

FOR SCOTLAND'S COLLEGE SECTOR

reach



Leading
Creating
Sharing

2019

Retain and attain

Colleges are using quality improvement methodology to improve retention and attainment p10

College innovation

Collaborating with businesses through the SFC Innovation Voucher scheme p18

New Principals

Meet the new Principals in the sector and find out their plans for the year ahead p24

Creative colleges

Scotland's creative industries need colleges to prepare young people with new skills for future business needs



reach

2019

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Front Cover:

© Inverness College UHI,

Fashion show

Reach is produced by Connect Publications (Scotland) Limited on behalf of College Development Network

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Company Limited By Guarantee
Registered in Scotland No: 143514
Scottish Charity No. SC021876
VAT No. 617148346



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The creative industries are ever-changing and an extremely competitive environment. It's important our students get access to professionals who have experienced the highs and lows of the sector throughout their careers and can offer valuable advice and guidance.

Welcome

THE first issue of Reach received so much positive feedback, and this year we're delighted to be expanding the magazine with lots of new content.

In this issue I hope you'll find some inspiration and plenty of information, and we have some great interviews too.

Find out more about the ambitions of Richard Lochhead MSP for the college sector (page 8) and how this chimes with the aims and aspirations of some of our recently appointed Principals.

Our striking cover image comes from an Inverness College UHI fashion show. Our colleges are rich with creativity, and on page 12 we explore the creative industries and how colleges can best work with a sector which is worth £3.7bn to the Scottish economy.

In a world of increasing automation and artificial intelligence, creativity is king.



Employers today are valuing skills such as creativity and self-management just as much as technical knowledge.

Essential skills are a clear focus at Dundee and Angus College (page 20) and their award-winning programme, D&A Attributes.

There's no doubt that colleges are leading the way when it comes to developing students and equipping them

with modern skills, knowledge and experience.

The sector's role as an educational and economic driver has surely never been more important for Scotland, in uncertain and changing times.

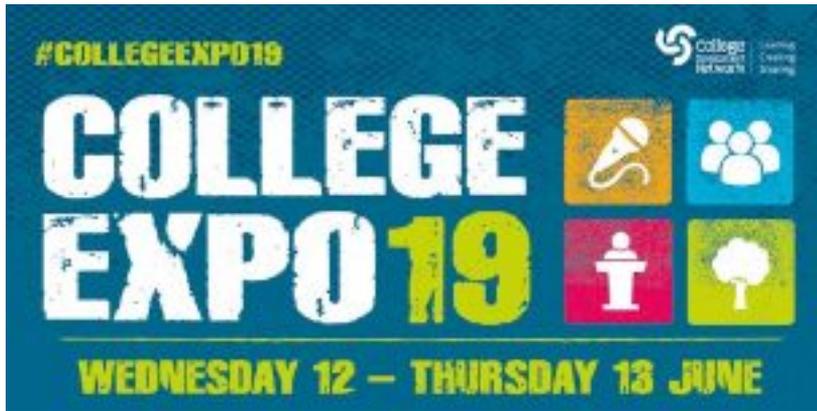


**Jim Metcalfe, Chief Executive,
College Development Network
(CDN)**

There's no doubt that colleges are leading the way when it comes to equipping students with modern skills, knowledge and experience.



Round-up



College Expo19 – Success in a Changing World

College Expo19 will take place on Wednesday 12 and Thursday 13 June 2019 at Perth College UHI and will explore the theme “Success in a Changing World”.

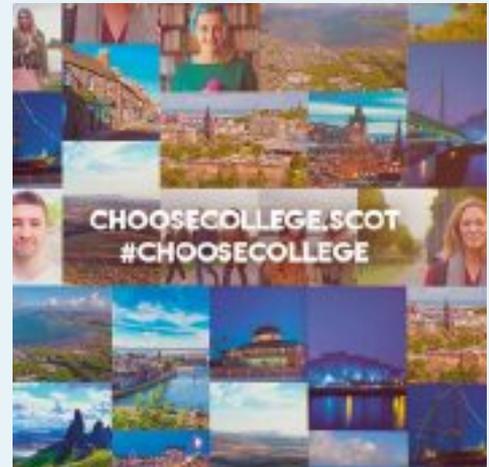
College Expo is a free landmark event for everyone involved in

post-16 education and training. It is a celebration of college excellence, a hub for staff development and practical innovation, and an opportunity to participate in cutting-edge debate on vocational learning.

Following the huge success of the inaugural College Expo last year,

planning is underway for an even more exciting event for June 2019.

Submissions for session proposals are open until the end of January and we are keen to hear from you if you have an idea for a session. Submit your session at: www.cdn.ac.uk/college-expo



#ChooseCollege – Promoting colleges as Plan A

The CDN Marketing and Communications Network has collaborated with colleges across Scotland on a national STV advert and campaign. Designed to raise the profile of the college sector, the campaign highlights the variety of colleges and courses available and presents college as a first choice for students.

The advert ran on STV and STV Player throughout November 2018. It was also featured at the Scotland versus Argentina rugby game at Murrayfield on 24 November.

Alongside the advert, a website for the campaign was launched, allowing prospective students to seek out their local college and showcasing case studies from the sector. The advert and campaign page can be viewed at: www.cdn.ac.uk/choose-college





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Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges

An ambitious collaboration between College Development Network (CDN), the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS), the Scottish Government, college staff and key partners saw publication of the new Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges in November last year.

Extensive consultation and a robust review process guided by a Steering Group chaired by Mhairi Harrington OBE, resulted in a modernised set of Standards which provide a professional framework for college lecturers.

The consultation took place during the 2017-18 academic session and included an online survey, which received more than 1,600 responses, and 25 focus groups and in-depth interviews involving college staff and key stakeholders.

The feedback informed a draft set of the Standards which were "road tested" by a reference group made up of teaching staff drawn from colleges across Scotland, plus a final online consultation at the beginning of the 2018-19 session inviting participation from college staff and stakeholders.

Lecturers work within a diverse, complex and dynamic environment and the Standards are designed to support and encourage them to develop a clear understanding of their role and how they contribute to wider student outcomes.

The revised Standards are developed

around three interdependent elements:

1. Professional Values
2. Professional Knowledge and Understanding
3. Professional Practice.



They embed the rapid changes seen across the learning and teaching landscape in recent years, address advances made in digital technology, and consider what that means for today's college teaching practitioners and learners.

The new Professional Standards will be used for a range of purposes including:

- Underpinning future professional teaching qualifications for lecturers in Scotland's colleges
- Developing critically reflective and evaluative practitioners
- Supporting professional dialogue and collegiate working
- Supporting professional development
- Contribute to ongoing development across the sector.

Jim Metcalfe, Chief Executive of CDN, said: "I am delighted that this collaborative process has produced a robust, modern set of Standards addressing the future needs of learners and employers. CDN will now be working hard to provide the continuing development our sector needs in the coming years."

The Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges may be viewed and downloaded at www.cdn.ac.uk/professional-standards



Language linking, business thinking

CDN partnered with SCILT, Scotland's National Centre for Languages, to deliver an event dedicated to language learning in the college sector at Edinburgh College in November 2018.

The event highlighted the role that modern languages can play in developing the employability and career aspirations of students in schools, colleges and universities. It demonstrated innovative approaches to building the bridge between employers and all sectors of education, highlighting the role of languages in the creation of an outward-looking labour market, based on current effective partnerships.

"This was a truly inspiring event," said Suzanne Marshall, Curriculum and Teaching Lead at CDN. "We heard from key employers in the service and STEM industries about the value of languages in these sectors. Staff now have lots of ideas to help them put languages on the local map."

The event also saw the launch of the Business and Language Toolkit, which is designed to help colleges create local events that highlight the business value of languages through direct engagement with employers. These sorts of events have been successful in enabling staff to demonstrate first-hand to students, regardless of their intended career aspiration, the value of language learning.

For more information and to download the Business and Language Toolkit and associated resources please visit: <http://bit.ly/SCILT-Business-Toolkit-and-Videos>

Simply the best

CDN was delighted to welcome John Swinney, Deputy First Minister of Scotland and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills to the CDN College Awards 2018.

The Awards are a key date in the college calendar and showcase the impact the sector is having every day for our learners, communities and the wider economy.

Will 2019 be your winning year? Keep an

eye on cdn.ac.uk for the 2019 call for entries.

Find out more and watch our film at: cdn.ac.uk/cdn-college-awards-2018



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TRIBAL

College Colleague of the Year Award

Winner: Alison Martin, Dumfries & Galloway College
Highly Commended: Colin McLaughlin, West College Scotland
Commended: Steve Swinley, Dundee and Angus College



Sponsored by:
Jisc

Digital Learning Award

Winner: Dundee and Angus College
Highly Commended: Ayrshire College
Commended: West College Scotland



Sponsored by:
West College Scotland

Employer Connections Award

Winner: West College Scotland
Highly Commended: Edinburgh College
Commended: Dundee and Angus College



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Essential Skills Award

Winner: Dundee and Angus College
Highly Commended: Fife College
Commended: Ayrshire College



Sponsored by:
Healthy Working Lives

Health Promoting College Award

Winner: Ayrshire College
Highly Commended: Inverness College UHI
Commended: Moray College UHI



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Inclusive College Award

Winner: Fife College
Highly Commended: West College Scotland
Commended: Glasgow Clyde College



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mindful

Innovation Award

Winner: Forth Valley College
Highly Commended: Ayrshire College
Commended: Glasgow Clyde College



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Marketing and Communications Award

Winner: West College Scotland
Highly Commended: Fife College
Commended: West Lothian College



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Student of the Year Award

Winner: Teresa Elliott, Moray College UHI
Highly Commended: Carol Hunter, Fife College
Commended: Sarah Cameron, Edinburgh College



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Sustainability Award

Winner: Edinburgh College
Highly Commended: Dumfries & Galloway College
Commended: Dundee and Angus College



The Judges' Award 2018

Dundee and Angus College
Essentials Skills Award – D&A
Attributes



Go for it!

Richard Lochhead was appointed Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science in September 2018. *Reach* finds out more about him

The CDN Marketing and Communications Network has led a national campaign to raise the profile of the college sector – do you agree that college should be Plan A for an increasing number of prospective students?

Colleges have always offered life-changing pathways for Scotland's students.

Students, now more than ever, need flexible learning that is tailored and personalised to their needs. We have a vast number of opportunities in post-secondary education in Scotland and students are best placed to make decisions on what skills they particularly want to gain, whether it be for entry into the workforce or to progress in their chosen career.

For some, college is about enabling them to have a second chance to access education and skills. For others, college provides the skills needed for work, and for some, colleges provide access to higher level technical skills, often as part of a route to a degree.

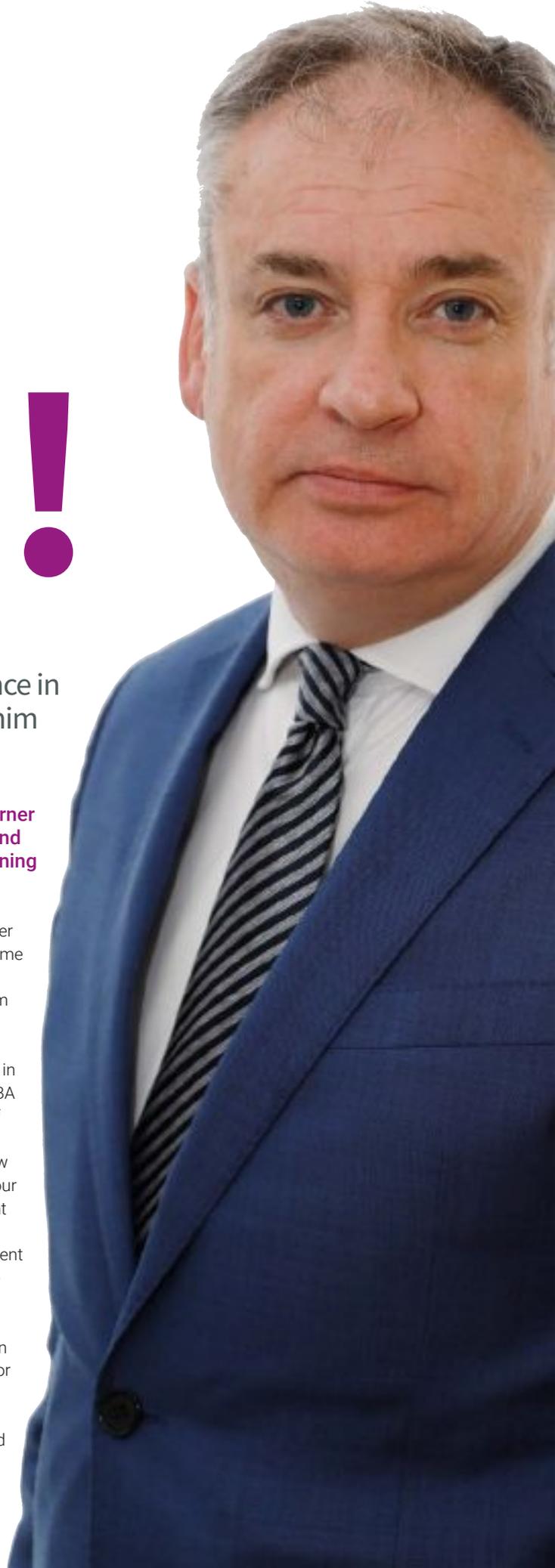
Education is the defining mission of this Government and we strive for excellence in education provision for whatever choice our students make, whether that be at college or university.

How do you see the Learner Journey incorporating and maximising college learning experiences?

Since I was appointed Minister I have spent a great deal of time reflecting on my own learner journey. I gained an HNC from the Glasgow Central College of Commerce in 1987, and with a period of employment in between, I graduated with a BA (Hons) from the University of Stirling in 1994.

The Learner Journey review made the case that to build our understanding of the different pathways, we need to know more about the prior attainment of learners who enter college and what added value they receive from attending.

We also need to be clear on what we define as success for different groups of learners. When it comes to retention and progression it was stated that we need to think about the effectiveness of different





modes of study and the nature of provision in helping different groups of learners achieve the best outcomes.

In recognising the various pathways for college students, it is important that we continue to maximise the value of the different curriculum options. In particular, that we build on the successes of the Developing the Young Workforce programme and the progress with the Foundation Apprenticeship, to establish routes that support the parity of college opportunities so that learners have the greatest confidence of the outcome of their investment in learning, thereby maximising their retention and outcomes.

Innovation has become a key issue for colleges - how would you like colleges to play their part in the national innovation challenge?

Innovation is important for any institution, whether it be government, a business, a college or a university. Improving processes, inventing new products is crucial in improving living standards and maintaining economic growth. Simply put, if we do not innovate we stagnate.

In relation to our innovation ambitions, progress is already being made to enhance and better recognise the contribution our colleges make to innovation, including improving the reach into our Innovation Centres.

We are all aware of the reputation and impact of Scotland's universities in this important area. I see a real opportunity to maximise the key role of colleges in reaching out to SMEs and supporting both their skills and their innovation needs.

I see the College Innovation Fund as a space to pilot new approaches and demonstrate success in strengthening and enhancing the links between colleges and industry.

What are the essential skills that colleges should instil in students for their future success in learning, life and work?

Colleges have a key role in ensuring that learners have the opportunity to develop the widest skill set – the skills that make

individuals enterprising, adaptable and resilient.

Colleges should deliver a broad range of subjects and qualifications more focused than ever on meeting local labour market demand. All college students should have the opportunity to develop the skills for learning, life and work – making them stand out in the competitive and ever changing jobs market, and equipping them with the essential skills and knowledge needed to forge successful careers.

We know that in order to compete successfully in a rapidly changing global economy, Scotland's employers need a workforce equipped with a broad range of skills, knowledge and attributes. Employers' demands for essential skills are now better understood and the response of our education system is much clearer.

Our colleges are also well placed to help us deliver these ambitions. Now more than ever, colleges are delivering courses that focus on economic need and provide opportunities for students to progress to employment and degree level study.

Finally, what is your message to our college students?

Go for it! College learning is life changing and opens up a lot of opportunities, whether that be through employment or further study. Enjoy your experience. 

Richard Lochhead
MSP meeting
college students



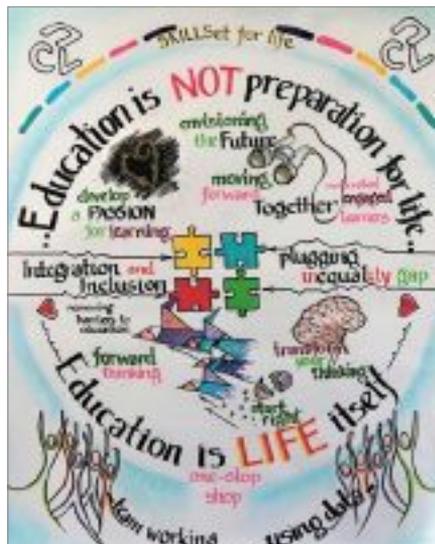
Retain, attain and share!

Find out how five colleges are using quality improvement methodology to improve retention and attainment

Following the announcement in March 2017 of the Scottish Government's "College Improvement Project", five colleges formed a national improvement project to apply improvement methodology to raise attainment and improve retention.

Dundee and Angus College, Edinburgh College, Inverness College UHI, New College Lanarkshire and West College Scotland have formed improvement teams to determine what things have the biggest impact on the learner experience and which of these could be tested and adapted by other colleges to the benefit of the sector as a whole.

What makes this project different is that the colleges are looking in detail at the combined impact of small scale changes



in both the classroom and within college systems. Now, in the second year of their improvement work, as evidence is starting to emerge about what works in which contexts, the five colleges are thinking about how they can develop their approach across the sector as a whole and share their findings and approach with a wider audience.

What are the challenges?

In the past, policy makers and others have been guilty of thinking about retention within further education in college as if it involved a typical learner. Moreover, that the contribution made by a college for that learner might exist in isolation of that made by school, families and communities.

The diversity of the learner, alongside the

Being involved in this national improvement project and engaging with QI methodology has enabled us to understand our system and, most importantly, challenge assumptions. While we don't want to catch analysis paralysis I think it would be fair to say D&A have caught the bug!

wider educational attainment challenge, is reflected in college statistics, which show that around a third of students who enrol on a full-time further education course for a recognised qualification don't stay the course and attain the qualification for which they enrolled.

Tackling this and raising attainment is, therefore, a shared priority across all of education, and its solution is complex, involving many contributing and challenging factors, including deprivation, local economic factors and other characteristics of student intake such as age and gender.

Through this project, the five colleges have set out to raise the spotlight on the diversity of college learners and bring into focus the different and often very personal reasons for why learners study and are motivated to progress, as well as looking at the processes, systems and practices within the colleges which are designed to support student success.

The colleges are clear that responding to the different learning styles and support needs of students is an important part of what colleges do to ensure the best educational experience for their learners. And, therefore, the key to their successful progression.

To deliver this, the colleges are using new improvement techniques alongside existing tried and tested practices to adapt systems and strengthen the quality of their relationship with their students in order to raise attainment.

What has been done?

Starting small but thinking big, the colleges have been engaging their staff and students to try out new approaches to improving practice; gathering information and learning about what makes the biggest difference to the learner experience.

Each college has taken forward their ideas in their own unique context, but with an ambition to share their experience across the sector, allowing others to learn from and test these approaches in their own settings.

As Gail Graham, Quality Manager at Dundee and Angus College notes: "Being involved in this project and engaging with Quality Improvement (QI) methodology has enabled us to understand our system and, most importantly, challenge assumptions.

"The use of a Pareto chart to demonstrate visually the real areas for improvement has been really helpful in focusing efforts in the right direction. While we don't want to catch analysis paralysis I think it would be fair to say D&A have caught the bug!"

Building on the learning from year one of the project, year two will see the college teams focusing their improvement effort on three specific themes:

- Services to Support Learning
- Engaging in College Life
- Teaching and Learning – colleges as learning organisations.

Learning events to support these themes are in progress, bringing together a valuable mix of support staff, teaching staff and students from across the five colleges. The first of these events in 2018, saw more than 30 college staff and students come together over two days at CDN's office in Stirling to devise, plan and understand how to measure the impact over time of changes to improve practice.

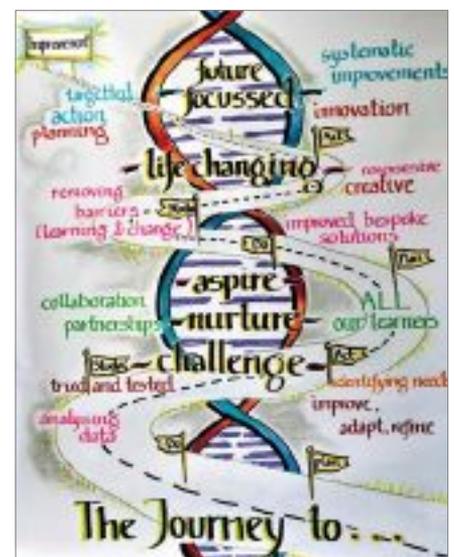
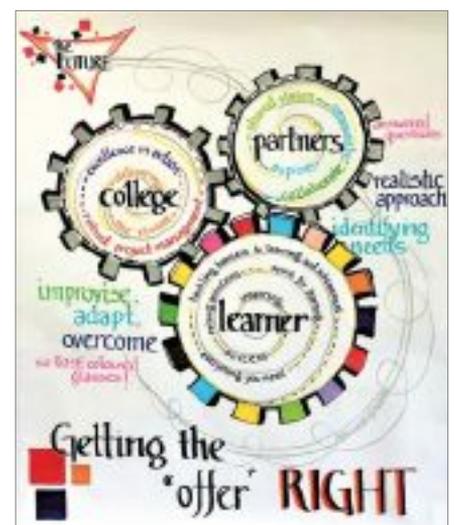
To maintain momentum, the improvement teams are now hosting events within their colleges, designed to support staff and students in using the quality improvement tools and techniques and to widen the understanding of Quality Improvement methods. Feedback so far has been positive.

Liz Cook, Quality Manager at Inverness College UHI says: "The benefits of the project have been to provide a stimulus for staff to refresh their engagement with improvement activity and, most importantly, to ensure the focus and effort is on the test for change."

How will we measure success?

By building capability in QI techniques, project teams expect to see an increase in completion rates in the areas their tests have focused on.

However, improving retention and attainment in the wider college sector will, of course, be a longer term endeavour, requiring more systematic application of the methodology as well as an expansion in the sharing of evidence, to build an informed toolkit of improvements that the sector can be confident make a difference. Our colleges are well-placed to achieve this. 🍀



POSTER DRAWINGS

Sandra-Jane Grier, Lead, CDN

A nation of creativity

From famous actors Ewan McGregor, Sean Connery and James McAvoy, to world-leading talent emerging from Glasgow School of Art, to Mike Dailly, who first put Dundee on the map for computer games, Scotland is a creative nation.

Our first design museum, the newly opened V&A Dundee, tells a global story, investigating the international importance of design alongside presenting Scotland's outstanding achievements.

The creative industries are one of the fastest growing parts of our economy, with huge potential stemming from our strengths in computer games and software development, digital technology and film and TV. Our universities and colleges are well known for producing high-calibre graduates

educated in the latest technologies.

Luise Yang, Policy and Research Officer at the Creative Industries Federation, says: "The creative industries in Scotland are growing at a tremendous rate, in terms of Gross Value Added (GVA) even faster than London. Between 2010 and 2016, there was 47% growth in this sector in Scotland. Young people and those changing career are looking outside of London – Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dundee are now seen as great creative hubs."

However, the creative industries are inherently multidisciplinary industries, requiring a tricky combination of creative, technological and business skills to drive continued innovation.

Industry members of the Scottish Government's Creative Industries Advisory Group continue to highlight the demand

for much-needed financial investment in Scotland, to attract and retain talent, as well as the current lack of available support for small businesses and creative individuals. Many people employed within the sector work in micro-businesses or on a freelance basis and feel detached from the decisions of policy-makers and the workforce at large.

Luise explains: "There needs to be more awareness that over 95% of creative industry companies have fewer than 10 employees, so a lot of interventions by policy or business support networks need to work for these micro-businesses. Throwing money at a sector is not enough, the issue is how do you support a business of three people to take on an intern or an apprentice and ensure that we are developing a creative environment for the future."

Human creativity

In a technological future, where self-driving cars and automation are the norm, humans will no longer have to do many of the more mundane jobs that exist today. In addition, with a rapidly changing working environment, young people just starting school are extremely likely to be doing jobs that don't exist at all yet.

According to innovation foundation Nesta, people working in the creative technologies have a distinct advantage; creative jobs are hard to automate.

Here in Scotland, the Centre for Work-based Learning is looking at this area too.

Programme Director David Coyne explains: "Research has been done that indicates that in addition to

changing technical skills, increasing importance will be placed on what are called "soft skills" – creativity, emotional intelligence, self-management and so on. Employers will come to value these skills as much as technical skills for a rounded worker with the ability to adapt and change quickly, as only humans can."

Looking to prepare for the future of work, David says colleges and universities need to consider how to produce graduates with the technical skills and emotional intelligence. "One of the things that is not fully embedded in most learning is accreditation or formal valuing of those soft skills. With a reimagining of the future of work, we will need to develop those uniquely human abilities."





The newly opened design museum, the V&A in Dundee

The creative industries are extremely varied, spanning the 16 sub-sector areas of advertising, architecture, cultural education, computer games, design, visual art, crafts, writing and publishing, TV and radio, music, fashion and textiles, performing arts, photography, software and electronic publishing, heritage, and film production. And this assembly of industries will continue to evolve. A recent review of the sector, led by ITV Executive Chairman Sir Peter Bazalgette, stated that with the continued

digital innovation of our age, “we need to reimagine this as a ‘creative-tech’ sector”.

To stimulate continued growth and develop a talent pool against a background of such complexities, Skills Development Scotland’s three-year Skills Investment Plan for the sector was developed. It emphasises the need to support young people to build a portfolio of technical, digital, creative and career management skills for those aspiring to work in the creative industries. The Skills Investment Plan also highlights a

requirement for industry relevant work-based learning in partnership with schools, colleges and universities, as well as integration of business development, entrepreneurship and innovation skills within Scottish creative education and vocational training.

The Scottish Government recently launched the £500,000 College Innovation Fund to support innovation in Scotland’s economy through colleges and innovation centres. Mike Cantlay, Chair of the Scottish Funding Council, said: “Colleges across

[Continues overleaf >](#)





Worth
£3.7bn
to the Scottish
economy

More than
15,000
companies in the sector

More than
70,000
people employed

47%
GVA growth between
2010 and 2016

91%
of the Scottish
population is engaged
in cultural activity

There are **16**
sub-sectors in the
creative industries

> Continued from previous page

Scotland already play an incredibly important role in helping businesses to be innovative. This funding takes things to a new level, especially in helping to exploit the very exciting opportunities being created through the innovation centre programme."

Connect Forth, a project developed by Forth Valley College staff and students, was highlighted as a best practice example at the launch of the new fund. Connect Forth – which offers radio, filmed podcasts, social media platforms and a striking brand – has developed an online option to bring all the streams together for students to develop, as they study for their BA Digital Media integrated degree. Student Ellie Donald said: "I have really enjoyed being a part of Connect Forth as it gives you a lot of creative freedom as well as industry experience as we are working as part of a proper management team."

Luise says colleges have a great role to play in the creative industries: "Though traditionally, higher education was the only way to enter the industry, colleges should be increasingly seen as an alternative entry pathway with high-quality and unique training courses. Also, they can offer students access to local business partnerships and open up opportunities for young people in the industry."

Daydream Believers

Edinburgh College is one college which has been working to embed strong employer engagement at each stage of young people's journeys through education and into employment in the creative industries.

The Daydream Believers programme is the brainchild of students Niamh Curran and Holly McNie and is sponsored by partner agency, Threebrand. Originally launching as

Students and staff from Forth Valley College launched a new website platform, Connect Forth



the Creative Ambassadors project, student ambassadors began working with six local secondary schools, delivering workshops on creativity and careers. In 2017-18, the project expanded and became Daydream Believers. It is part of Edinburgh College's Engaging Schools Programme, which aims to transform how educators work together to create the workforce of the future.

The programme involves workshop sessions for school pupils, using design processes used at colleges and in industry. An online course run by students, lecturers and agency partners also helps pupils and teachers navigate design processes. Work is assessed and the top submissions displayed at the College's show at the Dovecot Gallery. The winning pupils become Daydream Believers and are invited to attend a one-week course at the College.

The course offers secondary school pupils aged 12 to 14 the chance to experience college life, meet employers and visit Scotland's leading design agencies. Throughout the week, college students and employers work alongside the pupils on various challenges, sharing their insights and skills while also promoting creative thinking and problem solving. 20 pupils (The Daydream Believers) from 11 schools completed the 2017-18 course, completing tasks and a live project brief from partner businesses including Skyscanner, Whitespace, Realise and Campfire to learn about digital skills and careers.

Daydream Believers is highlighted by the SQA on its Best Practice Showcase website,



Forth Valley College students researching, developing and producing a piece of wearable art

and was also presented to John Swinney MSP at the Scottish Learning Festival in September 2017.

The College has developed employability skills for its existing students, pairing up each student with mentors from local design agencies to advise them on projects and career options. Partners also set students one-day guerrilla design projects, where mentors turn up unannounced in the morning and set a design challenge to be completed that day. Many of the students have secured internships as a result of their mentor relationships.

Film and TV students at Edinburgh College also work with employers including the BBC and Scottish Motor Racing Championships, producing sports broadcasts and commercial videos.

The College's Creative Industries Employability Day has run for six years and provides an opportunity for students to boost their employability, and for staff and students to develop partnerships with employers. The 2018 event saw 700 students hear from 58 speakers from creative businesses and arts organisations, and get involved in workshops provided by BBC Scotland, the Traverse Theatre, Business Gateway, DF Concerts, the Cultural Enterprise Office, Creative Scotland and FreeAgent.

Edinburgh College's Head of Creative Industries Jakki Jeffery said: "The creative industries are ever-changing and an extremely competitive environment. It's

important our students get access to professionals who have experienced the highs and lows of the sector throughout their careers and can offer valuable advice and guidance. Combining education with industry experience is crucial in preparing students for the world of work. Initiatives like our Daydream Believers programme and Creative Industries Employability Day offer students real insight into what it takes to make it in the world of work and we hope to build on these in years to come to ensure we're developing the creative talent of the future."

Similarly, City of Glasgow College's inaugural Creative Industries Symposium brought together photographers David Eustace and Grant Scott, Creative Director of Graven, Jim Hamilton, and designer, Gillian Kyle, to share their interpretation and understanding of creativity and how it impacts and influences their professional practices.

Sandra Gunn, Faculty Director for Creative Industries at City of Glasgow College, said: "It was genuinely refreshing to hear people give their personal take on creativity and their fearlessness in showing vulnerability and honesty. The symposium and related exhibitions created opportunities to showcase the work of our students. We endeavour to develop a learning environment where curiosity, imagination, exploration and experimentation are fostered – creativity is not taught, it's nurtured." 





Attainment starts with family learning

Sheila White explains how Glasgow Clyde College has been tackling the attainment gap through family learning



The Community Learning and Development (CLD) team at Glasgow Clyde College has focused work on raising the aspirations and achievements within a group which is often distanced from learning. The team has developed creative ways to equip and build capacity amongst parents and to capitalise on family learning opportunities to raise attainment and close the poverty-related attainment gap.

They set out to develop literacy and numeracy courses by creating a learning environment which would blend core learning skills with a practical-based curriculum, fostering curiosity, creativity and imagination through a variety of learning experiences. This meant that adults were more comfortable in their learning, which encouraged them to take on challenging topics.

Three of the core courses that have been delivered over the last year are:

- Story Telling through Photography
- ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) through Story Telling
- Supporting Parents Supporting Children: Numeracy and Mathematics Level 1

Story Telling through Photography

In the 12-week Story Telling through Photography course, the college used language and photography to engage families in core literacy learning alongside the practical skill of photography. Teaching two diverse yet complementary subjects enabled learners to develop written narrative by first using the lens of a camera to build a story board, which was then used to describe a range of scenarios of interest to them. This has encouraged families who would not have normally engaged in literacy-based activity to become active story tellers.

One primary school working with Chinese parents developed a colourful booklet to let other families know about useful places to visit in their area. Pictures were taken of interesting local landmarks and, working with their children, they wrote an imaginative tale of a dragon's adventure through their local area.

This story was translated into Mandarin by the families, supporting the effort to develop the children's language skills. In addition to the book, which was professionally printed, the group held a successful photography exhibition inviting members of the community and supporters from across the educational establishment.

The team hopes to credit rate this course through SCQF by spring 2019 which would offer certification to learners.

In another example, parents created a fictional story about the place in which they live, around the Maryhill Canal area. This story

included environmental as well as active living messages. The story will now form the basis of reading in the school curriculum.

The Chief Executive's department at Glasgow City has adopted this model of learning to engage the wider community around an activity which will be called "Learner's Voice". This will be used to encourage adult learners from the city's poorest areas to evaluate the needs of their locality and will use photography and written narratives to articulate this.

ESOL through Story Telling

ESOL through Story Telling courses were delivered over 12 weeks and were taught by a qualified Glasgow Clyde College ESOL tutor. Parents had previously expressed an interest in using English in social contexts and everyday conversation to help children read books, to improve pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary. Using story telling has allowed them to gain a solid grounding in grammar and vocabulary while learning the skills of reading to their children in English. This progression in their English language has also given many of the parents the confidence to take up college places. ESOL through Story Telling has been newly credit rated through SCQF and will now provide certificated learning for parents.

Supporting Parents Supporting Children

In Supporting Parents Supporting Children, the College has developed courses which support parents to become proficient in mathematics and numeracy by becoming the educators of their own children in these areas.

Developing courses which help parents understand the ideas and language of Curriculum for Excellence and the correct mathematical language used when engaging children, alongside a firm grounding on the subject, has given them both the confidence and the skills to become parent educators to their children.

Most recently, a parent class has been studying introductory algebra and supporting their children in this area. One parent recently described her joy and her child's "surprise" when she was able to help with an algebra problem at home, stating: "I've been doing that in our class!"

These classes have been enthusiastically welcomed by several Glasgow schools as a way in which parents can develop the confidence to help raise the attainment of their children. Supporting Parents Supporting Children: Maths and Numeracy Level 1 has now been SCQF credit rated and will be delivered as a certificated course to parents.

The team hopes to continue to credit rate their community courses with SCQF to widen access and inclusion to learning. 



Feedback from the schools included:

"Glasgow Clyde College did an excellent job both designing and writing the course to meet the parents' specific needs and delivering the great material in an engaging and warm way. This can be seen by the evaluations, attendance and 'impact statements' gathered.

"The culmination of the course was

the reading of traditional tales from the students' own countries but translated into English. The fact that some parents in the group so lacked confidence to even attempt to speak, but developed the confidence to read their stories aloud to the class was very inspiring.

"I also felt that before the course began some parents were very isolated within the community but by the end they had made connections with other parents and still

continue to meet for coffee and a chat.

"There has been an increased involvement from the parents, in some cases expressing a desire to become parent helpers."

Sheila White is CLD Manager at Glasgow Clyde College. Alan Milson, CLD Worker, worked on these projects. Three of the projects will be on the Education Scotland Improvement Hub (education.gov.scot/improvement/) as exemplar practices.

What links reindeer tracking and 3D printed textiles?

College innovation!

Innovation Vouchers are available to fund collaborative projects between Scottish businesses and colleges. Here we learn about some of those projects

In the academic year 2017-18, Scottish Funding Council Innovation Vouchers valued at more than £24,000 were awarded to fund five individual collaborative projects between Scottish businesses and colleges.

One of these was between independent fashion designer Karen Hamilton and Dundee and Angus College. Karen wanted to produce a prototype using different printing filaments which would allow her to print unique lace designs that can be used

as a textile. Her pioneering idea was that the lace fabric would be printed in a single piece and not printed in component parts that are then joined together.

This is a new innovative use of an established printing technique, as no other company or designer is using the technology to produce textiles, with the potential to transform the industry. Therefore, support was required to access the specialist equipment and resources.

Karen was able to collaborate with the

Learning Lab at the College, which is a space promoting the use of innovative technology through hands-on learning, after £5,000 was awarded to the collaboration. She was provided with guidance, expert knowledge and practical supervision of the use of equipment as she endeavoured to develop innovative lace fabric using 3D printing.

Brian Riley, Business Advisor, Dundee and Angus College, said: "From the perspective of the College, this is an example of cutting-edge research and development activity within commercial fabric design and construction and depending on outcomes, could inform future curriculum content and afford student project opportunities.

"The project has provided an excellent



Image © Alex Smith, Cairngorm Reindeer Herd

opportunity to engage in applied research – something not normally associated with the college sector – using internal resources and academic staff with expertise in digital and related areas of work activity. It represents a fine example of commercial and academic partnership and will serve as a good model for future such collaborations.”

Innovation Vouchers have helped to fund several other industry-led collaborative projects, including three with City of Glasgow College.

City of Glasgow College is collaborating with Altitude Thinking to develop, construct and test a prototype of a programmable drone that will be used to navigate Scottish waterways while producing accurate, real-time reports on pollution levels and water conditions.

The £5,000 Innovation Voucher will allow the partners to look at engineering development for subsequent drones with enhanced capabilities to remove litter and other pollutants from waterways using suction pumps.

Douglas Morrison, STEM and Innovation Lead at City of Glasgow College, said: “The Innovation Voucher Scheme has opened up new opportunities to support the College’s SME (small to medium sized enterprises) partners in realising productivity gains and improved performance through innovation. We are currently working with three companies on projects aiming to enhance water quality and reduce water bound refuse, to reduce the time taken to survey historic buildings using thermal imaging drone inspections, and to connect communities through virtual reality conferencing.

“The scheme rightly recognises the vital role that colleges play in supporting local businesses to develop their workforce and introduce new products and services. Our academic teams are also finding these collaborations incredibly valuable, with learning from project activity being integrated into curriculum delivery for our students.”

New College Lanarkshire and charity New Rhythms for Glasgow (NRG) also received £5,000 through the scheme to develop an online service platform for disadvantaged and excluded people who wish to either use or contribute to the creative industries in the local deprived area.

The charity in North Glasgow provides music and arts workshops and opportunities for people living in areas of high deprivation who experience a range of barriers to accessing creative industries.

John McNair, Head of Regional Business Development at New College Lanarkshire, said: “This is a great opportunity for the College and NRG to collaborate and co-create a targeted digital technology solution that supports the charity’s aim of providing a more sustainable and innovative service.”

A very different kind of collaboration between The Reindeer Company Ltd and Inverness College UHI is that of the Secret Lives of the Cairngorm Reindeer. This project, which has recently been granted a £5,000 Innovation Voucher, will use cutting-edge tracking technology to enhance reindeer management and the experiences of people visiting the reindeer herd in the Cairngorms as well as the online experience. The collaboration is in its early stages, so it is a case of “watch this space”.

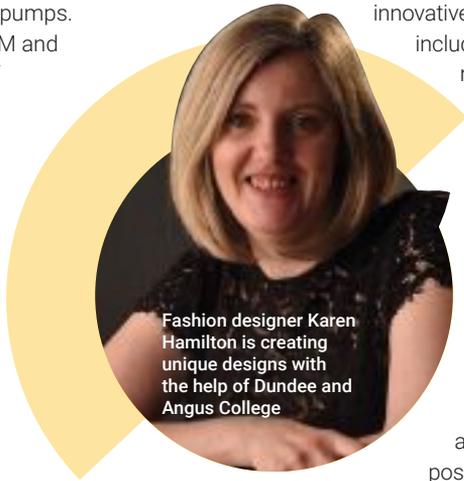
James Frew was awarded an Innovation Voucher to collaborate with West College Scotland (WCS) to develop a new innovative training planning process, including monitoring certification renewals, developing individual training plans and measuring the impact of training through Achievement Measurement Indexing.

Andrew Fogarty, Head of Energy and Engineering, West College Scotland, said: “The Innovation Voucher has allowed James Frew and WCS to collaborate positively to implement business

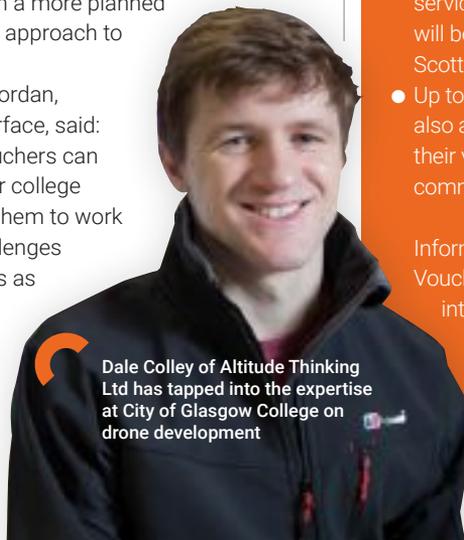
improvements and develop more meaningful relationships that are mutually beneficial. In doing so, our staff at the College have been able to use this knowledge to work with other organisations to help them improve and enhance the products and services that they offer.”

It is envisaged that whilst improving the relevance of training interventions, significant cost savings and improved efficiency will be realised through a more planned and systematic approach to training.

Dr Siobhán Jordan, Director of Interface, said: “Innovation Vouchers can be beneficial for college staff, enabling them to work on real-life challenges with businesses as they research and develop products, services and processes.”



Fashion designer Karen Hamilton is creating unique designs with the help of Dundee and Angus College



Dale Colley of Altitude Thinking Ltd has tapped into the expertise at City of Glasgow College on drone development

Funding for innovation

Did you know that funding is available for colleges to work with businesses and organisations for research and development activity? Up to £5,000 of funding aimed at encouraging first time partnerships between a company and further education college is available through Interface, which administers the Scottish Funding Council’s Innovation Voucher Scheme.

The main highlights of the Scheme are:

- The value of a Standard Innovation Voucher is between £1,000 and £5,000, which covers the staff project costs and is paid directly to the college.
- The company contributes an equal value in cash or in kind (such as staff time, materials or equipment) or a combination of both.
- All SMEs (from sole traders up to 250 employees max), social enterprises and third sector organisations with main company operations in Scotland can apply for a voucher to partner with a Scottish college.
- Businesses are eligible to apply for one Standard Innovation Voucher with a college partner. Follow-on Innovation Vouchers are available to continue the relationship.
- Projects must be innovative (a novel/pioneering idea) and lead to new products, services or processes that will benefit the company and Scottish economy.
- Up to four businesses can also apply together to pool their vouchers to solve a common issue.

Information on Innovation Vouchers can be found at: interface-online.org.uk/how-we-can-help/funding/standard-innovation-vouchers

Attributes for life

Dundee and Angus College strives to give students the opportunity to access a range of life experiences that will develop their essential skills. Here we find out how they have achieved this through the D&A Attributes programme

Over the past three years, Dundee and Angus College has developed and refined the D&A Attributes programme with direct input from local employers. It was designed to complete the full educational circle and help nurture a more “rounded” student with all the attributes needed to be both successful and sought after.

The D&A Attributes programme is a voluntary opportunity open to every student and is built around the College’s aim to ensure that D&A students are sought after by local and national employers. The programme’s attributes are built around employer feedback with respect to the most important skills they are looking for in students leaving college.

So how does it work? The College began by working closely with around 50 local businesses, with students and staff to get a comprehensive picture of what the key attributes that each group felt were the most important in creating a positive career or future pathway.

The support from local employers was incredible. Businesses such as McGill’s Engineering, Dundee City Council Waterfront, creative and digital company, Bright Solid, local solicitors, call centres and Sports Scotland all had valid (and remarkably consistent) points to make. Through a range of focus groups and iterations the 12 key attributes that underpin the D&A Attributes programme were developed.

The people that we employ will need a full range of attributes just like those highlighted in this programme, which we both welcome and support

The 12 D&A Attributes

Each attribute is supported by a local employer, who has put their name to

the overall programme and is happy to highlight the value of that attribute in terms of their business.

Manager of Dundee and Angus Domino’s Pizza Franchises, Steve Robson, said: “For success in any type of work there is a need both for the relevant technical and occupational skills, but also the generic life skills and aptitudes which underpin and enhance effective performance in any type of work.”

The great thing about the D&A Attributes programme is its flexibility. This means students can choose to complete just one attributes badge or you can follow a Pathway to Success and complete multiple badges that build into awards (three bronze, six silver and nine gold).



Example activity

A large selection of options have been built to cater for the interests of all students. For example, students can enrol as an Enablement Volunteer:

Tasks/responsibilities

You will work with individual and groups of Supported Education students in a befriending role, encouraging them to take part in wider activities in the College, explore new areas of the College and experience new interactions and social environments.

You will be working in partnership

with Gowrie Care Support Staff. You will receive a basic introduction and training session from the Gowrie Care Team.

We are looking for students who have skills that they are keen to share: arts and crafts, sport, fashion, photography; or students who love to chat!

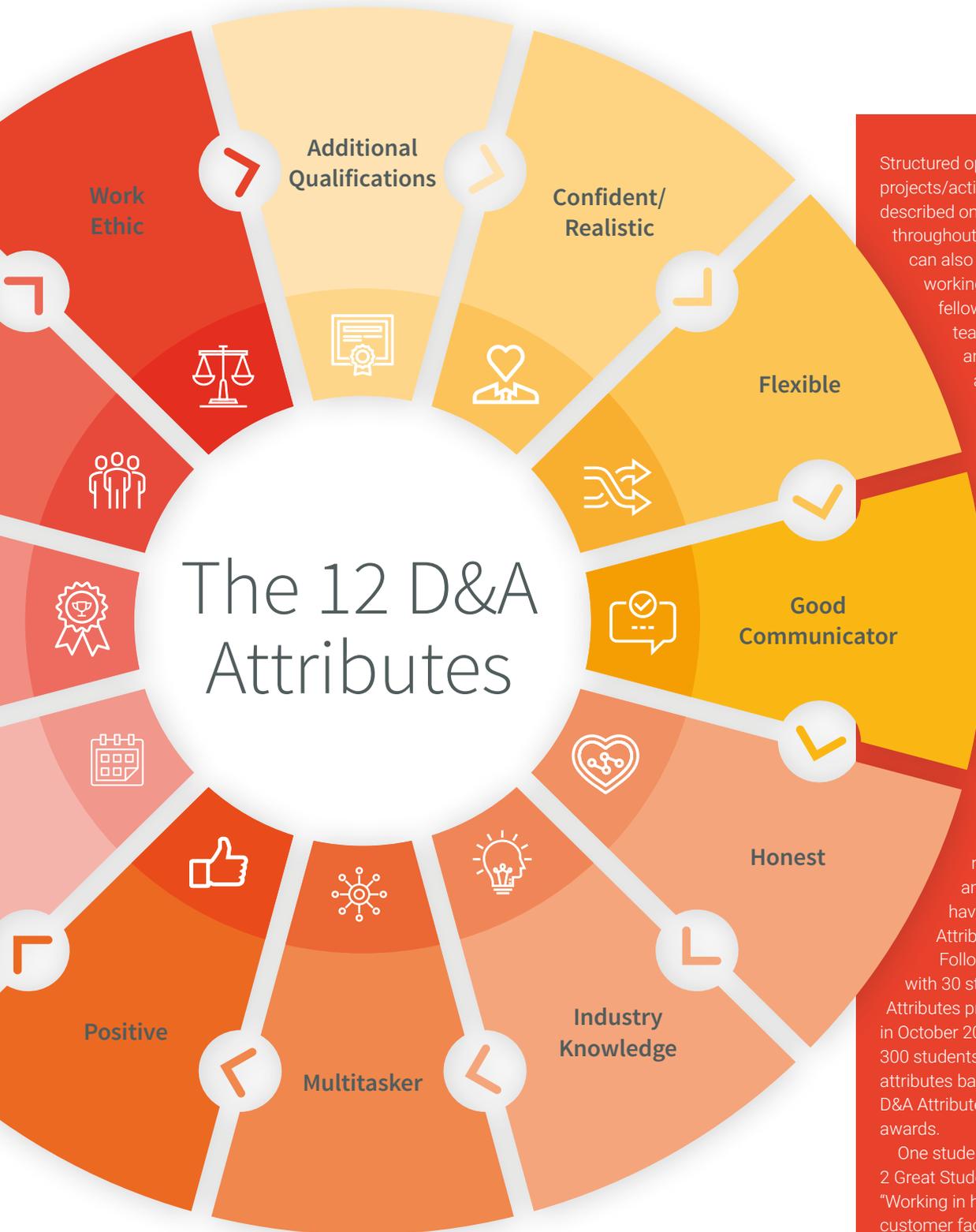
All activities will be supported by Gowrie Care and Learner Engagement.

Estimated time commitment:

One lunchtime per week. We are looking for students who can commit to at least one full semester, to gain two badges.

D&A Attributes badges that can be achieved:

- Confident/Realistic
- Flexible
- Good Communicator
- Industry Knowledge
- Positive
- Professional Standards
- Team Player



The 12 D&A Attributes

To achieve an award, however, students must demonstrate 90% attendance and have a positive recommendation from a member of staff. Students who receive a Gold Award can also be nominated for the Principal's Award.

Each badge is flexible in terms of content and is developed as appropriate to the student's level of study. As a result, students can build up their badges across their studies at different levels.

Jay Grant, Projects and Development Manager, Dundee City Council (DCC), said: "As an organisation we look for these 12 attributes from individuals to set them

on the right path, not only with Dundee City Council as an employer, but other employers within the area."

Lynne McKay, Development Manager from the CIOB in Scotland, agrees: "The people that we employ will need a full range of attributes just like those highlighted in this programme, which we both welcome and support."

The D&A Attributes are learner-led, with students building their own reflective log of experiences in respect of their chosen badge(s) through extra-curricular engagement and volunteering. This was an interesting change of approach.

Structured opportunities and projects/activities (such as those described on page 20) are available throughout the year, and students can also gain attributes by working with their lecturers, fellow students and support teams on one-off projects and other activities such as:

- Class and Lead Representatives
- Pop-Up Shops
- Sports Union
- Valeting@D&A enterprise
- Skills for Learning, Life and Work
- Mock Interviews
- Fashion Show
- Volunteering
- MotivateMe!
- Library Volunteer
- Enterprise volunteer.

The most rewarding part of this story is the response from students and local businesses, who have bought into the D&A Attributes programme.

Following a pilot programme with 30 students, the D&A Attributes programme was launched in October 2017. Since then almost 300 students have completed attributes badges, with 80 achieving D&A Attributes Gold, Silver or Bronze awards.

One student, Kristopher, a Good 2 Great Student Ambassador, said: "Working in hospitality, you are customer facing. This experience will be great for my confidence, self-belief, and future career."

Through the skills developed on the D&A Attributes programme students have gained a broad range of essential skills, secured employment, been promoted at work, and obtained places at their university of choice.

Ola, Events Assistant, said: "Helping with college events is a great buzz. Not only am I helping to improve the student experience, but I am also cementing real skills like working under pressure!"



Virtual water rescue

Find out how digital approaches and role play provided Ayrshire College students with a real-life taste of what it's like to be involved in a river rescue

Designed by Ayrshire College staff, the water rescue virtual reality (VR) project saw various departments coming together with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Department to deliver an engaging, innovative vocational learning experience. It also addressed local and national water safety agendas.

One key community priority in South Ayrshire is to improve community safety with a focus on water safety. Fire and rescue crews regularly respond to emergency calls from people who have got into difficulty in the water and need to be rescued.

The water rescue virtual reality (VR) project was designed in partnership with the Scottish

Fire and Rescue Service to create a water rescue situation that would enable students to assess an incident and improve their first aid skills. The idea behind this was to train and assess the students in a virtual environment.

Greig Fleming, Station Manager at Ayr Community Fire Station said: "The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service have entered into a strong local partnership with Ayrshire College, working together to provide an educational package that can be adapted when working within our local communities."

While the initiative was taught and delivered by the College's Care Department, it was developed by various partners within the College. Footage of the water rescue

was recorded by the College's Learning Technology Department, using a state of the art 360-degree 4K camera. This camera footage allowed students to carry out a first aid assessment and the treatment of injuries within the water rescue scenario.

Students watched the incident using virtual reality goggles and commented on what actions they would carry out. The footage includes "pop up" questions, which can be downloaded using the Wonda VR app and then by clicking on a customised QR code.

It is anticipated that Ayrshire College will utilise the VR technology in summative assessments for first aid.

The SQA has expressed an interest



Next steps

During 2019, further activity is planned, including the chance to carry out joint CPR training between college students and Strathclyde Fire and Rescue staff with a terrorist scenario, which again will be used for first aid assessment within the college and for Community Safety Awareness Training by Strathclyde Fire and Rescue Services. Students from the Drama Department and from make-up artistry courses will participate in the scenario during the planning, preparation and delivery stages.

Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's College

The revised Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges emphasise the importance of technology-enhanced approaches in learning, teaching and assessment.

A digital mindset provides an opportunity for enhanced collaborative practice with local and global communities. The Standards also remind us that we need to work on our cyber resilience, in our personal and professional roles.

Ultimately, we rely on our judgement to decide what will benefit our students; that might be training future automotive mechanics to deliver inspection summaries via video, or carers to edit shared documents online.

If you are looking for somewhere to start, then:

- Why not come along to a CDN TeachMeet? An informal gathering after work where we share stories and the odd cake or two. Keep an eye out on our events page for future meetings.
- Keep updated with the latest innovations and developments in teaching practice by subscribing to our monthly newsletter <https://www.cdn.ac.uk/tick-to-talk/> and to our weekly news from the sector <https://paper.li/ColDevNet/1443012593/#/>
- Look out for our new 23 Things resource, a free online course tailored to the college sector, filled with ideas on how to develop your digital skills - www.cdn.ac.uk

in supporting this initiative, which would see Ayrshire College as the first college in Scotland to use technology in this way.

Following on from the first aid scenario, firefighters demonstrated the procedures that would be adopted at a real-life water rescue, including the use of a rescue sled to rescue casualties from the water. This helped prepare

the students for real scenarios they might face in a health care setting after a river incident.

The partnership has been so successful that the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and Ayrshire College will continue to work together to develop and maximise learning opportunities for Ayrshire College students and Strathclyde Fire and Rescue staff. 🔄

The Principal aims

The college sector has seen a number of new Principals appointed. *Reach* speaks to five of them about their priorities for the coming year

Jackie Galbraith

**Principal of West Lothian College,
was previously Vice Principal at Ayrshire College**

"My top priority is for our students to stay on course and succeed in what they set out to achieve when they decided to come to college. Excellent learning and teaching is fundamental to that, as is effective support for those who face barriers that get in the way of their success. Removing barriers is important. That's why, for example, in response to feedback from our Student Association and staff that more and more students are experiencing poverty, we now offer free soup and a roll so that no student has to face their learning on an empty stomach.

"Our purpose is to help our students achieve their full potential, to be an outstanding vocational education provider completely in tune with the skills requirements of the regional economy, and to provide vital support for inclusive growth in local communities. Therefore, listening and responding to employers and community stakeholders is another priority high on my list.

"West Lothian has seen improvement in full- and part-time student outcomes over the past three years, and in 2017-18 made very good progress on improving FE full-time student success. Learning from others is essential and I've encouraged teaching and support staff to visit other colleges to find out how they are tackling some of the problems we are facing.

"One way that the College is tackling the attainment gap is through international work placements which are supported by Erasmus+ funding. We use these placements to engage reluctant learners and those most at risk of dropping out of college. They provide students who have never been abroad the opportunity to broaden their horizons. As a result, the College has seen improved results and better retention rates among students from areas of multiple deprivation. Over 100 students each year benefit from international placements.

"West Lothian has one of the youngest populations in Scotland, and the population is predicted to grow each year for the next ten years. This is very different to the trend in most other parts of Scotland and presents a huge opportunity for the College. Sustained



growth in employment is also forecast in West Lothian for the next ten years in most industry sectors. That's a fantastic opportunity for the College and our students, and will drive a fundamental review of our curriculum to make sure it is fit for the current and future needs of the region's economy.

"There is no doubt that financial sustainability is a major challenge for colleges. Our main financial challenge in the year ahead is improving our IT infrastructure so that it meets the digital expectations of our students. Close behind is the need to refurbish student-facing parts of our estate, for example to create a modern learning resource centre and a one-stop shop for student services, to enhance the learning experience of our students.

"The main thing that I'd like to achieve this year is that more students successfully complete the qualifications they set out to achieve. Whether coming to college is a first choice or second chance, I want to make sure that West Lothian College is never second best and that all of our students have a first-class experience."



Martin Jones

**Principal of Argyll College UHI,
was previously a Senior Lecturer in Law
at Glasgow Caledonian University**

"The College has just embarked on the development of its strategy for the next five years and so I am fortunate to be able to help guide and shape it during the first few months of my tenure. My sense is that staff are eager to set a course for the next stage of the College's growth and development and they are very much open to fresh ideas.

"Argyll College UHI serves some of the most remote areas in Scotland, making it possible for rural communities to access FE and HE opportunities. Our student experience mirrors the realities of the modern workplace and remote working practice, making use of video technologies and online collaboration whilst enabling people to remain in the communities and environment they love. This is a very important element in preventing further rural depopulation.

"Our HE numbers have grown significantly over the past few years as more students decide to remain in Argyll. We've greatly expanded our provision of apprenticeships and we will continue to work to meet employer demand for a skilled local workforce. We have also successfully introduced teacher training as part of our offer in recent years. This development is of regional strategic importance given the difficulties often encountered filling vacant teacher posts in rural areas.

"We need to continue to develop innovative ways of working with local employers. We are fortunate enough to have employers in our region who are keen to work with us in order to create outcomes which are not only mutually beneficial but which also have the students as future employees at their core. The percentage of our FE students entering employment in 2017 was 10% above the national average.

"Aside from crystallising the strategy of Argyll College, I would like to see it maintain its strong record of student attainment whilst broadening and deepening its relationships with key employers."



Liz Connolly

was internally promoted to Principal of West College Scotland

"Our Board has been working on a new corporate strategy, so I've taken the opportunity to share that with staff and get their thoughts and ideas. I've also been meeting with stakeholders to understand what they want from us as a college.

"Probably the biggest change for me is the sheer breadth of the role. As well as running the business, there is a huge external element to the job, and as we serve a large and fairly complex region, that adds to the diversity.

"All colleges are doing different things as we seek to meet the needs of our regions. As a college we have over 40% of our students from SIMD20 which defines much of what we do. We are also very proud of the way we work with employers, particularly in the support they provide inside the classroom, providing live projects as an integrated part of our students learning. This really helps prepare our students for the world of work.

"We are constantly looking to review the nature of our programmes to ensure that they meet the needs of our students and the employers we work with. We are definitely seeing a move towards more part-time provision in response to changes in patterns of demand, and we need to continue to be flexible and adaptive to ensure that we can respond to change.

"Ensuring the best use of the resources that we have available is paramount to make sure that we generate the greatest impact. We do require investment in our estate to create the 21st-century learning environments that our students require. We will continue to work with partners and stakeholders to determine the best way to move forward with this.

"It is critically important that we continue to work with employers to understand their needs now and in the future, to ensure that we are equipping our students with the skills that they require for employment and to help them secure a rewarding and fulfilling career. To help us better understand the needs of local employers we recently conducted a skills survey, "Our Workforce, Our Future". More than 230 companies employing in excess of 65,000 people responded and this has given us a real insight into the future requirements of local employers."

Continues overleaf >

> Continued from previous page



Carol Turnbull

Principal of Dumfries and Galloway College, taking up post as Principal of Ayrshire College

Firstly, I want to listen and hear about what the College does well, areas for improvement, identify where the College can make the most impact and also to find out what staff, learners and stakeholders expectations are of me.

Ayrshire College is approximately four times bigger than Dumfries and Galloway College and works with three local authorities, whilst Dumfries and Galloway only has one. I've only visited Ayrshire College a few times but I get a strong sense of a friendly college, committed to learners, some fantastic facilities (and some areas for improvement) – all of which are similar to Dumfries and Galloway.

My vision for the College is one where all learners maximise their potential, where the College is embedded in the communities it serves, and one that is a beacon of success for the sector. #AyrshireFirst – First for Learners, First for stakeholders, First for Staff, First for the Sector.

Through increased employer engagement, more part-time and work-based learning opportunities, clear pathways and progression routes, business support and innovation, I envisage the College being at the heart of inclusive economic growth, and making a significant contribution to the social and economic prosperity of the region. I also want it to be an organisation that exceeds expectations and one where staff and learners excel and are proud to be part of.

The college sector is integral to supporting inclusive economic growth and this is increasingly being recognised through initiatives such as the Flexible Workforce Development and Innovation Funds that are exclusive to colleges. This is also an area on which I have a strong focus as I believe having a highly skilled regional workforce that meets the current and future needs of employers is essential for the success and prosperity of a region.

I think there are further opportunities for increased employer engagement, especially with SMEs. I'd like to see further development and implementation of our digital skills strategy, and a move towards more work-based and part-time learning opportunities. And, finally, I want to make sure that we celebrate success – for learners, staff, the College and the region.



Audrey Cumberford

previously Principal of West College Scotland, is now Principal of Edinburgh College

"I firmly believe colleges can prosper in an uncertain policy and funding context and in an environment where digital and technological advances are impacting upon everything we do – and at a pace which is exponential. We must be fundamentally more collaborative, outward-looking and socially productive; where the College serves the needs of students and is recognised as a key contributing partner in Edinburgh's, and Scotland's, inclusive economic, cultural and social growth.

"There are many things that impact on the profile of a college whether that's the demography of the local population, the levels of deprivation, levels of unemployment and the demands of industry. As employment levels rise we are experiencing a shift from full-time to increasing demand for part-time, for adult returners and for individuals in work looking to up-skill or re-skill. Our apprenticeship activity continues to increase, ranging from foundation apprentices through to graduate apprentices.

"The curriculum portfolio at the College evolves constantly and is shaped by both student demand and the demands of industry, and that will not change. The speed of change in our environment, in particular the impact of new and emerging technologies on what we do and how we do it – along with the impact on businesses and the skills required for Scotland's future workforce – will undoubtedly shape what we do. Our focus is also on the future skills needs of our students and our business partners which means we need to be in a position not only to meet immediate needs of our region but also put the foundations in place to meet future demand.

"There is no doubt the skills of Scotland's future workforce will be different to the critical skills gaps of today – and colleges must be a large part of the solution to both. I believe colleges already go beyond simply engaging with employers and are committed to creating a culture where employers and colleges co-exist and co-invest in our vocational system. The need for up-skilling and re-skilling individuals in work is becoming increasingly important and will undoubtedly impact on the intensity of our collaborations with employers.

"The scale and reach of our College is significant and that comes with a huge responsibility to the local areas we serve and our region as a whole.

"The real test of the character of Edinburgh College will be how we respond not just to the challenges but the opportunities that are ahead of us." 



Charting a path to success

John Rafferty CMgr FCMI, reflects on his leadership journey
with College Development Network (CDN)

Throughout my career I've always maintained some form of continuous professional learning. However, I found that the busier I became, and the more my career developed, the less time I seemed to have to do any pieces of "deep learning". I therefore chose the Chartered Management Institute Certificate in Strategic Leadership and Management, delivered by CDN, which struck a nice balance between being substantial enough to be meaningful yet flexible enough to fit in amongst my other commitments as a senior manager with a young family.

My previous academic qualifications mainly testified to my readiness for a teaching career I had long since moved on from – possibly a common feature of managers in FE. I'd also studied management at postgraduate level before, but this was long before I'd ever worked as a manager and it did not include the most recent developments in management research which I had to catch up on.

The CMI suite of qualifications was a good solution for me for a variety of reasons. Firstly, they can be completed mostly online with a minimum amount of time taken out of work. Secondly, they can be undertaken at a variety of SCQF levels. Also, they don't break the bank, either for yourself or your employer. Another great feature is that they have a number of exit points: finish one unit and you get the CMI Award, two or three units gets you the CMI Certificate and five or more the CMI Diploma.

Being introduced to CMI also turned out to be of significant value in itself. For example, during my course I was given the opportunity to attend the annual CMI conference in Edinburgh. I've attended

numerous conferences over the years and found the CMI conference to be one of the most engaging. This is because it is a professional association of managers from every possible sector you can imagine; it is not focused upon any one sector in particular.

It was after this that I started thinking seriously about aiming for Chartered Manager status. Achieving this would not only secure full CMI membership, with access to their library of online journals and video resources for managers, but it would also both test and certify my capabilities as a reflective practitioner of the art and science of management.

Successfully completing my CMI Postgraduate Certificate, which took about six months, was the first stage in this process as it refreshed and updated my knowledge of management theory. I then embarked on completing the written application for Chartered Manager, a task made infinitely easier having just completed the assessments for the CMI qualification. The final components of the process were an hour-long telephone interview and a written testimony from my line manager to corroborate the authenticity of the achievements described. The assessment panel then considered all this evidence,

along with my CV and copies of my other qualifications to reach a judgment, which in my case led to a successful outcome.

The new professional standards in both teaching and leadership in FE

puts critical reflection and career planning and development at the top of the agenda.

Interestingly, so too does the 15 - 24 Learner Journey Review which requires us to instil these skills in our own students. It seems

obvious that increasing the focus on career planning

skills for students has to begin with getting better at these skills for ourselves, so that we might practice what we preach.

The CMI approach is in my view one way to do this; it's an appropriately testing process but a fair one and one which leaves you with a much clearer appreciation of where you are as a manager. For me, it has left me with the clearest sense I have ever had in my career of what my strengths and weaknesses are and where I must go next with regards to career long professional learning. It could be a route that suits you too. 📍

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

To find out more about CDN's Management and Leadership courses please visit: www.cdn.ac.uk/management-and-leadership/



Lindsay Snodgrass, Head of Student Services at Inverness College UHI, explains how a holistic approach to mental wellbeing has seen a reduction in students withdrawing from their courses

Positive health

Mental ill health poses an increasing challenge to the college sector, and society in general.

In response to this, Inverness College UHI has adopted a two-pronged approach, focusing on proactive initiatives to promote and maintain positive health whilst also ensuring that they remain responsive to students who experience difficulties. This approach takes account of the linkages between environmental, social and physical health.

It is an inclusive model that shifts support from being reactive to more proactive; and to a wider social model of health. This approach also focuses on working with external partners from NHS and third sector agencies to provide a comprehensive support package for our students.

A key aspect of the whole college approach is staff development, which has included:

- New staff induction around the importance of student mental wellbeing
- Mental Health First Aid courses specifically targeting

Personal Academic Tutors

- An online Mental Health Toolkit – giving staff confidence in recognising student mental ill health at an early stage
- “Baggage” theatre production – a student-led play to raise awareness as part of staff development to the various issues and “baggage” which individuals (staff and students) carry around and bring to college which may affect study and work
- Ongoing staff development sessions run in partnership with external agencies on a range of mental health issues experienced by students including Personality Disorders; Autism Awareness; Stress Management; and Mindfulness.

This investment in staff development has had a positive impact on staff awareness, confidence and ability to deal with difficulties students may experience.

For 2017-18, resilience workshops were introduced for all students focusing on positive mental wellbeing. This



The whole college approach has been successful in:

- Early recognition of those who are at risk of not successfully completing their course
- Provision of the appropriate and bespoke support students require to sustain their studies
- Improved successful outcomes in 2016-17
- A reduction in further withdrawals in 2016-17
- Colleagues feeling more aware, supported and confident in how to best support their students and recognise emerging issues through investment in staff development
- 91% of students are “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with Wellbeing and Counselling services (SSES results)
- Increased number of referrals and successful referral outcomes to keep students on their course
- Student nominations for support staff in HISA

was delivered to all students early in the academic session to enable awareness raising and to equip students with strategies to help overcome possible future challenges. At the end of the sessions the students created a personal wellbeing action plan to be used when they feel they start to encounter challenges. Feedback from both the Personal Academic Tutors and students has shown these to be useful in helping individuals identify key stressors and ways

to maintain a positive mental attitude.

In addition to the resilience workshops the College put on a range of workshops to class groups on various aspects of maintaining positive mental health, such as Coping with Exam Stress and Mindfulness.

It ran a range of events and campaigns throughout the year focussed around health improvement and prevention of ill health, including:

- Smoking Cessation



(Highlands and Islands Student Association) Awards, reflecting the impact of the service on students' lives.

The College places great emphasis on the promotion of positive health and early identification of individuals who may require support. It puts a focus on raising awareness at a whole college level of the growing challenge around student mental ill health and the importance of

keeping students healthy. This work includes close partnership with the Highlands and Islands Student's Association, to gain their support, which involves high student engagement.

- Drug and Alcohol Awareness
- Safe Use of Social Media
- Safe Partying
- Arrive Alive / Safe Driving
- Harassment
- Happy, Healthy You
- Healthy Body Healthy Mind.

In addition, several support groups were made available for individuals who may be at risk, including:

- **Autism Initiative** – a peer support group run in partnership with a local

Autism charity which allows students to share their experiences, challenges and solutions

- **Anxiety Group** – a peer support group run by the Wellbeing Officer which allows students to express

their anxieties and work towards solutions to overcome them

- **Paws for Stress** – an initiative run in partnership with Canine Concern Scotland Trust to provide stress relief at peak times of the academic year
- **A Men's Group** – a peer support group run in partnership with Andy's Man's Club to encourage males to share problems and reduce the risk of suicide
- **Reach Out Health Walks** – this is a new initiative in response to reluctance by some predominantly female class groups to get involved in physical and health promoting activities. The college's Introduction to Care Level 4 course run a weekly student led walking group for students, staff and members of the community with student volunteers trained as Walk Leaders through Paths for All Scotland. This initiative has been dual focused in tackling social isolation among both students and vulnerable members of the community but has also helped participants to

improve their social,

emotional, and mental wellbeing.

The initiative has had a positive impact on retention among the student group with 92% predicted successful completion.

The College also

recognises the need for students to have time out and a quiet space at times, and it has a well-established Wellbeing Garden and a Quiet Room where students can escape from the busy campus environment.

Responding to emerging student issues

Specific processes have been put in place to enable the College to identify, at the earliest point, when an individual requires enhanced support. INSIGHT monitoring and tracking system flags are used with priority groups, including those who have disclosed an additional support need such as mental ill health. This enables the Personal Academic Tutor to keep a closer eye on individuals at risk of having more challenges. A referral system is in place which directs individuals to specialist support through a wellbeing service.

A triage system takes a three-pronged approach, directing students according to need – either to counselling, wellbeing, or outside agencies. The College counselling service offers a six-session model of support with a built-in evaluation to consider the impact of the support. There is a direct referral system to local GPs for individuals who are deemed to have longer term needs. For crisis cases there is a system of direct referral into NHS Psychological Services.

Despite the increasing numbers of students requiring support, the College has successfully resourced services and met demand so far. This has been achieved through commitment from senior managers to the whole college approach; innovative approaches in how the service is managed; use of counselling placement students (final year students on the Diploma in Person Centred Counselling); and recruiting Wellbeing Ambassadors across the student body to deliver wellbeing sessions.

There is no doubt that the work undertaken has made a significant contribution in addressing the health and wellbeing needs of staff and students. ☺



Love and learning

**Sarah-Jane Linton, Head of Faculty and Strategic Lead
for Widening Access at Edinburgh College**

There's growing interest in the work of renowned San Francisco Doctor Nadine Burke-Harris and her underpinning theory of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) on the poor physical and mental health of adults, with a recent conference hosted in Glasgow aiming to make Scotland the first ACE aware nation. This theory focuses on childhood trauma and 10 specific areas for concern, ranging from verbal abuse and lack of nurture, to sexual and physical violence, which act as multipliers for early morbidity.

I took the ACEs test with my three foster sons, all of whom scored at least 9 out of 10. Even with my short sample, it's clear that a high score would indicate care experience is likely. So I'm pleased, as a foster parent and college senior manager, that public services are waking up to this. Scotland's care system is undergoing an independent review, while in tandem an historic enquiry of abuse in care is reviewing practice and cases up until 2015. The earlier work of John Carnahan and the Violence Reduction Team in Glasgow also illustrates the power of multi-agency approaches to understanding the impact of trauma, poverty of ambition and early death.

So, what's the relevance to colleges? Along with this surge of interest in early trauma is the legislative impact of Corporate Parenting. Public organisations and their staff have been writing strategies and Who Cares? Scotland (of which I'm a Board trustee) has been working tirelessly to train corporate parents to better understand our care-experienced population. Edinburgh College hosted the first Corporate Parenting Celebration for Who Cares? Scotland and the Scottish Funding Council in November 2018, where FE and HE Corporate Parents gathered to share practice and ensure a smoother pathway for care-experienced learners through college and university.

This legislation has been bolstered in education by the First Minister's decision to increase the FE bursary to create parity of financial support for young care-experienced learners at college. An excellent decision, but one that has created an interesting response from professionals, including concerns that CEYP (Care-Experienced Young People) will use the money unwisely, to the disappointing practice by at least 11 local authorities in Scotland who have reduced through-care expenses in line with the increase in bursary - thus

placing some CEYP at risk of becoming homeless. I attended The Rock Trust Youth Homelessness Conference at the end of September in Edinburgh and they, like me, are deeply concerned that the number of homeless, vulnerable young people will rise due to this practice by some local authorities. All of this interesting theory, changing policy and improved practice doesn't seem to offer a complete solution, so how do we fix it?

Sarah Cameron, recently commended as CDN Student of the Year, is a care-experienced, Grade A HND legal services Edinburgh College student, who lost both her mother and grandfather through murder. Sarah is smart, a lone parent and aspires to become a lawyer. The Commission on Widening Access has achieved many things, but Sarah will still have to start at SCQF level 7, first-year undergrad, and resit two years of study when she undoubtedly could navigate deftly around Family Law with her lived experience and proven intellect. Is it fair that she should be delayed from qualifying for two years?

We should be proud that 40% of young people leaving care go to college but only 4% go to university. To ensure our care-experienced learners sustain and attain, they need patience and understanding of the impact of their trauma but most of all, they need love. My 16-year-old foster son received a standing ovation in the Palais de Nations as a human rights defender when he said: "I've done nothing miraculous, I'm just like every other young person in care, only I've been lucky to be loved."

I mentor an Edinburgh College alumni, Alicia Santana, an incredibly talented young musician who is care-experienced and studying her BMus at Napier University. There's much to be done to improve the lives of Scotland's care-experienced population, and it's unquestionably a rights based issue, that I hope when addressed will see care experience become the 10th protected characteristic. But while change is happening with our policy makers, let's be the change these young people need in our colleges now. I ask you not only to respect your care-experienced student population, but to treat them with dignity and show them love in your practice – with our growing understanding of the impact of Adverse Childhood Experience. Colleges across Scotland are leading the way to success, let us multiply their chances of success and becoming nurturing parents themselves by showing them love. 





College winners dazzle at SQA Star Awards

Scotland's colleges and their learners lit up the stage with a host of wins at the Scottish Qualifications Authority's annual Star Awards, which were hosted by TV and radio presenter Kaye Adams at Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum in Glasgow.

The SQA Star Awards are unique — they recognise both the individuals working towards SQA qualifications, and the organisations that deliver those qualifications. They reward people and institutions which have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to education and training.

Glasgow Clyde College, in partnership with Glasgow City Council, lifted the prestigious Pride o' Worth Award for Centres for the Glasgow School-College Inclusion Programme, which also won the Promoting Inclusion Award earlier in the evening. The programme sees young people who are disengaged from the traditional school environment undertake SQA qualifications at the college.

The college also won the award for Lifelong Learning Centre, for its Community Learning and Development team's work offering language courses to parents whose first language is not English, so they can play a more active role in their child's education.

Teaching staff at the college were also recognised at the ceremony, as senior lecturer Kirsten Amis was named SQA Champion for her work on the development of a new Higher National Diploma in Counselling.

Dundee and Angus College was named winner of the Partnership of the Year award. Students there are linked with local and global tech companies while they are still at college, giving them a flavour of working life after graduation, and preparing them to make a successful transition into employment.

Ross Munro was winner of the College Candidate of the Year category which was sponsored by College Development Network. Ross combines studying for a National Certificate in Sport and Fitness at Ayrshire College with competing as a successful wheelchair athlete, and using sport to inspire other disabled young people in the community.

Speaking about the winners and highly commended finalists, SQA Chief Executive, Dr Janet Brown, said: "Every year I am amazed by the stories of achievement, ingenuity, and accomplishment of our Star Awards winners. Every one of them, and all the highly commended finalists, fully deserve the recognition that they have received."

Find out about all the SQA Star Awards winners and highly commended finalists at www.sqa.org.uk/star



Pride o' Worth – Nicola McKenzie, Glasgow City Council presented by John Swinney, Deputy First Minister



Lifelong Learning – Sheila White, Glasgow Clyde College



SQA Champion – Kirsten Amis, Glasgow Clyde College



Partnership of the Year – Gillian McGovern, Dundee and Angus College



College Candidate of the Year – presented to Ross Munro by Jim Metcalfe, CDN





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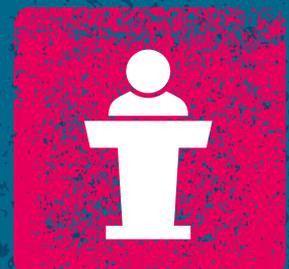
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**College Expo is a free landmark event for everyone
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The two-day College Expo19 is a celebration of college excellence, a hub for staff development and practical innovation, and an opportunity to participate in cutting-edge debate on vocational learning.



FOR MORE INFO VISIT: CDN.AC.UK/COLLEGE-EXPO