



OUTCOME AGREEMENT 2022-23



west lothian
college

INDUCTION

Vision and Strategic Goals

The college's vision to deliver a highly skilled, enterprising and resilient workforce is underpinned by four strategic goals and three core values that influence how we act.

To inspire and enable success for all, we will:

- Provide a wide range of qualifications at further and higher education level
- Have clear vocational pathways from school to college, and from college to university, apprenticeships or employment
- Have a modern curriculum, responsive to the skills needs of the economy and supported by up-to-date facilities
- Integrate digital technologies across our curriculum and student support services
- Help our students facing financial, learning or mental health challenges.

To support economic recovery and growth, we will:

- Provide skilled people to help businesses survive and thrive
- Ensure that all courses are relevant and keep pace with industry developments
- Be flexible in what, how, where and when we deliver
- Establish centres of excellence in areas such as outdoor learning and sustainable living
- Enhance our STEM activity with schools, employers and partners.

To strengthen our communities, we will:

- Deliver more for our communities to reach people not in education or work
- Enhance our partnerships with the third sector to achieve shared objectives
- Help our Community Planning Partnership to achieve its goals.

To lead with vision and empathy, we will:

- Be a trauma responsive college working with partners to support our students
- Support positive mental health and wellbeing of students and staff
- Make work better for our employees by being a Fair Work employer
- Help our workforce and students adapt to a post-pandemic world of work.

The college's four strategic goals align very well with the themes in SFC's 2022-23 Outcome and Impact Framework, specifically outcomes for students, and outcomes for economic recovery and social renewal.



Values

Our values underpin our vision and strategic goals. Putting students at the centre of everything we do means exactly that. Through two elected full-time sabbatical presidents, volunteer executive officers and faculty ambassadors, our Student Association plays a pivotal role in the college. It sits at the heart of our decision-making and self-evaluation processes, ensuring that every decision we make enhances the student experience.

Being welcoming to all means that we ensure equality of opportunity, embrace diversity and are a truly inclusive college.

Always striving for better sums up our commitment to embracing a culture of continuous improvement. We know what we need to do to improve the learning experience for our students and make work better for our employees and we are making good progress.



Supporting national strategic outcomes

Plans set out in this Outcome Agreement support Scottish Government priorities to create a fairer, wealthier and greener country, promoting economic recovery and inclusive growth, widening access and addressing the attainment gap. They contribute to achieving goals set out in the National Strategy for Economic Transformation, specifically on the skilled workforce, fostering an entrepreneurial culture, and creating a fairer, more equal society.

This Outcome Agreement contributes to the high priority outcomes of the West Lothian Community Planning Partnership's Single Outcome Agreement 2013-23 to improve the employment position in West Lothian and to improve attainment and positive destinations for school pupils. The college plays a critical role in supporting individuals and businesses across West Lothian, contributing to inclusive economic growth and community wealth building. We contribute to a number of regional groups to support economic growth and recovery – including the Economic Partnership Forum, the Jobs Task Force, the Chamber of Commerce, Job Centre Plus and the Developing the Young Workforce regional employer group.

Our new Compass Point is an engine-room of partnership working that offers a welcoming and inclusive space for learning and for partners to support our students in addressing their wider needs. Partners co-located in the Compass Point include public and third sector organisations such as Action for Children, Children 1st and West Lothian Council.

We will continue to work with college, university and West Lothian Council partners on implementing skills projects created through the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal. The college plays an active role on the City Deal HE/FE strategy group and elected members oversight committee, alongside our involvement in the regional college coordination group. In 2022, this work has expanded to connect the City Deal regional curriculum manager to the college's lead for STEM, ensuring refreshed approaches to digital skills are applied consistently across our curriculum.

The region is changing and the college aims to provide the skills necessary to help businesses, raise productivity, and meet the challenges presented by demographic, environmental and technological change. In planning a curriculum that meets the needs of the region, as well as understanding how industry sectors are expected to grow or decline over the next three years, the college pays close attention to changes in the economy and skills requirements at an occupational level. The Board strategy event in January 2023 will focus on regional economic growth and labour market demand, and future workforce skills.

The Regional Skills Assessment forecasts that the highest proportion of job openings in the next ten years require skills at SCQF level 7 and above. Given that less than half of the adult population has qualifications at these levels, it is essential that people are able to achieve qualifications like HNCs and HNDs to be able to take advantage of higher value and more secure jobs. The college will therefore continue to support a range of pathways to higher education including part-time HNC study for senior phase school pupils, moving on to HNC study straight from school, progressing from FE qualifications to HNC, and part-time learning in work through work-based SVQs or HE-level professional qualifications delivered in evening classes.



Despite the short to medium term economic challenges caused by the pandemic, forecasted growth over the next ten years in the population and the regional economy present significant opportunities for the college. The population of West Lothian is projected to increase by 21,200 by 2042, making it one of the fastest growing populations in Scotland. This is reflected in the growing number of students enrolling at the college each year and consistently delivering above the target credit activity agreed with SFC. The college was very pleased to receive additional core credits for 2022-23 in recognition of our performance and demand. We fully expect to exceed our credit target yet again this year without needing to make use of the range of flexibilities made available by SFC.

OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS

Fair access and transitions – people from deprived areas have fair access and are supported to succeed

Tackling Poverty

The proportion of students enrolled at the college who are resident in SIMD20 postcodes continues to increase and exceeds the relative proportion in the general population, demonstrating that we are reaching more people in communities affected by multiple deprivation. The precarious financial situation facing an increasing number of students makes committing to full-time study a challenge. Levels of poverty and homelessness amongst our students are rising, and we will continue to make use of partnerships with a range of external organisations to provide vital financial and housing support. For example, we will disburse grants of £200 to young students with £50,000 funding from West Lothian Council's Anti-Poverty Team. The college will bid for additional student funding if there is an in-year redistribution call.

As well as continuing to provide a free hot lunch for all students, we will continue to offer the free hot breakfast we introduced in March 2021, ensuring that learning is not hindered by hunger. In 2021-22, we were pleased to see many colleges and some universities follow in our footsteps by offering free food to students. Our support is enhanced by the provision of healthy pre-cooked meals from a local social enterprise for students to take home for dinner.

We continue to ensure easy access to free sanitary products, and our Student Association provides dignity packs for students unable to afford basic hygiene products. Homeless students and others affected by poverty have free access to a washer/dryer on campus. Our Student Association and staff work with local charities and social enterprises to help students facing financial difficulties remain on course and gain qualifications that will help them achieve improved life circumstances.

Trauma responsive practice

Experience of trauma is recognised as having a potentially negative impact on an individual's future development and an increasing number of our students have experienced trauma in their lives. Our college is playing a unique role in contributing to Scotland's ambition to be an adverse childhood experience aware nation and in delivering on The Promise through the Children's Hearings Scotland Learning Academy. Our trainers develop the skills of thousands of volunteer panellists across Scotland which includes an understanding of trauma-informed practice.

Our whole-college approach to trauma responsive practice will increase significantly in 2022-23, enhanced by working with professionals and academics to embed it in all practice. Working

closely with West Lothian Council's Youth Justice, Adult Justice, Addictions, and Children and Families teams we offer individualised admission pathways for potential students. We work with students to support and build resilience to enable them to achieve their goals. This is now recognised as a route to avoid custodial sentencing and a network of college staff and external professionals will support those with specific needs to make progress in their learning. This provision attracted national attention in 2022 and was acknowledged with a College Development Network (CDN) award in November 2023.

Young Person's Guarantee poverty funding in 2022-23 will support our TRUST project in collaboration with local partners to improve the situation of students and their families. This individualised support is for students who have experienced barriers to learning, including mental health and involvement with the justice system, or who have not reached a positive destination since leaving school. Supported by funding from the National Lottery Improving Lives Fund, we will recruit a three-year peer navigator post to support TRUST students with a mentor who has lived experience of poverty and the justice system. In February 2023, the success of this approach will be highlighted in a research report commissioned by CDN and will feature in a national TV documentary 'Let's Talk About Trauma'.

Over 700 child, health and social care students will learn about the impact of trauma through engagement in interactive workshops led by leading trauma expert Dr Suzanne Zeedyk. A workshop will be delivered for all college staff as part of our drive to embed an understanding of trauma responsive practice across the college.

Care-experienced students

Over the year, we will continue to make further progress towards SFC's refreshed National Ambition for Care-Experienced Student, and ensure that enhanced support is put in place for care-experienced students. We guarantee an interview for all applicants who declare as care-experienced and work with partner agencies to offer an introductory welcome to potential students and a key contact prior to application. Where students disclose as care-experienced on application, we put support in place to enable them to progress successfully and achieve positive outcomes. This has proved very effective and has resulted in sustained above sector average success for care-experienced students.

We have built on our excellent partnership with West Lothian Council's Inclusion and Wellbeing Service to support young people who are care-experienced and not in full-time education at school. Monthly strategic meetings with senior social work leads for justice, through-care and after-care co-create bespoke courses that are tailored to next steps on moving onto college or employment.

The college joined the Edinburgh Hub for Success in 2021 to promote greater success in widening access for those least likely to progress to university from college. We are a member of the West Lothian Corporate Parenting Strategic Group and the CDN Access and Inclusion group. We will continue to engage with Who Cares? Scotland and CELCIS in our work with care-experienced

students. The college is represented on SFC's Care Experienced Governance Group and involved in the Care Experienced, Estranged and Carers East Forum.

Following our achievement in 2021 of the Going Forward for Student Carers Award from the Carers Trust and the UK national award Driving Change from the Carers Federation, we have deepened our relationship with West Lothian Carers. One of our faculty directors works directly with West Lothian Council's lead officer on the delivery of The Promise to ensure a joined-up and responsive approach to ongoing improvements to the care system are complemented by the work of the college and our partners. This is complemented by our well-established work in the TRUST project. All staff will continue to participate in mandatory training on what it means to be a good corporate parent.

Transitions and pathways for students are supported and signposted

We continue to be the top destination for school leavers in West Lothian. West Lothian's school/college partnership is led strategically by the council's Education Services in close collaboration with the college. We have a very strong partnership with the region's twelve secondary schools, and liaise directly with heads and depute heads in each school as well as with council lead officers.

Vocational pathways are available to all secondary schools, including courses tailored for disengaged pupils that focus on essential life and employability skills. The college has a strong suite of courses delivered to more than a thousand senior phase pupils, providing access to vocational qualifications, national qualifications and foundation apprenticeships (FAs). The college is a strong supporter of FAs, and is the focal point for the delivery of FAs in West Lothian. We will continue to work with the council to review our curriculum planning processes to ensure we have a comprehensive and responsive vocational portfolio.

While most courses for school pupils are delivered at college, we offer School Link where pupils with additional support needs attend college over three taster days and Schools Transition, a half day a week course over the academic year for school leavers from special education schools. We also offer a transition programme one morning a week for young people in their final year of school who are on the autistic spectrum and looking to apply for a full-time mainstream college course the following year.

Our shared aspiration with the council is to produce a well-aligned, seamless vocational curriculum between school and college that supports progression, avoids duplication and results in a senior phase curriculum designed with young people at the heart. Increased engagement between teachers and lecturers to enhance delivery to students will be an important part of this. Stakeholders take part in our annual school/college partnership planning event each year and agree shared objectives and actions.

The college will continue to meet Skills Development Scotland (SDS) careers information and guidance managers, West Lothian Council's Education and Access 2 Employment teams, and the Developing the Young Workforce regional group regularly to understand and integrate approaches

to positive destinations for young people.

We will engage with primary school pupils and teachers primarily where it enhances the learning experience of our students, for example enabling childhood practice students gain valuable skills by working with hundreds of pupils over the year in our forest classrooms. We will deliver a career long professional development project with primary teachers to develop their woodworking skills to enable them to introduce this to their STEM curriculum. This work is funded by the City Deal. We will host a Lego League heat on campus and provide encourage staff and students to offer a range of STEM activities to enhance this event.



Transitions to higher education

There is active collaboration between the college and other SFC-funded institutions, and across the education and skills system. The college has articulation agreements with a growing number of higher education institutions to enable students to progress to university with advanced standing from many of our Higher National qualifications. We will increase the number of articulation agreements in 2022-23 to 224 routes and add Glasgow Caledonian University as an additional pathway institution, extending the availability of advanced standing for our HE students. Our work continues with Scottish Wider Access Programme East to ensure adult returners access twelve connected university partners to further their ambitions to achieve a degree.

Our partnership with Edinburgh Napier University to replace the former BA Business Management franchise degree pathway is in its second year of delivery in 2022-23, with the agreed model delivered online and on our campus by university lecturers. This new degree pathway ensures our students can progress to the degree without the complexity of travelling to the university. Pastoral and tutorial support is provided by college lecturers known to the students from their journey through NC, HNC and HND qualifications. The initial two-year agreement has been replaced with a more permanent arrangement.

High quality, learning, teaching and support (students at all levels experience a high-quality, safe and supportive learning experience that enables them to succeed in their studies and they find it easy to participate and engage in their educational experience)

Student experience of learning, teaching and support is protected

Recommendations from a working group in 2021-22 that concentrated on how to improve success for full-time FE students will be implemented in 2022-23. These include improving the induction process, reducing all full-time FE courses to a maximum of 16 credits, creating a new course tutor role with dedicated time to support students, and implementing a risk register for lecturers to highlight immediate support needed by students most likely to withdraw early.

Our new Student Support Policy, coupled with the Attendance and Fitness to Study Policy and Procedure, will provide proactive support to staff such as course tutors who work closely with students to maintain engagement in their course.

Following the decline of success rates for full-time HE students in 2021-22, largely in subjects where online delivery dominated throughout the year or where there was a high proportion of younger students on courses (particularly those starting college straight from school) all curriculum teams are focused on ensuring that HEFT student success improves in the current academic year.

We are still dealing with the consequences of the pandemic years, particularly on younger students and the extent of the effect of the pandemic on the development of young people is still unknown. Even before the pandemic, the younger generation was exhibiting higher rates of depression and anxiety in this increasingly volatile and uncertain world. Some school leavers moving onto college courses are struggling as a result of what they missed out on over two years of disruption caused by the pandemic and the college will adapt to support these students.

Self-evaluation in June 2022 generated a range of actions to improve the full-time HE student experience, the quality of engagement, and the quality of learning and teaching. As a consequence, almost all full-time students will return to campus-based learning in direct response to the need for social connection in learning and for students to be supported on campus. Some of the measures in place in 2022-23 for full-time FE students will be adopted to ensure improved attainment of full-time HE students.

The college will address all areas for improvement identified in the 2020-21 Education Scotland progress visit.

Rigour in the learning and teaching progress

Lecturers will be supported by learning champions through our reflective practice approaches to ensure that learning and teaching is engaging, and that digital pedagogy is appropriately embedded. Learning technologists and learning centre staff will provide focused support to ensure that all students gain the necessary digital skills at induction to enable them to engage well in blended learning.

Lecturers will make effective use of work placements, access to industry experts, project briefs and volunteering opportunities to enrich the learning experience for students. Work-based assessors will build on their experience of delivering SVQs during the pandemic to people in work by continuing to support their students online.

Quality assurance and enhancement support the student experience

Following a review of our self-evaluation processes in 2022, the college will move to a continuous process of self-evaluation using performance indicator data at particular points in the year. Improvements to our approach to quality assurance and enhancement will include the recruitment of a new team of quality champions (one per faculty) who will mirror the learning champion role created in 2021-22 while maintaining clear boundaries between the two roles. We will revise quality assurance processes to bring greater visibility to the completion of these and staff will receive training and support from quality champions and faculty managers. A revised internal audit process will link the internal audit on quality and self-evaluation with a desk-based audit of quality assurance and teaching material as part of the lesson observation process.

Data and evidence

In 2022-23 we will use data analytics to plan our curriculum using a wide range of information – from three-year trends to predictive analytics through our new risk register, and data collected by West Lothian schools on the future career preferences and destinations of their pupils as well as the courses they are studying. Combined with labour market information, this will ensure our curriculum is relevant to individual and employer needs.

In addition, we will use data proactively to determine how we can help individual students improve their chances of success and predict future trends for support needs. Our support staff, armed with analysis of our data and the intelligence that comes with that, reach out to students to offer personalised help.

Learning and teaching strategies adapt to digital and blended learning

The college is committed to sustaining blended learning while recognising that the most effective pedagogical model for full-time, schools and apprenticeship students is on-campus delivery. Our 2022-23 curriculum plan will ensure that the majority of learning delivery for these students will take place on campus, while using a blend of virtual learning where it is appropriate for them and other part-time students, for example employed students undertaking qualifications in the workplace.

To provide leadership and resources for digital and blended learning, the Learning Continuity Support Team will continue in 2022-23. Weekly mandatory development sessions for lecturers, assessors and instructors will continue to have a strong focus on the improvement of engagement in learning, developing a shared vision for blended learning and supporting delivery staff to adapt pedagogy for a hybrid approach.

Six learning champions (lecturers with partial remission from teaching duties) are led by a faculty director to inspire others to create innovative teaching approaches and assessment methodologies across the college. Each learning champion supports the improvement of learning, teaching and assessment practice by co-creating a customised action plan for each faculty. They will raise the aspirations and abilities of our staff through improving skills, sharing innovative practice and ensuring all of this is aligned to General Teaching Council Scotland professional standards.

Digital technology will continue to impact on every industry sector the college serves, on how we deliver education and skills, and on how we operate. Following significant investment in technology for learning in 2021-22, we will expand our digital learning infrastructure further to provide students the opportunity to engage in high-quality blended and hybrid learning. This will include a Lapsafe facility in the learning centre that offers students a self-service facility for short-term laptop loans and the provision of over 300 laptops for longer-term loan to students experiencing digital poverty.

The college will embed hybrid working for the majority of staff and adapt workspaces to accommodate this, for example by providing fifteen soundproofed, ventilated pods across the buildings, and creating hybrid meetings rooms with the necessary audio-visual equipment.

Mental health and wellbeing

We take a whole-college approach to mental health and wellbeing. As the proportion of students declaring mental health problems increases each year, collaborative efforts by staff, students and stakeholders have a positive impact on students with poor mental health. These efforts are illustrated in our Student Health and Wellbeing Agreement for 2022-24 which was co-developed by our Student Association and staff.

We will continue to support staff in the work they are doing proactively to support student mental health. For example, the Man Cave will now meet in a dedicated, bespoke space on campus as well as online each week. In response to student feedback we will create Head Space, a private room for neurodivergent students who need individual time away from others. To provide opportunities for students to build friendships and engage with others, we will create an outdoor recreational area situated amongst trees that has table tennis, chess and football tables as well as seating areas. The college will also make improvements to the existing outdoor wellbeing garden for students who want to get away from the bustle of the campus and spend time in a peaceful outdoor space.



An outdoor gym, comprising eight pieces of equipment (including some that are accessible to wheelchair users) and supporting up to twelve simultaneous users, will be ready for students in August 2022. With funding from SportsScotland, the college will recruit an active campus coordinator in 2023 who will be instrumental in enabling us to realise our ambition of encouraging all students to take part in physical activity. This will include individual and team activities, informal sports clubs and gym sessions.

The college will help the Student Association to establish a range of clubs by providing resources. Supported with a philanthropic donation, the college will implement a proposal from staff and students to create a Gaming Cave in a dedicated room equipped with state-of-the-art gaming technology for students to engage in team eSports activity. While this will be an extra-curriculum activity, we will look at how we make use of this resource in course delivery in future years.

Partnership, participation and student experience (students find it easy to participate, have their voice heard and valued, and influence their educational and student experience)

The partnership between college leaders and Student Association representatives ensures that students are at the centre of everything we do. This begins at the start of the academic year when, along with the principal and vice principals, the student presidents will welcome full-time students in two weeks of large induction sessions.

The student voice is critical in setting out the kind of college we want to be and the Student Association will continue to influence all decisions we make. The college will introduce a new survey tool and associated process for engagement at the start of the 2022-23 academic year, designed in partnership with the Student Association, to support a programme of student surveys over the year (induction, SPARKLE, SSES and end-of-course) and increase response rates to these surveys so that we can be confident that the student voice is comprehensively captured. The college will review feedback from the induction survey in September 2022, the November 2022 SPARKLE survey and the spring 2023 Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey to take forward any required improvements.

The Student Association plays a vital role in evaluating the quality of learning and teaching through its SPARKLE evaluation toolkit. This leads to changes in college processes, in the delivery of learning and support services, and in resources for learning. Class reps will be identified for every course and course tutors will lead on engaging with them to ensure student feedback is captured consistently. This will be further supported by volunteer student ambassadors in who will complete SPARQs training and who will train course tutors to ensure effective engagement of the student voice. A revised self-evaluation process will ensure that this is core to actions for improvement.

In addition to monthly meetings between the principal and student presidents, the Student Association will organise regular question time sessions throughout 2022-23 where the principal will respond to questions and suggestions submitted by students. As well as evaluating the student experience, the Student Association self-evaluates its own performance and governance structure to ensure sustainability in capturing and acting on the student voice.

Learning with impact (students at all levels are equipped to flourish in employment, further study and to lead fulfilling lives)

Students supported to complete successfully

Our new Compass Point is designed to facilitate better joint working and on-campus presence for partners and college staff to ensure the right support is available to our students when they need it most. Partners include public and third sector organisations such as the local Youth Justice Team, Drug and Alcohol Services, Children 1st and Action for Children as well as Skills -Development Scotland and the Department for Work and Pensions. In 2022-23, more students on mainstream courses will have access to the personalised support available. This support includes advice on addiction, poverty, mental health and employability.

In spring 2023, the Compass Point will be the base for a new charity, The Scheme which was co-founded by two former students. As well as supporting people in the wider community on recovery from addiction, The Scheme will be available to support students and staff.

Students supported to positive destinations

In 2022-23, we will continue to advise and assist students on positive progression pathways on leaving college. Pathways for all full-time courses are available at <https://fliphtml5.com/vmhkh/lvjs> and are promoted throughout the year to enable students to make informed choices. In addition, we will hold a range of sector-specific events at which employers and universities will raise awareness of the opportunities available to progress onto university or into work. For example, during Scottish Apprenticeship Week we have an event on campus at which the college, companies and universities will promote foundation, modern and graduate apprenticeships to current students. In spring 2023, an Engineering Your Future 'speed-dating' event will connect employers who are recruiting with students who are likely to complete their qualification in this academic year. Industry specific employment fayres (including the emergency services, healthcare and digital) will take place throughout the year, complemented with engagement from industry experts.

Universities will continue to take part in events at key points in the year to raise awareness of progression opportunities, and students aspiring to progress onto degree study will have opportunities to visit a range of universities.

Support graduates in a challenging labour market

The college will increase opportunities for students to benefit from work experience opportunities that enable them to gain vital skills in real-life settings. We will further develop our engagement with Bridge 2 Business to enable students to consider self-employment as an option on completing their qualifications. The college will signpost graduates to opportunities such as the local authority's graduate internship scheme and Robertson Trust scholarships. In addition, graduates will be made aware of the Chamber of Commerce's employer showcase event in 2023.

Good understanding of needs of business

Our close relationship with West Lothian Council's economic development team yields insights into employers' current and future skills needs, and leads to the involvement of the college in proactive planning with businesses. Weekly meetings with the council, the Developing the Young Workforce group and JobCentre Plus will enable us to be agile in designing provision that meets immediate and medium-term needs of industry sectors. Faculty teams will use employer forums and industry events to consult widely on curriculum development and delivery.

Equalities and Inclusion (every student has their individual needs recognised in terms of protected characteristics; and everyone is treated fairly and with respect)

The college will maintain a culture of equality of opportunity where all staff, students and stakeholders are treated fairly and with respect. We value diversity and foster good relations, and eliminate discrimination, victimisation and harassment of any form, including gender-based violence. The Equalities Committee ensures that disabilities are considered fully and reasonable action is taken to ensure every student has an equal chance to succeed. We will seek accreditation as a Disability Confident Leader, going beyond our current Disability Confident Employer status.

Mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion into the everyday work of the college is at the heart of all we do. Our equality outcomes are closely aligned to the college values to ensure equalities and widening access are embedded into all our activity. The college will continue to make progress on mainstreaming equalities through our Access and Inclusion Plan, Equalities Policy and Procedure, and Equalities Action Plan. These set out how we will ensure services and courses are open and inclusive for all, and that we attract and meet the needs of people from all backgrounds. We will publish our mainstreaming report in April 2023.

We will build on above sector performance and continue to ensure that students with protected characteristics are successful in achieving their qualification. We will continue to enhance accessibility to campus facilities, for example by installing wheelchair-accessible outdoor gym equipment and social areas. In partnership with the Student Association, the college will seek to be reaccredited for the LGBT Youth Charter in 2023 and will aim to go beyond our current silver status to achieve the gold award.

All students supported to achieve their full potential

A dedicated student support team of well qualified, proactive and experienced staff meet the needs of individual students. Students are encouraged to disclose specific needs when they join the college and, increasingly, before they enrol. From 2022, all students will be asked to complete a wellness survey on enrolment which will influence how we support students.

Support is personalised to facilitate learning and attainment and available during the day as well as out-of-hours to support part-time students. Our student support team provides a high-quality service, evidenced by our above average success for students living in areas of multiple deprivation, care-experienced students and those with a declared disability. Individual support plans are developed in consultation with students and shared with teaching staff to inform strategies for retention and attainment. Student progress is monitored throughout the year by named staff. Areas of concern are noted on a heat-mapped risk register and course tutors will action this immediately to ascertain any required support.

The college will sign up to West Lothian Council's FORT System (Fast Online Referral Tracking) to promote speedy referrals to a wide range of agencies and charities offering support. This will enable staff and the Student Association to refer students directly for help on housing, benefits, food and more.



The college supports disabled students and staff very well, as evidenced by sustained above sector average successful outcomes for students who declare a disability. Students who disclose a disability are referred to the student support team who develop a support plan with them relevant to the nature of their disability. Students leaving school who have been in a supported learning environment benefit from a transition period that is supported by full-time college courses that enable students move onto opportunities including employment or volunteering. During Learning Disability Week in May 2023, the college will host a Scottish Council for Learning Disability Leadership Conversation Cafe on the theme of enabling more people with learning disabilities to gain access to further and higher education.

OUTCOMES FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND SOCIAL RENEWAL

Responsive institutions (institutions are responsive to employer and industry needs and to current and future skills requirements)

Using labour market information and industry engagement

Curriculum planning throughout the year involves private, public and third sector employers. The college uses a wide range of sources to ensure that our courses align with labour market information. Each year we use the West Lothian Regional Skills Assessment to understand projected growth or decline in different industry sectors, occupational trends, and the profile and skills level of the population. This is enhanced by ongoing engagement between college leaders and industry bodies that results in comprehensive intelligence on current and emerging skills needs which influences curriculum planning.

Employers have a major influence in ensuring our curriculum is fully aligned with individual, economic and community need. College leaders and faculty managers engage directly with hundreds of companies and organisations. As well as these individual relationships, employers take part in key strategic activities to plan course provision, for example through sector-specific employer advisory forums and annual curriculum planning events. All faculties use labour market intelligence effectively, and involve employers in course design.

The college is a key partner in weekly meetings of the West Lothian Economic Recovery Group. Through us, partners such as West Lothian Council, universities and Skills Development Scotland provide employers with a single skills support proposition rather than individual organisations approaching them separately. This prevents duplication and will ensure that students are given the right support to progress onto a path that is right for them. In 2022-23, as a strategic partner of the local Chamber of Commerce, the college will welcome hundreds of employers to business networking and showcase events hosted on campus, another opportunity to engage directly with businesses on skills needs.

Upskilling and reskilling the existing workforce

The college plays a pivotal role in supporting West Lothian's economic recovery. Working closely with partners such as West Lothian Business Gateway, West Lothian Chamber of Commerce and the Voluntary Sector Gateway, we help businesses shape their current and future workforce through skills development.

In 2022-23, we will further extend our reputation as an SVQ provider of choice for private, public and third sector employers. We will continue to encourage companies in West Lothian to access upskilling and reskilling opportunities for their existing workforce through the Flexible Workforce Development Fund (FWDF) and our extensive work-based SVQ (Scottish Vocational Qualifications) portfolio. Funding from West Lothian Council will compensate for some of the reduced SFC funding for the FWDF to enable us to support more employers.

The college will build on strong partnerships in the digital sector through our membership of ScotlandIS and engagement with the Scottish Business Resilience Centre, to create additional learning opportunities for students to access this important sector. This includes creating opportunities for people such as those who are neurodiverse and often do not have access to this sector. Building on our successful track record on this, the City Deal's Data Driven Innovation coordinator will investigate how the course we deliver for neurodivergent students can be replicated in other colleges.

People have the necessary meta skills to succeed

The college will use Skills Boost courses to develop the necessary meta and specific skills needed for people to connect with particular occupations. In 2023, the college will develop a unit based on the Inner Development Goals which align with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Designed around five dimensions with 23 associated skills and abilities, our bespoke Change, Sustain, Attain unit will extend and enhance Skills Development Scotland's meta skills framework.

Pathways for people without work to study and move into jobs

As part of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Regional Deal (through the Data Driven Innovation Gateway project) we will continue to work with other colleges to develop a suite of courses that enhance the digital skills of groups including those furthest away from work.

The college will add to its portfolio of data science courses with support from Skills Development Scotland's Digital Skills Pipeline Fund. Over the next three years this will create opportunities for at least 150 young people who would otherwise have no access to digital learning.

With funding from ScotlandIS, the college will purchase equipment to undertake the delivery of cyber security and computing through outreach in schools and communities across West Lothian in a new project called CyberDrive. This will drive up participation in tech skills and tackle gender stereotyping by involving more female school pupils.

Fair Work

Committed to being a Fair Work employer and building on our accreditation of Investors in People Gold in 2022, the college will make further progress on listening to, investing in and providing opportunities for current and future staff.

On the Fair Work dimension of effective voice, the principal will continue to engage throughout the year directly with staff in small and large group settings to provide opportunities for ongoing feedback. In parallel, the college will encourage staff to join a trade union and will engage positively with local trade union representatives. All managers will meet regularly with their teams.

Supporting the Fair Work dimension of fulfilment, the health and wellbeing of staff will be ongoing priorities in 2022-23 and the college will continue to offer a wellbeing day for all staff. We will also hold a staff wellbeing festival in February 2023 that will include in-person and online activities. Throughout the year, staff will be encouraged to take advantage of opportunities for learning and development which will be promoted throughout the year.

On the Fair Work dimension of respect, the college will continue to support the availability of hybrid and flexible working to support diversity in working patterns. The college achieved the LGBT Youth Scotland Silver Charter Mark in 2019 and will seek reaccreditation in 2023. Training in areas like epilepsy and deaf awareness is offered to all staff.

In relation to the Fair Work dimension of security, we will implement the national increase in the Real Living Wage as soon as it is announced in autumn 2022. Conscious of the impact that the cost of living crisis challenges may have on staff, we will promote both our own and partners' support. Everyone in our workforce is paid at least the Real Living Wage, including the Modern Apprentices we employ.

As far as possible, the college will issue permanent contracts to employees. For fixed-term contracts, clarity is provided on the period covered by the contract. The college does not make use of zero-hours arrangements, ensuring fairness and predictability for earnings and work commitments which is particularly important for those with caring responsibilities. This can help to address the gender pay gap with females traditionally having caring responsibilities.

Taking forward the Fair Work dimension of opportunity we will continue with our commitment to developing our young workforce by providing apprenticeship, graduate internship and work experience opportunities. The college will seek to create paid job opportunities for young disabled people, ensure that staff with a disability are well supported in the workplace, and make progress on becoming a Disability Confident Leader building on our reaccreditation as a Disability Confident Employer in 2022. The college will continue to use the Minority Ethnic Recruitment Toolkit to improve the diversity of our workforce and engage with stakeholders such as the West Lothian Community Race Forum to attract more people from minority backgrounds. This had a very positive impact on Board membership in 2022 which now has three ethnic minority non-executive members.

Confident and highly capable work-ready graduates
(students are equipped to take up employment and succeed when the job market opens up)



Pipeline of technically skilled people to fill skills gaps

The college has a contract with SDS to deliver 106 new start Modern Apprenticeships in 2022-23, with growth in the social care, business and construction sectors. We will further develop our partnership with Herriot Watt University to ensure local employers have access to the full range of modern and graduate apprenticeships on offer. The college supports the delivery of apprenticeships in a number of local authorities and will continue to deliver the educational component of Scottish Electrical Charitable Training Trust and Construction Industry Training Board apprenticeships, supporting increasing numbers in 2022-23.

In collaboration with ScotlandIS, we will launch our CyberDrive initiative in March 2023 to deliver cyber security, coding and hackathon learning opportunities through an outreach approach in schools and in community settings. This is particularly important for schools that offer little or no computing qualifications.

Equipping graduates with the skills, knowledge and capabilities to be successful in their chosen career

Through engagement with employers and industry bodies, curriculum areas will adapt course content to provide opportunities for students develop bespoke skills and knowledge in their chosen career.

Effective support for students to understand their careers options, to self-assess and to undertake career planning

Students will be able to engage in a series of industry sector-specific events on and off campus to understand career options on completion of their qualifications. This will include Engineering Your Future, a speed-dating event for students to engage directly with local employers with job opportunities.

Opportunities to engage in work-informed or work-based learning

As full-time students return to campus-based learning in 2022, the college will increase opportunities for work-based learning through an extensive programme of industry expert engagement and an increase in work placement opportunities. Students will have opportunities to explore current and emerging industry trends by visiting innovation centres such as BE-ST (Built Environment – Smart Transformation).

INNOVATION

Innovation in Net Zero

The college will complete a new build ECOHOUSE Skills Centre for Sustainable Living in summer 2023 and during the year will adapt our curriculum portfolio to include net zero units and courses for delivery in 2023-24. Every full-time built environment student will benefit from these units, and a programme of renewables short courses will upskill people working in the construction sector.

While the initial focus of the Skills Centre is on sustainable skills in the construction sector, ultimately the ECOHOUSE will provide a training facility for health and social care students to develop skills in independent living in technology-enabled homes.

Supported by the Scottish Government Decarbonisation Fund, the college will decarbonise one of our buildings in 2022-23 by removing the gas boilers and installing a new air source heat pump, insulating the building, and installing secondary or new double glazing.

Innovation in the curriculum

We will continue to be an early adopter of new approaches to curriculum design and delivery. Working with partners, we will leverage opportunities brought about by the Edinburgh and Southeast Scotland City Regional Deal, in particular related to data.

Supported by funding from the City Deal's HCI, one of our construction lecturers will lead a career-long professional learning (CLPL) woodworking activity for primary teachers in 32 schools across West Lothian to enable them to embed STEM in their teaching. This aims to increase the confidence of primary practitioners to embed woodworking in the early years curriculum and will be developed through a combination of in-person practical learning activities at the college and masterclasses in the schools. Teachers will work on risk assessments, develop project ideas and create lessons that allow for many Curriculum for Excellence outcomes to be delivered as students are immersed in woodwork experiences learning.

Innovation in physical and virtual learning spaces

The college is in the third year of a five-year learning estate plan. Our two main challenges are making the best use of limited internal space as student numbers continue to grow, and modernising our practical learning spaces to stay relevant to industry. An increasing number of local companies are sending apprentices to the college following the expansion and modernisation of our engineering workshops.

Addressing these with increasingly limited funding is a challenge. While we will make the most effective use of the capital funding we receive from SFC, the major reconfiguration required of our physical estate is not possible with our existing grant. As well as continuing to make a business case for additional capital funding, we will pursue alternative funding and partnership opportunities to fulfil our ambitions. For example, our ECOHOUSE Skills Centre for Sustainable Living will be completed by August 2023 and is wholly funded by West Lothian Council.

A priority for improving our learning estate in 2022-23 includes the reconfiguration of our hair and beauty salons in response to student feedback and changing industry demand to ensure practical learning occurs in a high-quality setting. In response to continued growth in demand for construction apprenticeships and skills for renewables, we will convert identified classrooms into an additional workshop and reconfigure a mezzanine area to create more practical workspace.

In 2022-23, the college will complete the reconfiguration of staff work spaces that support effective hybrid working. This will include the installation of fifteen soundproofed and ventilated pods for engaging in Teams/Zoom calls privately away from open plan work areas. It will also include the creation of a number of fully hybrid meeting and teaching rooms and implementation of our hybrid working guidelines.

Collaboration (there is active collaboration with other SFC funded institutions and across the education and skills system)

Meaningful opportunities for collaboration

The college will make progress on a range of collaborations with other SFC-funded institutions in 2022-23. This includes working with all Edinburgh and Southeast Scotland Regional City deal colleges and universities. In 2023, the college will engage strategically with Borders College and Dumfries and Galloway College to explore areas for collaboration as medium-sized colleges.

In spring 2023, the leadership teams of the college and Edinburgh Napier University will meet on campus to explore a range of collaborative opportunities.

We will work with Edinburgh College and Borders College in 2022-23 to co-develop a series of virtual learning and teaching materials to support the delivery of a modern health and social care curriculum, employing technology such as virtual reality to give an immersive learning experience.

Our ECOHOUSE Skills Centre for Sustainable Living will be designed and developed taking account of feedback from industry and university partners and the Built Environment–Smarter Transformation innovation centre.

Collaboration on estates assets/improve coherence and sustainability of provision/reduce carbon emissions/place-based approach to economic recovery

Made possible with nearly £0.5 million from West Lothian Council's place-based funding, our ECOHOUSE Skills Centre for Sustainable Living will be completed by August 2023. The first of its kind in the college sector, it will comprise two semi-detached houses – one a shell, the other built to passive house standards – the ECOHOUSE will support specialised training in sustainable construction, efficient and effective renewable energies and smart home technologies. It will provide skills development to deliver a pipeline of talent for new builds and retrofitting older properties.

Climate Emergency

In preparation for the opening of our ECOHOUSE Skills Centre for Sustainable Living in summer 2023, our curriculum portfolio is being developed to include net zero units and courses, and staff will take part in upskilling to deliver these in 2023-24. While the initial focus of the Skills Centre is on sustainable skills in the construction sector, ultimately it will provide a training facility for health and social care students to develop skills in independent living in technology-enabled homes.

Following a campus energy audit supported by the Scottish Government Decarbonisation Fund in 2021-22, we secured £2 million capital funding to decarbonise one of our buildings in 2022-23 by removing the gas boilers and installing a new air source heat pump, insulating the building, and installing secondary or new double glazing. This project will be carried out in summer 2023.

Sustainable Development Goals

Our Net Zero Plan sets out cross-college actions to take forward our commitment to tackling climate change. Our sustainability goals include biodiversity, reducing building emissions, the circular economy and a focus on key UN Sustainable Development Goals such as poverty, zero hunger, and good health and wellbeing.

Embedding sustainability in all college courses is planned for 2022-23 and will be achieved by the development and introduction of our Change, Sustain, Attain module which is shaped around the Inner Development Goals and enables students and staff to understand their role in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals. This work will be developed in conjunction with the College Development Network and will be shared with the sector when it is completed in 2023.

In 2022-23, we will continue to make full use of our extensive outdoor space for learning, wellbeing and recreation. We will extend the use of our forest classrooms to other curriculum areas and encourage the use of our outdoor gym by all course groups. To provide students and staff with recreational facilities and further develop our college community, we will create a campus park comprising outdoor table tennis, football and chess tables, and seating amongst the trees.

We will also enhance our wellbeing garden, plant additional trees across the campus, and nurture our wildflower areas with homes and feeders for insects, birds and small wildlife. Using the talents of our art lecturers and students, we will create an outdoor installation of trees to form a living sculpture and a covered area in which to create art.

Following the success of our UN Sustainable Development Goals Teach-in in 2022, we will dedicate a week of activity in March 2023 involving all curriculum faculties and students at all levels. Learning outcomes and assessments for students from construction, business, childhood practice, professional cookery, sport and other subject areas will be achieved by designing sustainability activities for over 550 pupils from 14 primary schools across West Lothian – led and supported by our students.

ANNEX A – NATIONAL MEASURES TABLE

College Outcome Agreement Impact Framework: Supporting Data

Measure	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
A Credits Delivered (Core)	44,196	43,417	42,595	44,132	44,607	44,644	49,395	49,603	46862
Credits Delivered (ESF)	0	973	1,490	1,194	833	1,187	1,017	1,602	
Credits Delivered (Core + ESF)	44,196	44,390	44,085	45,326	45,440	45,831	50,412	50,665	46862
B Volume of Credits Delivered to 10% most deprived postcode areas	2,129	1,938	2,437	3,694	3,986	4,012	4,470	4,390	
Proportion of Credits delivered to 10% most deprived postcode areas	4.8%	4.4%	5.5%	8.1%	8.8%	8.8%	8.9%	8.7%	8.8%
C Volume of credits delivered to care-experienced learners	0	246	164	576	2,148	2,849	4,226	1,919	
Proportion of credits delivered to care-experienced learners	0.0%	0.6%	0.4%	1.3%	4.7%	6.2%	8.4%	3.8%	5.0%
D Number of senior phase age pupils studying vocational qualifications delivered by colleges	75	134	186	197	278	228	279	317	
E1 Proportion of enrolled students successfully obtaining a recognised qualification (Full time FE)	63.5%	64.1%	61.9%	65.5%	67.7%	65.3%	60.3%	64.2%	66.0%
Number of enrolled students successfully obtaining a recognised qualification (Full time FE)	849	842	788	875	838	799	667	696	
Total number of FTFE students	1,336	1,313	1,273	1,336	1,237	1,223	1,107	1,085	
E2 Proportion of enrolled students successfully obtaining a recognised qualification (Part time FE)	74.2%	70.6%	77.7%	78.7%	85.5%	84.1%	89.2%	91.0%	90.0%
Number of enrolled students successfully obtaining a recognised qualification (Part time FE)	2,482	1,676	2,241	2,675	3,735	2,425	3,377	4,327	70.0%
Total number of PTFE students	3,344	2,374	2,883	3,400	4,370	2,883	3,786	4,756	
E3 Proportion of enrolled students successfully obtaining a recognised qualification (Full time HE)	71.1%	69.7%	72.5%	69.8%	70.5%	68.5%	71.3%	61.7%	68.0%
Number of enrolled students successfully obtaining a recognised qualification (Full time HE)	507	513	525	531	541	529	542	460	
Total number of FTHE students	713	736	724	761	767	772	760	745	
E4 Proportion of enrolled students successfully obtaining a recognised qualification (Part time HE)	73.9%	65.5%	74.6%	78.5%	81.7%	89.6%	83.4%	88.0%	89.0%
Number of enrolled students successfully obtaining a recognised qualification (Part time HE)	334	306	362	547	468	575	568	635	
Total number of PTHE students	452	467	485	697	573	642	681	722	
F Number of students achieving an HNC/D qualification articulating to degree level courses	0	197	248	246	222	181	257	N/A	
Number of students achieving an HNC/D qualification articulating to degree level courses with advanced standing	0	101	131	123	116	83	135	N/A	
Proportion of students achieving an HNC/D qualification articulating to degree level courses with advanced standing	-	51.3%	52.8%	50.0%	52.3%	45.9%	52.5%	N/A	
G Total number of full-time FE college qualifiers (in confirmed destinations)	763	841	759	787	759	596		N/A	
Number of full-time FE college qualifiers in work, training or further study 3-6 months after qualifying	749	797	738	749	731	574		N/A	
Proportion of full-time FE college qualifiers in work, training or further study 3-6 months after qualifying	98.2%	94.8%	97.2%	95.2%	96.3%	96.3%		N/A	
Total number of full-time HE college qualifiers (in confirmed destinations)	466	477	486	476	483	381		N/A	
Number of full-time HE college qualifiers in work, training or further study 3-6 months after qualifying	454	466	473	463	469	377		N/A	
Proportion of full-time HE college qualifiers in work, training or further study 3-6 months after qualifying	97.4%	97.7%	97.3%	97.3%	97.1%	99.0%		N/A	
H Percentage of students overall satisfied with their college experience (SSES survey)	-	92.2%	94.2%	?	95.4%	N/A	89.1%	95.2%	95.5%

Please note that 2019-20 figures for measures E, G and H and all 2020-21 figures were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and may not be directly comparable to other years

ANNEX B – SIGNED AGREEMENT



Outcome Agreement between West Lothian College and the Scottish Funding Council for AY 2022-23

On behalf of West Lothian College:

Signed:



Print name: JACKIE GALBRAITH

Position: Principal and Chief Executive

Date: 6 December 2022

Signed:



Print name: ALEX LINKSTON

Position: Chair

Date: 6 December 2022

On behalf of the Scottish Funding Council:

Signed:



Print name: Karen Watt

Position: Chief Executive

Date: 26 July 2023

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