awareness of articulation routes and job prospects and as a result, progression both internally and externally into industry is a strength for many programme areas. Continuing on to higher-level studies is supported by the provision of progression talks at each of the campuses conducted by the student

recruitment team. SRUC also provides students with an opportunity to attend the Careers Fair, which is an annual event.

Areas for development

- The availability of detailed labour market intelligence (LMI) for some of the land based sectors is limited. Discussions with staff indicate that there are currently more formal and effective opportunities to consider LMI in relation to the development and redevelopment of HE programmes as part of Institution Led Review (ILR). The ILR process has now been expanded to include all FE delivery so consideration of LMI will be further developed as this change becomes embedded. The utilisation of LMI data would be enhanced by the availability of improved LMI for land based areas. SRUC will work with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) to look at how SRUC can further enhance the capture and use of labour market intelligence, which can be obtained through the Regional Skills Assessment exercises.
- Although there are multiple opportunities for learners to provide feedback, engagement with surveys continues to be poor. On discussion, almost all learners were unable to identify how their views are used to improve or develop future curriculum plans and apart from Class Representatives, learners are unaware of what happens with the feedback they provide.
- Discussions have been held with Skills Development Scotland (SDS), to improve the access to careers advice on some campuses. However access to Careers Advisers on each site is still variable. Dialogue with local SDS offices are taking place to identify the measures to put in place to address this.

3.2.2 Learning, teaching and assessment

Areas of positive practice

- There is a centralised staff development budget available, which supports both industry specific and pedagogic development. Staff are encouraged to discuss their needs with line managers as part of the Performance Management Review and record requests in their online Personal Development Plans. The budget is prioritised to support mandatory staff development in the first instance e.g. TQFE, however the budget is generous enough to support the majority of non-mandatory requests too. Many staff feel that this process is effective as they are able to stay up to date due to their continued contact with industry and the opportunities to attend conferences. However, a few feel that they struggle to keep their knowledge and skills current due to a lack of time to undertake CPD activities. Some staff e.g. Veterinary Nursing have a professional obligation to undertake CPD in order to retain their registration status; this is supported by the institution and contributes effectively to the currency of the qualifications delivered.
- The annual Learning and Teaching Conference was attended by approximately 160 academic staff, who engaged in workshops covering a range of topics including, preparing learners for success in exams and practical activities, career management skills, the digital future and flipped learning. Staff rated the majority of the workshop sessions as very good or excellent in their feedback.
- Many staff continue to teach across both FE and HE programmes and have access to consulting and research resources, while some FE programmes e.g. Agriculture benefit from specialist input from SRUC Consulting and Research colleagues resulting in students who have a better understanding of the link between research and its practical application.
- Feedback from students indicates that lecturers are approachable and that they feel comfortable talking to them about any issues or queries that may arise in relation to their programme of study.
- All staff recognise the value of using new and advancing technologies to enhance teaching and learning. The use of the VLE is increasing along with a move towards using a higher proportion of online assessment. “Go to Meeting” is being used to good effect to support distance-learning students and the investment in a digital classroom at the Barony Campus is driving the development of more digital and collaborative approaches to learning and teaching. A blog detailing progress with this initiative can be accessed at <https://sruclarningspace.wordpress.com/>
- There are a range of opportunities for all staff to reflect on the outcomes of their approaches to improving the learning experience i.e. end of unit surveys by students, Student Liaison Group meetings and annual programme monitoring reports. Internal monitoring indicates that these processes are becoming embedded across all programmes, however almost all learners when asked did not identify receiving any feedback on previous changes and addressing this feedback loop, continues to be a priority for teams.
- During 2017-18, SRUC introduced a new Quality Calendar detailing the cycle of key quality assurance and enhancement activities during the academic year. This also highlights opportunities for programmes to undertake student engagement activities and reflect on outcomes during the year. The development of reports detailing learner

performance data has advanced and is used to good effect in the annual monitoring reports but easy access to this data during the year, requires further development.

Areas for development

- SRUC is currently consulting with staff on what makes a good teaching room or learning space, with a view to developing classrooms for the future. Consideration should be given to the creation of a bespoke blended learning strategy, which incorporates both hard and software needs with teaching and learning and a staff development strategy.

3.2.3 Services to support learning

Areas of positive practice

- A focus on marketing and recruitment activity means that prospective applicants can effectively access high quality information about SRUC programmes from a wide range of sources including the website, prospectus, course specific literature, open days, and subject specific taster days, shows and events.
- Staff and students identified support for those with different educational needs as a particular strength. Further to this, it was confirmed that the identification of FE students who require additional support is very quick if the student discloses their needs during the recruitment process. This enables a discussion to take place at interview and a support plan to be created and in place for the start of the academic year.
- The majority of staff are very good at supporting learners with different learning needs by using a wide range of teaching and learning approaches. There is also a perception that there is now more support for staff and students to help understand different learning needs. Effective communication between support staff and academic staff enables adjustments to be made effectively, with UNIT-e providing a mechanism for highlighting to appropriate staff, which students have additional needs.
- The Student Support Services staff have worked collaboratively during 2017-18 to develop a new approach to annual self-evaluation, which has resulted in the first annual monitoring reports and quality enhancement plans for five individual parts of the student journey culminating in an overarching report and enhancement plan for provision across the institution. Dialogue between managers has resulted in closer team working and the identification of a number of areas for development that will further enhance the learner journey in the coming year.
- During 2017-18, SRUC developed and launched a Healthy Living Healthy Working strategy and received external recognition from the National Association for Managers of Student Services (NAMSS) and National Union of Student (NUS) for its work to address mental health. The SANE/ Black Dog campaign was a collaborative project between SRUCSA and SRUC staff to raise awareness of mental health challenges and associated measures to address these.
- The SRUC Business Intelligence team have been working on making more learner performance data available during the academic year and have developed a number of reports e.g. recruitment, attendance and retention. However staff would benefit from the creation of an easy to use dashboard to enable easy access to the data.

Areas for development

- Actions to take account of the Scottish Government priority to address Gender Based Violence (GBV) are being developed and will be implemented in 2018-19. This will include an emphasis on respect through valuing diversity.
- SRUC continues to explore the option of introducing a portal, which will act as a single access point for students and staff to access key systems and data that support their day to day activities. The aim is to use this portal to improve all student's engagement with SRUC using a dynamic and modern approach.

3.3 Leadership and Quality Culture

3.3.1 Governance and leadership of change

Areas of positive practice

- SRUC has appointed a new Executive Leadership Team that have created an ambitious vision for the future direction of the institution. As a result, SRUC is entering a period of significant strategic change that will see the formation of three regional faculties encompassing education, research and commercial activities. The ultimate aim is to become an innovative 21st century university that will continue to enable student progression from entry level through to PhD, supported by enhanced teaching and learning, informed by an excellent research base. This vision has been clearly articulated to staff, students and external stakeholders and will underpin institutional planning for the next four years.
- SRUC delivered 23167 credits in 2017-18 and has consistently exceeded the targets set for delivery of FE provision by between 2.4 to 1.3pp over the past three years. This includes a significant increase in provision in 2016-17, due to the transfer in of Animal Care and Veterinary Nursing provision from North East Scotland College and Edinburgh College.
- SRUC has successfully increased the proportion of credits delivered to S3 and above learners in 2017-18 by 3.3pp and exceeded target by 1.5pp. Similarly the proportion of credits delivered to learners enrolled on STEM courses has increased by 0.8pp and exceeded target by 0.4pp. The proportion of credits delivered to Senior Phase pupils has also increased by 0.6pp but remains below target by 0.1pp. Overall the general increase in this area of provision indicates that managers and staff are aware of DYW targets and are proactively increasing delivery levels in these areas.
- Student representation is embedded in a number of academic committees and the number of student representatives on the Board of Management will increase to two in the coming year. Student Liaison Committees, which enable student representatives on each campus to have a direct discussion with a board member and other senior staff on site, are also embedded in the annual cycle. Further to this, the Academic Director has instituted regular meetings with the Student Association and the Principal has met with students as part of the development of the new strategy.

Areas for development

- SRUC will continue to develop and embed the new strategic direction and supporting infrastructure over the period of the next four years, with a view to achieving University status by 2021 and growing revenue to £100 million by 2023.
- Engagement between the SRUC Board and the wider staff and student body continues to be limited. In 2018–19, the structure of the Academic Board will be reviewed to enable SRUC to meet the requirements of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 in this academic year i.e. ahead of the 2020 deadline. This will significantly increase the number of staff involved in Academic Governance and decision making.

3.3.2 Leadership of evaluation leading to improvement

Areas of positive practice

- Success rates for FE full time students over the past three years have been consistently above 68% and sector benchmark. Equally, FE part time students have enjoyed success rates that have been consistently above 90%. This along with high retention rates is indicative of the time and effort that staff within the institution invest into developing interesting and engaging programmes and supporting students through individual tutorials and support plans, to stay in College and achieve success in their chosen area.
- SRUC has consistently met and exceeded the credit target for the provision of FE credits (up to SCQF level 6) for the past three years and has successfully integrated the Animal Care and Veterinary Nursing teams that transferred in from North East Scotland College and Edinburgh College. Further to this, demand for the Level 3 Veterinary Nursing programme (at Oatridge Campus) through block release (i.e. employed status) has increased over the past two years, both as a result of students securing employment while studying the full time programme then transferring to block release and at the point of entry.
- Student representatives recognise the role they play in academic committees and the value of Student Liaison Group meetings as a forum for students to raise issues, which are then incorporated into enhancement plans and addressed by programme and department teams. This added to the input that students provide as panel members for Institution- led Review meetings allows an opportunity for a more diverse student voice to be heard across the institution. 2016-17 was also the first year that student representatives were included in the panel for the academic dialogue meetings, which has raised the profile of the student voice and enhanced the meetings by bringing a clearer student perspective to the discussions.
- The annual Landex peer review visit took place in April 2018, with the chosen themes being the “Student Voice” and “Progression and Pathways”. Feedback from the review highlighted the mechanisms for gathering the authentic student voice and involvement of students in all levels of decision making as a significant strength.
- Annual monitoring processes and procedures have developed significantly within the past three years with a key change being the introduction of annual dialogue meetings, which promote academic discussion about all levels of provision. These discussions help to identify and focus on good practice and areas for improvement, including key performance indicator data relating to specific programmes e.g. work based learning success rates and the development of associated actions to address any issues arising.
- The implementation of internal monitoring activities enabling advice and guidance to be provided in relation to the implementation of new policies and procedures highlighted the need for ongoing standardisation of learning, teaching and assessment activities across the sites. Progress with this is continuing effectively as evidenced through feedback from External Verification activities in 2017-18.
- All programmes, adopt a team approach to annual programme monitoring culminating in an annual programme report, which includes a quality enhancement plan and is aimed at improving the learning experience for all learners. In 2017-18 compliance with the deadline for completion of the reports has improved indicating that Programme Leaders are more aware of the importance of the reports and the role these have to play in improving the student experience and in meeting external reporting requirements.

- All departments collate key themes arising from annual programme reports into an annual department report and quality enhancement plan aimed at addressing overarching actions to improve the parity of experience for students across all sites and programmes.
- The availability of data including key performance indicators, retention rates, College Leavers Destinations data along with both internal and external survey data has improved in 2017-18 with much of this being effectively included in the annual monitoring reports.
- The majority of managers continue to engage effectively with their respective industry partners through membership of relevant boards and committees e.g. the Scottish Federation of Chefs or attendance at industry meetings e.g. Horse Scotland and National Farmers Union Scotland and make use of relevant information to inform the annual monitoring process and make improvements for all learners.

Areas for development

- Access to live performance data via an easy to use “dashboard” system would be beneficial to managers and programme leaders in order to enhance the cyclical nature of monitoring.
- Learner satisfaction as measured by the SFC Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey, has been consistently high (i.e. above 85%) for both full time and part time FE students for the past three years. Full-time satisfaction rates increased to 88% while part-time increased to 95.7% in 2017-18. However engagement rates for this survey remain poor so increasing participation to levels that will provide statistically reliable information remains a priority in 2018-19.
- All delivery should be included in the annual monitoring reports, however a few programme areas have not included the schools provision. This should be addressed in 2018-19.

Section 4- Capacity for Improvement Supporting Statement

The Board of SRUC, as a designated Higher Education Institution, that also delivers Further Education has confirmed that they are confident that SRUC has effective arrangements to maintain standards and to assure and enhance the quality of its provision.

Barriers between FE and HE delivery are blurred through both the individuals delivering the teaching and learning and the support and administrative structures supporting the holistic student experience. The development and ongoing implementation and monitoring of the standardised approach to quality assurance and enhancement in the form of the completed SRUC Education Manual will continue to improve the consistency of the student experience across all sites.

SRUC recognises that there are a number of enhancement led areas for development, with analytics continuing to be a key area for improvement. This is being supported internally by the ongoing Business Intelligence project and externally through the second year of the QAA Scotland Enhancement Theme, Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience.

The specific outcomes of FE delivery at SRUC are consistently good as is evidenced by ongoing achievement rates that are above institutional target and sector average. However, there is a declining trend in full time achievement rates with some programmes continuing to fall below 65%. These programmes will be subject to further scrutiny and review, which will be ongoing during the coming academic year.

SRUC is working towards a transformational vision for the future of the institution which will see the formation of three new regional faculties with a revised and invigorated curriculum offer underpinned by excellent teaching and learning and associated quality assurance and enhancement.

SRUC has devised a comprehensive Enhancement Plan for 2018-20 to take account of the wider areas for development and is confident that these aspirations will be progressed effectively in the coming year.