

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT ACTION TRACKER

COMMITTEE: Learning and Teaching Committee, 27 May 2021

(Paper 1a)

DATE RAISED	ACTION No	ACTION	DUE DATE	OWNER	STATUS*	COMMENTS
04.03.21	1	Benchmark comparison data from the college sector on College Leaver Destinations 2019-20 to be provided to the Committee at their meeting in May 2021.	May 2021	A Campbell	In Progress	SFC has not yet published the sector data as at 17 May 2021
04.03.21	2	The wording used to describe the risk in L&T3 is to be updated to read 'There is a risk that the College will fail to achieve its SFC credit activity target, resulting in SFC clawback'. This will align the wording with that used in the other risks.	ASAP	J Thomson	Completed	Risk wording updated prior to the meeting of the Audit Committee on 16 th March

* Not Started / In Progress / Completed

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Learning and Teaching Committee**27 May 2021**

Subject:	Student Association Report
Purpose:	To update Committee Members on Student Association activity since the last meeting
Recommendation:	That Committee Members note the content of the report and feedback any recommendations they may have

1. Background

Lauren Howieson, Student President, and Steven Oliver, Student Vice President, continue to deliver the core service of the Student Association through a variety of virtual platforms and through student email, with the support of the Student Association Advisor. Work of the Student Association has been supported by a core group of students who have taken responsibility for co-facilitating and moderating the Student Associations clubs and societies.

2. Current Situation

The Student Association is maintaining consistent levels of student engagement through various clubs, focus groups, and dealing daily with student feedback and concerns. We have recently undergone the Student President Elections 2021 and have successfully returned a new Student Vice President and a returning Student Vice President for 2021/22.

3. Association Activity**3.1 Student President Elections**

The Student President Elections, which took place from the 10 – 14 May, successfully returned two officers to the positions of Student President and Student Vice President.

From an initial five candidates, three candidates stood in the elections and we are delighted to announce that the results are as follows:

Student President Elect: Ellie Jamieson
Student Vice President Elect: Steven Oliver

The new Student President, Ellie, will take up position on the 1 July alongside returning officer, Steven, who will serve a second year as Student Vice President.

3.2 SFC Additional Funding

The Student Association is part of a short life working group which is looking at bids from students and curriculum areas for pots of money to deliver projects which help improve and maintain positive mental health. The first round of applications has been

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considered and the successful applicants are being contacted. We look forward to supporting the proposed projects.

3.4 Ambassador Focus Groups

The Ambassadors are planning the second round of Focus Groups which will include questions in relation to the Organisational Effectiveness Review and questions which will also inform the Student Mental Health Agreement 2021/22 and Promoting Wellbeing Action Plan 2021-24. These are being organised and will be delivered by the Ambassadors, with the support of the Student Officers by the end of May.

3.5 The S Word

The Student Association will be working on a project alongside the Equalities Advisor and Mental Health Liaison Officer to help normalise talking about mental health, and in particular, suicide. This project will be incorporated into a revised Wear it on Your Sleeve Campaign to encourage males to discuss their mental health. The project will include a male only safe space online to come together socially.

3.6 Ayrshire College Gaming Society

The Ayrshire College Gaming Society is still being utilised daily with a membership of almost one hundred students. Feedback from members has been really positive and many informal student networks have formed as a result of shared interests. An event will be in the works shortly to remind students of ACGS in an attempt to recruit new members.

3.7 Mental Health Awareness Week

On the 11th and 12th of May we held an online event hosted by Midnight Entertainment to promote Mental Health Awareness Week. This consisted of a mental health related quiz on the first evening and interactive games the following evening. We also partnered up with Brothers in Arms which is a Scottish men's mental health charity.

Throughout the event there were links to their donation page as well as an information page to help inform people of the amazing work they carry out.

4. Future Activity

4.1 Choose College Event

The Student Association have been invited to take part in the College Development Networks, Choose College Event which takes place on the 26 May. We will deliver a ten-minute live presentation at the event on the support that students should expect to receive when they come to Ayrshire College, from a student's perspective. We will be delivering this alongside the marketing team who have a stall at the marketplace event and the Head of Student Experience who is taking part in a questions and answer panel.

5. **Proposals**

N/A

6. Risks

Due to the challenging issues dealt with within the SA there is a risk of reputational damage.

7. Equality Impact Assessment

Due to the nature of this paper an equality impact assessment has not been undertaken.

8. Conclusion

ACSA will continue to work alongside staff in order to best support and encourage student and make the 2020/21 session, despite the unprecedented challenges it brings, both enjoyable and successful for students.

Lauren Howieson
Student President
19 May 2021

Publication

This paper will be published on the College website

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Learning and Teaching Committee

27 May 2021

Subject: Covid-19 Update

Purpose: To update Learning and Teaching Committee members on the impact of Covid-19 on learning, teaching and the student experience in AY 2020-21.

Recommendation: Members are asked to note the contents of this paper.

1. Background

The purpose of this paper is to update Learning and Teaching Committee members on the impact of Covid-19 on learning, teaching and the student experience during AY 2020-21.

2. Delivery of learning, teaching and assessment

All students undertook their learning exclusively online from 21 December 2020 until 15 February 2021. This coincided with the tougher lockdown measures announced by the UK and Scottish Governments which came into effect from 26 December 2020.

16 February 2021

A small number of learners whose on-campus attendance was deemed critical, returned to Ayr and Kilmarnock campuses from 16 February 2021. These were in the subject areas of construction, engineering, motor vehicle and hospitality. Their attendance was within the 5% threshold of the maximum daily attendance of students permitted on campus at any one time.

5 April 2021

From 5 April, colleges could prioritise a return for those students at risk of not completing their qualification, including those undertaking qualifications in construction, engineering, hairdressing, beauty and related courses. This amounted to 29% of the maximum daily attendance on campus. As a consequence of the Spring Break, the actual effective date for return was 19 April 2021. In addition, delivery of school-college partnership programmes could commence. These students were not included in the 29% cap.

26 April 2021

From 26 April 2021, all of mainland Scotland moved to Level 3 of the Scottish Government's guidance document, *Coronavirus: Covid-19 Strategic Framework*, where colleges were asked to operate a restricted blended learning model. All students were supported to return to campus from 26 April 2021 only where face to face teaching and in person assessment was deemed critical.

17 May and conclusion to AY 2020-21

From 17 May, all of mainland Scotland (with the exception of Glasgow City and Moray) moved to Level 2 of the *Strategic Framework*. In Level 2, colleges are asked to operate a blended learning model. Where recommended by the course team, and where appropriate, previously identified category 4 students were supported to spend some time on campus. Course teams were asked to make a judgement on a return to campus based on the overriding principle of supporting students to successfully conclude their studies in AY 2020-21.

3. Current Situation

Students studying with the College during AY 2020-21 have faced significant disruption to their learning. The main focus, as the end of the academic term draws to a close, is on supporting students to complete their studies to enable them to progress, successfully, to further study or in to work.

Certification of students in AY 2020-21

The Covid-19 Further and Higher Education Ministerial taskforce, chaired by Richard Lochhead, brought together key stakeholders (College, universities/SAAS/SQA/EIS-Fela/NUS) in order to provide a strategic, system approach to addressing the challenges faced in AY 2020-21. This facilitated and accelerated Awarding Body decisions around flexibility of assessment evidence and conditions and provided clarity over funding arrangements beyond AY 2020-21. Challenges, however, remain in subject areas which are highly practical, where students have not been able to undertake a vocational placement or where assessment involves close contact personal services which are not yet permitted in, for example, subjects such as hair and beauty.

Work has been undertaken to highlight those qualifications and subject areas most at risk of non-completion, where students are likely to have to return in AY 2021-22 and how this will impact on the College's Curriculum Development Plan for AY 2021-22. At present, of those students still enrolled with the College, approximately 78% of full-time students, 80% of part-time students and 75% of apprentices are scheduled to complete by the end of AY 2020-21. It should be noted that most final-year apprentices should complete by the end of the term.

School – College Partnership (SCP) programmes

School-College Partnership programmes, both those delivered in college and in school, recommenced face-to-face delivery, where appropriate, week commencing 19th April 2021. Some SCP programmes have remained online. Programmes have been extended by 7 weeks to allow pupils the opportunity to achieve their vocational qualifications, with additional classes being offered, where required.

Digital Poverty

The Digital Poverty panel continues to accept and process applications from students across the College. To date, the College has distributed 661 Chromebook, 285 laptops and 119 MiFi devices, all with an unlimited data package. Arrangements have been made to ensure that those requiring access to devices and data packages over the

summer have the requisite access. The college is currently working on a process to provide students with the same level of access to devices and data in AY 2021-22.

Summer Activity

A number of activities are planned over the summer period to either facilitate completion of qualifications or to provide experiences that students would have ordinarily undertaken throughout a normal academic year. Examples include offering a YOU salon summer placement programme, a hospitality summer placement programme in the College's restaurants, a supported learning summer transition programme and an early learning and childcare outdoor forest kindergarten placement experience.

4. Risks

A number of risks are highlighted in the narrative, above, primarily around the constraints around the ability to support students to succeed and achieve their qualifications in AY 2020-21.

5. Conclusion

Members are asked to note the contents of this paper.

Anne Campbell
Vice Principal, Curriculum
17 May 2021

Publication

This paper will be published on the College website

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AYRSHIRE COLLEGE

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT - FINAL

PARTNERSHIP WORKING (SDS)
JANUARY 2021

LEVEL OF ASSURANCE	
Design	Operational Effectiveness
Substantial	Substantial



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AYRSHIRE COLLEGE, PARTNERSHIP WORKING (SDS)

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DISTRIBUTION

Anne Campbell Audit Committee	Vice Principal - Curriculum Members
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REPORT STATUS LIST


Auditors:	Sean Morrison
Dates work performed:	16 November 2020 - 10 December 2020
Draft report issued:	18 December 2020
Final report issued:	20 January 2021


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AYRSHIRE COLLEGE, PARTNERSHIP WORKING (SDS)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

LEVEL OF ASSURANCE: (SEE APPENDIX I FOR DEFINITIONS)

Design  There is a sound system of internal control designed to achieve system objectives.

Effectiveness  The controls that are in place are being consistently applied.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS: (SEE APPENDIX I)

High		0
Medium		0
Low		0

TOTAL NUMBER OF RECOMMENDATIONS: 0

BACKGROUND:

As part of the 2020-21 Internal Audit plan for Ayrshire College (the 'College'), it was agreed that Internal Audit would assess the arrangements in place to strategically manage key relationships with partners to ensure common understanding of aims, roles and responsibilities, and effective partnership and collaborative working. The review focussed specifically on the partnership that Ayrshire College has with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and the three main themes that the College and SDS are working towards:

- Delivery of the family of apprenticeships
- Targeted support for progression for school leavers
- Use of labour market information to inform curriculum planning

The College Strategic Plan and the College Outcome Agreement are two key overarching documents which dictated the direction of the College. These set out the aims and objectives for the College. The most recent Strategic Plan covered 2017-2020, with the new plan currently in development, the strategic ambition of the new plan will focus on the themes of right learner, right place, right delivery, and right alignment. The most recent College Outcome Agreement covers the period 2020-2023, and has a mission of providing excellent, high quality, flexible learning opportunities that enables all students to fulfil their potential. There is clear alignment with elements of the SDS 2019-2022 Strategic Plan, particularly in relation to ensuring that people have the information and skills that they need.

Lead personnel have been assigned for each of the key themes that the College and SDS are working towards. The lead personnel are responsible for communicating with the respective SDS representatives and managing their respective relationships. The theme responsibilities are in alignment with the respective lead personnel job positions, for example the Head of Apprenticeships & Work Based Learning has a key role in managing the achievement of the delivery of the family of apprenticeships, and the Vice Principal for Curriculum is responsible

AYRSHIRE COLLEGE, PARTNERSHIP WORKING (SDS)

for the new theme of using labour market information to inform curriculum planning. The third theme relating to Career Management/supporting school leavers is managed by the Head of Schools, Engagement & Widening Access, and the Head of Student Experience.

Across the three themes, College staff engage with SDS via a number of communication channels. Examples of communication methods include, formal monitoring meetings, industry workshops, forum attendance such as employability forums, networking and development events, student support meetings and informal discussions. These communication methods provide the opportunity to develop the partnership relationships, identify improvement areas, and to provide feedback on the partnership.

Student services in particular have a hands on student level relationship with the SDS, whereby both parties work together to provide information to the students in relation to their course choices and destinations following course completion. They also work together to identify students that may need additional support in transitioning to the College, for example young early school leavers.

The Head of Business Intelligence & Information Systems works with SDS on a national level as a member of the SDS National Data Hub Reference Group. This relationship involves exchanging information through the data hub in line with the data sharing arrangements in place. In practice the College utilise this hub to get an understanding as to whether students may need additional support from the College based on certain triggers in the data, for example students that have a history of leaving courses early, or identifying Care Experienced students. This support can include supporting the students transitioning to the College, identifying additional funding, and providing career path information. As part of the data sharing agreement when a student leaves the College, the College put this information onto the hub, which then triggers SDS to follow up with the student to see if support can be provided, such as identifying the reason for leaving the course and identifying other education opportunities.

On an annual basis the College tenders for the delivery of SDS contracts in relation to apprenticeship provision. Upon completion of this tender details of key contacts from the College are provided to SDS, for example the Head of Apprenticeships & Work Based Learning. To ensure that effective progress is being made against the contract requirements, monthly meetings are held between the SDS local authority area representatives and the lead personnel from the College. These meetings cover progress against the contract deliverables, milestone achievement and roles and responsibilities from both partners, for example marketing and employer engagement. The Learning and Teaching Committee, which meets on a quarterly basis, also has a standing agenda item relating to the monitoring of the Apprenticeship contract performance.

SCOPE AND APPROACH:

The scope of our review was to assess whether:

- The College has in place effective arrangements (clearly defined roles and responsibilities, communication and feedback mechanisms) for managing partnership work with SDS.
- The College's aims and plans for partnership working are aligned with SDS's partnership working plans in the region.
- Contract compliance is effectively monitored, which includes the effectiveness of financial controls and reporting; operational performance and reporting; communications; and governance structures.

AYRSHIRE COLLEGE, PARTNERSHIP WORKING (SDS)

Our approach was to conduct interviews to establish the controls and processes in operation, and to review documentary evidence that these controls are designed as described. We then evaluated these controls to identify whether they adequately address the risks.

GOOD PRACTICE:

We have noted a number of areas of good practice being demonstrated at the organisation in relation to the SDS partnership working. These included:

- There is clear alignment between the College aims and objectives and those noted in the SDS strategy. In particular the focus on developing the skillsets in the region, supporting students and developing the curriculum to meet economic needs.
- The College have assigned staff to the specific strands of the SDS partnership, all of these key contacts are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities within the partnership.
- The College effectively communicates with SDS via a number of channels, for example via workshops, partnership groups, direct formal meetings and informal ad-hoc communications. These channels also provide the opportunity for feedback to be provided on the processes in place and performance.
- Modern apprenticeship contract compliance is conducted via monthly meetings between the key College staff and the SDS representatives. Also, on a quarterly basis the Learning and Teaching Committee reviews performance reports on the contract compliance as a standing agenda item.

CONCLUSION:

We are able to provide substantial assurance over the design and operational effectiveness of the partnership working controls in place in relation to the SDS partnership.

OUR TESTING DID NOT IDENTIFY ANY CONCERNS SURROUNDING THE CONTROLS IN PLACE TO MITIGATE THE FOLLOWING RISKS:

- ✓ Ayrshire College's partnership working plans may not be aligned with the partnership working plans of SDS.
- ✓ Roles and responsibilities within key SDS partnerships may not be clearly defined.
- ✓ Communication with SDS may not be managed effectively.
- ✓ Feedback mechanisms from SDS may not be established or may indicate weaknesses in the management of the relationship which are not addressed.
- ✓ Contract compliance is not effectively monitored.

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OBSERVATIONS

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

We recognise that the staff within the College that engage with SDS are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities and that key duties are recorded within staff job descriptions. However, there is no document that specifically outlines all of the College responsibilities in relation to the partnership themes. In our experience for completeness it would be beneficial for the roles and responsibilities within the partnership to be documented.

ACTION PLANS

Any actions developed from partnership discussions whether formal or informal should be documented and fully completed. By documenting the action it confirms the views of both parties as what was discussed and agreed. It was explained by the Head of Student Experience that following a networking event involving both the College and SDS representatives, that improvement areas were identified to the processes for working together to support the students. Some of these improvements have been actioned, for example monthly meetings are taking place between student experience team leaders and SDS representatives. However, an action plan has not been developed to allow effective tracking of the agreed upon improvement areas.

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STAFF INTERVIEWED





BDO LLP APPRECIATES THE TIME PROVIDED BY ALL THE INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN THIS REVIEW AND WOULD LIKE TO THANK THEM FOR THEIR ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION.

Anne Campbell	Vice Principal - Curriculum
Carol Nisbet	Head of Schools, Engagement & Widening Access
Doreen Wales	Head of Student Experience
Richard Simson	Head of Business Intelligence & information Systems
Stuart Miller	Head of Apprenticeships & Work Based Learning




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AYRSHIRE COLLEGE, PARTNERSHIP WORKING (SDS)

APPENDIX I - DEFINITIONS

LEVEL OF ASSURANCE	DESIGN OF INTERNAL CONTROL FRAMEWORK		OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OF CONTROLS	
	FINDINGS FROM REVIEW	DESIGN OPINION	FINDINGS FROM REVIEW	EFFECTIVENESS OPINION
Substantial 	Appropriate procedures and controls in place to mitigate the key risks.	There is a sound system of internal control designed to achieve system objectives.	No, or only minor, exceptions found in testing of the procedures and controls.	The controls that are in place are being consistently applied.
Moderate 	In the main there are appropriate procedures and controls in place to mitigate the key risks reviewed albeit with some that are not fully effective.	Generally a sound system of internal control designed to achieve system objectives with some exceptions.	A small number of exceptions found in testing of the procedures and controls.	Evidence of non compliance with some controls, that may put some of the system objectives at risk.
Limited 	A number of significant gaps identified in the procedures and controls in key areas. Where practical, efforts should be made to address in-year.	System of internal controls is weakened with system objectives at risk of not being achieved.	A number of reoccurring exceptions found in testing of the procedures and controls. Where practical, efforts should be made to address in-year.	Non-compliance with key procedures and controls places the system objectives at risk.
No 	For all risk areas there are significant gaps in the procedures and controls. Failure to address in-year affects the quality of the organisation's overall internal control framework.	Poor system of internal control.	Due to absence of effective controls and procedures, no reliance can be placed on their operation. Failure to address in-year affects the quality of the organisation's overall internal control framework.	Non compliance and/or compliance with inadequate controls.

RECOMMENDATION SIGNIFICANCE

High 	A weakness where there is substantial risk of loss, fraud, impropriety, poor value for money, or failure to achieve organisational objectives. Such risk could lead to an adverse impact on the business. Remedial action must be taken urgently.
Medium 	A weakness in control which, although not fundamental, relates to shortcomings which expose individual business systems to a less immediate level of threatening risk or poor value for money. Such a risk could impact on operational objectives and should be of concern to senior management and requires prompt specific action.
Low 	Areas that individually have no significant impact, but where management would benefit from improved controls and/or have the opportunity to achieve greater effectiveness and/or efficiency.

AYRSHIRE COLLEGE, PARTNERSHIP WORKING (SDS)

APPENDIX II - TERMS OF REFERENCE

PURPOSE OF REVIEW:

The purpose of this review is to provide independent assurance on how the College is managing key, formally established partnership relationships, and monitoring contract compliance with partners including:

- Effectiveness of operational performance and reporting.
- Effectiveness of communications with partners.
- Effectiveness of governance structures.

The review will focus, specifically on the partnership that Ayrshire College has with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and the three main themes that both the College and SDS are working towards:

- Delivery of the family of apprenticeship.
- Targeted support for progression for school leavers.
- Use of labour market information to inform curriculum planning.

KEY RISKS:

Based upon the risk assessment undertaken during the development of the internal audit plan, through discussions with management, and our collective audit knowledge and understanding the key risks associated with the area under review are:

- Ayrshire College's partnership working plans may not be aligned with the partnership working plans of SDS.
- Roles and responsibilities within key SDS partnerships may not be clearly defined.
- Communication with SDS may not be managed effectively.
- Feedback mechanisms from SDS may not be established or may indicate weaknesses in the management of the relationship which are not addressed.
- Contract compliance is not effectively monitored.

SCOPE OF REVIEW:

The scope of this review will be to assess whether:

- The College has in place effective arrangements (clearly defined roles and responsibilities, communication and feedback mechanisms) for managing partnership work with SDS.
- The College's aims and plans for partnership working are aligned with SDS's partnership working plans in the region.
- Contract compliance is effectively monitored, which includes the effectiveness of financial controls and reporting; operational performance and reporting, communications; and governance structures.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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Learning and Teaching Committee

27 May 2021

- Subject:** 2020-21 Credit Report (position at 14 May 2021)
- Purpose:** To advise Learning and Teaching Committee members of the current 2020-21 credit activity target position and projection to the end of the academic year
- Recommendation:** Members are invited to note the contents of this paper

1. Background

A key strategic aim, of the College, is to meet the annual credit activity target agreed with the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) as part of the Outcome and Impact Framework.

The activity target, agreed for AY 2020-21, is **124,877** credits which comprises a combination of core and ESF credits. Table 1 provides a breakdown of credits.

Table 1

	2020-21
SFC Core credit target	124,086*
ESF credits	791
Total SFC credit target	124,877

2. Current Situation

Appendix 1 provides a summary of the current position and the anticipated final position for AY 2020-21. Currently, the College is expected to exceed its credit activity target by 145 credits. Though the College is not funded for over delivery, it is necessary to ensure that the College has sufficient credits for its FES credit activity audit.

3. Resource Implications

Members should be aware that, ordinarily, the SFC reserves the right to clawback funding should the College not meet the agreed activity target. SFC has confirmed, however, that it will not seek to recover funds, for AY 2020-21, for shortfalls against Outcome and Impact Framework targets where related to Covid-19. The College is not funded for over delivery.

4. Risks

The failure to meet the SFC credit activity target, ordinarily, also presents a reputational risk to the College and may affect future activity levels. These risks are included in the corporate risk register.

5. Conclusion

Members are invited to note the contents of this paper.

Anne Campbell
Vice Principal, Curriculum
14 May 2021

Publication

This paper will be published on the College website

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Curriculum Area	2020-21 Covid baseline	Current position as at 14 May 2021 (minus deferred)	Deferred Credits	Total as at 14 May 2021	Remaining Provision	Total Projection
ACES, Computing, Games Development, Business including Travel & Tourism	43 469	42 396	3 373	45 769	0	45 769
Creative, Social Science, Sport and Hospitality	37 565	36 459	779	37 238	120	37 358
Care, Essential Skills, Supported Learning and ESOL	31 231	32 934	361	33 295	180	33 475
Schools, Engagement and Widening Access	3 559	3 768	157	3 925	0	3 925
Apprenticeships and Work Based Learning	2 550	3 316		3 316	0	3 316
Community	1 700	1 329		1 329	0	1 329
One-plus/remaining provision	3 100	0		0	0	0
Deferred students	4 101					0
Sub-Total	127 275	120 202	4 670	124 872	300	125 172
Less UWS Articulation Agreement	-150					
Total	127 125	120 202	4 670	124 872	300	125 172
Summary	Total					
Current Position	124 872					
Remaining	300					
Total	125 172					
Total Projected Delivery	125 172					
Less UWS Credits	-150					
Sub-total	125 022					
Credit target	124 877					
Over/Under Target	145					

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Learning and Teaching Committee

27 May 2021

Subject: 2021-20 Student Recruitment Update (position at 13 May 2021)

Purpose: To advise members of the 2021-22 student recruitment position

Recommendation: Members are invited to note the contents of this paper.

1. Background

The 2021-22 Curriculum Delivery Plan (CDP) was approved by the Learning and Teaching Committee at its meeting on 12 November 2020.

The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) issued its [Announcement of indicative funding allocation for colleges for Academic Year \(AY\) 2021-22](#) on 24 March 2021. Final allocations will be published in May 2021. The indicative core credit target allocation, provided by SFC for AY 2021-22, is 128,599 credits – an increase of 3,722 credits on AY 2020-21.

Table 1 outlines the differences in credit allocation between AY 2020-21 and AY 2021-22.

Table 1 – Credit comparison (AY 2020-21 and AY 2021-22)

	2020-21 Credit target	2021-22 Indicative Credit target
Core credit target	124,086	121,168
ESF credit target	791	3624
Foundation Apprenticeship credit target	0	1240
Deferrals	0	2567
Total	124,877	128,599

European Social Fund (ESF)

AY 2021-22 is the final year of the European Social Fund (ESF) programme for colleges. In order to ease the transition to AY 2022-23, when ESF funding will no longer be available, SFC has adjusted the balance between core credits and ESF credits. Ayrshire College is amongst a number of colleges concerned about the decision taken and the material impact. A joint letter was written to SFC on 13 April 2021 and is included as an appendix (Appendix 1)

Foundation Apprenticeships

Foundation Apprenticeships will now be supported by SFC funding.

Table 2 outlines the updated credit planning targets in line with the increase in the AY 2021-22 indicative credit target allocation.

Table 2 – credit planning targets

Curriculum Directorate	2021-22
Aeronautical, Construction, Engineering, Science, Business & IT	46,516
Care, Early Years Education and Essential Skills	36,289
Creative, Social Science and Sport	37,059
Schools, Engagement and Widening Access	4,758
Sub-Total	124,622
Less UWS Articulation Agreement	(150)
Work-based credits	2,550
Community activity	2,000
One plus credits	3,100
Deferrals	2,566
Total	134,688

2. Current Situation

Full-time FE and HE courses, and school-college partnership programmes form the largest part of the CDP course provision and the majority of these courses are scheduled to commence in August 2021.

In order to achieve the credit activity targets, each course, within the CDP, has an identified target for initial recruitment and applications are monitored on a weekly basis to allow in-year decision making. For example, planning targets are revised due to new courses being added as a result of increased demand or courses withdrawn due to low application numbers.

The tables in Appendix 2 provide a detailed breakdown of the overall recruitment position. Comparison with the previous year's recruitment data demonstrates that the total number of applications is approximately 1700 less this year than at the same point last year. Total acceptances and offers still to be accepted are also slightly less. For AY 2020-21, this figure was 89.42%, while for AY 2021-22 it is 80.75%.

It should be noted, however, that there are variations between Directorates. Inclusion applications and acceptances are lower than in previous years as, ordinarily, students in this area complete their application in College. They have, however, not yet been on campus due to Covid-19 restrictions. Similarly, many school pupils complete their application in school with the assistance of college staff. Following the full-time return to school, college staff are liaising with schools to assist with the completion of applications. In line with normal processes, each Directorate will continue to review their area, in detail, to identify opportunities to deliver additional activity where appropriate.

It is not yet known what impact this year's disruption to learning will have on the College's 2021-22 enrolment position and, ultimately, its credit activity target. Conversion of applications to enrolments for AY 2021-22 may be impacted by:

- The requirement for physical distancing and other public health measures to continue in to AY 2021-22.
- Further disruption to learning because of constraints around student numbers permitted on campus due to requirements of blended and restricted blended learning and possible future lockdowns.
- The impact of deferred students.
- The College's ability to deliver some programmes based on Awarding Body constraints including health and safety implications and placement limitations.
- Potentially more students opting to stay on at school.
- Perhaps universities offering more places to Scottish-domiciled students to counter the potential impact of a reduced international market.
- A part in-college, part blended learning model being unsuitable for some learners, particularly vulnerable students

4. Consultation

No formal consultation is required to be completed given the subject matter of this report. The recruitment position is reviewed, formally by the Senior Leadership Team, on a monthly basis. Given the current situation, the statistics are monitored weekly by the Vice Principal, Curriculum, and Directors of Curriculum and appropriate remedial actions taken.

5. Resource Implications

No specific resource implications require to be noted.

6. Risks

The failure to meet the credit activity target, agreed with SFC, presents a reputational risk to the College. In financial terms, any under delivery of the credit activity target results in a repayment to SFC.

The Covid-19 situation presents a significant challenge in terms of student recruitment, subsequent enrolment and meeting the SFC credit activity target.

7. Equality Impact Assessment

Given the subject matter of this report, a formal impact assessment of this paper is not required.

8. Conclusion

Members are invited to note the contents of this paper.

Ayrshire College # 484082
05/20/2021 15:28:51
Anne Campbell
Vice Principal, Curriculum
13 May 2021

*(Elaine Hutton, Julie Maxwell & Gavin Murray- Directors of Curriculum)
(Stuart Millar, Head of Apprenticeships and Work Based Learning)
(Carol Nisbet, Head of Schools, Engagement and Widening Access)*

Ayrshire College # 484082
05/20/2021 15:28:51

APPENDIX 1



Ms Karen Watt
Chief
Executive
Scottish Funding Council

By email: kwatt@sfc.ac.uk

13 April 2021

Dear Karen

Indicative college funding allocations AY 2021-22: Announcement of indicative funding allocation for colleges for Academic Year (AY) 2021-22. (reference: SFC/AN/11/2021)

We are writing to you in response to the recent SFC publication announcing the indicative funding allocations for colleges for 2021-22, to express our significant concerns about the decisions that have been taken and the material impact on a number of colleges.

It is clear from the proposed allocations that a group of colleges will see a material reduction in 'core' funding and a corresponding increase in ESF funding for AY 2021-22 – with other regions seeing a decrease in ESF exposure and an increase in core allocations. **Appendix 1**

There have been no detailed discussions with our colleges or wider sector on the approach to rebalance ESF in response to projected reductions in ESF funding. We do appreciate that a recent FFR guidance note referred to this as an assumption but it is our strong view that the approach being proposed and material impacts resulting from that approach would have benefited from detailed engagement.

Over recent years a number of colleges have taken strategic decisions (approved by Boards) to reduce the financial risk and exposure associated with ESF funding.

Staff resource requirements have been employed to deliver at 2020-21 ESF activity levels aligned to current curriculum delivery plans and not at the increased levels proposed – which have neither been requested or agreed. It is also not clear what risk or material impacts have been considered by SFC as part of the decision-making process on either the financial capacity of the colleges to absorb the financial exposure of other colleges nor the financial risks in doing so.

The total financial risk and exposure to 8 colleges as a result of this decision is £3.52m with no direct college staff resource associated with this increased activity, as the current staff resource per curriculum offer is within core funding requirements.

We fully accept and understand a planned and strategic approach (that is fair and equitable) needs to be taken to support a transition towards reductions and eventual removal of ESF funding, however we cannot accept that transition for those colleges with ESF activity is borne by colleges where long term strategic decisions were taken to limit exposure and risk from this activity.

SFCs role in supporting financial stability and carefully managed financial and staffing transition is important and it is our view that this approach should be applied to those colleges with current high levels of ESF to ensure a planned transition over 2021-2022 and beyond.

We do hope you understand our deep concerns and would welcome a discussion with colleagues at the SFC to ensure there is an understanding of why we cannot accept the approach being taken and allow us to understand the decision making process and rationale for the SFC going down this route.

Kind regards,

Audrey Cumberford MBE

Dr Hugh Hall

Carol Turnbull

Neil Cowie

Joanna Campbell

Dr Ken Thomson OBE

Jackie Galbraith

Angela Cox

Ayrshire College # 484082
05/20/2021 15:28:51

ESF CREDITS IMPACT ACROSS THE SECTOR PER SFC INDICATIVE ALLOCATION LETTER 24 MARCH 2021										APPENDIX 1	
	2020-21					2021-22 ESF			2021-22		
	2020-21 ESF Total					2021-22 ESF Total			2021-22 ESF Only		
	£13m					£13m			£5m		
	Credit Income Risk					Credit Income Risk			Credit Income Risk		
	Movement					Movement			Movement		
	2020-21	ESF Total	2021-22	2021-22	Total	2020-21	2021-22	Additional	2020-21	2021-22	Additional
	ESF Total	£13m	ESF Total	ESF Total	Additional	ESF Only	ESF Only	Income	SFC Only	SFC Only	Income
	Credit	Income	Credit	£13m	Income Risk	£5m	£5m	Risk	£8m	£8m	Risk
	Risk	Risk	Risk	Income Risk	Movement	Income Risk	Income Risk	Movement	Income Risk	Income Risk	Movement
Ayrshire College	791	£221,013	3,624	£1,037,916	£816,903	£85,005	£399,199	£314,194	£136,008	£638,718	£502,710
Borders College	454	£133,031	744	£223,398	£90,367	£51,166	£85,922	£34,756	£81,865	£137,475	£55,610
Dumfries & Galloway College	622	£175,000	894	£257,753	£82,753	£67,308	£99,136	£31,828	£107,692	£158,617	£50,925
Dundee & Angus College	4,091	£1,142,709	3,117	£892,416	(£250,293)	£439,503	£343,237	(£96,267)	£703,206	£549,179	(£154,026)
Edinburgh College	1,257	£344,719	5,452	£1,532,576	£1,187,857	£132,584	£589,452	£456,868	£212,135	£943,123	£730,989
Fife College	2,255	£622,227	3,845	£1,087,475	£465,248	£239,318	£418,260	£178,942	£382,909	£669,215	£286,306
Forth Valley College	1,686	£473,507	2,493	£717,523	£244,016	£182,118	£275,970	£93,852	£291,389	£441,553	£150,164
Glasgow Region	16,383	£4,520,885	11,172	£3,160,093	(£1,360,792)	£1,738,802	£1,215,420	(£523,381)	£2,782,083	£1,944,673	(£837,410)
Lanarkshire Region	11,099	£3,124,174	5,272	£1,520,937	(£1,603,237)	£1,201,605	£584,976	(£616,630)	£1,922,569	£935,961	(£986,607)
North East Scotland College	2,235	£618,176	3,831	£1,086,080	£467,904	£237,760	£417,723	£179,963	£380,416	£668,357	£287,941
West College Scotland	5,838	£1,610,301	4,605	£1,302,080	(£308,221)	£619,347	£500,800	(£118,546)	£990,954	£801,280	(£189,674)
West Lothian College	707	£193,387	1,287	£360,882	£167,495	£74,380	£138,801	£64,421	£119,007	£222,081	£103,074

Total	47,418	13,179,129	46,336	13,179,129	0	5,068,896	5,068,896	0	8,110,233	8,110,233	0
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Ayrshire College # 484082
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APPENDIX 2

Full-time and Short Full-time - Semester 1

	Target students	Target Credits	Students	Total Number of Applications	Total Number of Acceptances	Acceptances as Percentage of Target	Total Number of Offers still to be Accepted	Acceptances and Offers still to be Accepted	Acceptances PLUS Offers Still to be Accepted (as a percentage of Target)
Arts and Humanities	874	13,177	1137	1211	526	60.18%	246	772	88.33%
Business, Computing and Tourism	858	11,964	754	784	317	36.95%	212	529	61.66%
Construction Technology and Trades	768	11,082	1088	1136	293	38.15%	191	484	63.02%
Early Years Education	808	12,765	1125	1219	640	79.21%	85	725	89.73%
Engineering and Science	666	9,792	895	935	302	45.35%	234	536	80.48%
Essential Skills	199	2,794	169	174	127	63.82%	15	142	71.36%
Hairdressing, Beauty, Make-Up Artistry and Complementary Therapies	520	7,440	711	741	331	63.65%	95	426	81.92%
Health and Social Care	1,021	15,093	2013	2173	980	95.98%	125	1105	108.23%
Inclusion	134	907	100	111	53	39.55%	20	73	54.48%
Sport & Fitness and Hospitality	673	10,452	795	850	146	21.69%	328	474	70.43%
Total	6,521	95,466	8787	9334	3715	56.97%	1551	5266	80.75%

Learning and Teaching Committee, 27 May 2021

Full Year and all MOA

	Target students	Target Credits	Students	Total Number of Applications	Total Number of Acceptances	Acceptances as Percentage of Target	Total Number of Offers still to be Accepted	Acceptances and Offers still to be Accepted	Acceptances PLUS Offers Still to be Accepted (as a percentage of Target)
Arts, Fashion and Social Science	1,326	14,387	1449	1539	532	40.12%	246	778	58.67%
Business, Computing and Tourism	1,047	12,980	820	850	317	30.28%	212	529	50.53%
Construction Technology and Trades	1,609	18,194	1170	1223	299	18.58%	191	490	30.45%
Early Years Education	1,258	14,249	1289	1393	676	53.74%	89	765	60.81%
Engineering and Science	1,479	13,495	1204	1257	339	22.92%	251	590	39.89%
Essential Skills	670	3,881	254	260	191	28.51%	29	220	32.84%
Hairdressing, Beauty, Make-Up Artistry and Complementary Therapies	831	9,009	733	764	338	40.67%	95	433	52.11%
Health and Social Care	1,266	15,901	2161	2340	988	78.04%	132	1120	88.47%
Inclusion	2,232	4,185	100	111	58	2.60%	20	78	3.49%
Sports and Hospitality	1,129	12,758	933	996	146	12.93%	328	474	41.98%
Total	12,847	119,039	10113	10733	3884	30.23%	1593	5477	42.63%

Learning and Teaching Committee, 27 May 2021

Learning and Teaching Committee

27 May 2021

Subject: 2020-21 Student Support Funds Position as at 14 May 2021

Purpose: To update Members on the Student Support Funds position and projections as at 14 May 2021

Recommendation: Members are asked to note the contents of this paper.

1 Background

The College is responsible for administering student support funds on behalf of the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), the Scottish Government and Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS).

2 Current Situation

The following sections of this paper provide details of the position of each student support fund as at 14 May 2021.

Members should note that while projected expenditure figures are included within this report there are a significant number of variables still to be factored including student retention rates and actual awards still outstanding.

Financial projections will continue to be refined throughout the year for reporting to both the Strategic Leadership Team and the Business, Resources and Infrastructure Committee.

2.1 SFC Funds Provided for Bursary Support

The total 2020-21 SFC Student Support Funds allocated to Ayrshire College were £10,607,955. On 19 February SFC allocated an additional £384,346 to Ayrshire College as part of a £5,000,000 FE in-year redistribution exercise for the sector. This additional funding is to meet student hardship needs, including digital poverty. Table 1 below details the bursary support funds provided by SFC for 2020-21 together with projected expenditure figures as at 14 May 2021.

Table 1

Student Support Fund	Budget	Projected Expenditure	Difference
SFC Bursary	£9,335,000	£7,307,425	£2,027,575
FE Childcare	£517,138	£267,477	£249,661
HE Childcare	£278,459	£122,672	£155,787
FE Discretionary	£861,704	£1,067,291	£(205,587)
Total	£10,992,301	£8,764,865	£2,227,436

The above figures are based on the most up to date information on student applicants based on all students continuing with the College. Student Funding will continue to review and revise the numbers to take account of student withdrawals, once these have been confirmed by the curriculum areas.

The figures set out in Table 1 also include circa £1,980,000 which relates to 255 care experienced students. The College has actively promoted the additional support available to care experienced students and continues to do so. Therefore the level of support and the number of identified care experienced students is expected to increase during AY2020-21.

On 19 February 2021 SFC also announced winter COVID-19 discretionary funding for FE student support. This funding is to be allocated to students in immediate need of additional financial support, in particular to support students struggling to pay rent for accommodation and anyone experiencing hardship due to Covid-19 effects. Ayrshire College's share of this funding is £194,485.

This funding needs to be reported separately to SFC. Table 2 sets the details the funds provided by SFC for 2020-21 together with projected expenditure figures as at 14 May 2021.

Table 2

Student Support Fund	Budget	Projected Expenditure	Difference
Winter COVID-19 FE Discretionary 2020-21	£194,485	£194,472	£13
Total	£194,485	£194,472	£13

Student Funding will continue to monitor student numbers and projected bursary support closely. Any significant changes or anomalies to withdrawals or engagement levels will be reported to members as part of the regular reporting arrangements.

2.2 Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

EMAs are provided by the Scottish Government to support eligible 16 to 18 year-old students. The College's allocation for AY2020-21 is £800,000. The College is currently projecting EMA spent of £459,300 at this time. Members are asked to note that this figure includes 2021 winter start courses.

There is no financial risk in this area as actual amounts paid out are reimbursed in full to the College a month in arrears.

2.3 SAAS Funds Provided for Higher Education Discretionary Support

The College is also allocated funding from SAAS for eligible students completing HE programmes. This budget is administered in line with SAAS guidance.

Table 3 below details the HE Discretionary Fund Budget made available by SAAS for 2020-21 together with expenditure as at 14 May 2021.

Table 3

Student Support Fund	Budget	Projected Expenditure	Difference
HE Discretionary Additional	£242,268	£191,961	£50,307
Total	£242,268	£191,961	£50,307

On 12 February 2021 SAAS announced an additional £4,034,076 of HE discretionary fund for the college sector. Of this, £283,150 has been allocated to Ayrshire College. Table 4 sets the details the funds provided by SFC for 2020-21 together with projected expenditure figures as at 14 May 2021.

Table 4

Student Support Fund	Budget	Projected Expenditure	Difference
Winter COVID-19 HE Discretionary 2020-21	£283,150	£158,395	£48,819
Total	£283,150	£158,395	£48,819

These additional funds are to be used by 31 July 2021 with the College only able to retain a maximum of 27% of the funding beyond 31 March 2021. Any unused funds above this 27% figure were to be returned to SAAS by 16 April 2021. Ayrshire College was able to utilise c.83% of the funding. The balance was therefore returned to SAAS.

3 Proposals

No further proposals are noted in this paper.

4 Consultation

No formal consultation is required given the subject of this paper.

5 Resource Implications

No further resource issues require to be noted in this paper.

6 Risks

The disbursement of student support funds and financial monitoring arrangements are key areas of financial risk for the College. In addition, issues arising from the management of the student support funds can impact significantly on the reputation of the College.

7 Equality Impact Assessment

An impact assessment was completed in respect of the 2020-21 Student Funding Policy and Procedures.

8 Conclusion

Members are asked to note the contents of this paper.

Michael Breen
Vice Principal, Finance
14 May 2021

(James Thomson – Director of Finance, Student Funding and Estates)

Ayrshire College # 484082
05/20/2021 15:28:51

Learning and Teaching Committee

27 May 2021

Subject: Apprenticeships and Work Based Learning Report

Purpose: To advise Members of the current position and provide an update on the impact of COVID-19

Recommendation: Members are asked to note the contents of this paper

1 Background

The Scottish Government is committed to growing a world class work-based learning system in Scotland. The family of Scottish Apprenticeships demonstrate and promote the benefits work-based learning brings to businesses, individuals and the Scottish economy.

The Scottish Apprenticeship family consists of three programmes - Modern Apprenticeships; Foundation Apprenticeships and Graduate Apprenticeships.

Scottish Government's ambition was to continue to expand apprenticeship provision in Scotland to 30,000 new starts annually by 2020. In line with this, the College continually develops the portfolio it offers to businesses to ensure that the skills development and succession planning needs of our region's employers and stakeholders are met, increasing employment opportunities for our communities.

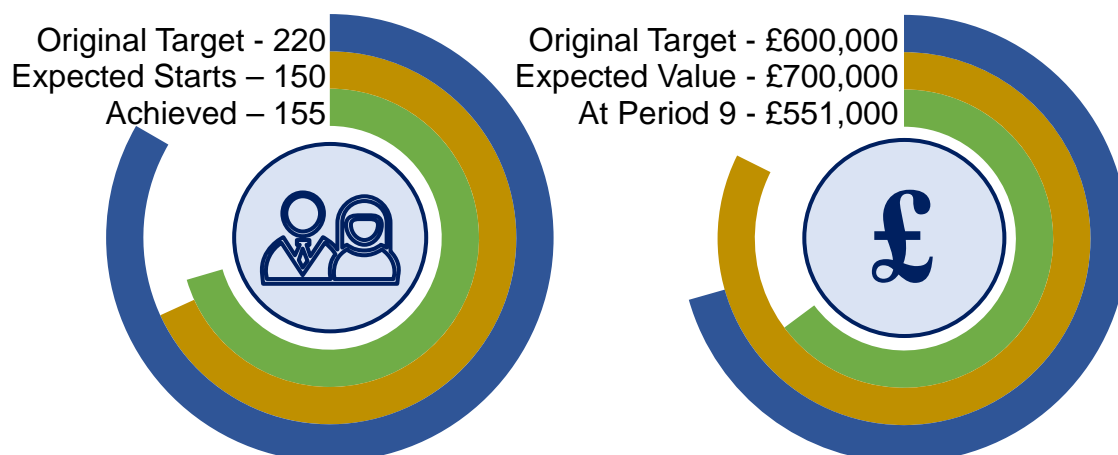
COVID-19 has impacted on apprentice recruitment across Scotland, with some sectors experiencing a larger impact than others. Much recent activity has focussed on protecting the skills pipeline and supporting apprentices who have had their learning and development or career prospects impacted.

The content of this report describes the current position, taking into account the impact of COVID-19 on the College's Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning provision.

Ayrshire College # 484082
05/20/2021 15:28:51

2 Ayrshire College Apprenticeships Provision

2.1 Modern Apprenticeships (MAs)



The Modern Apprenticeship contract year runs from April to March each year. The volume of starts presented is in relation to the Skills Development Scotland contract year, while the financial targets and claim values are presented in relation to the College's academic year.

2.2 Recruitment

The pace of new apprentice recruitment for 2020-21 was impacted by COVID-19 as companies were affected by lockdown. However, the apprentice pipeline remained relatively strong, particularly in STEM sectors. Apprenticeships supporting the service sectors were impacted more significantly but showed signs of recovery at the end of the contract period.

The following table details the starts signed up in the 2020-21 SDS contract award over the industry sectors, alongside other years for reference.

Sector	2017-18 Starts	2018-19 Starts	2019-20 Starts	2020-21 Award	2020-21 Starts
Automotive	19	9	20	22	10
Construction Trades	3	8	31	40	30
Engineering	71	73	92	95	97
Food & Drink	-	0	7	10	0
Hairdressing	22	20	16	21	7
Hospitality	-	21	9	22	3
Sport, Health & Social Care	-	10	8	10	8
Total	115	141	183	220	155

Overall recruitment figures were lower than originally contracted, and compared to 2019-20. In many sectors, however, the overall impact of COVID on apprentice starts was not as large as originally feared and recruitment numbers were greater than those achieved in the years prior to 2019-20.

Recruitment in engineering was strong and surpassed original expectations. Although some companies who traditionally recruit cancelled their apprentice recruitment in 2020, others have continued and we have also had starts from new or returning employers.

The automotive and construction sectors returned relatively early from the lockdown period and we saw an upturn in interest for these apprenticeships subsequent to that.

Sectors such as hairdressing, hospitality and sport returned to business after the lockdown periods and recruitment activity increased after that point.

2.3 Recruitment Incentives

Two enhanced incentives were introduced between January and March 2021 to encourage employers to recruit apprentices. The Adopt An Apprentice grant was enhanced to £5,000 during this period, to encourage employers to take on an apprentice who has been recently made redundant. The Apprentice Employer Grant provided employers who recruited a new apprentice with a £5,000 incentive.

These grants increased interest in the apprenticeship programme and we saw a positive response to the incentives reflected in the start volumes at the end of the contract period.

The college supported twenty Ayrshire companies to access the Apprentice Employer grant with two further benefitting from the Adopt An Apprentice grant.

2.4 Claims

The majority of financial claims affecting this and next year's funding from SDS will be in relation to apprentices already on the programme. Although delayed or reduced recruitment has a longer term impact on funding, the largest immediate impact is related to redundancy of current apprentices. Though a large proportion of apprentices were furloughed during the lockdown period, to date we are not currently aware of any major apprenticeship redundancies related to COVID-19.

Assessors continued to support, guide and assess their candidates remotely where possible when they are on furlough, helping progress their underpinning knowledge. In sectors such as engineering and construction, financial claims are made on the basis of quarterly progress reviews. These continued while apprentices were on furlough. Some claims have been subject to delay if employer corroboration of claims is delayed or apprentices are uncontactable. In these cases, claims are subject to a recoverable delay rather than a loss of funds.

The Apprenticeships team has continued to process claims remotely with subsequent Skills Development Scotland payments being received as per normal practice. Claims are currently progressing as planned through the academic year.

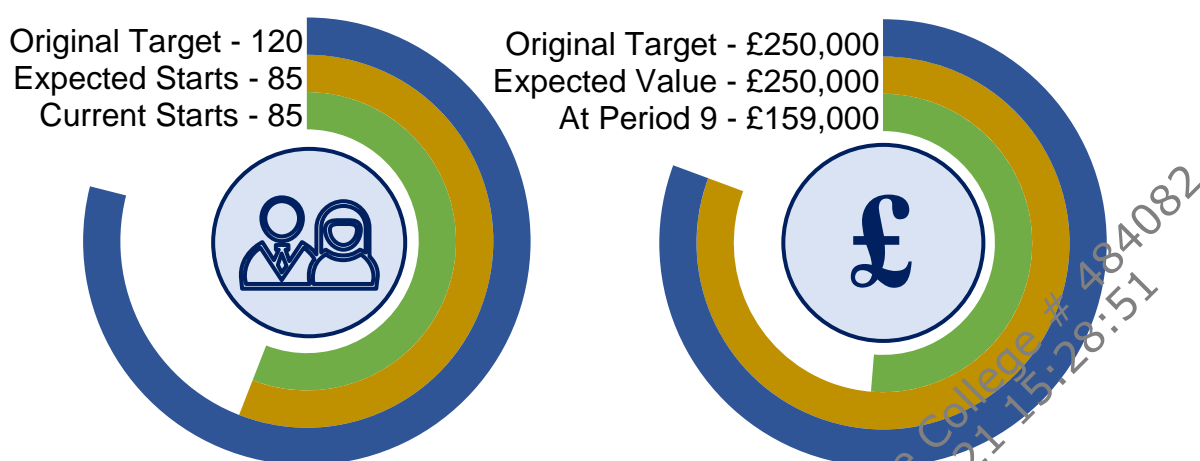
The expected final claim figure for 2020-21 is expected to be larger than originally forecast due to the College processing the recruitment incentives for employers.

2.5 2021-22 Award

The College has recently received its Modern Apprentice allocation for 2021-22 and work for this is now underway. The awarded volumes will support growth of the College's Modern Apprenticeship provision and recovery from COVID and are summarised below, compared to the previous year's contract:

Sector	2020-21 Award	2021-22 Award
Automotive	22	25
Construction Trades	40	57
Engineering	95	95
Food & Drink	10	10
Hairdressing	21	25
Hospitality	22	14
Sport, Health & Social Care	10	10
Life Science	-	4
Total	220	240

2.6 Sub Contracted Modern Apprenticeships

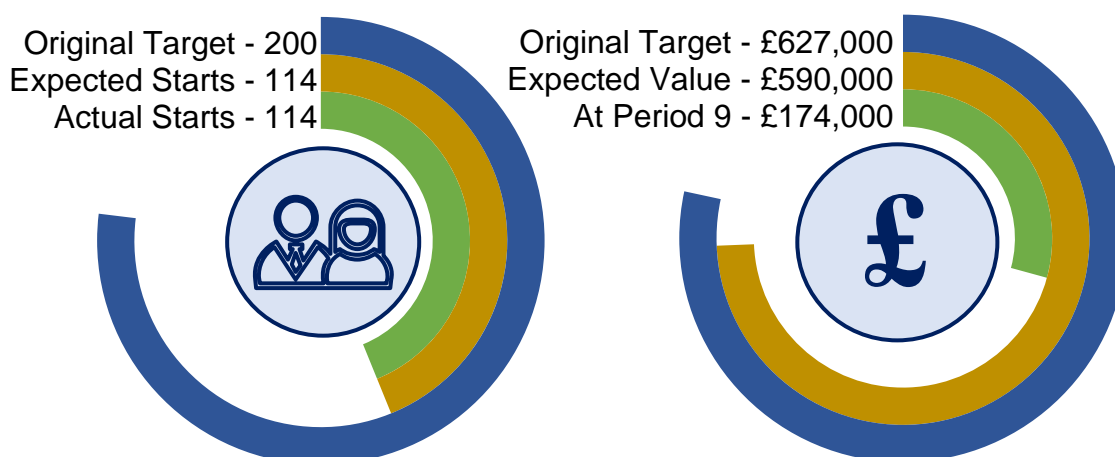


Alongside the contract held directly with SDS, the College also delivers off-the-job training to significant numbers of Modern Apprentices via contracts held with other training providers such as trade bodies and local authorities.

Approximately 350 apprentices are supported by these contracts, with the majority being employed in construction trades.

Though it varied by specific trade, overall recruitment remained relatively strong in construction trades. Recruitment in Carpentry & Joinery and Electrical Installation has been in line with volumes experienced in previous years. Some recruitment was delayed into calendar year 2021 due to company needs and workshop capacity which has been impacted by social distancing.

2.7 Foundation Apprenticeships (FAs)



Recruitment for the 2020-22 FA programme is as follows:

Framework	Awarded	Applications Received	Starts
Civil Engineering (2yr) (AC)	15	22	11
Engineering (2yr) (AC)	45	88	29
Children & Young People (2yr) (AC)	40	64	28
Children & Young People (1yr) (EAC)	15	18	10
Business Skills (1yr) (AC & SAC)	30	10	10
Scientific Technologies (1yr) (AC)	15	8	5
Food & Drink Technologies (1yr) (EAC)	10	10	10
IT Hardware & System Support (1yr) (AC)	15	5	0
Social Services & Healthcare (1yr) (NAC)	15	20	12
Total	200	245	115

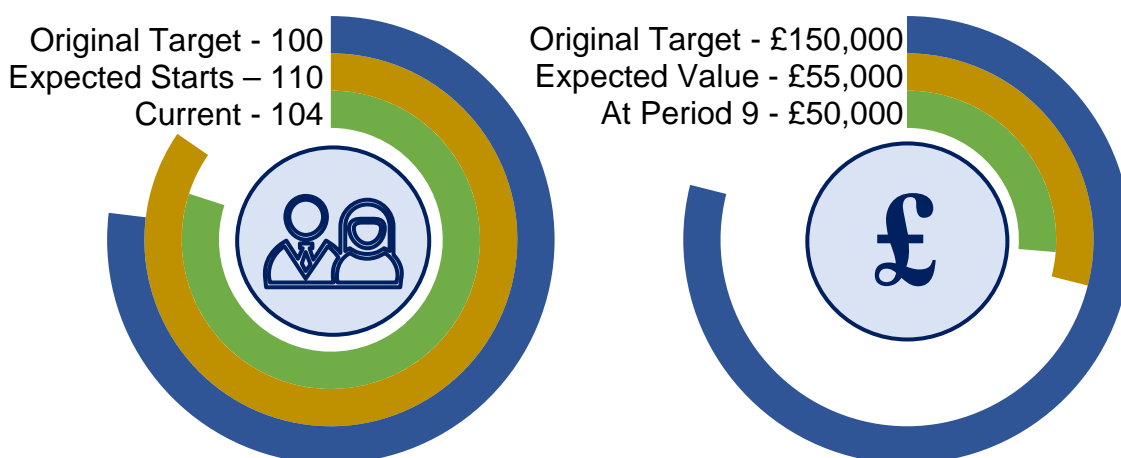
As reported previously, in most sectors, applications numbers were relatively strong for the FA programme. However, there was a drop in applications converting to starts on the programme.

Although £174,000 has been received from SDS related to 2021-22 activity to date, claims to the value of £380,000 have been submitted to their online system. Work is ongoing with SDS to release the balance of funds. Claims will continue to be processed throughout the remainder of the academic year.

Through recent discussions with Skills Development Scotland and Scottish Funding Council, the College has been informed of a structural change to how Foundation Apprenticeships are funded. Funds will be dispersed via SFC, rather than SDS, in the form of additional credits from academic year 2021-22 onwards.

Final allocations for 2021-22 are due to be released imminently. Work is ongoing with SFC to understand any modifications to operational rules that will be introduced alongside this change.

3 Commercial SVQs



Assessment support for candidates undertaking commercial SVQs continued throughout the lockdown period. The majority of these candidates work in the Health & Social Care sector and continue to work. Although direct face-to-face observation of these candidates was not possible, e-portfolio was used which allows for ongoing assessment and support for uploaded evidence. Other methods of observation, such as video, are also being utilised.

Recruitment of new candidates had not been possible through the initial lockdown period and was further delayed by lockdown early in 2021. This was, in part, because of difficulties in inducting candidates remotely but also because the services accessing the SVQs were under considerable pressure.

Significant contracts were agreed with both East and South Ayrshire Councils to deliver SVQs to their care at home staff. 100 candidates have now been signed up across these two organisations and assessment activities are now underway.

As recruitment was delayed from the original plan, a large portion of assessment activity will be delivered in Academic Year 2021-22. Although approximately £120,000 was secured through these two contracts, the remainder of the income will be released in AY 2021-22 in line with when this activity is taking place.

4 Other Activity

4.1 SVQ Units of HNC Provision in Health and Social Care and Early Years

Work based assessors in the Health and Social Care and Early Years sectors normally support over 400 students to achieve their full-time qualification. Courses in these areas, particularly at HNC level, have SVQ units embedded which are assessed by work-based assessors in collaboration with the Curriculum departments.

Work placements were significantly impacted by COVID-19 and associated restrictions. Condensed work placements were able to resume in Early Years after the return of primary schools and nurseries, post-lockdown.

Work is currently ongoing to facilitate potential demand for deferred work placements in Health and Social Care.

4.2 Apprentice Transition Plan

The College has been represented on a group comprising SDS, the SCQF Partnership and other training providers to introduce the Apprentice Transition Plan, a service designed to support apprentices who have been made redundant as a result of COVID-19. The service is intended to help affected apprentices either achieve their qualification if they are nearing the end, or receive accreditation for the learning and development they have completed to support their search for future employment. Factors such as the extension of the furlough scheme and Adopt An Apprentice have meant that this service has not been required in Ayrshire to date, though this is being constantly monitored. The Apprentice Transition Plan has been extended through to March 2022 to cover the period that furlough is expected to wind down.

4.3 Scottish Apprenticeship Advisory Board – Standards and Frameworks Group

The College continues to be the Colleges Scotland representative on the Scottish Apprenticeship Advisory Board Standards and Frameworks Group. This group oversees governance of the Scottish Apprenticeship Family.

To date, the SFG group has overseen a transition to a new approval process for apprenticeship frameworks. This includes a development process that ensures a focus on industry needs and a more consistent approval mechanism undertaken by the new Apprentice Approvals Group.

Work is now continuing to establish a new model of apprenticeship framework, for the future, which is more flexible and allows for easier transition between occupations.

4.4 Managing Agents Working Group

The College has been represented on a number of external groups looking to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on apprentices. As part of the Managing Agents Working Group set up by Colleges Scotland, Ayrshire College has led negotiations on a number of fronts.

After a successful renegotiation of the fee structure with CITB, the Managing Agents Working Group is now in discussion with SECTT and SNIPEF, the trade bodies for Electrical Installation and Plumbing and Gas respectively. This negotiation is intended to establish a new fee structure to ensure the provision of apprenticeships for these sectors is sustainable in the future.

Work is ongoing with CITB to review the fee structure at the end of the agreed two-year period, with a view to achieving sustainable future funding for Construction Modern Apprentices.

4.5 Industry Challenges

To help mitigate the impact of COVID on Modern and Foundation Apprentices, the College has supported a range of industry challenge projects.

Ayrshire College is one of a group of colleges, Forth Valley, Fife and NESCol, who have worked innovatively together, using employer relationships to develop a series of industry challenges for engineering apprentices. This was introduced to keep Modern and Foundation Apprentices engaged in learning and creative thinking through the disruption associated with COVID-19. The project, named *Fuel Change* has seen apprentice teams solve industry challenges for one of six sub-sectors of engineering. Challenges focus on finding low carbon solutions for real engineering problems and it is hoped that the outputs from the challenge will align with the COP 26 conference planned in Glasgow next year. SFC and SDS have lent their support to the project.

Challenges have been set by large national or multi-national organisations including Alexander Dennis, Spirit Aerosystems, National Manufacturing Institute Scotland, BAM Nuttal, Scottish Power Energy Networks and BP.

Modern Apprentices across Scotland took part in this challenge and Ayrshire companies were well represented. A post-project event helped showcase the work undertaken and Ayrshire apprentices impressed with a range of innovative solutions including aircraft decommissioning solutions and seaweed farming.

The challenge has also being made available to our engineering Foundation Apprentices, to help mitigate the impact that COVID-19 has had on work placements.

A similar industry challenge was developed in partnership with McLaughlin & Harvey to support Foundation Apprentices in Civil Engineering. This work saw all first and second year FAs undertake a project involving flood defence work currently underway in the Garnock Valley. Students presented their project work to representatives from McLaughlin & Harvey, North Ayrshire Council and Ayrshire College.

5 Conclusion

Members are invited to note the information contained in the progress report.

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Director of Curriculum
17 May 2020

(Stuart Millar - Head of Apprenticeships and Work-based Learning)

Publication

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