

**Meeting of the Business, Resources and Infrastructure Committee
To be held on Tuesday 12 March 2024 at 4.00pm
by Hybrid Attendance at Kilmarnock Campus and via Microsoft Teams**

AGENDA

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|---------------|
| 1 | Welcome and Declarations of Interest | | |
| 2 | Apologies | | |
| 3 | Minutes of the meeting held 21 November 2023 | | Paper 1 (C/P) |
| | • BRIC Action & Decision Tracker | | Paper 1a (P) |
| 4 | Matters Arising | | |

Part A - For Discussion, Decision and Approval

- | | | | |
|----|---|--|----------------------|
| 5 | Staff Survey Feedback and Considerations | | Presentation (DD/GB) |
| 6 | 2024-25 Budget Update | | Paper 2 (R) (AR) |
| 7 | 2023-24 Management Accounts as at 31 January 2024 | | Paper 3 (R) (AR) |
| 8 | Financial Regulations Annual Review | | Paper 4 (P) (AR) |
| 9 | College Estate Update | | Paper 5 (R) (AR) |
| 10 | Business Growth 6-Month Report | | Paper 6 (R) (ARod) |
| 11 | Mainstreaming Equality & Diversity Annual Report | | Paper 7 (P) (DD/GB) |
| 12 | Transformation Projects Update | | Paper 8 (R) |
| | • Aerospace | | (ACa) |
| | • Digital Transformation | | (AR) |
| | • Workforce Skills | | (DD) |

Part B - Regular Reporting/Monitoring

- | | | | |
|----|---|--|-------------------------|
| 13 | 2023-24 Student Support Funds as at 31 January 2024 | | Paper 9 (P) (AR) |
| 14 | HR and HSW Update Report (November 2023 – January 2024) | | Paper 10 (P) (DD/GB/MH) |
| 15 | 2023-24 Quarterly Complaints Report Q1 | | Paper 11 (P) (ACa) |

Part C- Risk Management

- | | | | |
|----|-------------------------|--|-------------------|
| 15 | Strategic Risk Register | | Paper 12 (R) (AR) |
|----|-------------------------|--|-------------------|

Part D - For Information

- | | | | |
|----|---|--|--|
| 16 | AOB | | |
| 17 | Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday, 28 May 2024 at 4.00pm | | |

(C/P) Confirmed minutes will be published; (P) Papers will be published on the College website; (R) Papers will not be published for reasons of commercial sensitivity or for reasons of personal data confidentiality

**Minute of the Business, Resources and Infrastructure Committee
Held by Hybrid Attendance at Kilmarnock Campus and
via Video Conference using Microsoft Teams
on Tuesday 21 November 2023**

Present:

Mike Stewart	Chair
Norman Bone	Non-Executive Board Member
Lisa Keggans	Elected Member, Service/Support Staff
Linda Corbett	Elected Student President
Angela Cox	Principal, Ex-Officio

In attendance:

Anne Campbell	Vice Principal – Skills and Enterprise
David Davidson	Vice Principal – People, Performance and Transformation
Alan Ritchie	Vice Principal – Finance and Infrastructure
Gillian Brown	Head of HR Services
Brad Johnstone	Head of ICT Services
Liz Walker	Head of Financial Services
Hilary Denholm	Board Governance Advisor
June Northcote	Executive Assistant (Minutes)

1. Welcome and Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly Alan Ritchie, Vice Principal of Finance and Infrastructure, who joined BRIC for the first time.

The meeting was confirmed as quorate.

No declarations of interest were presented.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Vice Chair Mathew Wilson, Non-Executive Board members Gordon Neil and Gillian Murray, Elected Member Janette Moore, Elected Student Vice President Tim Chan and Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing Martin Hammond.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 3 October 2023 (Paper 1) (P)

The minute was approved as an accurate account.

Proposed: Norman Bone

Seconded: Angela Cox

Action & Decision Log (Paper 1a) (P)

The Committee noted that all actions were recorded as complete.

4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising outwith those detailed on the meeting agenda.

7. 2022-23 Annual Procurement Report (Paper 4) (P)

Alan Ritchie introduced Paper 4 as presented.

The Committee noted:

- The annual report is standard practice and a legislative requirement.
- A balanced approach being applied to APUC procurement, sourcing locally when possible.
- Procurement procedures will be audited in 2024.
- No areas of potential risk were highlighted.

The Committee noted and approved the report as presented.

Decision BRIC26-D03: The Committee recommended the 2022-23 Annual Procurement Report to the Board of Management for approval on 14 December 2023.

9. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report (August 2022 – July 2023) (Paper 6) (P)

David Davidson introduced paper 6, as presented.

The Committee noted:

- The report is a statutory requirement, which provides an overview of the College's performance in relation to Health and Safety, for the academic year 2022-23.
- The number of incidents increased by 23% from academic year 2021-22. This increase was attributed to a full return to on-campus learning.
- A revised sector-wide approach to data collection presents the opportunity for more robust benchmarking going forward.
- Mandatory health surveillance training was completed by 257 members of staff.
- The new safety management system has significantly reduced costs whilst providing robust reporting.
- A wellbeing accreditation scheme is being progressed this year.
- Accident and incident statistics for Ayr campus, are higher than other campuses due to the range of activities including STEM and Sport and Fitness programmes. The incident levels remain within the KPI.
- No areas of potential concern were highlighted

The Committee commended and approved the report as presented.

Decision BRIC26-D05: The Committee recommended the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report (August 2022 – July 2023) to the Board of Management for approval on 14 December 2023.

11. HR & HSW Update Report (August – October 2023) (Paper 8) (P)

Gillian Brown, introduced Paper 8, as presented.

Committee members noted:

- An increase in staff absence figures during the reporting period, due to the downgrading of the pandemic and as a result Covid-19 related absences being recorded as sickness absence.
- A rise in absence in the category of 'Depression, Anxiety and Psychological' which was impacted during the pandemic and also during the cost of living crisis.
- The second cohort of Aspire candidates starting the project launch phase.
- The new leadership development programme "Evolve" which was introduced in November 2023 to promote and support key leadership values.
- A review of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) process as a key priority for the current academic year.
- 16 Days of Action showcasing related activities across all three campuses.

The Committee noted the report as presented.

12. 2022-23 Annual Complaints Report (Paper 9) (P)

Anne Campbell introduced Paper 9, as presented.

Committee members noted:

- The report is compiled in line with SPSO guidelines.
- Service improvements in line with SPSO guidelines are of key importance.
- Increase in number of complaints, likely due to the full return to campus.
- Triangulation is in place with HR to investigate any patterns and trends.

The Committee noted the report as presented.

13. 2022-23 Freedom of Information Annual Report (Paper 10)

Anne Campbell introduced Paper 10, as presented.

Committee members noted:

- During the reporting period, 27% of requests originated from the Scottish Parliament and 20% originated from trades unions.
- A high proportion of Freedom of Information requests related to staffing information.

The Committee noted the report as presented.

15. AOB

The Chair invited those present to discuss the frequency of meetings and it was agreed that the current cycle remain in place for the next cycle of committee meetings.

16. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 12 March 2024 at 4pm.

(C/P) Confirmed minutes will be published on College Website; (P) – Paper will be published on the College Website; (R) – Paper is reserved, because it contains data

or information of a personal nature, which is restricted by legislation, or because it contains commercially sensitive information, and will not be published on the College Website.

RESERVED ITEMS ON THE NEXT PAGE

Business, Resources & Infrastructure Committee - Action and Decision Log
Meeting No 27 – 12 March 2024

(Paper 1a)

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Reference	Details	Action Owner	Due Date	Action Decision	Open Complete Approved Declined
21.11.23	2022-23 Financial Statements	BRIC26: D01	The 22-23 Financial Statements were recommended for approval to the Audit & Risk Committee.	N/A	30.11.23	Decision	Approved
21.11.23	2023-24 Management Accounts - October 2023	BRIC26: D02	The Committee agreed they were content with the 2023-24 Management Accounts as at Oct 2023 as presented	N/A	N/A	Decision	Approved
21.11.23	2022-23 Annual Procurement Report	BRIC26: D03	The Annual Procurement Report was recommended for approval to the Board.	N/A	14.12.23	Decision	Approved
21.11.23	ICT Update Report	BRIC26: D04	The Committee noted and approved the ICT Update Report.	N/A	N/A	Decision	Approved
21.11.23	Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual report	BRIC26: D05	The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report was recommended for approval to the Board.	N/A	14.12.23	Decision	Approved
21.11.23	Transformation Projects – Aerospace	BRIC26: D06	The Committee approved the outline budget which will allow project staff to take forward actions.	N/A	N/A	Decision	Approved
21.11.23	2023-24 Corporate Risk Register (V2) – BRIC Extract	BRIC26: D07	The Committee approved the Risk Register (V2) – BRIC Extract for submission to ARC.	N/A	30.11.23	Decision	Approved

Business, Resources and Infrastructure Committee Meeting

12 March 2024

Strategic Objective Reference: SO5 High performing college underpinned by excellence in stewardship and governance

Subject: **Financial Regulations Annual Review**

Purpose: This paper summarises the annual review and update of the Financial Regulations.

Action Required: Members are asked to review and approve the updated Financial Regulations.

Appendices: Yes

1. Summary/Key Points

The Financial Regulations were last updated in December 2022 and have been reviewed and updated as follows:

- Update of post titles to reflect the current structure throughout the document.
- Hyperlinks have been made to material documents referred to in the Financial Regulations to allow easy access to reference materials.
- Board of Management financial responsibilities updated to reflect current wording in relation to financial sustainability – **page 4**
- Inclusion of financial responsibilities of the Executive Management Team – **page 7**
- The conditions regarding virement of budgets has been simplified – **page 15**
- Fraud and corruption section has been removed as now subject to separate policy – **page 19**
- Addition of table detailing approval levels for payments – **page 21**
- Update of procurement section to include Scottish Government requirements and requisition levels – **pages 28 - 30**
- Addition of section on Intellectual Property Rights – **page 43**

2. Resource Implications

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

3. Consultation

No further consultation is required to be completed. The revised Financial Regulations has been discussed with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

4. Risks

No specific risks require to be noted because of this paper.

5. Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

An Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment has been carried out. No issues identified.

6. Recommendations

Members are asked to review and approve the updated Financial Regulations.

Alan Ritchie
Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure
12 March 2024

Publication

This paper will be published on the College's website.

Financial Regulations ~~(V5)~~

Date of first issue:	12 August 2013
Revision number:	65
Date of last review:	December 2022 November 2019
Date of approval by the Board of Management:	December 2022 <u>TBC</u>
Responsibility for Review:	Vice Principal – Finance <u>and Infrastructure</u>
Date of next review:	September 2024 <u>TBC</u>

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

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SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTIONS AND BACKGROUND

1 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992 ('the Act') created a framework for further education colleges offering full-time and part-time education to act as free standing corporate bodies with powers to employ staff and own land and buildings. From 1 April 1993 they have been funded directly by Government, through the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). ~~In April 2014 as a result of the ONS reclassification of colleges to public sector bodies a significant number of changes were made to the financial requirements under which colleges in Scotland now have to operate.~~
- 1.2 These Financial Regulations for Ayrshire College (the "College") should be read in conjunction with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), relevant Accounting Standards, Office of Scottish Charity Regulators (OSCR) requirements, circulars and guidance issued by the Scottish Government and the SFC including the Scottish Public Financial Manual, and the College's own financial procedures.

2 General Provisions

- 2.1 The College's structure is laid down in the Constitution and Governance Arrangements.
- 2.2 The Financial Memorandum between SFC and the College sets out the terms and conditions on which grants are made. In addition, the College requires to comply fully with the Addendum to the Financial Memorandum (September 2014) which sets out the revised delegated limits for incorporated colleges.

The Board of Management is responsible for ensuring that the conditions of grants are met. As part of this process, the College must adhere to the funding body's guidance on audit which requires it to have sound systems of internal financial and management controls. The College's Financial Regulations form part of this overall system of accountability and control.

3 Status of Financial Regulations

- 3.1 This document sets out the College's Financial Regulations. It translates the College's broad policies relating to financial control into practical guidance.
- 3.2 These Financial Regulations are subordinate to the College's Constitution and Governance Arrangements, and to any restrictions contained within the SFC ~~College's~~ Financial Memorandum ~~with the funding body~~ and the SFC ~~funding body's~~ guidance on audit requirements.

- 3.3 The purpose of these Financial Regulations is to provide control over the totality of the College's resources and provide management with assurances that the resources are being properly applied for the achievement of the College's Strategic Plan and business objectives.

These assurances include:

- ~~F~~Achieving financial sustainability
- Achieving ~~best~~-value ~~for money~~
- Fulfilling the College's responsibility for the provision of effective financial controls over the use of public funds
- Ensuring that the College complies with all relevant legislation including but not limited to OSCR obligations
- Safeguarding the assets of the College.

- 3.4 Compliance with the Financial Regulations is compulsory for all staff connected with the College. A member of staff who fails to comply with the Financial Regulations may be subject to disciplinary action under the College's ~~Staff D~~disciplinary ~~P~~policy. The Board of Management will be notified of any significant breaches through the Audit ~~and~~ Risk Committee.

- 3.5 ~~It is the responsibility of Senior Leadership Team to ensure that all staff are aware of the existence and content of the College's Financial Regulations.~~ Budget Holders must ensure that their staff are made aware of the existence and content of the ~~College's~~ Financial Regulations. In this context Budget Holders includes any member of staff assigned budgetary responsibility. ~~Budget Holders include, but are not limited to Vice Principals, Assistant Principals, Heads and Managers.~~

- 3.6 The Business, Resources and Infrastructure ~~Committee (BRIC)~~ ~~(BRIC) Committee~~ is responsible for maintaining a continuous review of the Financial Regulations, through the Vice-Principal – Finance ~~and Infrastructure~~ and for advising the Board of Management of any ~~amendments additions or changes~~ necessary. The Vice-Principal – Finance ~~and Infrastructure~~ is assisted in their responsibilities, as required, by the Head of Financial Services.

- 3.7 In exceptional circumstances, ~~the BRIC Committee~~ may authorise a departure from the detailed provisions herein, such departure must be reported to the Board of Management at the earliest opportunity.

- 3.8 The College updates and maintains detailed financial procedures which set out precisely how ~~these~~ ~~Financial~~ ~~R~~egulations are ~~to be~~ followed.

3.9 These Financial Regulations should be read in conjunction with relevant guidance on financial accountability or propriety issued by the:

- The Scottish Funding Council
- The Scottish Government
- Audit Scotland
- The Scottish Parliament Audit Committee
- SORP: Accounting for Further and Higher Education 2019
- The Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM)

3.10 The SFC issued a Financial Memorandum ('the Financial Memorandum') that had effect from 1st December 2014. The primary purpose of the Memorandum is to establish a formal relationship through which funds provided by the SFC are administered by the College in such a way as to ensure they are applied appropriately and are safeguarded. The Board of Management is aware that if the College fails to comply with any terms and conditions attached to the funds from the SFC or contained in the Financial Memorandum, the College may be required to:

- repay to the SFC any sums received from it; and
- pay interest to the SFC in respect of any period during which a sum due to the SFC is unpaid.

SECTION 2 - CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

1. Responsibility of the Board of Management

- 1.1 The Board of Management of Ayrshire College (the "Board") shall ensure that the College provides the best possible education and learning environment for its students.

The Board approves the mission and strategic vision of the College, including institutional and longer-term learning and teaching plans, the Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Funding Council, business plans, annual budgeting, ~~and~~ annual accounts ~~and~~ key performance indicators. The Board ensures that the College meets the interests of all stakeholders, including students, staff, employers, Community Planning Partners, other key stakeholders, local communities and funding bodies.

The Board safeguards the good name and values of the College through its Statement of Ambition and Strategic Objectives.

The College plays a central role in building a strong, vibrant and inclusive Ayrshire. It achieves this by being bold in its ambitions for the region's people, communities and economy, and innovative in the solutions it provides,

- 1.2 The Board's ~~general~~ financial responsibilities include:

- ~~to plan and manage its activities to remain sustainable and financially viable. An institution is being managed on a sustainable basis if, year on year, it generates sufficient income to cover its costs and allow for maintenance of and investment in its infrastructure (physical, human and intellectual) at a level which enables it to maintain adaptive capacity necessary to meet future demands administering and managing the solvency of the College, its property rights, liabilities and obligations with the funds available from all sources;~~
- appointing, grading, suspending, dismissing and determining the pay and conditions of service of the Principal and other senior post holders;
- setting a scheme of delegation for the Principal;
- setting a framework for pay and conditions of service for all other staff;
- ensuring that financial, planning, and other management controls, including financial controls against fraud and theft, are applied by the College to protect public funds and ensure they are spent on the purpose for which they were provided;
- ensuring that the funds provided by the funding body are used in accordance with the terms and conditions specified in the SFC ~~College's~~ financial memorandum ~~with the funding body~~;

- securing efficient, economical, and effective management of all the College's resources and expenditure to safeguard the College's assets and equipment;

• ~~employing suitable staff;~~

- approving the College's strategic plan, annual budget, and financial statements;

• ~~approving the appointment of the College's internal auditors;~~

• determining tuition fees;

- monitoring, reviewing and reporting the general performance of the College.

2. Responsibility of the College Principal

- 2.1 The College Principal is the Chief Executive of the College and is responsible for the financial administration of the College's affairs as detailed within the Scheme of [Financial](#) Delegation. [This is set out in Appendix A.](#)
- 2.2 In this capacity, the Principal must advise the Board of Management if, at any time, any action or decision under consideration by the Board of Management appears to the Principal to be incompatible with the [SFC](#) Financial Memorandum. If the Board of Management decides nevertheless to proceed, the Principal (as accountable officer) must immediately inform the Chief Executive of the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) or appropriate funding body in writing.
- 2.3 The Principal must ensure that annual budgets of income and expenditure are prepared for consideration and approval by ~~the BRIC Committee~~ and thereafter that the annual budget is presented for approval to the Board of Management.
- 2.4 As the designated accountable officer, the Principal may be required to justify any of the College's financial matters to the Scottish Parliament or other relevant body.
- 2.5 The Principal shall demonstrate their oversight of financial matters by signing the annual statutory financial statements in accordance with their responsibilities.
- 2.6 The Principal is directly responsible to the Board of Management for the control of resources, for seeking economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of the College's resources and for ensuring that financial considerations are taken into account at all stages of decision-making.

In particular, the Principal shall:

- sign the annual statutory financial statements in accordance with their responsibilities;
- ensure that satisfactory and adequate records of the financial statements are retained in a form acceptable for presentation to the Scottish Parliament or other relevant body;
- advise the Board of Management on the proper discharge of its financial duties;
- be authorised, through a Scheme of Delegation, to write-off losses and instruct special payments;
- be involved with the SFC Chief Executive ~~SFC~~ on matters relating to public funding which arise before the Scottish Parliament.

3. **Responsibility of the Vice-Principal— Finance and Infrastructure**

3.1 ~~Strategic financial planning is the responsibility of the The~~ Vice-Principal —Finance and Infrastructure ~~is accountable for the day-to-day financial administration of the College and is~~ responsible to the Principal for:

- preparing annual capital, revenue budgets and financial plans;
- preparing accounts, management information, monitoring and control of income and expenditure against budgets and all financial operations;
- preparing the College's annual statutory financial statements, other financial statements and returns;
- ensuring that the College maintains satisfactory financial systems and processes;
- provision of advice on financial strategy and planning policy and liaison with internal and external auditors to achieve efficient processes.

The Vice-Principal— Finance and Infrastructure is supported in these responsibilities by the Head of Financial Services who is responsible for the day-to-day financial administration of the College.

4. Executive Team

4.1 The Executive Team is responsible to the Principal for the operational and financial management of the areas or activities within their remit. They are advised by the Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure on strategic financial matters. The Executive Team is responsible for establishing and maintaining clear lines of control and responsibility within the areas that they manage for all operational and financial matters including the delegation of day-to-day budget control to other budget holders.

4.2 The Executive Team shall provide the Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure with such information as may be required to enable:

- compilation of the College's financial statements;
- implementation of financial planning and budgeting;
- implementation of audit and financial reviews, projects and value for money.

45. Responsibility of Budget Holders

54.1 Budget holders are the designated lead for specific budget lines within the overall College budget. Budget Holders are responsible for establishing and maintaining clear lines of accountability within their areas of responsibility for all financial matters.

Budget Holders are ultimately responsible through line management relationships to the Principal for the financial management of the areas or activities they control.

Budget Holders are advised and supported, as appropriate, by the Vice-Principal – ~~Finance and~~ Finance and Infrastructure and ~~the Head of Financial Services Director of Finance, Student Funding and Estates~~ in executing their financial duties.

54.2 Budget Holders will provide the Vice-Principal – Finance ~~and~~ Infrastructure with the information needed to establish:

- the compilation of the College's annual statutory financial statements;
- the implementation of financial planning;
- the implementation of audit and financial reviews, projects and value for money studies.

56. Responsibility of all Members of Staff

65.1 All members of staff should be aware and have a general responsibility for the security of the College's property, for avoiding loss and for due economy in the use of resources.

65.2 They should ensure that they are aware of the College's financial authority limits (see para 9.3), and the values of purchases for which quotations and tenders are required.

- 65.3** All members of staff shall make available any relevant records or information to the Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~ [and Infrastructure](#), or their authorised representatives, in connection with the implementation of the College's financial policies, these financial regulations and the system of internal financial control.
- 65.4** All members of staff shall provide the Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~ [and Infrastructure](#) with such financial and other information as they may deem necessary to carry out the requirements of the Board of Management.
- 65.5** All members of staff shall immediately notify the Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~ [and Infrastructure](#) or Head of Financial Services, whenever any matter arises which involves, or is thought to involve, irregularities concerning, *inter alia*, cash or property of the College. The Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~ [and Infrastructure](#) or Head of Financial Services shall take such steps as deemed necessary by way of investigation and report.
- 65.6** Budget Holders must ensure that agreements negotiated within their area with external bodies cover any legal liabilities to which the College may be exposed. The advice of the Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~ [and Infrastructure](#) or their authorised representative should be sought to ensure that this is the case.

76. Committee Structure

- 76.1** The Board of Management has ultimate responsibility for the College's financial performance. However, the Board of Management delegates specific powers and responsibilities to various committees. Reference should be made to the Constitution and Governance Arrangements document of Ayrshire College which provides the Terms of Reference under which each of the Board of Management's committees operate.

87. Risk Management

- 87.1** The Board of Management acknowledges the risks inherent in its business, and is committed to managing risks that pose a significant threat to the achievement of its business objectives and financial sustainability.
- 87.2** The Board of Management has overall responsibility for risk management including determining a common approach to the management of risk throughout the College through the development, implementation and embedding within the organisation of formal and structured risk management processes. The Audit & Risk Committee, based on its Terms of Reference, is responsible for ensuring a system of risk management has been established and is being maintained.

78.3 The Board of Management requires that the risk management processes include:

- the adoption of a Risk Management Policy to embed common terminology in relation to the definition of risk and risk management;
- the determination of the risk appetite of the College;
- the establishment of a Strategic College-wide Risk Register which sets the criteria for the measurement of risk, linking the threats to their potential impact and the likelihood of their occurrence;
- detailed and regular review of risks across the College ~~services~~ to identify significant risk associated with the achievement of key objectives and mitigation actions in place to manage these risks;
- a designated "risk owner", who will be responsible and accountable for managing the risk in question;
- regular reporting to the Audit & Risk Committee and Board of Management of the Strategic College's Risk Register as approved by the members of College Committees.

98. Whistleblowing

98.1 Whistleblowing in the context of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 is the disclosure by an employee (or other party) about alleged malpractice in the workplace. Whistleblowing can include crime, civil offences (including negligence, breach of contract, etc.), miscarriage of justice, danger to health and safety or the environment and the cover-up of any of these. It does not matter whether or not the information is confidential. Whistleblowing can extend to malpractice occurring in the UK and any other country or territory.

89.2 Normally, any concern about a workplace matter at the College should be raised with the relevant member of staff's immediate line manager. The College however recognises that the seriousness or sensitivity of some issues, together with the identity of the person the member of staff thinks may be involved, may make this difficult or impossible.

98.3 A member of staff may, therefore, make the disclosure to one of the members of the Executive or Senior Leadership Team. If the member of staff does not wish to raise the matter with one of these individuals, or with the Principal or the Chair of the Board of Management, the matter may be raised directly with the Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee. If the concern relates to a member of the Board of Management (including the Principal), it should be raised with the College's Internal Auditors.

9.4 A copy of the Raising Matters of Concern (Whistleblowing) Policy can be found on the staff intranet and the College website.

109. Code of Conduct

109.1 The College is committed to the highest standards of openness, integrity and accountability. It seeks to conduct its affairs in a responsible manner, having regard to the principles established by the Committee on Standards in Public Life, which members of staff at all levels are expected to observe. These principles are set out in Appendix B.

~~These principles are set out at Appendix B.~~ In addition, the College expects that staff at all levels will observe its code of conduct, ~~contained in its detailed financial procedures,~~ which covers:

- probity and propriety
- selflessness, objectivity and honesty
- relationships.

109.2 Members of the Board of Management, Senior Leadership Team or those involved in procurement are required to disclose interests in the College's Register of Interests maintained by the ~~Secretary to the Board of Management~~ Board Governance Advisor. These individuals will also be responsible for ensuring that entries in the register relating to them are kept up to date regularly and promptly, ~~as prescribed in the Financial Procedures.~~

109.3 In particular, no person shall be a signatory to a College contract where they also have an interest in the activities of the other party.

Receiving Gifts or Hospitality

109.4 It is an offence under the Bribery Act 2010 for members of staff to accept any gift or consideration as an inducement or reward for doing, or refraining from doing, anything in an official capacity or showing favour or disfavour to any person in an official capacity.

109.5 Staff must never canvass or seek gifts or hospitality. Staff should not accept any gifts of alcohol from contractors or suppliers.

109.6 The conduct of individuals should not create suspicion of any conflict between their official duty and their private interest. The action of individuals acting in an official capacity should not give the impression (to any member of the public, to any organisations with whom they deal or to their colleagues) that they have been (or may have been) influenced by a benefit to show favour or disfavour to any person or organisation.

~~109~~.7 Staff are responsible for ensuring they avoid any position whereby they might be, or might be deemed by others to have been, influenced in making a business decision as a consequence of accepting such hospitality. Thus, members of staff should not accept any gifts, rewards or hospitality (or have them given to members of their families) from any organisation or individual with whom they have contact in the course of their work that would cause such a position to arise.

~~109~~.8 The guiding principles to be followed by all members of staff must be that it is usually appropriate to refuse offers except:

- isolated gifts of a trivial character or inexpensive seasonal gifts (such as a calendar or diary) or other simple items of office equipment of modest value;
- Normal hospitality associated with staff duties and which would reasonably be regarded as inappropriate to refuse; or
- Gifts received on behalf of Ayrshire College.

~~910~~.9 When it is not easy to decide between what is and what is not acceptable in terms of gifts or hospitality, the offer should be declined or advice sought from the Vice-Principal —Finance [and Infrastructure](#) or Head of Financial Services. For the protection of those involved, the Vice-Principal —Finance [and Infrastructure](#) through the Head of Financial Services (or other designated officer) will maintain a register of gifts and hospitality received where the value is in excess of £25.

~~109~~.10 Members of staff in receipt of such gifts or hospitality are obliged to notify the Vice-Principal —Finance [and Infrastructure](#) (or other designated officer) promptly.

SECTION 3 – FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL

1. Financial Planning

General

- 1.1 The Vice-Principal –~~Finance~~[Finance and Infrastructure](#) is responsible to the Principal for preparing and recommending financial plans for onward approval by the Board of Management on the recommendation of the BRIG Committee. The Vice-Principal –~~Finance~~[Finance and Infrastructure](#) is responsible for preparing any financial plans or forecasts for submission to the SFC or other appropriate body. Financial plans should be prepared consistently with the College's strategic plans approved by the Board of Management.

Budget Objectives

- 1.2 The Board of Management will, from time to time, set budget objectives for the College through the approval of a Financial Strategy. These strategic directions will help guide the Vice-Principal –~~Finance~~[Finance and Infrastructure](#) in preparing detailed financial plans for the College.

Resource Allocation

- 1.3 Resources are allocated annually throughout the College by the Executive Leadership Team and recommended to the Board of Management through the BRIG Committee. Budget Holders are responsible for the economic, effective and efficient use of resources allocated to them.

Budget Preparation

- 1.4 The Vice-Principal –~~Finance~~[Finance and Infrastructure](#) is responsible for preparing each year an annual revenue budget and capital programme for the approval of the Senior Leadership Team prior to the consideration, scrutiny and approval of the BRIG Committee. The BRIG Committee requires to recommend the budget to the Board of Management. The budgets presented should include a detailed income and expenditure account, cash flow forecasts for the year and a projected year-end balance sheet.
- 1.5 The Vice-Principal –~~Finance~~[Finance and Infrastructure](#) must ensure that detailed information is prepared in order to support the resource allocation process. This information is to be communicated to Budget Holders following approval by the Board of Management.
- 1.6 During the year, and if required, the Vice-Principal –~~Finance~~[Finance and Infrastructure](#) is responsible for submitting revised budgets to the Executive Leadership Team for discussion and approval before submission to the BRIG Committee.

Capital Programme

- 1.7 The Capital Programme includes all expenditure on land, buildings, equipment (including ICT), furniture and other associated capital expenditure. It includes all assets ~~arrests~~, whether these are secured from the funding bodies' capital grants or capitalised for inclusion in the College's annual statutory financial statements.
- 1.8 The Vice Principals of the College will establish protocols for the identification, prioritisation and inclusion of projects in the capital programme. This will be presented to the Senior Leadership Team for approval.
- 1.9 Thereafter, the capital programme shall be presented to the BRI ~~G~~ Committee in line with the responsibilities as detailed within the committee terms of reference. The Board of Management requires to provide final approval for the capital expenditure programme.
- 1.10 The Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~ Finance and Infrastructure will also establish protocols for the approval of variations to the Capital Programme (including the notification of variations) to the Principal and to the BRI ~~G~~ Committee. If appropriate, it will be presented to the funding body, as detailed in the funding body's guidelines.
- 1.11 The Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~ Finance and Infrastructure is also responsible for providing regular statements concerning all capital expenditure to the BRI ~~G~~ Committee for scrutiny and monitoring purposes.

Overseas Activity

- 1.12 In planning and undertaking overseas activity, the College must have due regard to the relevant guidelines issued by the funding body.

Other Major Developments

- 1.13 Any new major development of business, or proposed establishment of a company or joint venture, which will require an investment in buildings, resources or staff time should be presented for approval to the BRI ~~G~~ Committee and the Board of Management.
- 1.14 All major developments shall be in accordance with the SFC ~~F~~inancial ~~M~~emorandum between the funding body and the Board of Management.

2 Financial Control

Budgetary Control

- 2.1 The control of income and expenditure within an agreed budget is the responsibility of the Budget Holder supported by the Head of Financial Services and Finance Team. Budget Holders must ensure that day-to-day monitoring is undertaken effectively. Budget Holders are responsible through their line managers to the relevant Senior Leadership Team member. Ultimately, they are accountable to the Principal for the income and expenditure budgets appropriate to their areas of responsibilities.
- 2.2 Significant departures from agreed budgetary targets must be reported immediately by the Budget Holder to the Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~[Finance and Infrastructure](#). If deemed necessary, corrective action must be taken.

Financial Information

- 2.3 Budget Holders are assisted in their financial responsibilities by management information provided through the Head of Financial Services. Monthly Budget statements will be provided to Budget Holders and they will be supported by the Finance Team.
- 2.4 The Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~[Finance and Infrastructure](#) is responsible for supplying budgetary reports on all aspects of the College's finances to the BRIC Committee on a basis agreed by the BRIC Committee. This is however subject to any specific requirements of the funding body.

Significant Changes to the Approved Budgets

- 2.5 Significant changes proposed to the overall approved budgeted position, prior to the new Financial Year commencing, will be first considered by the Senior Leadership Team. If approved these will thereafter be referred to the BRIC Committee for its scrutiny and approval. If required, advice will be taken from the Chair of the Committee.
- 2.6 Significant in-year changes required to the approved budget will be considered by the Executive Leadership Team and if approved will thereafter be referred to the BRIC Committee for its scrutiny and approval. If required, advice will be taken from the Chair of the Committee.

Virement (In-Year Transfer between Budgets)

- 2.7 In year consumables budgets cannot be used to fund staff appointments and any ring fenced or designated funds must be used solely for the purpose provided.

2.8 The virement of budgets must not lead to any net change in the overall annual budget for the College. Senior Leadership Team members may vire budgets within a single cost centre or between cost centres. These virements should be within detailed budget headings within each of the three principle budget categories:

- income.
- staff costs, and
- other operating expenditure.

2.9 Transfers between budget categories (e.g. staff and other operating expenditure) require the approval of the Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure. Virement between budgets held by different Senior Leadership Team members is permitted with the written approval of the transferring and receiving Senior Leadership Team members.

Where a Budget Holder is responsible for more than one budget, virement is permitted up to £25,000 of the budget from which virement is sought, with the written consent of the Vice Principal — FinanceFinance and Infrastructure.

2.9 Virement between budgets held by different Budget Holders is permitted up to £250,000 of the budget from which virement is sought with the written consent of the transferring Budget Holder and the Vice Principal — FinanceFinance and Infrastructure.

2.10 All virements over £50,000 but less than £250,000 require to be authorised by both the Vice Principal — FinanceFinance and Infrastructure and the Principal.

2.11 Any requirement to vire £250,000 or over (in year) require to be approved by the BRIC Committee with appropriate supporting documents detailing the reason/rationale.

Treatment of Year-End Balances

2.13 At the year end, Budget Holders will not have the authority to carry forward a balance on their budget to the following year unless the Vice-Principal —~~Finance~~Finance and Infrastructure has specifically approved this.

3. Accounting Arrangements

Financial Year

3.1 The College's academic year runs from 1 August to 31 July. ~~The College is also required to report to both the Scottish Government and Scottish Funding Council on their financial year which run from 1 April to 31 March.~~

Basis of Accounting

- 3.2 The College's consolidated financial statements are prepared on the historical cost basis of accounting and in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the funding body's accounts direction.

Format of the Financial Statements

- 3.3 The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the *Statement of Recommended Practice Accounting for Further and Higher Education*, subject to any specific requirements of the funding body, current Accounting Standards, and in accordance with the provisions of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992, if appropriate.

Capitalisation and Depreciation

- 3.4 ~~The~~ The ~~a~~Accounting policies in relation to capitalisation and depreciation are noted within ~~the main accounting policies of the College included within the statutory annual financial statements.~~ From time to time the main ~~a~~Accounting policies may be presented for updating to the BRIC Committee for approval.
- 3.5 New land and buildings will be recorded in the balance sheet at actual build or acquisition cost, except where they are received as gifts. If received as gifts they will be recorded at depreciated replacement value. Buildings will be depreciated in equal instalments over their estimated remaining useful life. Land will not be depreciated.
- 3.6 Expenditure incurred on the acquisition of assets other than land and buildings will be recorded in the balance sheet in line with approved accounting policies.
- 3.7 Certain tangible assets will be revalued. Where such a policy is adopted, it should be applied consistently to all tangible fixed assets of the same class, and the carrying amount should be its current value. A full valuation at least every 5 years and an interim valuation in year 3, with an interim valuation in the intervening years where it is likely that there has been a material change in value. Where an asset is found to have suffered impairment, the prospective impairment and background must be communicated to the SFC at the earliest opportunity.
~~Capitalised assets will be depreciated in accordance with the College's approved accounting policies.~~

Accounting Records

- 3.8 The Vice-Principal – ~~Finance~~ Finance and Infrastructure is responsible for the retention of financial documents. These documents should be kept in a form that is acceptable to the relevant authorities, and complies with the requirements of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and Data Protection Act 1998/2018.

3.9 The College is required by law to retain primary documents for six years. These include:

- [Bank account records](#)
- [Expenditure records](#)
- [Ledger records](#)
- [Receipts and revenue records](#)
- [Salaries and related records](#)
- [Stores records](#)
- [Other accountable financial records](#)
- ~~official purchase orders~~
- ~~paid invoices~~
- ~~accounts raised~~
- ~~bank statements~~
- ~~copies of receipts~~
- ~~payroll records, including part time lecturers' contracts.~~

3.10 All ~~m~~Members of staff require to ensure that retention arrangements comply with any specific requirements of particular funding organisations.

3.11 Additionally, for auditing and other purposes, other financial documents should be retained for three years or as determined by the funder.

Public Access

3.12 The Board of Management is required to supply any member of the public with a copy of the College's most recent set of annual statutory financial statements within 20 days of a request, subject to the financial statements having been presented to Parliament. To ensure compliance with the [Freedom of Information \(Scotland\) Act 2002](#), the College will also allow members of the public to inspect the financial statements during normal working hours. An electronic copy of the most recent set of financial statements will also be available on the [College's website](#).

Taxation

3.13 The Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~[Finance and Infrastructure](#) is responsible for advising Budget Holders on all College related taxation issues. This advice will be in line with guidance issued by the appropriate bodies and relevant legislation as it applies to the College.

3.14 Therefore, the Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~[Finance and Infrastructure](#) will issue instructions to Budget Holders and relevant staff members on compliance with statutory requirements. These include those concerning VAT, PAYE, national insurance, corporation tax and import duty, as required.

3.15 The Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~[Finance and Infrastructure](#) is responsible for maintaining the College's tax records, making all tax payments, receiving tax credits and submitting tax returns by their due date as appropriate.

4. Audit Requirements

General

4.1 External Auditors and Internal Auditors shall have authority to:

- access College premises at reasonable times;
- access all assets, records, documents and correspondence relating to any financial and other transactions of the College;
- require and receive such explanations as are necessary concerning any matter under examination;
- require any employee of the College to account for cash, stores or any other College property under his or her control;
- access records belonging to third parties, such as contractors, when required.

4.2 The Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~[Finance and Infrastructure](#) is responsible for agreeing a timetable for final accounts purposes with the External Auditors.

4.3 The BRICT Committee is responsible for considering, scrutinising and approving the College's financial performance. The financial statements require to be reviewed and approved by the Audit & Risk Committee which shall receive all year end audit reports.

4.4 On the recommendation of both the BRICT and Audit & Risk Committees the annual statutory financial statements and relevant year end audit reports will be submitted to the Board of Management for approval. Thereafter they will be forwarded to SFC and other relevant bodies such as Audit Scotland who will present them to the Scottish Parliament.

External Audit

4.5 Under the terms of the [Public Finance and Accountability \(Scotland\) Act 2000](#), the Auditor General is responsible for appointing the External Auditors to the College.

4.6 The primary role of external audit is to report on the College's annual statutory financial statements. External audit carries out such examination of the statements and underlying records and control systems as are necessary to reach its opinion on the statements and to report on the appropriate use of funds.

4.7 The External Auditors address their report and opinion jointly to the Auditor General and the members of the Board of Management. The External Auditor's duties and responsibilities are in accordance with advice set out in the funding body's audit code of practice and the Auditing Practices Board's statements of auditing standards.

Internal Audit

- 4.8 The Internal Auditor is appointed by the Audit & Risk Committee on behalf of the Board of Management.
- 4.9 The ~~SFC College's~~ Financial Memorandum ~~with SFC~~ requires that it has an effective internal audit function. The main responsibility of internal audit is to provide the Board of Management and the Executive Leadership Team with assurances on the adequacy of the internal control systems.
- 4.10 The internal audit service remains independent in its planning and operation. The service has direct access to the Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee and any other member of the Board of Management including the Chair of the Board of Management and the Principal as required. The formal responsibilities of internal audit are detailed in Appendix C. The internal auditor service will also comply with the Auditing Practices Board's auditing guideline *Guidance for Internal Auditors*.

Fraud and Corruption

- 4.11 ~~Full procedures and regulations for Counter Fraud, Bribery and Corruption are set out in the College's Counter Fraud, Bribery and Corruption policy.~~

Commented [AR1]: To link to Policy

~~Whenever any matter arises which involves, or is thought to involve, irregularity, including fraud, corruption or any other impropriety it is the duty of all members of staff and management to immediately notify the Vice Principal— Finance Finance and Infrastructure or in their absence the Head of Financial Services immediately.~~

- 4.12 ~~The Vice Principal— Finance Finance and Infrastructure shall immediately advise of any suspected fraud, corruption or impropriety. The Principal will consider and decide on the following responses:~~

- ~~• The Principal will inform the Audit & Risk Committee, the BRIC Committee and the Board of Management, as appropriate.~~
- ~~• The Principal shall inform the Police if a criminal offence is suspected or has been committed.~~
- ~~• The Principal and the Audit & Risk Committee shall commission such investigation as may be necessary of the suspected irregularity, by the internal audit service or others, as appropriate.~~

- 4.13 ~~The internal audit service, or others commissioned to carry out an investigation, shall prepare a report for the Audit & Risk Committee on the suspected irregularity. Such reports shall include advice on preventative measures.~~

- 4.14 ~~If the suspected fraud is thought to involve the Vice Principal— Finance Finance and Infrastructure and/or the Principal, the member of staff should notify the Chair of the~~

~~Audit & Risk Committee or Chair of the Board of Management directly of their concerns regarding irregularities or utilise the College's Whistleblowing processes.~~

Value for Money

- 4.125 It is a requirement of the SFC Financial Memorandum that the Board of Management is responsible for delivering value for money from public funds. ~~The Board of Management should keep under review its arrangements for managing all the resources under its control, taking into account guidance on good practice issued from time to time by the funding body, Audit Scotland, the Public Accounts Committee or other relevant bodies such as APUC.~~
- 4.16 The College's Internal Audit services have regard to value for money considerations in their programme of work. To fulfil this responsibility, the Audit & Risk Committee, approves an Internal Audit Plan which includes value for money work that will provide evidence of compliance with the funding body's requirements. The Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee will ~~to~~ refer to these value for money considerations in the Committees' ~~is~~ annual report.

Other Auditors

- 4.17 The College may, from time to time, be subject to audit or investigation by external bodies such as funding bodies, Audit Scotland, European Court of Auditors, and HM Revenue & Customs. These external bodies will have the same rights of access as external and internal auditors.

5. Treasury Management

General

- 5.1 The Vice-Principal ~~— Finance~~ Finance and Infrastructure is responsible for setting out a strategy for treasury cash management. ~~All long term cash investments beyond 12 months maturity and any borrowings require the prior approval of the BRIC Committee.~~
- 5.2 All treasury management activities require to be compliant with SFC rules regarding approval for any secured or unsecured loans that go beyond the general consent levels set out in the SFC Financial Memorandum. Any and all borrowing shall be undertaken in the name of the College and shall conform to any relevant funding body requirements.
- 5.3 The Vice-Principal ~~— Finance~~ Finance and Infrastructure will provide regular reports to the BRIC Committee on Treasury Management activities as required.

Appointment of Bankers ~~and other Professional Advisers~~

- 5.4 All bodies to which the Scottish Public Finance Manual applies are required to use the Government Banking Service contract.

~~The Board of Management is responsible for the appointment of the College's bankers and other professional financial advisers (such as investment managers) on the recommendation of the BRIC Committee. The appointment shall be for a specified period after which consideration shall be given by the BRIC Committee to competitively tendering the service.~~

Banking Arrangements

- 5.5 The ~~Head of Financial~~ Director of Finance, Student Funding and Estates is Services is responsible for liaising with the College's bankers in relation to the College's bank accounts and the issue of cheques. All cheques shall be ordered on the authority of the Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~ Finance and Infrastructure. The Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~ Finance and Infrastructure shall make proper arrangements for their safe custody.
- 5.6 Only the Principal and the Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~ Finance and Infrastructure may open or close a bank account for dealing with the College's funds. If required, this will be carried out in line with requirements of the bank. All bank accounts shall be in the name of the College ~~or one of its associated entities (as appropriate).~~
- 5.7 ~~All cheques and electronic payment instructions, including BACS and CHAPS payments, shall be signed or otherwise authorised by two duly authorised signatories from those set out on the list of authorised signatories for the bank account from which the payment is to be made.~~

Authorisation to make payments is as per detailed in the table below:

<u>-</u>	<u>Student Funding Payments</u>	<u>Payments - Suppliers</u>	<u>Payroll</u>	<u>Bank Account Transfers (same Bank)</u>
<u>Team Leader/ Financial Accountants</u>	<u><£50,000 Individual payment Limit £5,000</u>	<u><£50,000 Individual payment Limit £5,000</u>	<u><£0 Individual payment Limit £0</u>	<u><£250,000</u>
<u>Head of Financial Services/APs</u>	<u>>£50,000</u>	<u>>£50,000 to £500,000 Individual Payment Limit £50,000</u>	<u>>£50,000 to £500,000 Individual Payment Limit £50,000</u>	<u>>£250,000 to £1,000,000</u>
<u>ELT</u>	<u>Dispensation from SSF</u>	<u>>£500,000</u>	<u>>£500,000</u>	<u>>£1,000,000</u>

To ensure segregation of duties, sSystem generated batch payment files where in-built authorisation processes have been enforced by the table above (purchase ledger, payroll and student funding) will be uploaded to the BACS system by a member of the Finance Team. This file will only require one authorised electronic signatory, which must be one of the ~~Student Funding Manager (student funding payments only)~~ Head of Financial Services, Finance Manager, Financial Accountant or Finance Team Leader.

Other sundry payments including Bank transfers and urgent payments where appropriate authorisation has been obtained per the table above will be entered or imported into the online banking system by a member of the Finance Team. These payments will require two authorised electronic signatories one of which must be the Head of Financial Services, Financial Accountant or Finance Team Leader.

~~All automated transfers on behalf of the College, such as BACS, must be authorised in the appropriate manner detailed in the scheme of delegation for authorised spend and incorporating adequate separation of duties. Details of authorised persons and limits are provided for in the College's detailed financial procedures.~~

- 5.8 The Head of Financial Services is responsible for ensuring that all bank accounts are subject to regular reconciliation and that large or unusual items are investigated as appropriate.

6. Income

General

- 6.1 The Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~Finance and Infrastructure is responsible for ensuring that appropriate procedures are in operation to enable the College to receive all income to which it is entitled. All receipt forms, invoices, tickets or other official documents in use and electronic collection systems must have the prior approval of the Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~Finance and Infrastructure.
- 6.2 Levels of charges for services rendered, goods supplied, rents and lettings are determined by procedures approved by the Executive Leadership Team. These will be incorporated into the annual budgets presented to the BRIG Committee and thereafter the Board of Management.
- 6.3 The Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~Finance and Infrastructure is responsible for the prompt collection, security and banking of all income received. These processes are overseen by the Head of Financial Services.
- 6.4 The Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~Finance and Infrastructure is responsible for ensuring that all grants notified by the funding body and other bodies are received and appropriately recorded in the College's accounts.
- 6.5 The Vice Principals, based on remit, are responsible for ensuring that all claims for funds, including grants and contracts, are made by the due dates.

Maximisation of Income

- 6.6 It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that revenue to the College is maximised by the efficient application of agreed procedures for the identification, collection and banking of income. In particular, this requires the prompt notification to the Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~[Finance and Infrastructure](#) of all sums due so that collection can be initiated.

Receipt of Cash, Cheques and other Negotiable Instruments

- 6.7 All monies received within the College from whatever source must be recorded on a daily basis, for example cash, cheques and other negotiable instruments.
- 6.8 All paperwork and monies received must be remitted to the Finance Team promptly, and in accordance with the format and timetable prescribed by the Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~[Finance and Infrastructure](#) and set out in these Financial Regulations. The custody and transit of all monies received must comply with the requirements of the College's insurers.
- 6.9 All sums received must be paid in and accounted for in full, and must not be used to meet miscellaneous expenses or be paid into petty cash floats.
- 6.10 Personal or other cheques must not be cashed out of money received on behalf of the College.
- 6.11 Receipts by credit or debit card: the College may only receive payments by debit or credit card using procedures approved by ~~the the Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure~~[Director of Finance, Student Funding and Estates](#).

Collection of Debts

- 6.12 The Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~[Finance and Infrastructure](#) shall ensure that:
- debtors' invoices are raised promptly on official invoices, in respect of all income due to the College;
 - invoices are prepared with care, recorded in the ledger, show the correct amount due and are credited to the appropriate income account;
 - any credits granted are valid, properly authorised and completely recorded;
 - VAT is correctly charged, where appropriate, and accounted for;
 - monies received are posted to the correct debtor's account;

- swift and effective action is taken in collecting overdue debts, in accordance with the protocols noted in the financial procedures;
- outstanding debts are monitored and reports prepared for management.

6.13 The Principal, through the Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~[Finance and Infrastructure](#) can agree credit arrangements and indicate the periods in which different types of invoice must be paid. This will include standard instalment plans.

6.14 Requests to write off debts in excess of £25,000 (i.e. an individual and not cumulative amount) must be referred in writing to the Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~[Finance and Infrastructure](#) and considered and approved by the Executive Leadership Team. If approved the request must go to the BRIG Committee for final approval. Debts between £10,000 and £24,999 may be written off with the permission, in writing, of the Principal. If below £10,000, by permission, in writing, of the Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~[Finance and Infrastructure](#).

Student Fees

6.15 The procedures for collecting Student Fees (including but not limited to tuition fees) must be approved by the Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~[Finance and Infrastructure](#). [The procedures are detailed in the Student Fees and Debt Recovery Policy.](#)

6.16 The Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~[Finance and Infrastructure](#) is responsible for ensuring that all student fees due to the College are received. Student fee levels require to be approved by the Executive Leadership Team as part of the annual budget processes.

6.17 Any student who has outstanding debts or any other item owed to the College shall not receive the certificate for any diploma or other qualification awarded by the College. This will only be given to the student when all outstanding debts have been cleared. Students with outstanding debts to the College shall be prevented from re-enrolling at the College. They will also be prevented from using any of the College's facilities unless appropriate arrangements have been made.

6.18 The Vice-Principal ~~—Finance~~[Finance and Infrastructure](#) shall have the authority to issue certificates or allow re-enrolment of students up to an existing debt outstanding of £2,500 taking into account relevant circumstances.

6.19 Any student with a debt above this amount requires the approval of the Principal for both the issue of certificates or re-enrolment within the College.

Student Loans

6.20 Appropriate records require to be maintained to support all transactions involving SAAS student loans.

7. Project Grants and Contracts

General

- 7.1 Where approaches are to be made to outside bodies for support for projects or where contracts are to be undertaken on behalf of such bodies, it is the responsibility of the ~~Vice p~~Principal(s) based on remit to ensure that the financial implications have been appraised by the ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure.—~~Finance~~.
- 7.2 This will include, but not be limited to, obtaining a set of grant terms and conditions from each organisation providing funding to enable appropriate monitoring of compliance.
- 7.3 The ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure—~~Finance~~ is responsible for examining every formal application for grant and shall ensure that there is adequate provision of resources to meet all commitments. Applicants are recommended to engage the support of the College's Financial Accountants in the development of the costings included within their applications. This should take place prior to examination by the ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure—~~Finance~~.
- 7.4 The ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure—~~Finance~~ should ensure that the full cost of the project/contract is established. Grants and contracts shall be accepted on behalf of the College only by the Principal, or in their absence, by the Vice-Principal – ~~Finance~~Finance and Infrastructure.
- 7.5 The Vice-Principal —~~Finance~~Finance and Infrastructure shall maintain all financial records relating to grants and contracts. The Vice-Principal —~~Finance~~Finance and Infrastructure shall initiate all claims for reimbursement from sponsoring bodies by the due date. Each grant or contract will be assigned as a responsibility to a specific ~~D~~irector or ~~v~~Vice ~~p~~Principal.
- 7.6 Any overspend or under-recovery is to be the clear responsibility of the assigned ~~d~~Director or ~~v~~Vice ~~p~~Principal.

Recovery of Overheads

- 7.7 Overheads may be considered and charged to project activity. The ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure—~~Finance~~ shall ensure that the treatment of overheads is factored into the establishment of the full cost of the project/contract and the decision making processes where appropriate.

Costing/Transparency

- 7.8 The College's principles on costing and pricing should be approved by the ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure—Finance.
- 7.9 Each Vice Pprincipal and staff undertaking project activity are responsible for maintaining the records specified within the documentation/grant agreement to enable compilation of any returns to the funding body.

Grant and Contract Conditions

- 7.10 Many grant-awarding bodies and contracting organisations stipulate conditions under which their funding is given. In addition, there are often procedures to be followed regarding the submission of reports or the provision of other relevant information. Failure to respond to these conditions could mean that the College will suffer a significant financial penalty. It is the responsibility of the assigned Vice Pprincipal, Assistant Pprincipal or Service Head to ensure that conditions of funding are met.
- 7.11 Any loss to the College resulting from a failure to meet conditions of funding is the responsibility of the assigned Vice Pprincipal, Assistant Pprincipal or Service Head.

8. Other Income-Generating Activity

Off-site Collaborative Provision

- 8.1 Any contract or arrangement whereby the College provides education to students away from College premises, or with the assistance of persons other than the College's own staff or with independent contractors (partner organisations), must be subject to the following procedure.
- 8.2 After a written recommendation from the relevant Vice Principal, and approval by the Executive Leadership Team, there shall be a contract signed by the Principal and on behalf of any partner organisation. The signed contract must at the least comply with the funding body model contract (as amended from time to time) in place before any provision is made.
- 8.3 The relevant Vice Pprincipal shall ensure that all funding body obligations are met including the provision of information and reporting requirements.
- 8.4 The form of the contract shall be scrutinised in advance of signature by the relevant ~~V~~Vice ~~p~~Pprincipal based on remit. Any concerns regarding contract provisions shall be raised immediately with the ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure—Finance who may decide to take a legal view on the provisions of the contract.

Community/European and Other Match Funding Projects

- 8.5 Any such project, ~~out~~with SFC led European projects, requires the approval of the Executive Leadership Team prior to any commitment being entered into. Approval should be gained through a written business case. The business case must show that eligible matching funds are available, that the project is deliverable in terms of outputs, financially viable and strategically beneficial to the aims and objectives of the College.

Profitability and Recovery of Overheads

- 8.6 All income-generating activities must be self-financing or surplus-generating unless it is intended that a new course is to be launched as a loss leader. If that is the case, the reason for it must be specified and agreed by the Executive Leadership Team.
- 8.7 Other income-generating activities organised by members of staff must be costed and agreed with the ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure—Finance based on remit, before any commitments are made. Staff are recommended to engage the support of the College's Financial Accountants in the development of the costings included within their applications. This should take place prior to examination by the ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure ~~—Finance~~.

Deficits

- 8.8 Any unplanned deficits incurred on other income-generating activities will be reported to the Senior Leadership Team. The forward actions/decisions taken by the Senior Leadership Team will be dependent on the reasons for the deficit.

Additional Payments to Staff

- 8.9 Any proposal that involves additional payments to members of staff should be supported by a schedule of names and values and must be approved by the relevant ~~A~~Assistant Pincipal or ~~S~~Service Head. In the case of an ~~A~~Assistant Pincipal, the relevant Vice Principal must approve the payment.
- 8.10 If work is undertaken by a member of staff, under agreement for a third party, and not during annual leave, any payment due should be remitted to the College and not be retained by the member of staff.

9. Expenditure

General

- 9.1 The ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure—Finance is responsible for ensuring appropriate systems are in place for making payments to suppliers of goods and services to the College. Application of these are overseen by the Head of Financial Services.

Scheme of Delegation/Financial Authorities

- 9.2 Budget Holders are accountable for purchases within their areas of responsibility. Budget Holders are not authorised to commit the College to expenditure without first identifying sufficient funds are available to them to meet the purchase cost.
- 9.3 When raising a purchase ~~order~~ order on EBIS, the Purchase Order (PO) will automatically route to the relevant signatory(s) based on the authorisation levels below, an Internal Requisition form should be signed by an authorised signatory and should be sent to the Finance Team. Authorisation levels for Purchase Orders ~~Internal Requisitions~~ are to be ~~were~~ approved by the Executive Leadership Team ~~at its meeting held 3 November 2022.~~ The authorisation levels are as follows:

<u>Requisition Value</u>	<u>Authorised by</u>
<u>Up to £5,000</u>	<u>Curriculum Heads</u>
<u>Up to £35,000</u>	<u>As above plus Assistant Principals and Service Heads</u>
<u>Up to £75,000</u>	<u>As above plus relevant Vice Principal</u>
<u>Over £75,000</u>	<u>As above plus Principal</u>

<u>Requisition Value</u>	<u>Authorised by:</u>
<u>Up to £5,000</u>	<u>Curriculum Heads</u>
<u>Up to £35,000</u>	<u>As above plus Assistant Principals and Service Heads</u>
<u>Up to £75,000</u>	<u>As above plus relevant Vice Principal</u>
<u>Over £75,000</u>	<u>As above plus Principal</u>

For the avoidance of doubt where the Budget Holder is a Vice Pprincipal or Assistant Pprincipal, they should sign as Budget Holder and within the limits noted above. The Internal Requisition thereafter should be signed by the ~~Vice-Principal~~ Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure ~~Finance and Infrastructure and~~ where required due to the value another Vice Pprincipal and Principal. Normally authorisation should reflect relevant line management structures, although other Vice Pprincipals or Directors can be used, if required.

All values above are **inclusive of VAT** at the prevailing rate.

9.4 The Head of Financial Services, on behalf of the ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure—Finance, shall ensure that maintain a register of all authorised signatories and Budget Holders use a digital signature for the purposes of authorising POs or any other documentation requiring signature. must supply him or her with specimen signatures of those authorised to raise POs or certify invoices for payment.

9.5 The ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure —Finance must be notified immediately of any changes to the authorisations to commit expenditure.

Contract Signatory Limits

9.6 The Principal may enter into a contract for the supply of goods and services where the value of the contract does not exceed £250,000. The Principal, on behalf of the Board of Management or one of the Board's committees, has authority to sign other contracts in excess of £250,000 for the supply of goods and services which have been previously approved by the Board of Management or the authorised sub-committee. ~~For example, this could be the Principal signing for a part of the approved Capital Programme.~~

9.7 Expenditure on single items or contracts of £250,001-£1,000,000 not previously approved shall require the approval of the BRI~~C~~ Committee.

9.8 The Board of Management must approve expenditure or contracts not previously approved in excess of £1,000,000.

9.9 The approvals to contract will be secured where possible in advance by highlighting such expenditure items in the annual budget or capital programme at BRI~~C~~ Committee or Board of Management.

Procurement Strategy, Policy and Processes

9.10 The College has separate documents which describe in detail the Procurement Strategy and the Policy and Procedures required to be adopted. The Procurement Policy complies with Audit Scotland requirements, the College Financial Regulations and with the Scottish Funding Council's SFC Financial Memorandum ~~and Addendum~~ which confirms the revised delegated limits for incorporated colleges. It is important that staff read and understand the requirements of the Procurement Policy and Procedure. Relevant staff are also required to undertake regular procurement training.

9.11 The College requires all Senior Leadership Team members, irrespective of the source of funds, to obtain goods and services that offer Value for Money and have been purchased in accordance with Scottish and EU procurement legislation and regulation.

9.12 The Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure is responsible for:

- ensuring that the College's procurement procedures are known and observed by all staff involved in procuring for the College;
- advising teaching and support departments on matters of College procurement procedures and practice;
- Developing and managing contract and supplier arrangements on behalf of the College to assist Senior Leadership Team members in meeting their value for money objectives;
- the drafting and negotiation of all large-scale procurement contracts undertaken by the College, and;
- ensuring that the College complies with relevant procurement legislation and regulations.

9.13 The Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure is responsible for ensuring that the College complies with its legal obligations under Scottish and EU procurement legislation. Scottish procurement regulations apply to contracts with a value of £50,000 or greater up to EU procurement regulations which apply to written contracts for all forms of procurement, purchase or hire with a total value exceeding the current EU threshold value.

9.14 The Scottish regulations require that the value of same or similar purchases over any 4-year period must be aggregated and that where that calculation exceeds £50,000 then the Scottish procurement regulations will apply to all future purchases. It is the responsibility of Senior Leadership Team members to ensure that their members of staff comply with the Scottish and EU regulations by notifying the Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure of any purchase that is likely to exceed the thresholds. This will need to be done well in advance in order to permit advertisements in journals such as the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU).

9.15 The Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure is also required to annually submit to the Scottish Funding Council details on expenditure which exceeds the threshold.

9.16 The Scottish regulations require that the College publishes an Annual Procurement Strategy and must confirm to the Scottish Government it has done so. The Scottish regulations require that the College provides the Scottish Government with an Annual Procurement Report that details all regulated procurement. The report must also be published on the College's website.

9.17 Procurement Non-Competitive Action requires prior consultation with the SFC if the anticipated spend is greater than £25,000 (per SFC guidance). Goods and services should firstly be sourced through APUC, Government and other framework agreements, prior to any alternative procurement route being taken.

Quotations and Tenders

9.18 Budget holders must comply with the College's Procurement Policy and the Scottish Government Procurement Journey. To avoid conflict with applicable procurement legislation and regulation guidance from College procurement team must be sought before making a purchase. The procurement procedure to be followed for the value threshold of a particular contract is as follows:

For goods / services / works

<u>Value incl VAT</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Authorisation</u>
<u>£0 to £5,000k</u>	<u>1 Quote</u>	<u>Devolved to Department</u>	<u>Budget Holders</u>
<u>£5,000k to £35,000k</u>	<u>3 Quotes</u> <u>Consider quality and price</u>	<u>Devolved to Department</u>	<u>College Management Team</u>
<u>£35,000k- to £214,904 for goods and services and £35,000 to £5,372,609 for works</u>	<u>Tender issued via Public Contracts Scotland</u>	<u>Procurement Manager</u>	<u>College Senior Leadership Team and Procurement</u>
<u>£214,904 and over for goods and services/ £5,372,609 and over for works</u>	<u>Tender- Open advert or if deemed appropriate restricted procedure via myTender and Public Contracts Scotland</u>	<u>Procurement Manager</u>	<u>Principal or Vice Principal and Procurement</u>

Over EU threshold - the contract will be subject to full EU tendering procedures unadvertised using the Public Contracts Scotland website.

Building Repair and Maintenance Contracts

9.11 ~~Building repairs and maintenance contracts are normally the responsibility of the Vice Principal – Finance. All awards of contracts must be completed in line with the College's Procurement Policy and Procedure.~~

Capital Projects (in excess of £250,000) and Key Stage Reviews (KSRs)

9.192 All Capital Projects greater than in excess of £250,000 require to be approved by the BRI Committee in line with the Committee's Terms of Reference.

- 9.13 Design team professionals such as architects and quantity surveyors/cost consultants should be appointed if the project is considered to be too large or too specialised for the in-house Estates Team. All appointments shall be subject to the provisions of the Procurement Policy and Procedure.
- 9.14 Proposals for large projects shall be presented in the form of strategic rationale including costings and where appropriate investment appraisals. Project proposals should be prepared by the relevant vice principal supported by the College's financial accountants in the development of the costings. Any requirement for Investment appraisals should comply with appropriate funding body guidance.
- 9.15 All Capital Projects over £250,000 shall be subject to a series of key stage review processes and project sponsor appointed for each. The key stage review will include five distinct stages outwith the formal committee structures. These are as follows:
- Outline business case approval
 - Pre tender review stage
 - Tender evaluation and contract award
 - Project review on project completion
 - Post occupancy
- 9.16 The key stage reviews will include initial scope versus developing proposals, change management and control arrangements, authorisation requirements, continued project relevance, risks and timelines, status updates and financial analysis including costs and funding requirements.

Overseas Regulations

- 9.17 The ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance is responsible for ensuring the College complies with its legal obligations concerning any relevant overseas procurement legislation. The College Procurement Policy includes detailed information on the overseas requirements and the processes to be adopted by the College.
- 9.19 The ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance may also be required to submit annually to the funding body details on relevant overseas expenditure. Copies of the relevant documentation falling into this category are the responsibility of the relevant budget holder. This documentation must be provided by Budget Holders to the ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance within the required timescales.

Receipt of Goods

- 9.20 All goods shall be received at designated receipt and distribution points. They shall be checked for quantity and/or weight and inspected for quality and specification. A delivery note shall be obtained from the supplier at the time of delivery and signed by the person receiving the goods.
- 9.21 All goods received shall be ~~entered~~ entered into EBIS as a GRN (Goods Received Note) onto an appropriate goods received document/formal systems in place. This would be completed by Central Stores team or receiving department. If the goods are deemed to be unsatisfactory, the record shall be marked accordingly and the supplier immediately notified so that they can be collected for return as soon as possible. Where goods are short on delivery, the record should be marked accordingly and the supplier immediately notified.

Payment of Invoices

- 9.22 The procedures for making all payments shall be in a form specified by the ~~Vice-Principal~~ Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure—Finance.
- 9.23 The Head of Financial Services is responsible for deciding the most appropriate method of payment for categories of invoice. Payments to UK suppliers will be made by BACS payment. Only in exceptional circumstances will manual cheques be used.
- 9.24 Budget Holders are responsible for ensuring that expenditure within their areas of accountability does not exceed the budgeted funds made available to them.
- 9.25 The operation and control of the College's credit cards is the responsibility of the ~~Vice-Principal~~ Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure—Finance. This does not, however limit the responsibilities of the card holders.
- 9.26 Holders of credit cards must use them only for the purposes for which they have been issued and within the authorised purchase limits. Cards must not be loaned to another person. Cards must not be used for personal or private purchases. Cardholders should obtain approval to purchase from the relevant Budget Holder and should ensure that there is sufficient budget available to meet the costs. The Head of Financial Director of Finance, Student Funding and Estates shall ~~Services shall~~ determine the information required on purchases made with credit cards and - ~~d~~Deadlines for receipts to be submitted in the Finance Team. This is to enable proper financial control.
- 9.27 Suppliers should be instructed by the Budget Holders to submit invoices for goods or services to the Finance Team. Should invoices be received in other curriculum/service areas, these must be passed to the Finance Team as soon as they have been authorised. Care must be taken by the Budget Holders to ensure that discounts receivable are obtained.

9.28 Payments will only be made by the Finance Team against invoices that have been certified for payment by the appropriate Budget Holder in line with the authorisation procedures. Payments will only be made by the Finance Team against invoices that can be matched to a receipted order. Certification of an invoice or receipting of an electronic order will confirm that:

- the goods have been received, examined and approved with regard to quality and quantity, or that services rendered or work done is satisfactory;
- where appropriate, it is matched to the order;
- invoice details (quantity, price discount etc.) are correct;
- the invoice is arithmetically correct;
- the invoice has not previously been passed for payment;
- where appropriate, an entry has been made on [EBIS for the GRN-a stores record](#)
- an appropriate cost centre is quoted(this must be one of the cost centre codes included in the Budget Holder's areas of responsibility and must correspond with the type of goods or service described on the invoice).

Staff Reimbursement

9.29 The College's payment procedures are in place to enable the majority of non-pay supplies to be procured through the purchase ledger without staff having to incur any personal expense. However, on occasion, staff may incur expenses, most often in relation to travel, and are entitled to reimbursement (see 10.5).

9.30 Where such purchases by staff are planned, the Head of Financial Services and the relevant Budget Holder may jointly approve cash advances to staff who are going to incur expenditure on the College's behalf. Such an advance will only be made on the completion of a Cash Advance Form (available on the College's intranet). Upon completion of the travel or purchase to which the advance relates, within one month a final account must be prepared to demonstrate how the advance was disbursed and any unspent balance repaid. Under NO circumstances will an advance be approved when the final accounting for an earlier advance to an individual is still outstanding.

Petty Cash

9.31 In exceptional circumstances, where a single item is for less than £50, it can be reimbursed from petty cash. It must be supported by a completed and authorised Payment Request Form and the relevant receipts or vouchers.

9.32 The [Head of Financial Director of Finance, Student Funding and Estates](#) ~~shall~~ [Services shall](#) make available to curriculum/service areas such imprests as they consider necessary for the disbursements of petty cash expenses. However, it is important for security purposes that petty cash imprest floats are kept to a minimum. A completed Float Reimbursement Form must be sent to the Head of Financial Services or their nominated representatives together with appropriate receipts or

vouchers. This must be sent before the total amount held has been expended, in order to retain a working balance pending receipt of the amount claimed.

- 9.33 The member of staff granted a float is personally responsible for its safe-keeping. The petty cash box must be kept locked in a secure place in compliance with the requirements of the College's insurers when not in use. The floats will be subject to periodic checks/audits by the relevant manager or another person nominated by him or her.
- 9.34 Petty cash floats may be subject to random checks and audits at any time. Members of staff granted a float must ensure that all paperwork is up to date, that the float is correct and that there is no undue delay in responding to the check or audit. Any discrepancies will result in an internal review by the Finance Team.
- 9.35 Standard College petty cash forms are supplied by the Head of Financial Services and must be used for recording all imprest accounts.
- 9.36 At the end of the financial year a certificate of the balances held should be completed by the member of staff responsible for the float. This must be provided to the Finance Team within the required timelines.

Other Payments

- 9.37 Payments for maintenance and other items to students on behalf of sponsoring organisations shall be made on the authority of the ~~Vice-Principal~~ Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure—Finance, supported by detailed claims approved by the Budget Holder.

Late Payment Rules

- 9.38 The Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 gives small businesses the right to charge interest on late payments from large organisations and public authorities. Key points are:
- small businesses can charge interest on overdue invoices;
 - the rate of interest is currently 8% per annum above the official daily rate of the Bank of England;
 - the Act also applies to overseas organisations;
 - the College can be sued for non-payment.

In view of the penalties in this Act, invoices must be passed for payment as soon as possible after receipt.

Project Cash Advances

- 9.39 Budget Holders may approve cash advances for projects carried out away from the College where cash expenditure may be unavoidable. Other forms of payment will

be expected to be used wherever possible, such as an official purchase order and subsequent payment or a College credit card (if applicable).

- 9.40 Receipts or paid invoices will be retained for all sums expended in this way. A final account must be prepared to demonstrate how the advance was disbursed and any unspent balance repaid. This must be finalised within one month of completion of the project to which the advance relates. Under NO circumstances will an advance be approved when the final accounting for an earlier advance to a project or individual is outstanding.

Giving Hospitality

- 9.41 Staff entertaining guests from external bodies at lunch/diner time should normally use the College's catering facilities. Where this is not the case, reasons must be stated when submitting a claim for reimbursement. All claims by staff must be approved by the relevant member of the Executive Leadership Team prior to reimbursement.

10. Pay Expenditure

Remuneration Policy

- 10.1 All College staff will be appointed to the approved salary scales and in accordance with appropriate conditions of service. All letters of appointment must be issued by the Human Resources and Organisational Development Team.
- 10.2 Salaries and other benefits for the Senior Leadership Team will be determined by the Performance Review and Remuneration Committee of the Board of Management.

Appointment of Staff (Permanent and Temporary)

- 10.3 All contracts of service shall be concluded in accordance with the College's approved human resources practices and procedures. All offers of employment with the College shall be made in writing by the Principal, or Principal's designate. All staff shall ensure that the ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance and the Vice Principal People, Performance and Transformation Assistant Principal of Human Resources and Organisational Development are provided promptly with all information they may require in connection with the appointment, resignation or dismissal of employees.

Salaries and Wages

- 10.4 The Vice Principal People, Performance and Transformation Assistant Principal of Human Resources and Organisational Development and ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance (as appropriate) are responsible for all payments of salaries and wages to all staff including payments for overtime or services rendered. All timesheets and other pay documents, including those relating to fees payable to external examiners or visiting lecturers, will be in a form prescribed or approved by the ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance.

10.5 The ~~Vice Principal People, Performance and Transformation Assistant Principal of Human Resources and Organisational Development~~ us ~~be~~ responsible for keeping the ~~Vice Principal~~ Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance informed of all matters relating to personnel for payroll purposes. In particular these include:

- appointments, resignations, dismissals, supervisions, secondments and transfers;
- absences from duty for sickness or other reason, apart from approved leave;
- changes in remuneration other than normal increments and pay awards;
- information necessary to maintain records of service for superannuation, income tax and national insurance.

10.6 The ~~Vice Principal~~ Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance is responsible for payments to non-employees and for informing the appropriate authorities of such payments. All casual and part-time employees will be included on the payroll (this excludes self-employed workers). All self-employed workers require the written approval of the Principal.

10.7 The ~~Vice Principal~~ Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance shall be responsible for keeping all records relating to payroll including those of a statutory nature.

10.8 All payments must be made in accordance with the College's detailed payroll financial procedures and comply with HM Revenue and Customs regulations.

Superannuation Schemes

10.9 The Board of Management is responsible for undertaking the role of employer in relation to appropriate pension arrangements for employees.

10.10 The ~~Vice Principal~~ Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance is responsible for day-to-day superannuation matters, including:

- paying contributions to various authorised superannuation schemes;
- preparing the annual return to various superannuation schemes.

10.11 The ~~Vice Principal People, Performance and Transformation Assistant Principal of Human Resources and Organisational Development~~, or their representative is responsible for administering pension arrangements and arranging when deductions should begin or cease for staff.

10.12 The ~~Vice Principal People, Performance and Transformation Assistant Principal of Human Resources and Organisational Development~~ or their representative, is responsible for advising any changes to employees' terms and conditions to the relevant superannuation agencies.

Travel, Subsistence and Other Allowances

- 10.11 All claims for payment of subsistence allowances, travelling and incidental expenses shall be completed using the College's i-Trent system. Claims will be approved by the relevant line manager for each individual staff member.
- 10.12 Claims by members of staff must be completed in line with the relevant College Policy and authorised online using i-Trent by their Line Manager. The authorisation by the line manager shall be taken to mean that:
- the journeys were authorised;
 - the expenses were properly and necessarily incurred;
 - the allowances are properly payable by the College;
 - consideration has been given to value for money in choosing the mode of transport.
- 10.13 Travel claims by the Principal shall be approved by the Chair of the Board of Management. Arrangements for travel by the Chair of the Board of Management shall be approved by the [Chair or Vice Chair of the](#) Audit & Risk Committee.

Overseas Travel

- 10.14 All arrangements for overseas travel must be approved by the Principal in advance of committing the College to those arrangements or confirmation of any travel bookings. Arrangements for overseas travel by the Principal or members of the Board of Management shall be approved by the Chair of the Board of Management.
- 10.15 Where spouses, partners or other persons unconnected with the College intend to participate in a trip, this must be clearly identified in the approval request. The College must receive reimbursement for the expected costs it may be asked to cover for those persons in advance of confirming travel bookings. Any additional costs must be fully incurred by staff or board member.

Expenses for Members of the Board of Management

- 10.16 Claims for members of the Board of Management, including the Chair will be authorised by the ~~Secretary to the Board of Management~~[Board Governance Advisor](#). These will then be submitted to the Finance Team for processing.

Severance and Other Non-Recurring Payments

- 10.17 Severance payments shall only be made in accordance with relevant legislation and under a scheme approved by the Board of Management and ~~the~~ SFC. Professional advice should be obtained where necessary. No amounts shall be expended that exceed the budget allocated for the purpose. All such payments shall be authorised by the Principal and calculations checked by the [Vice Principal People, Performance and Transformation](#) ~~Assistant Principal of Human Resources and Organisational~~

~~Development~~ and the ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance or their authorised representation.

~~10.18 Any individual amounts that do not fall within the parameters above or are in excess of £100,000 require approval by the BRIC Committee.~~

~~10.19~~ All amounts paid should, where appropriate, be declared in the financial statements in the prescribed format.

~~10.19~~ All matters referred to an employment tribunal shall be notified to the BRIC Committee at the earliest opportunity in order that budget provision may be made as necessary. All determinations of tribunals must be notified to the Board of Management.

11. Assets

Land and Buildings

11.1 The purchase, lease or rent of land and buildings under £250,000 per annum can be approved by the Principal after an appropriate recommendation and approval by the Senior Leadership Team.

11.2 The purchase, lease or rent of land and buildings over £250,000 per annum can only be undertaken with authority from the BRIC Committee and Board of Management.
~~Where exchequer-funded assets or exchequer funds are involved the authority must sign reference to funding body requirements~~

Fixed Asset Register

11.3 The ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance is responsible for maintaining the College's register of land, buildings, fixed plant and machinery. All Staff will provide the ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance with any information they need to maintain the register.

Stocks and Stores

11.4 Staff are responsible for establishing adequate arrangements for the custody and control of stocks and stores within their curriculum/service area. The systems used for Stores accounting must have the approval of the Head of Financial Services.

11.5 Allocated staff are responsible for ensuring that regular inspections and stock checks are carried out. Stocks and stores of a hazardous nature should be subject to appropriate security checks.

11.6 Where stocks require valuation in the balance sheet the allocated staff member must ensure that the stock-taking procedures in place have the approval of the Head of Financial Services~~Director of Finance, Student Funding and Estates~~. The staff member must also ensure that instructions to appropriate staff within their

curriculum/service areas are issued. These instructions must, in accordance with advice, be contained in the College's detailed financial procedures.

Safeguarding Assets

- 11.7 All staff are responsible for the care, custody and security of the buildings, stock, stores, furniture, cash, etc. under their control. They will consult the ~~Vice-Principal~~ Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance in any case where security is thought to be defective or where it is considered that special security arrangements may be needed.
- 11.8 Assets owned by the College shall, so far as is practical, be effectively marked to identify them as College property.

Personal Use

- 11.9 Assets owned or leased by the College shall not be subject to personal use without proper authorisation.

Asset Disposal

- 11.10 Disposal of equipment and furniture must be in accordance with the College's relevant policies and procedures. All such ~~d~~Disposals require the written authorisation of the ~~Vice-Principal~~ Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance.
- 11.11 Disposal of land and buildings must only take place with the authorisation of the Board of Management. ~~SFC Funding Body~~ consent ~~will may also~~ be required in advance of any planned sale. ~~if its funds were involved in the acquisition of the asset.~~

All Other Assets

- 11.12 All ~~s~~Staff are responsible for establishing adequate arrangements for the custody and control of all other assets owned by the College. This includes tangible assets (such as stock) and intangible assets (such as software), including electronic data.

12. Funds Held in Trust

Gifts, Benefactions and Donations

- 12.1 The ~~Vice-Principal~~ Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance is responsible for maintaining financial records in respect of gifts, benefactions and donations made to the College and initiating claims for recovery of tax where appropriate.

Student Support Funds

- 12.2 The ~~Vice-Principal~~ Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance will prescribe the format for recording the use of Student Support Funds.

- 12.3 Detailed records require to be held to support the payment of funds to students and these records require to comply with funding body requirements.

Voluntary Funds

- 12.4 The ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure –Finance shall be informed of any fund that is not an official fund of the College but which is controlled wholly or in part by a member of staff in relation to their function in the College.
- 12.5 The accounts of any such fund shall be audited/verified by an independent external person and shall be submitted with a certificate of audit/verification to the appropriate body. The ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure –Finance shall be entitled to verify that this has been done.

13. Other Matters

Insurance

- 13.1 The ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure –Finance is responsible for the College's insurance arrangements, including the provision of advice on the types of cover available. As part of the overall risk management strategy, all risks will have been considered and those most effectively dealt with by insurance cover will have been identified. This is likely to include important potential liabilities and provide sufficient cover to meet any potential risk to all assets.
- 13.2 The ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure –Finance is responsible for effecting insurance cover and reporting to the Executive Leadership Team. The ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure –Finance (or their nominated representative which in most cases will be the Head of Financial Services) is therefore responsible for obtaining quotes, negotiating claims and maintaining the necessary records. The ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure –Finance will keep a register of all insurances effected by the College and the property and risks covered.
- 13.3 The ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure –Finance (or their nominated representative) will also deal with the College's insurers and advisers about specific insurance issues.
- 13.4 All staff involved must ensure that any agreements negotiated within their curriculum/service areas with external bodies cover any legal liabilities to which the College may be exposed. The ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure –Finance's advice should be sought to ensure that this is the case.
- 13.5 All staff involved must give prompt notification to the ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure –Finance of any potential new risks and additional property and equipment that may require insurance and of any alterations affecting existing risks. All staff involved must advise the ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance

~~and Infrastructure – Finance~~ (or their nominated representative, in most cases the Head of Financial Services) immediately of any event that may give rise to an insurance claim. The ~~Vice Principal~~ Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance (or their nominated representative) will notify the College's insurers and, if appropriate, prepare a claim in conjunction with the staff member's manager for transmission to the insurers. Staff should ensure that all insurance claims are notified immediately to the ~~Head of Financial Services~~ Director of Finance, Student Funding and Estates.

- 13.6 The ~~Vice Principal~~ Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance (or their nominated representative) is responsible for keeping suitable records of plant which is subject to inspection by insurance companies or their representatives and for ensuring that inspection is carried out in the periods prescribed.
- 13.7 All staff using their own vehicles on behalf of the College shall maintain appropriate insurance cover for business use. All staff require to adhere to the relevant Policy. No personal car mileage claim will be reimbursed where a member of staff does not have business insurance cover.

Companies and Joint Ventures

- 13.9 In certain circumstances it may be advantageous to the College to establish a company or a joint venture to undertake services on behalf of the College. Any member of staff considering the use of a company or a joint venture should first seek the advice of the ~~Vice Principal~~ Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance. The ~~Vice Principal~~ Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance when assessing any such request should have due regard to guidance issued by the ~~SFC~~ funding body.
- 13.10 The Board of Management, following a recommendation from the Senior Leadership Team, is responsible for approving the establishment of all companies or joint ventures and the procedure to be followed in order to do so. This will have regard to any guidance provided by the funding bodies. The process involved in forming a company or a joint venture and arrangements for monitoring and reporting on the activities of these undertakings will be documented in the College's financial procedures.
- 13.11 It is the responsibility of the Board of Management to establish the shareholding arrangements and appoint directors of companies wholly or partly owned by the College. Where the College is the majority shareholder, the directors must submit, via the ~~BRIC~~ Committee, an annual report to the Board of Management. They will also submit business plans or budgets as requested to enable the Committee to assess the risk to the College. The College's internal and external auditors shall also be appointed to such companies.
- 13.11 Where the College is the majority shareholder in a company, that company's financial year shall be consistent with that of the College.

Security

- 13.12 Keys to safes or other similar containers are to be held securely by the person responsible at all times. The loss of such keys must be reported to the ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance (or in their absence the Head of Financial Services) immediately.
- 13.13 The ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance shall be responsible for maintaining proper security and privacy of information held on the College's computer network. Appropriate levels of security will be provided, such as passwords for networked PCs together with restricted physical access for network servers. Information relating to individuals held on computer will be subject to the provisions of the GDPR legislation. The ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance has responsibility to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and the safety of documents.
- 13.14 The ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance is responsible for the safekeeping of official and legal documents relating to the College. Signed copies of deeds, leases, agreements and contracts must, therefore, be forwarded to the ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance and held in an appropriately secure location.

Students' Association

- 13.15 The Students' Association is recognised as fulfilling a valuable role within the College.
- 13.16 Subject to any constraints imposed by the funding body, the Senior Leadership Team shall determine the level of grant to be paid annually to the Students' Association. This grant will be included within the annual budgets presented to the BRIG Committee and Board of Management in line with the arrangements noted in these Financial Regulations.
- 13.17 The Students' Association must adhere to the Financial Regulations in all matters.

Provision of Indemnities

- 13.18 Any member of staff asked to give an indemnity on behalf of the College, for whatever purpose, should consult the ~~Vice-Principal~~Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure – Finance before any such indemnity is given.

Intellectual Property Rights

- 13.19 Intellectual Property is the product of thought, creativity, and intellectual effort. In the course of their studies at the College, Students may generate Intellectual Property (e.g. "results") which is of some commercial value. A variety of legal rights protect applications of ideas and information that may be of commercial value. Those most relevant to the College's activities include patents, registered designs, copyright and

'know how'. The law is clear that intellectual property created by staff 'in the course of their employment' belongs to their employer.

Students are not normally employees of the College. Any assignment of Student Intellectual Property must be done by a specific contract. Colleges must seek to strike a balance between a duty of care to the Student and a duty to exploit (e.g. sell, transfer, assign or license) Intellectual Property for the College's good, this balance being best achieved by selective assignment arising out of a specific contract in cases where the College's input in the creation of the Intellectual Property is very clear.

In the event of the College deciding to become involved in the commercial exploitation of inventions and research, the matter should then proceed in accordance with the intellectual property procedures issued by the College and contained in the College's detailed financial procedures. Initial guidance should be sought from the SFC should this situation arise.

Intellectual Property Rights by Students

- 13.20 Where a Student generates Intellectual Property the Student has a duty to promptly inform the College of the Intellectual Property. The College will explain to the Student the issue of ownership in respect of all types of Intellectual Property through the development of appropriate documentation. When considering any Intellectual Property generated by one of its Students, the College will seek to strike a balance between fulfilling its duty of care to the Student and exploiting intellectual property for the good of the College. In each case the College will be mindful of protecting any third-party rights that may be relevant in the generation of the Intellectual Property.

APPENDIX A: PRINCIPAL ~~AND~~ CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S SCHEME OF FINANCIAL DELEGATION

The Principal and Chief Executive is authorised:

- 1 to take such measures as may be required in emergencies subject to advising the Chair where possible and reporting to the appropriate Committee or to the Board as soon as possible thereafter on any items for which approval of the Committee or the Board would normally be necessary;
- 2 to approve the provision of reasonable hospitality to representatives of other Colleges, organisations, members of staff of the College or others and also within the UK to make visits and to authorise members of staff of the College to make visits as representatives of the College if he or she considers it would be in the interest of the Board to do so. To make visits abroad or authorise such visits subject to reports being made to the Board of Management;
- 3 to sign all deeds and other documents binding the Board in line with authority, funding body regulations and relevant Acts
- 4 to appoint staff of the College within complements approved by the Board;
- 5 to engage the services of outside persons, firms or organisations when it is necessary to carry out the functions of the Board in cases where the power to engage such services is not delegated to a Committee or is not reserved to the Board;
- 6 to approve initial salary placing within approved salary scales;
- 7 to administer in accordance with College policy the disbursement of monies to students of the College;
- 8 to administer in accordance with College policy the provision to students of financial or other assistance;
- 9 to set and amend as necessary the level of tuition fees, examination expenses, maintenance and contribution scales for all courses offered by the College and to waive or grant remission of such fees or expenses in special cases within guidelines set by the Scottish Funding Council;
- 10 to authorise students to attend and to make grants to students to enable them to attend courses and conferences and to undertake educational visits and excursions at home or abroad within the approved estimates and policies of the Board;
- 11 to authorise leave of absence with salary for staff to accompany students of the College to courses, conferences, visits and excursions;

- 12 to ensure arrangements are in place to enable appropriate disciplinary action to be taken, including expulsion, against students in accordance with any policies of the College;
- 13 to provide financial and other assistance to the Students' Association of the College;
- 14 to grant the use of College accommodation to outside bodies or persons for the purpose of holding meetings and functions on such terms and conditions as are reasonable in the circumstances;
- 15 to allocate and apportion accommodation within the College among the various departments of the College;
- 16 to arrange for any necessary alterations or adaptations to College property at a cost of up to £250,000 in respect of one project, provided the alteration or adaptation does not affect any material change in the character of the College;
- 17 to apply to the appropriate authority for any necessary statutory consents;
- 18 to lodge with the appropriate authority, objections to the grant of any permission, licence, warrant etc. where it is competent and in the interests of the College to do so;
- 19 to determine and control the standard of furniture, furnishings and equipment within the College;
- 20 to grant any way leave or servitude over the property of the College on such terms as may be appropriate;
- 21 to seek and, in the company of another member of staff of the College when competitive tenders are sought, to open tenders for contracts with the Board;
- 22 to enter into contracts on behalf of the Board or to authorise another to enter into contracts on behalf of the Board after all necessary approvals have been obtained;
- 23 to terminate contracts or to authorise the termination of contracts, when it is in the interests of the Board to do so;
- 24 to check the financial standing of potential contractors;
- 25 to purchase necessary equipment at a cost of up to £250,000;
- 26 to dispose of equipment which is surplus to requirements;
- 27 to enter into agreements for rental, hire or leasing of items of equipment when the rental or hire charge does not exceed £250,000 per annum and to sign agreement forms for such rentals, hires or leases, all in accordance with the College's Procurement Policy and Procedures

- 28 to enter into contracts for the supply of goods and services to the College where the value of the contract does not exceed £250,000 per annum and to sign such contracts, all in accordance with the College's Procurement Policy and Procedures
- 29 To sign such other contracts for the supply of goods and services and other items as may be approved by a Committee or the Board, all having been procured in accordance with the College's Procurement Policy.
- 30 to provide courses as requested by outside agencies and to negotiate appropriate charges thereof;
- 31 to administer any educational endowment which transferred to and vested in the Board in terms of section 19(1) of the 1992 Act;
- 32 to raise funds for and to apply them to any of the activities which the Board has power to carry on;
- 33 to sign cheques;
- 34 to take out any necessary insurance;
- 35 to make arrangements with insurance companies concerning the settlement of claims;
- 36 to write off bad debts due to the College up to the value of £25,000;
- 37 to vire monies from expenditure headings within agreed budgets taking account of and complying with the College's Financial Regulations;
- 38 to sign and date the report of the Board of the Annual Accounts in terms of the accounts direction given by the Scottish Ministers under paragraph 18 of Schedule 2 to the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) 1992 Act;
- 39 to pay expenses to members of the Board, and the Board's Committees on receipt of valid claims taking into account guidance from the SFC.

APPENDIX B: THE NINE PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE FROM THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR BOARD MEMBERS OF DEVOLVED PUBLIC BODIES

SELFLESSNESS

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their families or their friends.

INTEGRITY

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that may influence them in the performance of their official duties.

OBJECTIVITY

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

OPENNESS

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all their decisions and the actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

HONESTY

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

LEADERSHIP

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

DUTY (PUBLIC SERVICE)

Holders of public office have a duty to act in the interests of the public body of which they are a Board member and to act in accordance with the core tasks of the body.

RESPECT

Holders of public office must respect fellow members of their public body and employees of the body and the role they play, treating them with courtesy at all times.

APPENDIX C: INTERNAL AUDIT RESPONSIBILITIES

The prime responsibility of the internal audit service is to provide the Board of Management, the designated officer and the other managers of the College with assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal control system, including risk management and governance.

Responsibility for internal control remains fully with management, who should recognise that internal audit can only provide 'reasonable assurance' and cannot provide any guarantee against material errors, loss or fraud. Internal audit also plays a valuable role in helping management to improve systems of internal control and so to reduce the potential effects of any significant risks faced by the College. Risk management provides the opportunity for internal audit work to be efficient and focused. It does not necessarily imply that internal audit activity has to be increased.

Internal audit can also provide independent and objective consultancy advice specifically to help management improve the internal control system, including risk management and governance. In such circumstances, internal auditors apply their professional skills in a systematic and disciplined way to contribute to the achievement of corporate objectives.

Such advisory work contributes to the opinion that internal audit provides on internal control, including risk management and governance.

Requirement for an Internal Audit Service

- 1 In accordance with the SFC College's Financial Memorandum ~~with the Scottish Funding Council~~, the Board of Management is required to secure the provision of an effective internal audit service (IAS). The prime responsibility of the IAS is to provide the Board of Management, the Accountable Officer and other senior management of the College, with an objective assessment of the adequacy and effectiveness of management's internal control systems.
- 2 Internal audit is an independent appraisal function established by management to review the College's internal control systems. The IAS will objectively examine, evaluate and report on the adequacy of internal control, thus contributing to the economic, efficient and effective use of resources and to the reduction of the potential risks faced by the College. Internal audit is a key control mechanism, as well as a service to management at all levels, with a scope covering all the activities of the College including those not funded by the Council.

Coverage includes all the College's operations, resources, staff, services and responsibilities to other bodies although does not extend to the academic process.
- 3 To be effective, the IAS must be distinct from and independent of the College's external audit provision and should have no executive responsibilities.
- 4 Internal audit is not a substitute for good management, the operational responsibility for which rests fully with senior management.

- 5 The IAS can deliver significant benefits to a College through its primary focus on the internal control systems, often resulting in improved performance and better management of risk. The IAS can also add value to the College by its involvement in value for money studies and special investigations. Further, the IAS may be requested by management to provide advice on the appropriate standards of controls to be implemented in relation to new systems, or review procedures before they are implemented to minimise the risk of control weaknesses being introduced, provided that its independence and objectivity in performing future internal audit work will not be compromised.
- 6 The IAS must not be directly involved in designing, installing and operating systems or the drafting of procedures for systems. Performing such duties will compromise audit objectivity.

Terms of Reference

- 7 The IAS must have formal terms of reference agreed by the Board of Management, on the recommendation of the Audit & Risk Committee, which should have regard to the provisions of this Code in drawing up and approving the terms of reference. The terms of reference should form part of the letter of engagement for the provision of internal audit services by external providers, or the job description of the Head of IAS where the service is provided in-house.
- 8 The scope and detail of the terms of reference must be such that they enable the Head of the IAS to provide the Board of Management with an objective assessment of the adequacy, reliability and effectiveness of the College's internal control system.
- 9 The Head of IAS must advise the Board of Management of the risks to which they, and the College, may be exposed if the scope of the audit coverage is limited in any way. Where the Head of IAS believes that any limitations are unacceptable, his or her views and opinion on the associated risks must be formally reported to the Chairman of the Board of Management, the Chairman of the Audit & Risk Committee and the Accountable Officer.



(Paper 7)

Mainstreaming Equality and Equality Outcomes 2021 – 2025

Progress Report February 2024



In this progress report:

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[social media links]

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Introduction

Ayrshire College recognises the importance of diversity of its students, staff, the community it serves and those we wish to attract. Ensuring that equality is at the heart of everything we do, taking into account the effects of intersectionality and factors, such as the long-term impact of the Covid pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis, the effect of adverse childhood experiences and deprivation, we continually strive to eliminate all forms of discrimination and support an inclusive culture which extends beyond the College bounds.

The purpose of this report is to provide an annual update on how the College continues to build on its many strengths and achievements as highlighted in the April 2023 **Mainstreaming Equality 2021 – 2023 and Equality Outcomes 2021-2025 Report**.

The April 2023 report set out the College's progress in meeting the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The PSED was created under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 in Scotland. All public sector bodies, including the College, are legally obliged to meet the general equality duty.

In addition to the general duty, specific duties require the College to publish a report on the progress it has made on integrating the general equality duty into the exercise of its functions to better perform that duty.

In January 2023, the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) published a set of National Equality Outcomes (NEOs) for colleges and universities to consider, which will be fully aligned with the College's own Equality Outcomes by April 2025.

We continue to work towards achieving the four College Equality Outcomes which we published for the reporting period 2021-2025, to ensure that we improve the learning and employment experience for those beset by inequality based on protected characteristic(s).

This report provides a summary of progress towards delivering on our Equality Outcomes 2021-2025 and on mainstreaming Equality across the College.

1. Our People

It is important that our workforce reflects the diversity of our local communities therefore, improving workforce diversity continues to be a key priority. By improving diversity, we benefit from a more creative and innovative workforce, encouraging everyone to use their diverse perspectives and talents, contributing to the success of the College.

Improving Workforce Diversity

In April 2023, the College reported that previously identified challenges regarding its workforce diversity had persisted.

These include:

- An ageing workforce with the highest representation continuing to be from the 41-55 age group and the lowest representation from the 16-25 years
- A low representation from minority groups in relation to; disability; ethnicity; religion or belief; and sexual orientation
- A clustering of male and female staff in traditionally gendered occupations and roles

Whilst these challenges persist, the College is committed to taking clear action and has demonstrated an improvement in terms of attracting increasingly diverse candidates for job roles at application stage.

The college made a commitment to tackle this priority by examining the employee journey, looking at staff recruitment, staff development and the exit process, embedding equality-based questions in the exit interview.

Whilst actions outlined in **Equality Outcome 2** have a student focus, it is acknowledged that by achieving these, there will be an impact on workforce diversity in that striving to create gender balance within all courses, will reflect positively in the workforce of the future.

Ten Months in Numbers – Ayrshire College Staff [Infographic]

Ayrshire College Staff 765

60% work full time

8.4% part-time staff are male

1.3% staff aged 16-26 years, maintaining the increase reported in April 2023

7% of staff with a disability or long-term health condition, maintaining the increase reported in April 2023

Applications to Join Ayrshire College Workforce

Reducing number of Prefer not to say for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual applicants at 3.6%

Total of 4.9% of BAME applicants

Total of 4.4% of non-Christian faith applicants

Total of 10.3% of applicants declaring a disability or long term health condition

Steps Being Taken to Improve Workforce Diversity

[Side quote] 'By improving diversity we benefit from a more creative and innovative workforce, encouraging everyone to use their diverse perspectives and talents which contributes to the success of the College'.

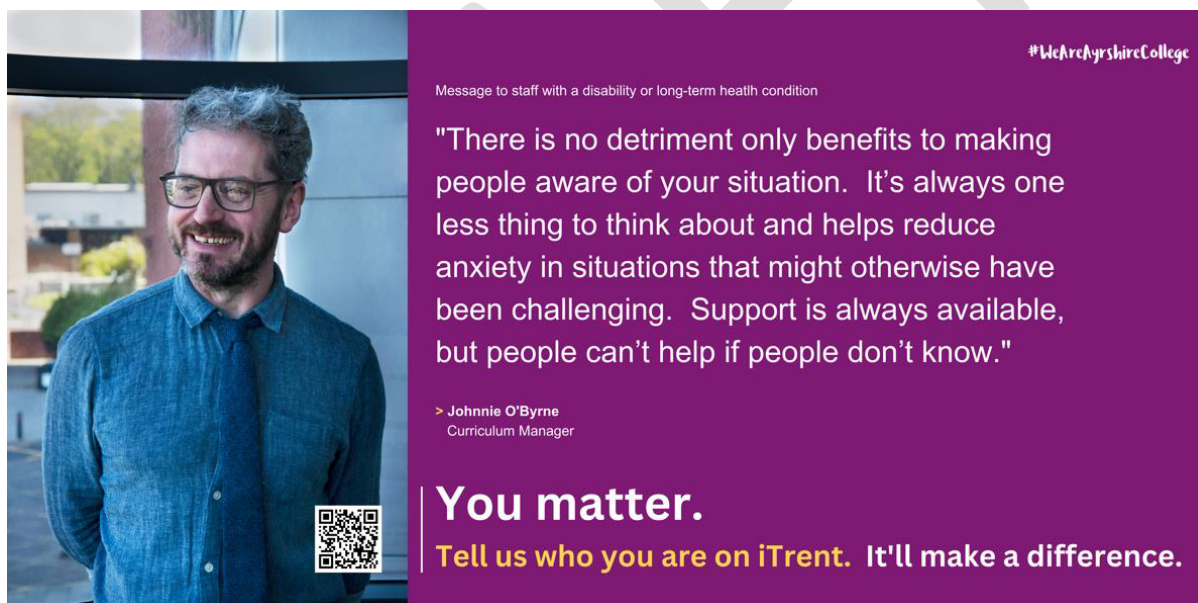
The College recognises that a series of sustained, inter-related actions are required to bring about its ambitions with regards to workforce diversity.

#WeAreAyrshireCollege

"We Are Ayrshire College" is an ongoing College initiative to celebrate the diversity of the College's students and staff to promote inclusion. 'If I can see me, I can be me' underpins this initiative, which aims to share the stories and experiences of students and staff. Those experiences are being shared on the College's website with the ambition to launch a series of staff photo posters around campuses with a QR code linking to the website.

The website can be accessed on the link here:

<https://www1.ayrshire.ac.uk/blog/2022/weareayrshirecollege/>



#WeAreAyrshireCollege

Message to staff with a disability or long-term health condition

"There is no detriment only benefits to making people aware of your situation. It's always one less thing to think about and helps reduce anxiety in situations that might otherwise have been challenging. Support is always available, but people can't help if people don't know."

> Johnnie O'Byrne
Curriculum Manager

You matter.
Tell us who you are on iTrent. It'll make a difference.

Hiring Manager Toolkit

The Hiring Manager Toolkit was launched in January 2021 as a training tool to support College line managers in carrying out their role and functions within the recruitment cycle. The training sets out guidance on vacancy request, advertising, shortlisting, selection, offer and pre-employment (onboarding). Specific focus is given to legal and discrimination issues to ensure that line managers have a detailed understanding of their duties and responsibilities.

The toolkit also includes unconscious bias e-learning to enable managers to recognise and challenge their own bias and assumptions, particularly within the context of recruitment and selection.

Since it was introduced, 90 staff members have completed the Hiring Managers Toolkit.

Growing Leaders Framework (Aspire)

In 2022 the Aspire programme was introduced as part of the Growing Leaders Framework to enable the aspirations of the Ayrshire College Statement of Ambition 2030 and Refresh and Renew Plan 2021-24. The aim of the programme is to develop the skill set of staff who aspire to succeed in leadership roles across the College.

The programme adopts a pioneering and unique learning process, providing opportunities for our people to exercise leadership in a strategic context. Without this practical exposure to management, it can be difficult for those aspiring to be in more senior roles to demonstrate the required capability.

The programmes focus includes leadership capabilities, manager resources, mentor toolkit, candidate resources, tailored workshops, project briefs/toolkit, with equality and diversity being delivered as a workshop topic as well as being embedded throughout the programme.

The first cohort of Aspire Candidates completed the programme in 2023. There were 10 candidates with a 7/3 female/male split. Five of the candidates (4 female/1 male) have moved into promoted Team Leader roles and two (females) of the four, have subsequently moved into management positions.

SUSE Scotland Assessment

The Scottish Union of Supported Employment (SUSE) is the national representative body for supported employment providers, supporting workplaces in ensuring that disabled people and those with long term health conditions, have the opportunity to experience working life. The College is working with SUSE Scotland to conduct a user experience employer assessment for accessibility. The assessment will take place in March 2024 and will consider both the physical environment and key college processes, including the recruitment cycle.

Progress Being Made

The College is making progress towards improving its workforce diversity, attracting applications from a more diverse pool of candidates and there is a steady increase in staff members who are declaring a disability.

This work needs to be approached with the acknowledgement that inequality extends beyond the key protected characteristics and is further exacerbated by income, wealth, living standards, health, education, labour market participation and life chances.

As an employer Ayrshire College is committed to advancing equality of opportunity, fostering good relations and eliminating unlawful discrimination. We

are committed to having a work environment where all employees are treated as individuals and with dignity and respect.

Moving forward, the College will continue to monitor the challenges relating to age, disability, race and sexual orientation with the aim of future actions being informed by this information.

2. Equal Pay

In April 2023, the college reported a gender pay gap between male and female staff as follows:

- a mean gender pay gap of 11.59% (full-time) and 11.70% (part-time).
- a median gender gap of 26.77% (full-time) and 16.07% (part-time).

In our 2023 report, we reaffirmed our commitment to the principle that pay should be awarded equitably and fairly to all staff, regardless of age, disability, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, whilst acknowledging the further exacerbating factors of intersectionality and persistent societal inequality.

We acknowledge that occupational segregation exists within the College and are committed to eradicating pay bias. As well as demonstrating this commitment primarily in our Strategic Ambitions and through our Equality Outcomes, we have set out priority actions to address these issues in order to improve our current gender pay gap.

[side note] To view the Colleges equal pay statement. Visit https://www1.ayrshire.ac.uk/media/9188/ayrshire-college-equality-report-2021-25-accessible_compressed.pdf

[Quote:] “The gender pay gap is complex and is symptomatic of gender inequality. It is for this reason the College has long taken a whole-College approach to gender equality.”

The College is investing in its people through the implementation of its Growing Leaders Framework and the offering of funded accreditation as well as supporting where possible, opportunities to work flexibly.

Evolve Leadership Development Programme

In March 2023 we consulted with staff on our future College requirements. One of the key focus areas identified is to embed outstanding leadership at every level of the organisation. Leadership that is positively impactful and building upon the examples of good practice to realise our potential as a high performing organisation.

Evidence supports that clearly defined leadership competencies, underpinned by a comprehensive programme of development, is central to helping to achieving this.

We developed the Ayrshire College Leadership Competency Framework and associated Evolve Leadership Development Programme. The Evolve Leadership Programme is for established leaders and managers and sits within

our Growing Leaders Academy, alongside our Aspire Growing Leaders Programme for emerging leaders. The programme is designed around 3 new leadership competences; Engages & Inspires Others, Grows People & Teams and Embraces Collaboration. As with the Aspire programme for budding leaders, equality and diversity are themes which are embedded into the programme and in addition to this, there is a workshop dedicated to Equality Impact Assessment.

Flexible Working Requests

Between April 2023 and January 2024, mirroring the previous reporting period, the College received 9 flexible working requests. All requests were made by female college staff with 44% of these related to childcare/dependants/caring responsibilities. All nine applications were approved.

3. Mainstreaming Equality

To mainstream equality is to embed equality into the everyday functions, activities and processes of the College to ensure that we can demonstrate that we are meeting the three needs of the general duty under our Public Sector Equality Duty:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advancing equality of opportunity between people from different protected characteristic groups.
- Fostering good relations between people from different protected characteristic groups, tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups.

In this way, equality becomes part of the fabric of 'who we are' as an organisation; that the value placed on inclusion and diversity are more than just words and instead is a way of being, with equality rooted in our day-to-day work.

Mainstreaming equality enables the College to continue to improve the experience of students and staff and contribute meaningfully to the inclusion and wellbeing of the communities it serves.

In April 2023 we assessed the College to be making good progress in mainstreaming equality and continue to strengthen our efforts for the betterment of our students and staff across all protected characteristics. We continue to work towards the six mainstreaming focus areas we set ourselves in 2021:

1. Strategic vision, approach and governance arrangements
2. Curriculum content and/or design
3. Raising awareness
4. Supporting student success
5. Supporting staff success
6. Partnership working

At that time the College also introduced mainstreaming themes to further progress and monitor specific equality needs. The Colleges three mainstreaming themes are:

- Equally Safe – Gender Based Violence (GBV)
- Student participation in the feedback process
- Female staff progression

To view the progress reported at that time, in mainstreaming equality against the three focus areas and College's themes, visit:

[[LINK TO APRIL 2023 REPORT](#)]

Progress Being Made to Mainstream Equality

Strategic Vision, Approach and Governance

[[LINK TO STATEMENT OF AMBITION](#)]

The College positioned equality and inclusion as a key ambition in its Statement of Ambition 2030 and as a strategic objective in its Refresh and Renew Plan 2021-2024. The College has implemented its new College Operating and Enhancement Plan (COEP) and Team Operating and Enhancement Plan (TOEP) process to enable continued success, through which teams are asked to align and map their objectives to the current College Equality Outcomes.

In addition to this strategic commitment to equality and inclusion, a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) takes on the role of Equality Champion during meetings, and the Values, Inclusion, Equality and Wellbeing Group (VIEW) steering group oversees five operational sub-groups.

A review of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) process has been carried out, with a focus on streamlining the process using digital tools to further support and embed the practice at all management levels. EQIAs are completed for all Board and Committee papers, where required, as well as for all policy, decisions and changes across the College, in accordance with our responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty. EqIA training will be rolled out through the Evolve programme and an e-learning module will be available through the staff learning portal.

The College now has a dedicated counselling room on each campus and students and staff also have access to a contemplation/wellbeing/prayer room.

Following on from the launch of the Menopause Policy, the College has established a Menopause Action group which facilitates a Menopause Support Group for Staff and Menopause Champions who are trained to support and signpost students and staff.

Curriculum Content and/or Design

In April 2023, the College shared several key highlights and examples of good practice to emphasise ways in which equality is being embedded in curriculum content and/or design, moving the College further towards realising a key College ambition. Ongoing success of award winning initiatives such as 'Passing Positivity' and 'Rockpool Podcasts' as well as partnership initiatives with Ayrshire Sportsability and Connecting Communities are examples of how the College is exploring new ways of delivering learning and teaching which

fosters inclusion and equality of opportunity. The innovative “Essential Radio” was highlighted for its aims of supporting students’ essential skills, including oral presentation, literacy development, ICT and numeracy skills through real-life, practical experience.

[QUOTE] ‘Essential Radio is embedded within Curriculum delivery and enriches the learning and teaching experience for students.’

Supporting Staff Success

The inclusion and wellbeing of staff remains a college priority. Staff are continuing to engage positively with available support such as MCL Medics, employee assistance service, the Menopause Support Group, Staff Wellbeing Teams Page, as well as various Wellbeing initiatives throughout the year such as walking challenges and the BRIT Challenge.

Following a hybrid working pilot from March 2022-June 2023, and an extensive staff consultation, staff have been supported with the transition to hybrid working, where appropriate. The approach to hybrid working recognises that there are benefits to working in this way, where roles permit.

The Equality Matters section of the Staff Learning Portal is continuing to enable staff to enhance and develop their skills, knowledge and understanding across all the protected characteristics, as well as other key topics of importance, such as sexual harassment, domestic abuse and allyship. The College introduced a ‘Commitment to LGBT+ Inclusion’ digital badge and lanyard pin badge for those who complete the e-learning modules in relation to gender reassignment and sexual orientation with 81 members of staff receiving this through the completion of the LGBT Youth Scotland E-Learning Module.

[Add in the Inclusion badge to border]

Good Practice Example:

Ayrshire Equality Network LGBT+ Conversation Café Events

In June 2023, the Ayrshire Equality Network, led by Ayrshire College, delivered on a series of LGBT+ Conversation Cafes. There was a conversation café hosted in each local authority area with cafes taking place in Irvine Royal Academy, Ayrshire College, Kilmarnock Campus and UWS, Ayr Campus. A total of 63 people took part in the cafes, this number was made up of members of the LGBT+ community, allies and service providers.

The purpose of the cafes was to consult with the LGBT+ Community and its allies on a set of discussion questions regarding the LGBT+ experience in relation to LGBT+ support in Ayrshire, health and wellbeing, and safety.

Participants reported that safety was an issue and whilst there are clubs available, many LGBT+ people are reluctant to go out after dark to travel to these, for fear of their safety.

The Ayrshire Equality network is looking at data collected with the view to developing a set of joint actions to support the strengthening and accessibility

of LGBT+ networks with the aim of reducing isolation by improving access to LGBT+ services and social opportunities.

Good Practice Example:

Gender Leadership Secondary School Pan Ayrshire Event

Ayrshire College is committed to ensuring that everyone has the opportunity, no matter their gender, to pursue a course and career of their choice.

In June 2023, we invited our local secondary schools to help us with this by challenging the gender stereotypes which still exist and influence young people's decisions about their subject choices and career progression.

We invited 60 children from each secondary school in Ayrshire (1152 in total) to attend a two-day taster event, where the pupils had the opportunity to take part in a range of curriculum activities that showcased the opportunities available at the College .

Prior to their visit, the College provided schools with a class activity which focused on removing stereotypical career pathway assumptions dependent on individual gender identity. This session included examples and student testimonial videos from across the College, to break down misconceptions relating to gender roles.

Students were then timetabled to attend sessions across the following curriculum areas; care, computing, creative, early years, hairdressing and beauty, hospitality, science and engineering, sport and trades ensuring that all students had the opportunity to participate in areas where there is a traditional gender imbalance.

Staff member quotes:

'Several pupils have been commenting on how they are now thinking about certain courses and careers based on this visit'.

'Pupils had a good look around the College, met staff and experienced aspects of college life. It was a good opportunity to help students engage with the curriculum.'

'It was good to see pupils engage with a range of subject areas.'

Pupil quotes:

'It was fun to explore different things in science and I liked wearing the coat and glasses.'

'We learned life saving techniques in health, which was good.'

'The lecturers were so positive, giving us high fives and great feedback when we did something well.'

Following its success, the College is continuing with this initiative, and an event is being planned for summer 2024. A follow-up will be conducted with the pupils who took part in the previous year to reinforce the message and monitor the project's impact.

Good Practice Example:

Beyond the Surface Showcase

The College's Hair, Beauty, Complementary Therapies and Make-Up Artistry department is looking beyond the surface to highlight the regulated qualifications colleges offer and to help break down gender stereotypes within the beauty industry to encourage more males and non-binary people into an industry, which has a long history of gender imbalance. The event also focusses on how we involve our industry partners in qualification design.

Beyond the Surface is an annual Ayrshire College event showcasing pathways to the industry in hair, barbering, spa, beauty, complementary therapies, and make-up artistry.

Participation is invited from prospective students, progressing students and secondary school pupils considering a career in the industry.

Following on from a department review of curriculum resources to ensure they are inclusive and do not reinforce gender stereotypes, the event further breaks down stereotypes by including representation and examples from across all genders.

There are keynote speakers from all our industries, along with a marketplace featuring stalls of employers, suppliers, past students, and current students encompassing try-a-skill activity and promoting recruitment opportunities with an opportunity for all approach.

Following on from a successful event in 2023, the next event is taking place in March 2024.

Good Practice Example:

16 Days of Action – Not That Guy

Ayrshire College in partnership with Ayrshire College Student Association and our Police Scotland Liaison Officer delivered a programme of events throughout the 16 Days of Action, which is a campaign to raise awareness of, and call an end to, violence against women and girls. In celebration of our new Willie Mackie Skills Hub, we enlisted the help of the level 4 joinery and plumbing students at Kilwinning to produce wooden banners to be used in the East Ayrshire Reclaim the Night March, hosted at our Kilmarnock Campus on Tuesday 5 December 2023.

The trades area has a persistent gender imbalance, and whilst there has been small but steady inroads into tackling this, there are still predominantly more

males studying trades courses. In addition, students within Trades are less likely to get involved in College initiatives regarding gender based violence, however, they have a critical role in helping the College tackle this gender imbalance to make a career in trades more attractive to females by creating a welcoming environment where sexual harassment and micro aggressions are not tolerated.

The “That Guy” initiative encourages males to call out their friends when their behaviour or banter crosses the line into sexual harassment, to tell their friends ‘don’t be that guy’.

To put the project in context for the students, PC Frank Lynch, the Colleges Police Liaison Officer delivered a series of ‘Not that Guy’ workshops to the students prior to them creating the banners as a practical task and contributing to the success of the campaign.

[INSERT PLACARD PHOTO HERE]

Good Practice Example:

Connecting Communities

Connecting Communities is a fully inclusive and sustainable partnership that has been developed between local government, local employers and Ayrshire College. The Connecting Communities Initiative has been recognised politically in both the Scottish Parliament and in the House of Commons where the impact has received cross party support, as well as receiving a Green Gown and CDN Award.

In March 2022, the College Development Network (CDN) Research and Enhancement Centre published evidence from a two-year national sector inquiry into the role of colleges in addressing the poverty crisis in Scotland. Much of what was learned derived from the outstanding work delivered at our college in terms of addressing how colleges can tackle the tangible barriers faced by our communities around food poverty, digital poverty, fuel poverty, and period poverty. Working with our communities brings a rich educational experience to our staff, students and employers. On any given day our students enjoy a full range of experience working with children from pre-school age to hosting our Older Adult Group, designed to improve mental and physical health. In addition to daily offering of community outreach, we also host the largest festival of sport for people with additional support needs in the south of Scotland. Not only does this invigorate our community it provides a range of immeasurable benefits for our students. Connecting Communities links with the Building Better Futures project that has been implemented by the College to develop the skills that people require to lead healthy, productive and successful lives. Our impact to the community is significant as we are responding to the Scottish and UK Governments, Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan, amongst other national policies. Our Connecting Communities initiative redefines the

College as a safe space that provides not only national qualifications but additionally ensures that we are promoting fair access for all.

As well as promoting wellbeing through the delivery of healthy eating and physical activity sessions for families, the initiative encompasses the Mental Health United, male only, football mental health support group. Currently the group has 30 members between the ages of 17 and 28.

The Connecting Communities initiative was recently recognised at the prestigious Green Gown awards, receiving the award for Benefiting Society and also winning the Health and Wellbeing award at the College Development Networks award ceremony in November.

4 Equality Outcomes

In April 2021 the College published its set of four Equality Outcomes. Equality outcomes are a means by which an identified, evidenced equality need is being addressed. The Equality Outcomes are used to tackle the most significant and persistent inequalities being experienced and they provide the opportunity to make a difference to the lives and experiences of those most beset by inequality on the basis of their protected characteristic(s).

When we set our outcomes, we were aware that these must reflect the journey that the College had already started with its previous equality outcomes and therefore, seek to build on our progress and achieve real change by 2025.

In January 2023, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and Scottish Funding Council (SFC) entered into a strategic partnership to enhance leadership and oversight in tackling persistent inequalities in the tertiary system. A set of National Equality Outcomes (NEOs) were developed with the expectation that educational institutions in Scotland contribute to these as part of their Public Sector Equality Duty. The College has aligned the NEOs to the Colleges Equality Outcomes (CEOs) 2021-2025 and will work towards these alongside the CEOs, to take another significant step forward in our aim to provide a culture within which there is opportunity for all and where we recognise, respect and celebrate diversity.

[\[LINK TO TACKLING PERSISTENT INEQUALITIES TOGETHER DOCUMENT\]](#)

Progress Being Made to Achieve our Equality Outcomes

As reported in the April 2023 Mainstreaming Equality 2021-2023 and Equality Outcomes 2021-2025 report, the College has been progressing actions across the College's four equality outcomes.

When measuring progress, it is important to remember that any change in supporting and enhancing inclusion and equality is achieved against a backdrop of persistent societal and cultural injustices. Our aspirations must be measured and steady, with the knowledge that impact will take time.

The key priority for the College is to create an environment where impactful change can happen.

Equality Outcome 1

Students and Staff with protected characteristics most likely to experience hate, report that they feel safe while engaged in study or work.

Aligned to National Equality outcomes:

- Disabled staff and students report feeling safe in the tertiary system.
- Trans staff and students report feeling safe to be themselves in the tertiary system.
- Staff and students feel supported and safe and are confident that complaints of harassment or bias on the grounds of race will be dealt with appropriately because complaints procedures are fit for purpose and offer effective redress.
- Students and staff report that they have confidence in institutional reporting mechanisms because they are fit for purpose.
- Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual staff and students report that they feel safe being 'out' at university and college.
- Institutions should have regard to attainment levels by racial group and ensure that their curriculum is diverse and antiracist.

We have:

- Delivered 37 mandatory Hate Crime student workshops to 479 students since April 2023.
- Delivered 3, I AM ME Disability Hate Crime workshops to 44 students as part of Hate Crime Awareness Week.
- Raised awareness of Hate Crime through Hate Crime Awareness week marketplace events, including pledge signing and Hate Crime drop-ins on each campus.
- Developed mechanisms to support our status as a Keep Safe space: training staff and awareness raising.
- Promote the Equality Matters e-learning modules and continue to develop Equality Matters section on the Staff Learning portal.
- Increased the number of Student Executive Officers with an equality related role with the introduction of the Equality and Transgender Students Officers.
- Delivered equalities training to the Student Executive Committee.
- Relunched the Report & Support reporting tool with a suite of new marketing materials. This tool enables students and staff to report college incidents related to hate crime and GBV.

Equality Outcome 2

Curriculum areas with a male or female student gender imbalance greater than a 75:25 ratio have improved.

Aligned to National Equality Outcomes:

- Institutions will have regards to significant imbalances on courses and take action to address it.

We have:

- Set annual priority actions through Team Operating and Enhancement Plans and align these to the College Operating and Enhancement Plan.
- Re-established the Gender Leadership Group with a view to tackling gender imbalance in those curriculum areas affected and also deliver preventative work to address curriculum areas or individual courses to prevent a move towards a significant gender imbalance.
- Delivered the Gender Leadership Schools Event which involved 1152, S1 school pupils from across Ayrshire's secondary schools.
- Delivered the Below the Surface event, promoting career pathways in Hair, beauty therapy, complimentary therapy, barbering and makeup artistry with a focus on making these as accessible as possible to non-traditional applicants.

Equality Outcome 3

The rates of retention and attainment of male students with a mental health condition have improved.

Aligned to National Equality Outcomes:

- The success and retention rates of college and university students who declare a mental health condition will improve.
- Men (staff and students) know how to access mental health support (recognising intersectionality within that group).

We have:

- Delivered 19 Cocaine Awareness workshops to 222 students in the STEM curriculum area since April 2023, in conjunction with Suicide Prevention input, to educate regarding the link between substance use and suicide amongst young males.
- Ongoing delivery of mandatory substance mis-use workshops to all level 4 students which emphasise risk and harm, accompanied by a package of support.
- Support materials for lecturers to be able to share with students following class input around suicide, including student and staff support within the College and links to external support agencies.
- Delivery of 18 "Hope for Tomorrow" workshops to 187 students since April 2023 to discuss suicide and break down the stigma of talking about suicide. These sessions are targeted at predominantly male populated classes.
- Re-establishment of the S-Word Working group, including students and staff from across the College with a refresh of the S Word action plan to deliver a programme to break down the stigma of suicide.
- Promoting wellbeing group held a Winter Wellbeing Festival.

- The development of staff e-learning modules on the topic of mental health and wellbeing.
- The introduction of male mental health drop ins hosted by the Student Associations Men's Officer who is a qualified Men Matter Scotland support worker, further reinforcing the work of the Student Association's, wear it on Your Sleeve male only peer support group for students and staff.
- Re-launch of the Mental Health United men's group at Kilmarnock Campus. hosted by the sports curriculum area and volunteers from the Samaritans. The group is open to students, staff and the wider community.

Equality Outcome 4

The recruitment and disclosure rates of staff with a disability have improved.

National Equality Outcome

- Where representation is not proportionate to the relevant population, increase the representation of disabled staff in the workforce and in College.

We have:

- Under the #WeAreAyrshireCollege campaign designed a series of postcards and promotional materials for staff to encourage them to disclose if they have a disability.
- Positive About Disability Group tested the College application process to enable an understanding of the potential barriers and applicant with a disability may face, including sharing interview questions with candidates in advance.
- Establishing a staff advisory forum Teams group, to develop and support a structured support network. Feedback from this exercise regarding the need for greater awareness raising will inform the group moving forward.
- The Student Association established an Accessibility Student Group, supported by the Disabled Students Officers. The aim of this group is to create a student network who can feedback their user experience, raise awareness and support students.
- Through the Equality Matters section in the staff e-learning portal, line managers can access a range of modules related to disability, including managing employees with a disability.
- The Aspire Growing Leaders programme, now in its second year, includes a specific workshop focusing on Equality and Diversity, which was led and delivered by the Equality and Diversity Performance Lead.
- This Aspire programme also includes an HR workshop focusing on recruitment and supporting candidates to understand unconscious bias with particular relevance to those applicants who declare a disability at application stage.
- The introduction of the Evolve Growing Leaders programme which is delivered to staff members already in a leadership role.

- Exploring the introduction of an employee journal which will be utilised to support staff returning to work from long- term sick leave, where they have a long-term health condition or disability.

DRAFT



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Business, Resources and Infrastructure Committee Meeting**12 March 2024**

Strategic Objective SO1 An inspirational college experience
Reference: SO2 Embedding diversity and inclusion.
SO5 High performing college underpinned by excellence in
stewardship and governance.
SO7 Developing staff and students to enable excellence.

Subject: **2023-24 Student Support Funds as at 31 January 2024**

Purpose: The paper provides an update on how the College has expended and plans to expend the £11m of student support funding.

Action Required: To Note

Appendices: No

1. Executive Summary

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).

The College has seen a significant increase in the level of care experienced students requiring support during 2023-24. The College is supporting 460 care experienced students as at February 2024 compared to 435 in 2023-24. This has resulted in a £100k reduction in projected amount which will be available for the intended April and June cost of living / transition payments.

The overall position remains that the College is operating within its allocated budget subject to the caveats and risks highlighted within the paper. There are no current risks that require to be drawn to members attention.

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. These projections will also be refined to reflect the information reported by curriculum on student numbers.

2. SFC Student Support Funds

In 2023-24 the SFC have provided Student Support Funding of £10,377,347 and table 1 details the bursary support funds position as at 06 February 2024.

Table 1

Student Support Fund	2023-24			2022-23	
	Budget Spend	Forecast Spend	Variance	Actual Spend	Movement on 2022/23
Bursary	£8,216,972	£8,209,571	£7,401	£7,229,539	14%
FE Childcare	£354,716	£180,648	£174,068	£244,162	-26%
HE Childcare	£167,924	£110,710	£57,214	£147,711	-25%
FE Discretionary	£1,637,735	£1,844,195	£(206,460)	£2,616,578	-37%
Total	£10,377,347	£10,345,124	£32,223	£10,237,990	1%

The above figures are based on the most up to date information on student applicants based on all students continuing with the College. Note that the 2023-24 budget allocations were reviewed and realigned at the start of the year based on student demand per fund.

The Student Funding Team continue to review and revise the data to take account of student withdrawals, once these have been confirmed by the curriculum areas. The projected figures include allocated awards and projections for January 2024 start courses. The ability to accurately forecast student withdrawals and levels of engagement (attendance) can be significantly compromised in the current challenging environment.

Bursary

The bursary figure includes £3,572,914 which relate to 460 care experienced students (2022-23: 435). In line with Scottish Government priorities, the College has actively promoted the enhanced bursary rate available to care experienced students and continues to do so. The level of funds allocated and the number of identified care experienced students may still increase during 2023-24.

Childcare

Demand for childcare funding has been reducing since the Scottish Government increased the number of hours of free childcare to parents in August 2021. Parents can now receive funding up to 1,140 hours per year (around 30 hours per week) if they have a child who is 3 or 4 years old. Further to this, some parents can now receive childcare funding for a child who is 2 years old, however this is only available where the parent falls into certain eligibility criteria.

The declining demand for childcare funding at both FE and HE levels is further impacted by the falling birth rate in Scotland which has been steadily declining for the past 15 years.

To date, all FE and HE eligible students with complete applications have been awarded financial support.

FE Discretionary

Additional support funds for discretionary payments were first made available to colleges the first year of Covid in 2020. This additional funding was then removed for 2022-23 however in recognition of the national cost of living crisis, SFC amended their Discretionary Fund Policy to allow colleges more flexibility and discretion to

support students without the need of a rigorous application process. These flexibilities remain in place for 2023-24

The level of allocated student support funding available in 2022-23 and 2023-24 remained the same however an increase of 11.1% to Bursary maintenance rates means that the available funding to support cost of living payments at the same level as what was offered in 2022-23, is not sustainable.

A budget of £450k has been included within the FE Discretionary projected spend to support the ongoing financial difficulties that many students continue to encounter due to the cost of living crisis. It is anticipated that Bursary and EMA eligible students from the lowest income households will receive access to a one-off payment of £250 to be paid April 2024.

A further £650k has been included within the FE Discretionary projected spend and this amount will be allocated to eligible students at the end of the academic year to support the transitional period between support funds ceasing and receiving Department of Works and Pensions benefits.

Both these proposed payments are subject to fund availability and SLT approval.

3. Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

EMA funding is provided by the Scottish Government to support eligible 16 to 17 year-old students. The College does not receive an allocated amount but are reimbursed through a reclaim system each month. The College is currently projecting 2023-24 EMA spent of £588,450 at this time. Members are asked to note that this figure includes allocated awards and projections for January 2024 courses.

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

4. SAAS Funds provided for Higher Education Discretionary

The College is allocated funding from SAAS for eligible students completing HE programmes. This budget is administered in line with SAAS guidance and will be paid in two parts, split over two fiscal years. Table 2 details the 2023-24 SAAS HE Discretionary Fund budget with the income being received in two instalments, one in October 2023 (£85,259) and one in April 2024 (£42,629).

Table 2

	2023-24			2022-23	
	Budget Spend	Forecast Spend	Variance	Actual Spend	Movement on 2022-23
HE Discretionary	£125,228	£125,228	£0	£199,873	-37%
FE/HE International Discretionary	£2,660	£2,660	£0	£7,678	-65%
Total	£127,888	£127,888	£0	£207,551	-38%

HE Discretionary Funding for 2023-24 reduced by 38% in comparison to 2022-23. This allocated budget will be paid to colleges between two instalments with the first instalment of £85,259 paid in October 2023, the second instalment of ££42,629 due to be paid April 2024.

SAAS base their allocated funding on historical SAAS/HESA/FES data from 2021-22. Available funding for HE Discretionary across the college sector in 2023-24 has reduced by £1,216,288 (36.57%) compared to 2022-23.

At this stage the College cannot allocate more than the original budget of £127,888. Institutions are advised to manage budgets based on initial allocation as there is no guarantee that SAAS will announce an in-year distribution, as was the case in 2022-23.

Student Support Funds 2024-25

There is no information available from SFC or SAAS regarding student support fund allocations for 2024-25 at this time. SFC have recently reached out to FESSAG members to explore dates in March for their annual meeting. It is expected that detailed information for 2024-25 will be available then.

5. Resource Implications

No further resource issues require to be noted outside of those recorded in this paper.

6. Risks

No further risks identified.

7. Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

An impact assessment was completed in respect of the 2023-24 Student Funding Policy and Procedures.

8. Recommendation

Members are requested to note the content of the paper.

Alan Ritchie
Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure
12 March 2024

(Louise Park, Head of Student Funding)

Publication

This paper will be published on the College's website.

Business, Resources and Infrastructure Committee

12 March 2024

Strategic Objective Reference:	SO2 Embedding diversity and inclusion SO3 Embedding a culture of open leadership and empowerment SO5 High performing college underpinned by excellence in stewardship and governance SO7 Developing staff and students to enable excellence
Subject/Purpose:	Human Resources and Health, Safety and Wellbeing Update Report (November 2023 – January 2024)
Action Required:	To Note
Appendices:	No

1. Summary/Key Points

The report provides members with an update on Human Resources and Health, Safety and Wellbeing activities during the reporting period, November 2023 to January 2024.

This includes key data on recruitment and selection, sickness absence, staff learning and development, equality and inclusion and health, safety and wellbeing.

2. Proposals and Recommendations

Members are asked to note the content of this update report.

3. Associated Risks

N/A

4. Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment (if applicable)

An impact assessment is not applicable given the purpose of this paper.

1 Human Resources Update

1.1 Recruitment and Selection

A total of eight internal and forty two external adverts were placed during the reporting period. Eight internal candidates were appointed to new roles within the College, with two being to promoted roles. Seventeen new members of staff commenced employment with the College across a range of posts.

1.2 Sickness Absence

Sickness absence levels for the reporting period are as follows:

Term	November 2023	December 2023	January 2024
Long Term	3.74%	4.49%	2.95%
Short Term	2.64%	1.27%	1.99%
Total absence	6.38%	5.76%	4.94%

In comparison, the College sickness absence levels for the same period in 2022-23 were as follows:

Term	November 2022	December 2022	January 2023
Long Term	3.14%	3.63%	3.23%
Short Term	2.32%	2.55%	2.55%
Total absence	5.46%	6.18%	5.78%

1.3 Sickness Absence Reasons

Absence Reason	November 2023		December 2023		January 2024	
	Days Lost	Staff Affected	Days Lost	Staff Affected	Days Lost	Staff Affected
Depression/anxiety/ psychological	219	15	212	12	160	10
Back pain/sprain/ strain/ musculoskeletal	159.5	14	122	10	76	7
Asthma/bronchitis/ respiratory	51	8	80	8	59	7
Stomach/bowel/gastric/ intestinal	102	21	80	15	69.7	13
Stress Work Related	83	5	55	3	59	5
Cold/Flu	64	24	53.7	17	117.3	29
Headache/migraine/ neurological	64	9	42	5	42	3

The overall absence rate for the College decreased across the reporting period. It is notable that the overall absence percentage decreased by 0.62% between November and December, and then by a further 0.82% between December 2023 and January 2024.

It is also noteworthy that the sickness absence percentage in 2024 was reported as 0.82% lower than that recorded in January 2023.

The prevalence of short-term absences across the reporting period, showed a slight decrease in November and December. In November, the short-term absence rate was 2.64%, which decreased by 1.37% to 1.27% in December, followed by an increase of 0.72% in January 2024 to 1.99%. In comparison to the same period in 2022/23, it was evident that the short term absence rate remained static between 2.3% and 2.55%. The prevalence of short term absence across the reporting period was largely attributable to seasonal winter illnesses including cold/flu and stomach viruses.

Long term absences continue to be of concern to the College, with a number of staff continuing to experience a range of long-term health conditions including mental health and musculoskeletal concerns and the requirement for surgical or medical interventions. During the reporting period, long term absences were reported as 3.74% in November, with an increase of 0.75% to 4.49% in December, followed by a significant decrease of 1.54% to 2.95% in January 2024. The absence rates in comparison to the same period in 2022/23, were more static across the reporting period between 3.14% and 3.63%.

The HR Team continue to support managers and staff to enable access to appropriate services through Occupational Health and Employee Counselling, as necessary and appropriate.

1.4 Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Leave

During the reporting period November 2023 to January 2024, three members of staff were on maternity leave.

1.5 Employment Relations

In the period November 2023 to January 2024, there was one Grievance Appeal process ongoing, which was resolved with no further appeal.

1.6 Flexible Working Requests

During the reporting period, one member of staff submitted a flexible working request, to reduce their contractual hours to support a planned retirement. The request was approved. A second flexible working request that had been submitted in the previous reporting period was also considered in December, following a period of absence. This request was to reduce contractual working hours to support caring responsibilities. This request was also approved.

1.7 National Job Evaluation Update

The National Job Evaluation project has been ongoing for a considerable period of time, with job evaluation outcomes effective from 1 September 2018. The project has experienced a number of significant challenges and over the past 12 months there has been very limited progress. During December 2022, colleges received details of the rank order of job roles submitted for job evaluation.

Across the Sector, and locally for Ayrshire College, the rank order of roles was significantly different from internal organisational and management structures, and were considered not viable for local implementation.

To date, there has been no agreement reached with the support staff trade unions on how to resolve these issues and make progress on the job evaluation project.

In addition, there are also a number of challenges around the implementation of job evaluation outcomes and whether assimilation to salary scale points should be determined locally or nationally, based on a local or national pay spine.

There is also uncertainty in relation to the status of the national funding, which had been identified to support the project and implementation of the outcomes.

The job evaluation project continues to be led by College Employers Scotland (CES) with a number of attempts made over the past 12 months to reach a new collective agreement with the trade unions. To date, a new collective agreement has not been achieved and it is increasingly unlikely that this will be possible.

2 Staff Learning and Development and Organisational Development Update

2.1 November 2023 to January 2024 CPD Events

During the reporting period the following Staff Learning and Development activities were shared with staff to support their continuing development.

Maximum Performance taster webinars on the following topics

- Coaching Skills for Line Managers
- Managing Effective Teams
- Breaking the Anxiety Loop
- Unleashing Customer Conversations
- Time and Priority Management

Online Learning Framework

In November and December two additional information sessions on the development of an Online Learning Framework for the College were delivered by Doreen Wales, Assistant Principal, Student Experience and Quality Enhancement and Russell Wilson, Head of Digital Learning Support, with 38 curriculum staff attending.

Neurodiversity Awareness Training

During November 2023, 10 staff attended a Neurodiversity Awareness Training course arranged through the Business Growth team.

2.2 LinkedIn Learning

During the reporting period, 478 courses and 1459 videos were viewed, with 23 courses and 776 videos completed. The most popular content during this period related to computer security and internet safety, as well as the Microsoft suite of packages.

2.3 Aspire Growing Leaders Programme – Cohort 2

The Aspire Cohort 2 delegates have now moved into the Growing Organisation phase of their programme journey. The 10 candidates are now working in two project groups, five per group, with a blend of curriculum and support staff.

In November 2023, the following project briefs were shared with the teams:

Project 1 – Sponsor Anne Campbell Vice Principal Skills & Enterprise

Carry out research on learning and teaching academies within colleges and universities, to understand the models in existence, best practice, and make recommendations for next steps for the College.

Project 2 – Sponsor(s) David Davidson Vice Principal People, Performance and Transformation, Gillian Brown, Head of HR Services.

Carry out research on values-based performance management processes, taking account of the feedback received from staff in relation to the current PPDR (Personal and Professional Development Review) process, and make recommendations for the next steps for the College.

The final outputs from both projects will be presented to the College Leadership Team in March 2024.

2.4 PPDR Completion Rates

Staff Group	Completion Percentage
Curriculum	79%
Professional Services	74%

2.5 Mandatory Training Completion Rates

Course	Completion Percentage
An Introduction to Working Safely	67%
Equality & Diversity in the Workplace	64%
Fire Detection & Response	66%
GDPR	71%
Safeguarding the College Community	70%
Understanding Cyber Security at Ayrshire College	67%

3. Equality and Diversity Update

3.1 LGBT Youth Scotland Charter Mark Update

The LGBT Charter Mark panel reviewed the College's portfolio submission in December 2023 and advised of one final activity, which was to share our Charter Mark journey with all staff. To this end, a staff briefing on our award journey has been included in the Equality Matters Newsletter in February 2024. The Charter Mark panel will conclude Ayrshire College's Charter Mark consideration in March 2024, with confirmation of the award being received soon after.

3.2 Report & Support Reporting Tool

The Equality and Diversity Performance Lead is currently conducting a review of the Report and Support reporting tool as our current contract period ends on 10 May 2024. Due to the cost of the tool, low uptake and quality of data reports, as well as concerns raised across the sector on the benefits of the tool, an in-house solution is currently being developed, through existing College platforms. The Equality and Diversity Performance Lead is working with the Interim Student Experience Manager on a new reporting tool and a system will be available for testing before the end of March 2024.

3.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) Review Update

Following a review of the current EqIA process, the Equality and Diversity Performance Lead is in the process of working with the Digital Learning Support Team on creating a new e-learning module to support the EqIA process. This e-learning module will also be supported through the delivery of face-to-face training on EqIAs and our legal obligations as a public sector organisation. The first programme of training will be delivered to key college staff through the Evolve Leadership Programme.

3.4 International Women's Day

International Women's Day takes place on Friday 8 March with this year's theme being 'Inspire Inclusion'. There is a range of activity taking place across the College which includes the Principal hosting a Leadership and Legacy Women's lunch on 8 March in the Westerly Restaurant, followed by the release of a Rockpool podcast.

The Student Association are also hosting a series of pledge events across the College, and soundbites from female students and staff, studying and working in traditionally male curriculum areas are being broadcast throughout the week on Essential Radio.

The Menopause Action Group has also planned Menopause Conversation Cafés on each of the three campuses throughout the week beginning 4 March.

A group of Complementary Therapy students from Kilmarnock Campus will be supporting the Violence Against Women Partnership in East Ayrshire by providing massages to service users at the Violence Against Women Conference. This will also include a presentation from Heather Waugh, former train driver with Scotrail, and author of 'My Mummy is a Train Driver', who is working with the College to support Early Years students break down gender stereotypes.

3.5 Mainstreaming Equality and National Equality Outcomes Update

The Equality and Diversity Performance Lead, working closely with the Head of Quality Enhancement continues to make progress in mapping curriculum and support activities to the National Equality Outcomes (NEOs), provided by SFC.

To support the sector as we progress with embedding the NEOs, the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Network has presented a set of questions to the SFC for consideration, to gain greater clarity and understanding on the expectations of the NEOs for colleges with regard to reporting outcomes and measurement frameworks.

In order to address these concerns, the network requested on behalf of the College sector that a response from the SFC should include:

- Full, realistic, and precise details of what colleges will be required to include in their April 2025 reports related to the NEOs and plans for the reporting cycle.
- In connection with the point above, a template or framework of key headings, relevant data sets and pertinent areas to ensure compliance with future related reporting requirements. This would allow the sector to benchmark and focus areas of strategic development.
- Clarity on the scope and factors to be included in the planned outcome audits and ongoing relationships with the EHRC.

There is consensus across the Sector for the National Equality Outcomes to be embedded meaningfully and effectively.

4 **Health, Safety and Wellbeing Update**

4.1 Health and Safety Training

Training sessions on the new safety management system have been delivered to essential users across the College.

4.2 Accidents and Incidents

There were 31 incidents recorded during the reporting period, detailed as follows:

Campus	RIDDOR	>3 days <7 days	Minor Injury	No Injury	Near Miss	Ill Health	Other	Total
Ayr	0	0	7	1	6	0	0	14
Kilmarnock	0	0	3	0	3	0	0	6
Kilwinning	0	0	7	0	4	0	0	11
Total	0	0	17	1	13	0	0	31

4.3 Rolling Accident/Incident Rate Total (figure based on 808 staff 11,794 students)

Accidents/Incidents 01 October 2022 – 31 October 2023	Total
Staff accidents involving injury + total dangerous occurrences + occupational diseases	20
Staff accidents/incidents per 1000 at risk	24.75
KPI on rate of accidents and incidents staff (2025 position)	20
Student accidents involving injury + total dangerous occurrences + occupational diseases	51
Student accidents/incidents per 1000 at risk	4.32
KPI on rate of accidents and incidents for students (2025 position)	6

4.4 RIDDOR Incident

No reports made to the enforcing authority during the reporting period.

4.5 Notable Incidents

Kilwinning Campus	09/11/2023	Location	Nature of Incident
Member of staff entered male toilet and detected a burning smell. The facilities management contractor was alerted and investigation identified evidence of burnt paper in one of the cubicles. No CCTV footage was available within the vicinity, to identify the responsible person(s). A campaign is being launched by the Promoting Positive Behaviour Group aimed at addressing challenging behaviours. In addition, facilities management staff undertake routine inspections of campus facilities.			
Ayr Campus	22/01/2024	Riverside Building – external	Property damage
The Estates team, as part of their opening procedures, found insulation material in the car park. Further investigation identified damage to the underside of the roof structure of the Riverside Building, where external panels had become loose. Due to the risk of the panels detaching from their fixings, a decision was taken to close the campus. The Estates Team Leader arranged for the roofing contractor to undertake the necessary repair, later that day, and the campus reopened on 23 January 2024. The Interim Estates Manager is making arrangements for a condition survey to be undertaken on the roof structure of the Riverside Building.			
Kilwinning Campus	24/01/2024	Passenger Lift	Horseplay
Five Kilwinning Academy pupils, who were not attending College, entered the campus and proceeded to make their way to the upper floors. They accessed the lift to return to the ground floor and caused the lift's safety systems to activate, due to inappropriate behaviour.			

College senior staff and facilities management contractor maintained communication with the school pupils, while awaiting the lift engineer to attend. Scottish Fire and Rescue Services (SFRS) and the engineer attended, and the lift fault was addressed. The School's Police Liaison Officer also attended and appropriate follow up action is being taken with the School.

4.6 Fire Safety – Fire Drills and Evacuations

Date	Campus	Details
22/11/2023	Kilmarnock	Hot water tap left on in a cleaning cupboard which generated steam. Alarm sounded after 18:00, only Estates and FM staff in the building, who evacuated. No response required from Scottish Fire & Rescue. Staff reminded of the importance of not leaving taps turned on when leaving an area.
23/11/2023	Ayr – Riverside	Evening class fire drill.
15/01/2024	Kilwinning – main building	Two students vaping in the stairwell activated a detector head. No response required from Scottish Fire & Rescue. Students identified and student conduct policy followed. “No vaping” posters designed and displayed around the campuses.

4.7 Claims

The College currently has 2 outstanding liability claims.

For one of the claims, the court action has been concluded and the final fee has been submitted. A settlement of £10,000 was agreed between both parties.

4.8 Risk Assessment

A fire risk assessment review was undertaken by an external consultant for the Kilmarnock Campus. The actions are being taken forward by the Health, Safety & Wellbeing, and Estates and Sustainability teams, in conjunction with the Facilities Management contractor.

4.9 Health Protection

Flu vaccination vouchers were made available to staff. A total of 75 staff took the opportunity to receive a voucher.

The Head of Health, Safety & Wellbeing attends a quarterly meeting with local Health Protection and Education bodies to discuss all health protection matters.

4.10 Health and Wellbeing

A range of health and wellbeing themes were also promoted during the review period:

- Scoping meetings have taken place to explore further the "We Invest in Wellbeing" accreditation framework award. This award will sit alongside the Investors in People accreditation framework.
- An application for funding to establish two new shower room facilities in Kilwinning campus was approved by Cycling Scotland. Proposals have been received from the architect and an application has been submitted to building control, with the aim of completing the building work during the Easter break.
- Team Winter Walking Challenge: 4-week active travel/step count challenge where 12 teams took part to boost winter wellbeing.
- A range of wellbeing advice and guidance was shared in the weeks before the Christmas holiday period, which was received well by staff.
- A "New Year, Happy You" campaign commenced at the start of the new calendar year, focusing on eating well, physical activity and the importance of sleep.
- The College is represented on the British Inspiration Trust (BRIT) Challenge regional steering group for the Sector. The BRIT supports mental health and fitness in the UK through the delivery of their annual challenge. The College challenge will take place during the period from 1 – 24 March 2024.

Activities planned to support the BRIT Challenge include:

- Bingo (which includes 24 different activities related to mental and physical health).
- The 240,000 challenge (individual challenge, to reach 10,000 steps per day, for period of challenge).
- 24 recipes (different healthy recipes to try out over the course of the challenge).
- Social Media Blackout & Earth Hour (23rd March 2024 8:30pm).
- Mental Health United (MHU) men's football initiative (Kilmarnock).
- 24 Minute challenge (24 minutes a day of something you enjoy).
- Knit & Knatter (Wednesdays, Kilmarnock Campus 1-2pm).
- Menopause Support Group Walk.

4.11 Legislative Update

There were no legislative changes in the reporting period that impact on the College.

David Davidson
Vice Principal People, Performance and Transformation
26 February 2024

*(Gillian Brown, Head of HR Services and
Martin Hammond, Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing)*

The top of the page features two overlapping teal abstract shapes. The larger shape is a wide triangle pointing downwards, and the smaller one is a curved shape overlapping its right side.

Quarterly Complaints Report 2023/2024 Quarter 1 (August – October 2023)



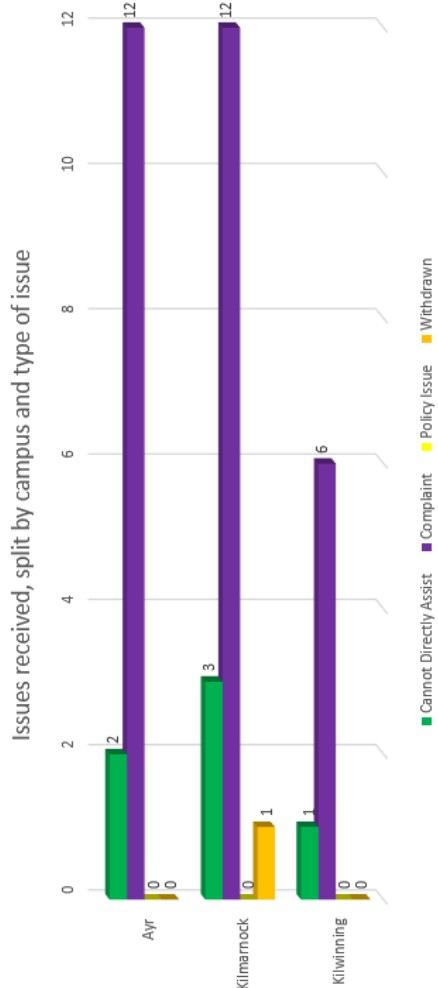
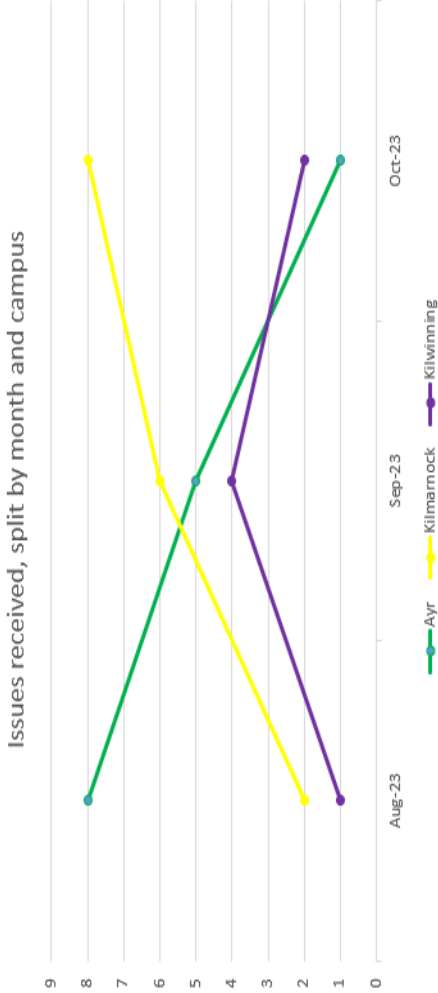
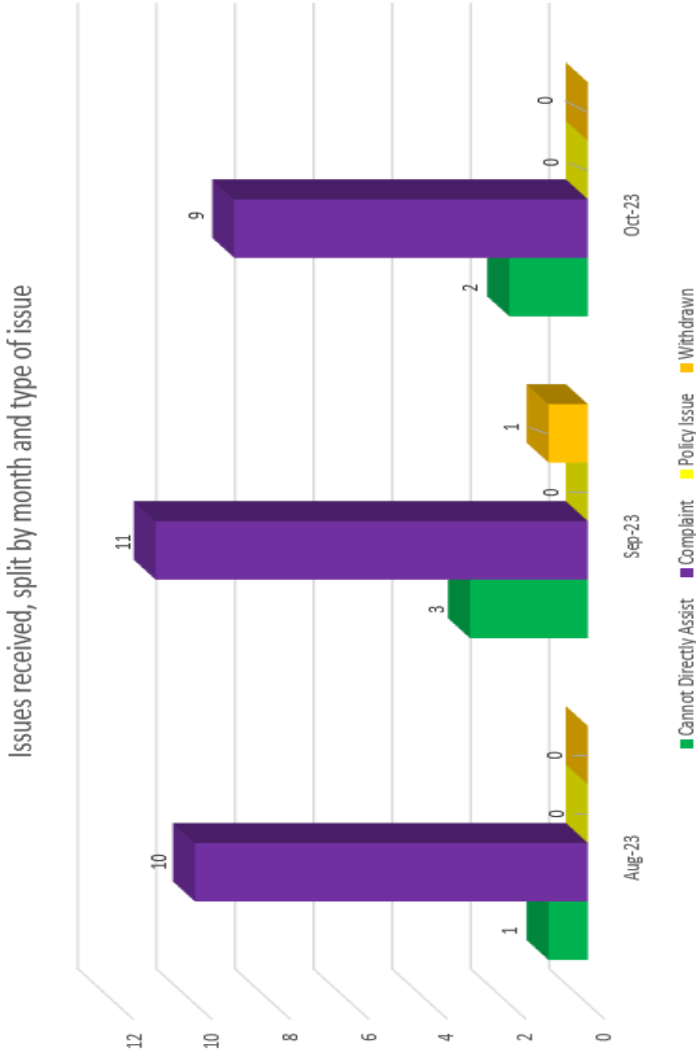
Total Issues Received

37 issues were received. The chart on the right shows the number of issues received each month, split by the type of issue.

31 complaints were received, 1 of these was withdrawn. 6 issues were recorded as cannot directly assist.

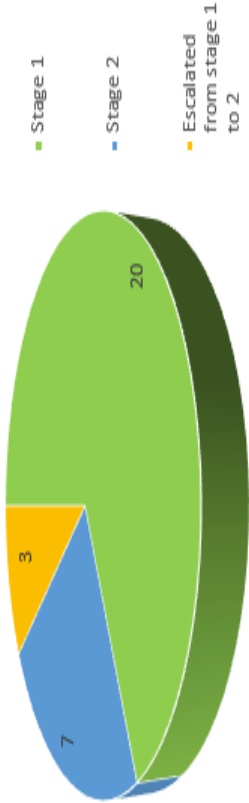
The issues recorded as cannot directly assist were 1 complaint about a student's behaviour, that was dealt with through the Student Conduct Policy. 2 complaints about students' behaviour outwith College. 1 complaint from a member of staff about students smoking on campus. 2 anonymous complaints - 1 about not being allowed on the course due to their gender and the other about comments made by a member of staff, however there was not enough information given to investigate either of them.

The charts below show the total issues received each month by campus and the total issues received split by campus and type of issue.



Complaints Received

Complaints received, split by stage



31 complaints were received, 1 of these was withdrawn.

The chart on the left shows the remaining 30 complaints received, split by stage.

20 out of 30 complaints received were dealt with at stage 1, which equates to 67% of complaints.

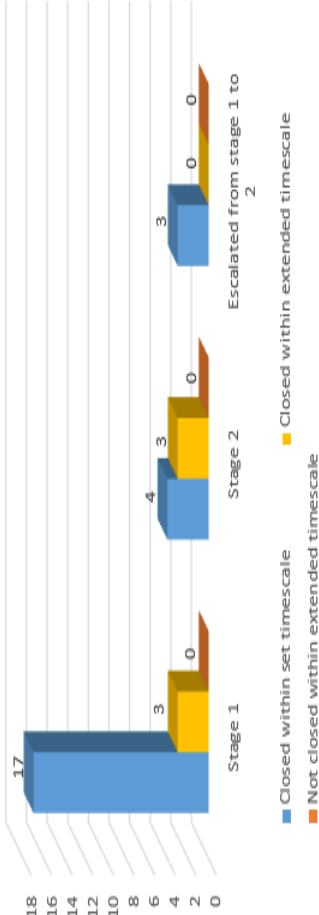
Stage 1 – SPSO set timescale is 5 working days and extended timescale is 10 working days

Stage 2 – SPSO set timescale is 20 working days and extended timescale is 40 working days

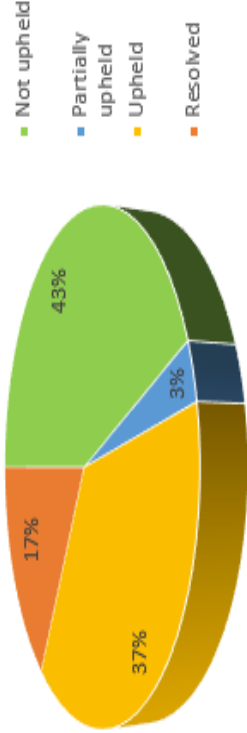
Escalated from stage 1 – 2 - SPSO set timescale is 20 working days and extended timescale is 40 working days

80% of complaints were closed within the SPSO set timescale.

Complaints received, split by stage and timescale closed in



Complaints received, split by outcome as a percentage



Of the 30 complaints received, 37% of complaints were upheld, with a further 3% partially upheld. This combines to 12 out of 30 complaints. 5 complaints were resolved.

Complaints Comparison

		COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE INDICATORS		Q1		Q1	
1.0		Total number of complaints received & complaints received per 100 population		2023/2024		2022/2023	
1.1		Number of complaints Received		30		31	
1.2/1a		College Population and Number of Complaints Received		8498	0.4	9015	0.3
2.0		Number of complaints closed at each stage and as a % of all complaints closed					
2.1/2a		Number of complaints closed at Stage 1 and % of total closed		20	66.7%	17	54.8%
2.2/2b		Number of complaints closed at Stage 2 and % of total closed		7	23.3%	7	22.6%
2.3/2c		Number of complaints closed after Escalation and % of total closed		3	10.0%	7	22.6%
2.4		Open		0	0.0%	0	0.0%
3.0		Number of complaints upheld, partially upheld and not upheld at each stage and as a % of complaints closed at that stage					
3.0		Stage 1					
3.1/3a		Number and % of complaints upheld at Stage 1		11	55.0%	2	11.8%
3.2/3b		Number and % of complaints partially upheld at Stage 1		0	0.0%	n/a	n/a
3.3/3c		Number and % of complaints not upheld at Stage 1		5	25.0%	1	5.9%
3.4/3d		Number and % of complaints resolved at Stage 1		4	20.0%	14	82.4%
3.0		Stage 2					
3.5/3e		Number and % of complaints upheld at Stage 2		0	0.0%	2	28.6%
3.6/3f		Number and % of complaints partially upheld at Stage 2		1	14.3%	n/a	n/a
3.7/3g		Number and % of complaints not upheld at Stage 2		6	85.7%	5	71.4%
3.8/3h		Number and % of complaints resolved at Stage 2		0	0.0%	0	0.0%
3.0		Escalated					
3.9/3i		Number and % of complaints upheld after Escalation		0	0.0%	2	28.6%
3.10/3j		Number and % of complaints partially upheld after Escalation		0	0.0%	n/a	n/a
3.11/3k		Number and % of complaints not upheld after Escalation		2	66.7%	5	71.4%
3.12/3l		Number and % of complaints resolved after Escalation		1	33.3%	0	0.0%
4.0		Total working days and average time in working days to close complaints at each stage					
4.1/4a		Total working days and average time in working days to close complaints at Stage 1		66	3.3	70	4.1
4.2		Total working days and average time in working days to close complaints at Stage 2		160	22.9	163	23.3
4b		Total working days and average time in working days to close complaints after Escalation		59	19.7	107	15.3
5.0		Number and % of complaints closed within set timecales (S1=5 working days; S2=20 working days; Escalated = 20 working days)					
5.1/5a		Number and % of Stage 1 complaints closed within 5 working days		17	85.0%	15	88.2%
5.2/5b		Number and % of Stage 1 complaints not closed within 5 working days		3	15.0%	2	11.8%
5.3/5c		Number and % of Stage 2 complaints closed within 20 working days		4	57.1%	4	57.1%
5.4/5d		Number and % of Stage 2 complaints not closed within 20 working days		3	42.9%	3	42.9%
5.5/5e		Number and % of Escalated complaints closed within 20 working days		3	100.0%	6	85.7%
5.6/5f		Number and % of Escalated complaints not closed within 20 working days		0	0.0%	1	14.3%
6.0		Number and % of complaints closed at each stage where extensions have been					
6.1/6a		Number and % of Stage 1 complaints closed within 10 working days (extension)		3	100.0%	2	100.0%
6.2/6b		Number and % of Stage 1 complaints not closed within 10 working days (extension)		0	0.0%	0	0.0%
6.3/6c		Number and % of Stage 2 complaints closed within 40 working days (extension)		3	100.0%	3	100.0%
6.4/6d		Number and % of Stage 2 complaints not closed within 40 working days (extension)		0	0.0%	0	0.0%
6.5/6e		Number and % of Escalated complaints closed within 40 working days (extension)		0	0.0%	1	100.0%
6.6/6f		Number and % of Escalated complaints not closed within 40 working days (extension)		0	0.0%	0	0.0%

- 30 complaints received, a decrease of 3% from Q1 2022/2023.
- 67% of complaints were handled at stage 1 in Q1 2023/2024, compared to 55% for the same period in 2022/2023.
- 80% of complaints were closed within the target timescale, compared to 81% in Q1 2022/2023.
- 100% of complaints were closed within the extended timescale in Q1 2023/2024, with 100% of complaints also closed within the extended timescale in the same period in 2022/2023.

Complaints – Sub-category

The chart below shows the complaints received, split by sub-category and outcome. Noted below are the reasons for complaint in each of the top 3 sub-categories:

Assessment & Exams, Certification

- Unhappy not received their qualifications as results not submitted
- Unhappy apprentice not received their papers and told by the assessor this would be sorted before they retired but it wasn't

Finance

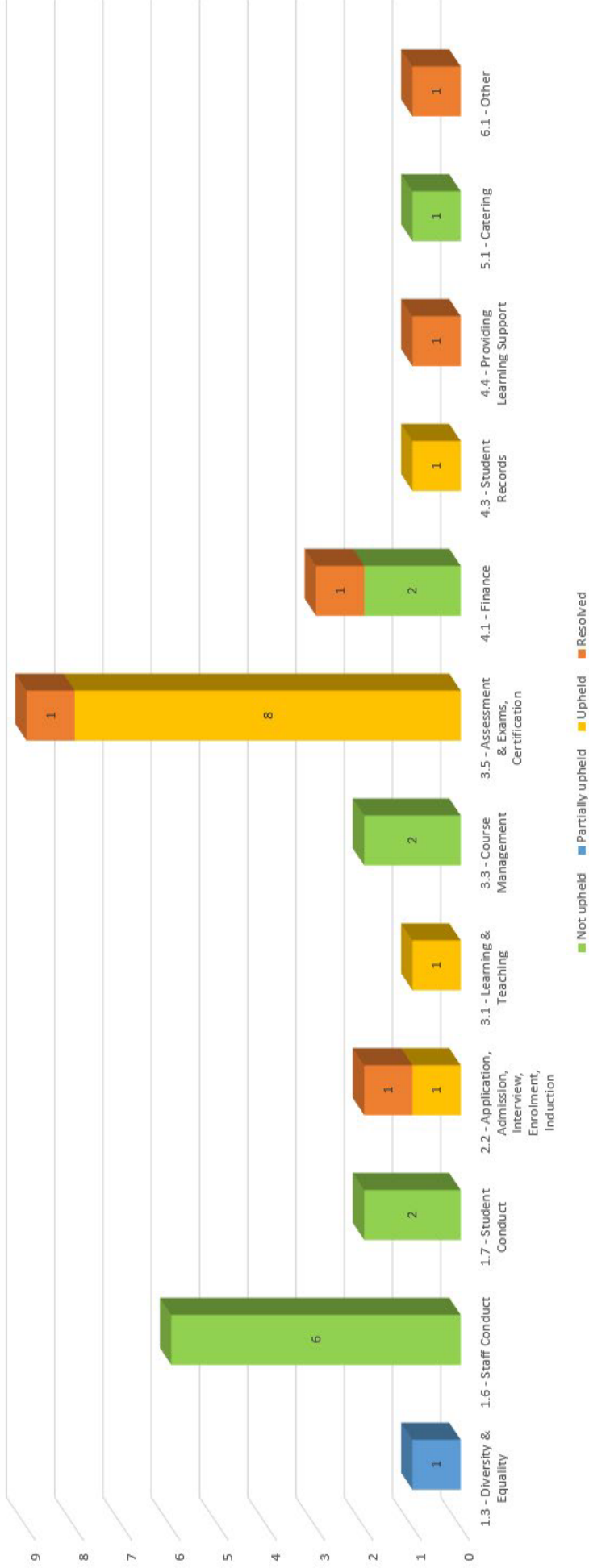
- Unhappy being asked to pay course fees when did not achieve any qualification
- Unhappy didn't receive a full refund of fees, was told payment would be in their account but it wasn't, no response to emails

Staff Conduct

- Treatment of students by staff member and with what was said to them
- Unhappy with the way they were spoken to by a member of staff and that no action taken when reporting bullying by other students
- Unhappy staff member intimidating and harassing them
- Unhappy not allowed to progress due to criminal conviction but made staff aware of this before starting course

* Pages 12-14 show all the categories and sub-categories available

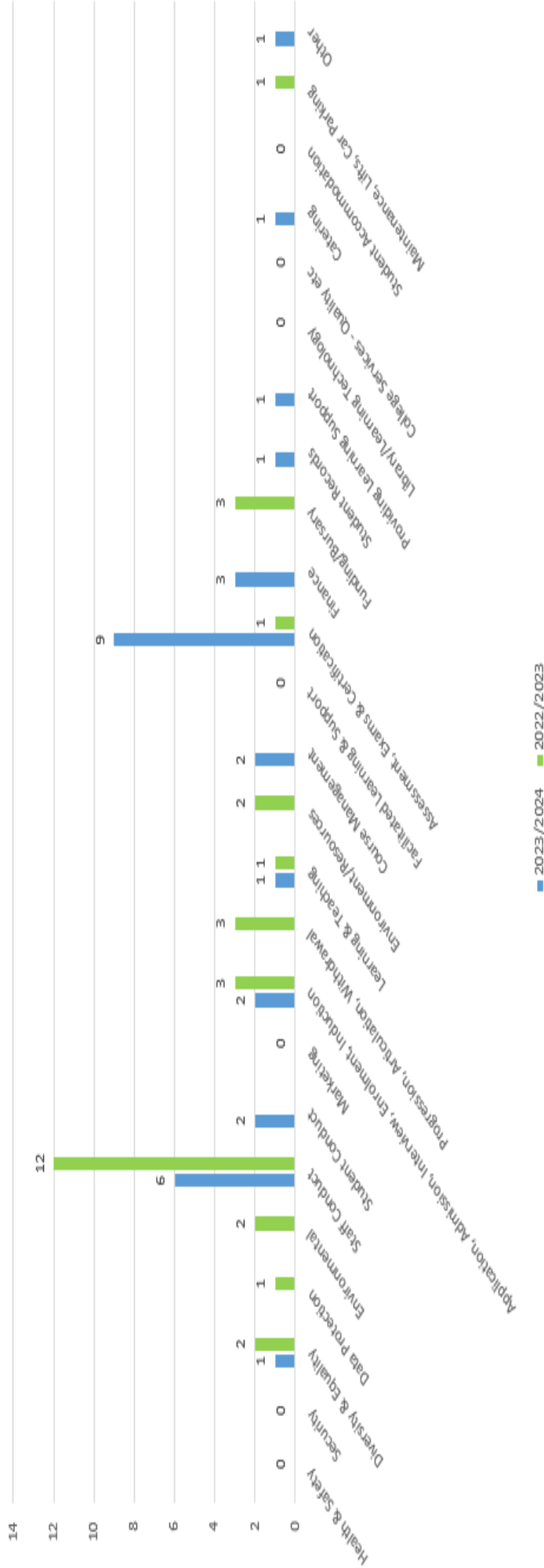
Complaints received, split by sub-category and outcome



Complaints – Sub-category Comparison

The chart below shows the complaints received, split by sub-category, compared to complaints received, split by sub-category, in Q1 2022/2023.

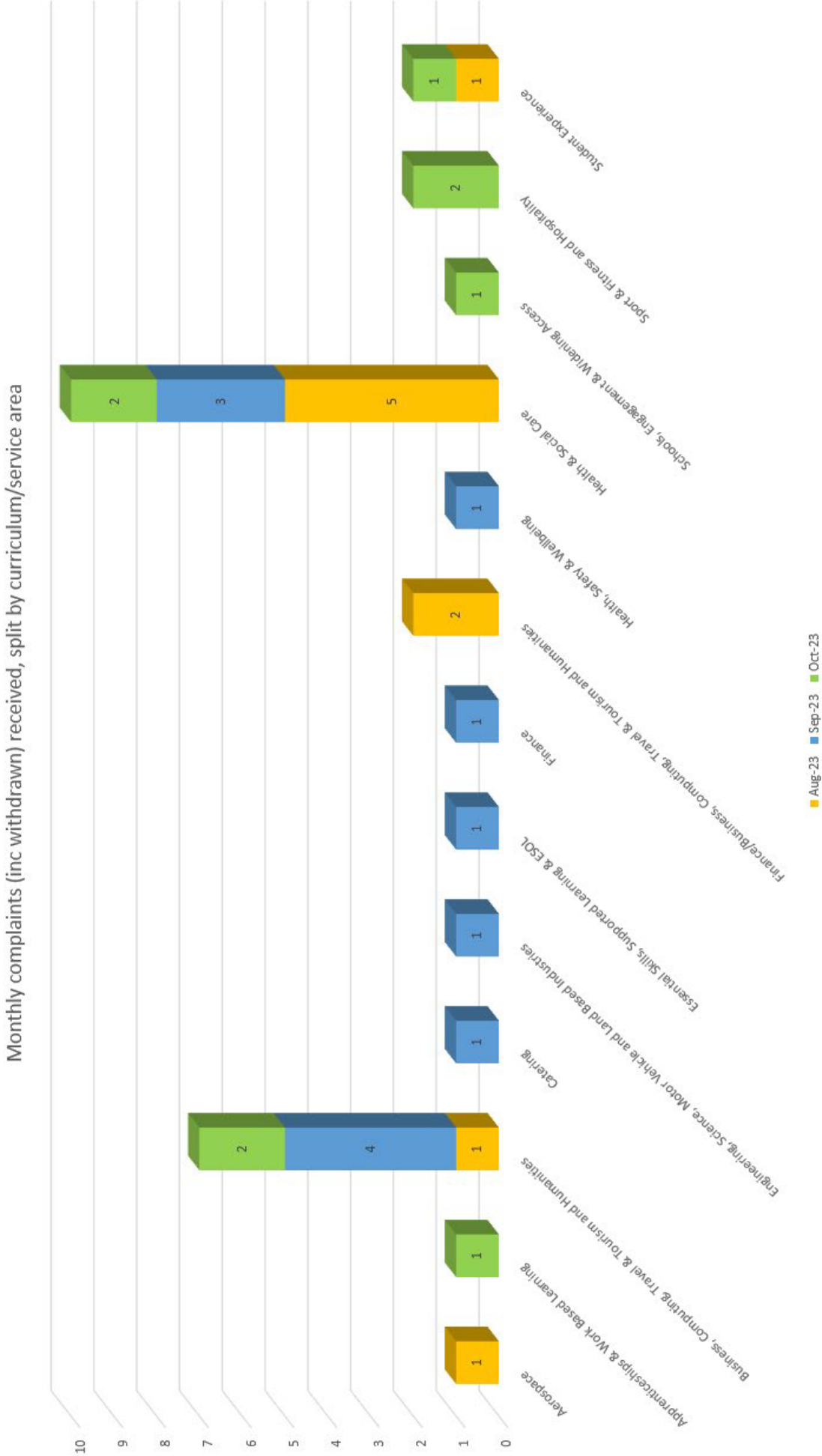
Complaints Received by Sub-category Q1, 2023/2024 vs Q1, 2022/2023



- Increase in complaints received in the assessment, exams & certification sub-category from 1 in Q1, 2022/2023 to 9 in Q1, 2023/2024. This is due to an increase in complaints about results not being submitted because of action short of strike.
- Decrease in complaints received in the staff conduct sub-category from 12 in Q1, 2022/2023 to 6 in Q1, 2023/2024. This is mainly due to a reduction in complaints about the treatment of students by staff.
- Increase in complaints received in the finance sub-category from 0 in Q1, 2022/2023 to 3 in the same period of 2023/2024. This is due to an increase in complaints about being asked to pay fees when not achieved a qualification.
- Decrease in complaints received in the progression, articulation, withdrawal sub-category from 3 in Q1, 2022/2023 to 0 in Q1, 2023/2024. This is due to a decrease in complaints about not receiving a place on the next level of course or being withdrawn.
- Decrease in complaints received in the funding/bursary sub-category from 3 in Q1, 2022/2023 to 0 in the same period of 2023/2024. This is mainly due to a decrease in complaints about delays in receiving funding.

Complaints – Curriculum/Service Area

The chart below shows issues received each month, split by curriculum/service area.



Complaints – Curriculum/Service Area

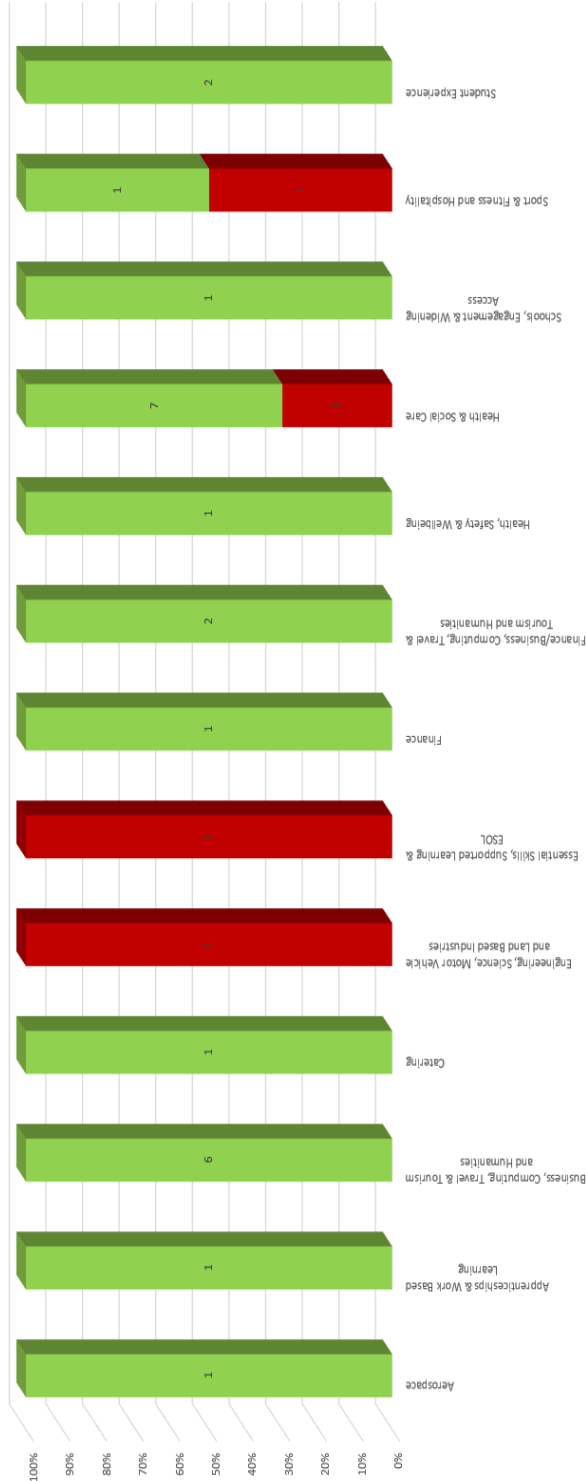
Quarterly Complaints Report – Q1, 2023/2024

Complaints received, split by outcome and curriculum/service area



The chart on the right shows the complaints received, split by outcome and curriculum/service area.

Percentage of complaints received, closed within timescale split by curriculum/service area



The chart on the left shows the percentage of complaints received, that were closed within the SPSO set timescale (5 or 20 working days), split by curriculum/service area.

Actions

Complaint Category	Number of actions	Number completed	Number outstanding
1. Customer Care	5	2	3
2. Applications, Admissions & Progression	1	1	0
3. Course Related	4	3	1
4. Services	3	2	1
5. Facilities	0	0	0
6. Others	0	0	0
Total	13	8	5

Service Improvements

Quarterly Complaints Report – Q1, 2023/2024

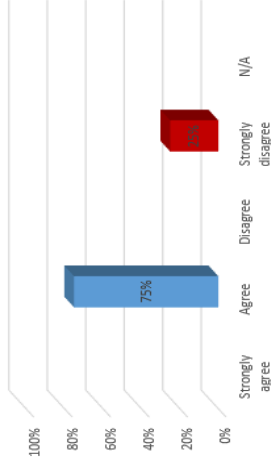
Issue	Actions
Parent unhappy applicant offered a waiting list place back in June but clearing page of website still shows places available on the course. Also went into Kilwinning campus about another course, spaces were available on the clearing site, but was told the course was full.	Feedback given to Curriculum Manager that Head of available during the summer and can carry out interviews and close courses in their absence. Curriculum Manager will now have a detailed plan of actions to be taken when they are on leave. Student Records made aware that in the absence of the Curriculum Manager during the summer, they should contact the Head of to carry out interviews.
Student unhappy they have been asked to pay course fees. Does not feel they are liable for the fees, as they were withdrawn from the course.	Review the wording of the Student Fees and Debt Recovery Policy. The policy confirms that if a student withdraws after attending more than 50% of the course no refund is due. This should be clearer that this is based on the amount of time the course has been running and not the student's actual attendance on the course.
Students unhappy desks in the classroom are too low for wheelchair access, there is only one table in LRC that can be adjusted and no adjustable desks in the open space, cannot adjust the table height in the Refectory and Still Room and the doors in the campus are too heavy.	Two electric rise and fall desks installed in the open space on level 2 and one installed in the LRC. Risers installed at a table in the Refectory and Still Room that can now be accessed by a wheelchair user. More crank handle keys for the rise and fall desks in the classroom in the process of being ordered. Process updated so that wheelchair users will be issued with crank handle key as part of PLSP to be kept until it is no longer needed.
Student unhappy with the learning and teaching from one of their lecturers, as they just plays videos in class. When they ask for support they don't get this and are unsure of what they are supposed to be doing.	Lecturer reviewed the delivery of the unit and discussed with the students their preferred models and explained why they were delivering in the method they were. Video use reduced but still available as a teaching aid if students require it.
Parent unhappy student asked to attend a meeting to discuss a miscommunication and was then informed it was a misconduct meeting and a misconduct form was completed. No check into their background or current issues was discussed with them.	Review of Student Conduct Policy, and the forms used, being carried out.

Customer Satisfaction

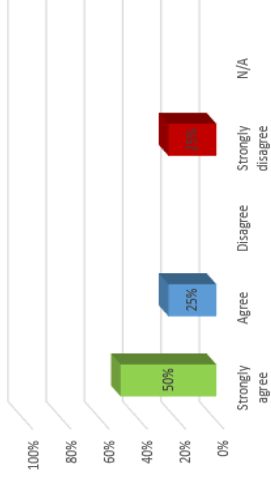
Quarterly Complaints Report – Q1, 2023/2024

A total of 23 surveys have been sent, with 4 responses received, this equates to a 17% response rate. The results from the responses received are shown in the charts below.

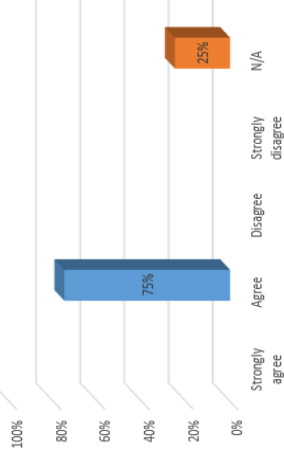
Q2 - I was aware of the complaints procedure before I needed to make a complaint



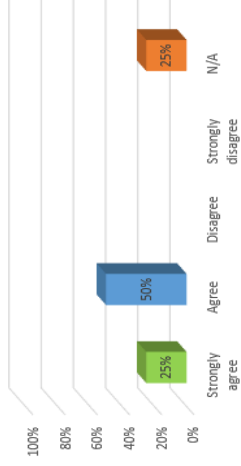
Q3 - I found the complaints process easy to access



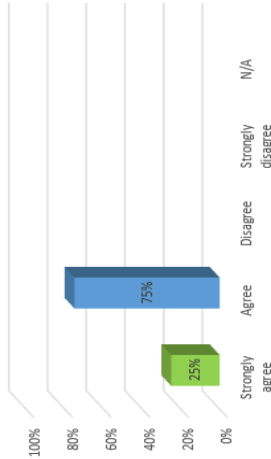
Q4 - I found the complaints form easy to use



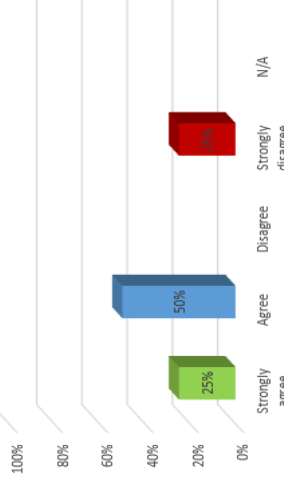
Q5 - I was able to access information and assistance in making my complaint where this was required



Q6 - I received a prompt acknowledgment of my complaint



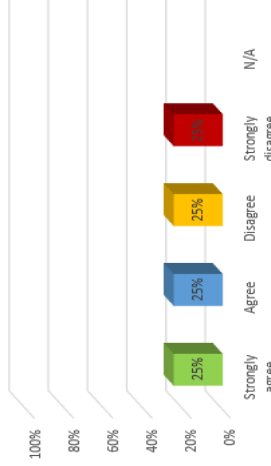
Q7 - I felt my complaint was taken seriously



Q8 - I felt my complaint was thoroughly investigated



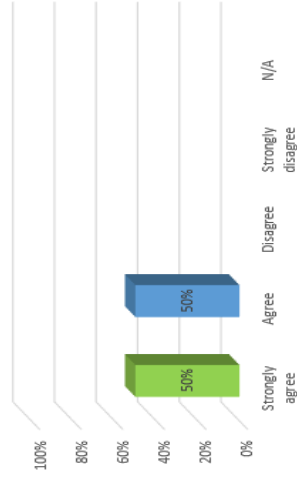
Q9 - I received a fair and objective response to my complaint



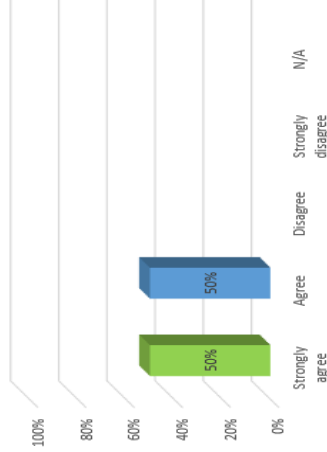
Q10 - I received a clear response to my complaint



Q11 - I received a response to my complaint within an appropriate timescale



Q12 - I was dealt with courteously at all times



Appendix

The tables below show the College Development Network categories and sub-categories, which we have adopted.

1.0	CUSTOMER CARE	
	Sub-Category	Examples
1.1	Health & Safety	• Alleged misuse of disability car parking spaces • Subject to passive smoking in no smoking area • Tripping hazards in workshop
1.2	Security	• Theft of personal property • Padlock on bicycle locker cut by Estates staff
1.3	Diversity & Equality (<i>Protected Characteristics</i>)	• Failure to make reasonable adjustments under the terms of Equality Act • Visitor complains of poor accessibility to toilets and lifts • Student not allowed to progress on course due to additional support not being available to support disability • Textbook contains racist material
1.4	Data Protection	• E-mail address divulged to other people • Staff shared student personal data with others during classroom discussion
1.5	Environmental	• Housing Association complains of students littering outside tenants' properties • Neighbour complains of noise from construction work at College • Residents complain that students and staff used private car-parking spaces
1.6	Staff Conduct	• Poor customer service • Failure to respond to requests by e-mail/phone etc. • Requests handled impolitely, discourteously
1.7	Student Conduct	• Student complains that disciplinary procedure was applied unfairly • Students damage neighbouring properties

Appendix cont...

2.0	APPLICATIONS, ADMISSIONS, PROGRESSION	
	Sub-Category	Examples
2.1	Marketing	• Unable to find evening class information on College website • Misleading information in College prospectus
2.2	Application, Admission, Interview, Enrolment, Induction	• No acknowledgement of application • Criteria for rejecting application was unfair • Placed on waiting list despite applying quickly • No information on College website to inform applicant course was already full and only found out weeks later • Applicant travelled long distance for interview only to be told they didn't have the necessary entry requirements • Applicant invited to wrong campus for interview
2.3	Progression, Articulation & Withdrawal	• Student unhappy that they were not allowed to progress to next level having successfully achieved the previous level • Student complains withdrawal process was not followed • University not supplied with student reference as requested
3.0	COURSE RELATED	
	Sub-Category	Examples
3.1	Learning & Teaching	• Quality of teaching not to the standard expected • Teaching from powerpoint for 3 hours without a break • Lecturer unapproachable when requiring support
3.2	Environment/Resources	• Classrooms/desks not fit for purpose • Wifi unreliable • Broken smartboard • Workshops too cold • Not enough computers for size of class
3.3	Course Management	• Class cancelled at short notice • No contingency for staff absence • Lecturer arrives late/finishes class early
3.4	Facilitated Learning Support	• Guidance class not held • Staff do not provide printed materials in format stipulated in PLSP • Staff unaware of changes to PLSP
3.5	Assessment & Exams, Certification	• Assessments crammed into end of block • Student not provided with opportunity for re-sit • Delay in providing results/certificates • Not receiving certificate due to College failing to attach student to group award • Noise disruption during exam

Appendix cont...

4.0	SERVICES	
	Sub-Category	Examples
4.1	Finance	- Former student unhappy to be threatened with legal proceedings for unpaid fees - Student unhappy not to have course fees refunded after withdrawing from course
4.2	Funding/Bursary	- Delay in processing bursary application - Application for hardship fund handled unfairly
4.3	Student Records	Student personnel data is incorrect/not updated
4.4	Provided Learning Support	- Delay in arranging DSA assessment - Student unhappy that they could not have the same support worker for every class - Student unhappy that additional support requirements have not been put in place
4.5	Library/Learning Technology	- Student complained that library overdue book notification system was unfair - Lack of support provided by the College with regards to provision of IT on evening class - Library opening hours
4.6	College Services – Quality etc	Delay in handling complaint

5.0	FACILITIES	
	Sub-Category	Examples
5.1	Catering	- Coffee shop frequently runs out of soya milk - Choice on offer
5.2	Student Accommodation	- Poor wifi service - Cleanliness of accommodation
5.3	Maintenance, Lifts, Car Parking	- Lifts out of order - College does not provide sufficient car parking space - College signage is misleading

6.0	OTHERS	
	Sub-Category	Examples
6.1		No College wide 2 minute silence on Remembrance Day